The Art and Science of Parenting:
Impact on Education, Health, and Mental Health
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Meetings by appointment

Course Number: CAMS-UA 161.001 (5714)

Course Description:
The course is offered in the fall, spring, and second summer semesters and carries 4 points.

After spending our early lives with our parents, what can we say about how they influenced our personalities and development? How have our parents affected what we learn, how we act, and how we manage our health? Just as you have wondered about these questions, so have scientists and professionals. We study parenting styles in detail to identify qualities that foster healthy child development. The course reviews research on the importance of parenting practices within a family context. We will discuss how parents and parenting practices have been presented in popular culture and the arts to determine if those depictions are accurate and fair. Students also learn how to interact effectively with parents, how to mobilize parents, and what efforts have been successful in changing detrimental parenting actions. This course is for the curious and those interested in careers in education, health, and mental health.

Course Aims:
Knowledge:
1. Students will learn how parenting practices have changed over the course of primarily Western civilizations.
2. Students will learn how parenting practices have been studied over the latter part of the 20th century to the present.
3. Students will learn how parents and their practices have been represented in typical samples of popular and artistic culture.
4. Students will learn what science has taught us about the impact of parenting practices on children’s achievement, health, and mental health.
5. Students will learn how parenting practices can be changed through education and family treatment.

Skills:
1. Students will learn the basic foundation of the scientific method as it is applied to an area of significant human functioning.
2. Students will be able to analyze studies on parenting practices and child outcome.
3. Students will learn how to investigate the scientific and clinical literature in order to draw conclusions about a topic of their choosing.
4. Students will learn how to critically consider how art of varied forms can be used to provide meaningful portrayals of parenting practices and their impact on children.

**Attitudes:**
1. Students will appreciate the importance of the study of parenting practices.
2. Students will recognize the challenges that parents face in meeting the needs of children.
3. Students will appreciate the diverse characteristics of families today and the varied presentations of children in terms of health characteristics, learning abilities, and behavioral and emotional functioning.

**Class Topics and Assignment Dates**

*Special Note: Readings from the Required Books are Listed Here. Articles for the topic if any are listed on NYUClasses.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week and Lecture Number</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Section I – Understanding Parents and Parenting</strong> (see readings below)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lecture 1</td>
<td>• Why Study Parenting?</td>
<td>Bigner – Ch. 1; Heath – Ch. 1</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• The Evolution of Parenting Practices</td>
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<td>• Historical Review of Parenting Practices</td>
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<td>• Changing Views of Children – Changing Views of Parenting</td>
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<td>Lecture 2</td>
<td>• <strong>What did my parents do to my personality?</strong></td>
<td>Bigner, Ch. 3; Heath, Ch. 2 &amp; 4</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Theories of parenting impact on personality development and young adult outcome</td>
<td>Selected articles</td>
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<td>• A historical review</td>
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<td>• How children learn behaviors and attitudes</td>
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<td>Lecture 3</td>
<td>• Variations in Parenting Practices: How are they described?</td>
<td>Bigner - Ch. 4; Heath – Ch. 4</td>
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<td>o The first scientific studies</td>
<td>Selected articles</td>
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<td>o Ways of gaining knowledge when studying parents and child outcome</td>
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<td>• The Essential Components of Effective Parenting</td>
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<td>Lecture 4</td>
<td><strong>QUIZ Number 1</strong></td>
<td>Bigner – Ch. 5, 6, 7; Heath – Chs. 5</td>
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<td>• Portrayals of parents in art and popular culture</td>
<td>Development Charts</td>
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<td>• The Developmental Challenges Facing Parents</td>
<td>Selected articles</td>
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<td>• Critical Concerns Prior to Birth</td>
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<td>• Critical Issues in Infancy</td>
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<td>Lecture 5</td>
<td>• Developmental Challenges Facing Parents</td>
<td>Bigner – Ch. 8 &amp; 9; Heath – Chs. 6 &amp; 7</td>
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<td>• Toddlers and Preschool</td>
<td>Selected articles</td>
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<td>• Early and Middle Childhood</td>
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<td>Lecture 6</td>
<td>• Developmental Challenges Facing Parents</td>
<td>Bigner – Ch. 10; Heath – Chs. 8 &amp; 9</td>
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<td>Lecture 7</td>
<td>• The Impact of Parenting Practices on Achievement and Education</td>
<td>Selected articles</td>
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| Lecture 8 | • Parenting Influences on Health Care in Typical Health  
• Parenting Influences on Health in the Face of Chronic Illnesses | Heath – Ch. 11  
Selected articles |
| Lecture 9 | • Parenting Influences on Mental Health  
• Parenting Responses to a Child with Developmental, Behavioral, or Emotional Disabilities | Selected articles |
| Lecture 10 | **PAPER DUE**  
• A Critical Review – Is it all really true?  
  ○ Harris’ Do Parents Matter?  
• Do the ideas apply to ethnic group variations in the United States?  
• Variations in Parenting Beliefs and Practices – Ethnic and Cultural Variations | Bigger – Ch. 2; Heath: Ch. 2 |
| Lecture 11 | • The Differing Impact of Mothers and Fathers on Kids  
• Social Variations in Parenting Practices – The Role of Socioeconomic Status | Selected articles |
| Lecture 12 | **QUIZ Number 2**  
• Varied Family Structures and Their Impact on Children: Single-Parenting, Multigenerational Childrearing, Same-Sex Parents  
• Disruption of Families through Divorce  
• Forming Families through Adoption and Foster Care | Bigger – Ch. 11, 12, 13, & 14; Heath – Ch. 3  
Selected articles |
| Lecture 13 | • Mobilizing and Engaging Parents  
• Interacting Effectively with Parents  
• Approaches to Educate Parents  
• Pre-Parenting Education  
• Basic Parent Education for Building Skills | Bigger- Ch. 16 |
Lecture 14

- Altering Harmful Parenting Practices
- Supporting Parents with Mental Health Problems
- The Path and Variables in Child Neglect
- The Path and Variables in Child Abuse
- Out-of-Family Child Care: The Impact of Foster Care

SECOND ASSIGNMENT DUE

| If possible | • Social trends in family composition and their impact on children  
|             | • The potential for a more divided society  
|             |   • Demographic trends and their influence on family composition and child outcomes |

| Readings to be announced |

STUDY SESSION

Location to be Announced

FINAL EXAM

Readings for the course:

2 Required Books from which required readings will be drawn:


Examinations and Grades:
Grades will be based upon:
1. Class participation (10%) – this is based on attendance and participation in discussions. Missing classes and failure to participate will reduce your grade.
   Attendance is strongly advised.
2. Two quizzes (15%)
3. Two take-home assignments (25%)
4. A final paper (25%) of 8 – 10 pages in length reviewing an area of research on parenting practices. Paper topics can be reviewed with the instructor. Students will utilize at least 3 primary sources on the topic, one of which must be a scientific study. The primary sources should be supplemented by book chapters and other sources.
5. A final examination (25%).

The assignments/examinations will include:
Class Participation: Including attendance, contribution to the discussions with questions, but also contributing through clear knowledge of the readings.
Two Short Quizzes: These will be based on the readings and lecture content. They will be conducted in-class for 15 minutes.
Two Midterm Assignments: Students will complete two take-home short-answer responses to questions on course readings and course materials. They will be graded on
three criteria: accuracy and completeness of information pulled from the readings, integration of the materials in answering the question, and clarity of writing.

**Final Examination:** Students will complete a 90-minute, multiple-choice, short answer examination and essay exam based upon the material covered in class and readings for the full course. Sample questions will be provided as a study guide one week before the last class.

**Note on the reading list:** The full reading list is extensive. Assigned readings will be marked on NYUClasses. Other optional articles will be placed on NYUClasses as well. The optional articles are presented for those who wish to study a subject in greater detail. Assigned readings will be described each week and optional readings will be listed as well. A printed version of many of the readings is appended to this syllabus for your exploration.
Section I: Parenting Style


Section II: Education, Health, and Mental Health


Barker, Erin T; Bornstein, Marc H; Putnick, Diane L; Hendricks, Charlene; Suwalsky, Joan T. D. Adolescent-mother agreement about adolescent problem


Bornstein, Marc H; Putnick, Diane L; Heslington, Marianne; Gini, Motti; Suwalsky, Joan T. D; Venuti, Paola; de Falco, Simona; Giusti, Zeno; Zingman de Galperin, Célia. Mother-child emotional availability in ecological perspective: Three countries, two regions, two genders. Developmental Psychology. Vol 44(3) May 2008, 666-680.


Brown, Ronald T; Wiener, Lori; Kupst, Mary Jo; Brennan, Tara; Behrman, Richard; Compas, Bruce E; Elkin, T. David; Fairclough, Diane L; Friebert, Sarah; Katz, Ernest; Kazak, Anne E; Madan-Swain, Avi; Mansfield, Nancy; Mullins, Larry L; Noll, Robert; Patenaude, Andrea Farkas; Phipps, Sean; Sahler, O. J; Sourkes, Barbara; Zeltzer, Lonnie. Single parents of children with chronic illness: An understudied phenomenon. Journal of Pediatric Psychology. Vol 33(4) May 2008, 408-421.


Sandler, Irwin; Miles, Jonathan; Cookston, Jeffrey; Braver, Sanford. Effects of father and mother parenting on children's mental health in high- and low-conflict divorces. Family Court Review. Vol 46(2) Apr 2008, 282-296.


Section III: Variations in Family Structure


Section IV: Working with Parents


Lipman, Ellen L; Waymouth, Marjorie; Gammon, Tara; Carter, Patricia; Secord, Margaret; Leung, Olivia; Mills, Brenda; Hicks, Frances. Influence of group cohesion on maternal well-being among participants in a support/education group program for single mothers. American Journal of Orthopsychiatry. Vol 77(4) Oct 2007, 543-549.


Talati, Ardesheer; Wickramaratne, Priya J; Pilowsky, Daniel J; Alpert, Jonathan E; Cerda, Gabriele; Garber, Judy; Hughes, Carroll W; King, Cheryl A; Malloy, Erin; Sood, A. Bela; Verdeli, Helen; Trivedi, Madhukar H; Rush, A. John; Weissman, Myrna M. Remission of maternal depression and child symptoms among single mothers: A STAR*D-child report. Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology. Vol 42(12) Dec 2007, 962-971.