

**CN568: THEOLOGICAL & PASTORAL PERSPECTIVES ON THE CONTEMPORARY FAMILY (4 Units).**

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**DESCRIPTION:**

This course examines perceptions of the family within the Christian tradition, and their relationship to wider cultural concerns in a variety of different historical and contemporary settings.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES/LEARNING OUTCOMES:** Students will

- reflect on their own family stories;
- understand Christian perspectives on the family, within the context of postmodern culture;
- acquire pastoral skills for supporting families in the church and in the wider community;
- develop skills in theological reflection in partnership with other people of both genders and diverse ethnicities.

**RELEVANCE FOR MINISTRY:**

Understanding our own experience of family and empathizing with the experience of others is a fundamental part of effective Christian life and ministry.

**COURSE FORMAT:**

The class will be conducted on the Internet using a 10-week lesson program aligned with Fuller's academic calendar. Each week, students and the instructor will interact with the material and each other through journaling, threaded discussions, web-based research, and other assignments.

**REQUIRED READING:**

- Anderson, Herbert, and Don Browning et al. *The Family Handbook*. Westminster John Knox, 1998.
- Barton, Stephen C., ed. *The Family in Theological Perspective*. T & T Clark, 1996.
- Browning, Don S. *Marriage & Modernization: How Globalization Threatens Marriage, and What to Do About It*. Eerdmans, 2003.
- Drane, John, and Olive M. Fleming Drane. *Family Fortunes: Faith-Full Caring for Today's Families*. Darton, Longman & Todd, 2004.
- Fleming Drane, Olive M. *Spirituality to Go: Rituals and Reflections for Everyday Living*. Darton, Longman & Todd, 2006.
- Course Reader available in the online course.

**RECOMMENDED READING:**

- Coupland, Douglas. *All Families Are Psychotic*. Flamingo 2001.
- Garland, Diana R. *Family Ministry: A Comprehensive Guide*. InterVarsity Press, 1999.
- Gittins, Diana. *The Family in Question*. 2nd ed. Macmillan, 1993.
- Ruether, Rosemary Radford. *Christianity and the Making of the Modern Family*. Beacon Press, 2000.
- Westerhoff, John H. *Will our Children have Faith?* 2nd ed. Morehouse, 2000.

**ASSIGNMENTS:**

1. Weekly threaded discussions (25%) and personal journaling including reflections on students' own family of origin (10%)
2. A report on personal experiential processing of course material undertaken throughout the course (15%)
3. A paper or field-work study of 12-15 pages on a subject relevant to the concerns of the course (50%). All assignments must be submitted to gain a grade.

**PREREQUISITES:** None.

**RELATIONSHIP TO CURRICULUM:** Elective. Fulfills concentration requirements in Family Life Education in MDiv and in MA in Family Life Education: Ministry Focus Elective in MA in Global Leadership degree

**FINAL EXAMINATION:** None.