American Public University System

The Ultimate Advantage is an Educated Mind

School of Arts and Humanities
Child and Family Development

CHFD446
Families and Social Action
Credit Hours 3
Length of Course 8 Weeks
Prerequisite(s)

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Instructor Information

APUS Faculty

Course Description (Catalog)

This course is the study of the multidimensional aspects of family law and policy, including child support enforcement, homosexual marriage, and surrogate parenting. Students will analyze case excerpts from court opinions on family policies and laws that apply at the federal, state, and local level.
**Course Scope**

**CHFD446 Families and Social Action** is divided into 8 weeks and designed to acquaint students with a basic understanding of law and policy as they relate to the American family. Content areas will explore the legal principles that define relationships, rights, and duties within a variety of family units.

**Course Objectives**

Upon completion of this course students will be able to:

1) Apply appropriate terminology, theoretical perspectives, and approaches to an array of legal actions experienced by American families
2) Utilize a variety of legal resources as they relate to the practice of family law
3) Identify the key elements and processes that affect and govern the American legal and political system

**Course Delivery Method**

This course delivered via distance learning will enable students to complete academic work completely online. Online assignments include classroom dialogs accomplished in groups through threaded discussion forums, examinations and paper assignments.

**Course Materials**


**Evaluation Procedures**
Discussion Forums:

We will have weekly Forum Assignments. Each Forum will activate early Monday morning and comprise of two parts. Your initial reply (200-300 word minimum) to the question/topic will be due by Tuesday (day 2 of the academic week) at 11:59 PM EST and at least two follow-up responses (100 word minimum each) to two another students’ initial post by 11:59 PM EST Friday (day 5 of the academic week). All three replies should be substantive.

In addition, the thoughts/position in your initial reply must be supported by at least one empirical source. Acceptable empirical sources are limited to academic journals, textbooks, or government websites. Remember, your discussion posts should not be a review of literature, but instead your own personal beliefs supported by fact. All empirical support must be formatted using APA (6th Edition) standards.

NOTE: The posting of an introduction is voluntary and does not count towards your overall score.

What counts as a "substantive" post?

In order to earn full participation points, you must add something of substance to the discussion. Your posts should consist of new ideas, your perspectives, pointed follow-up questions, etc.

Substantive posts and responses are defined as:

- Follow-up responses to classmates’ initial DQs that integrate course theories with a practical application of the subject, perhaps offering a personal observation or experience, or referencing real-world examples, current events, or presenting further research you have conducted on the topic.
- Posts that encourage further discussion and ongoing dialogue with other students and the instructor in the class.
- Interaction in classroom discussion that demonstrates deeper or broader thoughts about a topic, rather than just rephrasing what the textbook has presented on the topic.
- Asking additional, relevant questions about the week’s topic.
- Communications that are presented in a professional and supportive manner, and with respectful tone.

Here are some other helpful hints:
Each week several discussion questions will offer focus regarding the weekly concepts. To assist you, here's a list of points to consider:

1. Comment on others' experiences and ask others questions about their ideas/experiences.
2. Take an idea being discussed, and offer a different perspective on it.
3. Describe an interesting idea from the week's discussion and explain what insights you gained from it.
4. Ask the group a question about the week's topics if there is something you would like more information on.
5. Disagree (respectfully, of course) with a point that someone else made and add detailed explanations as to why.

Please note, the term "substantive participation" excludes simply saying, "I agree" or "Great idea!" Instead, it is a genuine contribution to the discussion. I do encourage you to compliment your classmates with messages, such as "I agree" or "Great idea," but understand that is not enough to be considered participation.

Quizzes and Exams:

Students will complete weekly online quizzes. Each quiz is due by Sunday at the end of its assigned week at 11:59PM Eastern Standard Time. A Midterm and Final Exam are also required. The Final Exam is comprehensive. Please note that I do not accept late quizzes, midterms or finals.

FINAL INTEGRATION PAPER:

This paper requires synthesis of course information related to a student identified topic of interest and supporting research article summaries. Detailed instructions, along with a grading rubric, are located in the course Assignments folder.

Due Date: Sunday, Week 7 by 11:55 PM EST. I will accept papers up to two day late with a 10% deduction for each day late. I will not accept any papers after Tuesday at 11:59PM EST.

This 1250-1500 word paper (not including the title page, or reference page) requires the following:

APA formatted paper title page & body containing the headings and content below:

1. CHFD446 Area of Interest (Include title of your paper here)
   This will contain the description of an area of interest from the course.
   This description will include the introduction, thesis, key concepts and your personal interest in this topic.

2. Three Journal Article Descriptions
   Summarize and discuss 3 scholarly journal articles related to the topic. Popular magazines, .com websites, encyclopedias such as Wikipedia and Encarta can't be used for this assignment (Tip: Articles found in the APUS Online Library in academic journals titled The Journal of ______ are your best bet). Discuss the relevance of the research articles and how they pertain to the field of Family Law as a whole. This section should examine the strengths and
weaknesses within the research studies included and their conclusions. Discuss how the conclusions contained within the research support or refute your thesis statement.

4. Discussion and Conclusion
Summarize the main points of your paper. Include a discussion on the future trends and research in the field of Family Law.

5. References
Include an APA format Reference page titled "References" (without the quotes) and list all sources used in writing the paper. NOTE: All these sources must have been cited in the paper body. Make sure you include at least 3 journal article references, in addition to using the textbook.

A grading rubric for this assignment is below. Please see resources folder for a complete grading rubric

Total Points: 100
Content and organization: 70%
Readability and Style: 15%
Mechanics: 15%

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Instruments</th>
<th>Percentage of Final Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Questions</td>
<td>12%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quizzes</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mid-Term and Final Exams</td>
<td>50%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Paper</td>
<td>8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100%</td>
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Professors have 7 days from the end of the course to submit their grades to the University.

APUS Grading System:

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Quality Points/Grading Percent</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.0/ 100 - 94</td>
<td>All: Very high quality, clearly above average work</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.67/ 93 - 90</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.33/ 89 - 87</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.0/ 86 - 84</td>
<td>Undergrad: Above average</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>2.67/ 83 - 80</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.33/ 79 - 77</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.0/ 76 - 73</td>
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<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>1.67/ 72 - 70</td>
<td>Undergrad: Below Average</td>
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<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>1.33/ 69 - 67</td>
<td>Undergrad: Unsatisfactory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>1.0/ 66 - 64</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>.67/ 63 - 60</td>
<td>Undergrad: Unsatisfactory</td>
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### Course Outline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Primary Readings</th>
<th>Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1    | Student autobiography: post in Student Lounge – NOT required  
Forum 1 Legal Definition of Family Quiz 1  
**Due by 11:59 PM EST on Sunday of Week 1** | **Assigned Reading:** Chapters 1 & 2 | **END OF WEEK 1** |
| 2    | Forum 2 Legal Rights Quiz 2  
**Due by 11:59 PM EST on Sunday of Week 2** | **Assigned Reading:** Chapters 3 & 4 | **END OF WEEK 2** |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Due Dates</th>
<th>Readings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Forum 3 Property Distribution Quiz 3</td>
<td>Due by 11:59 PM EST on Sunday of Week 3</td>
<td>Assigned Reading: Chapters 5 &amp; 6</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Mid-Term Exam Covers Chapters 1-8</td>
<td>Due by 11:59 PM EST on Sunday of Week 4</td>
<td>Assigned Reading: Chapters 7 &amp; 8</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Forum 4 Child Support Quiz 4</td>
<td>Due by 11:59 PM EST on Sunday of Week 5</td>
<td>Assigned Reading: Chapters 9 &amp; 11</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Forum 5 Alimony Quiz 5 Alimony</td>
<td>Due by 11:59 PM EST on Sunday of Week 6</td>
<td>Assigned Reading: Chapters 12 &amp; 13</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Forum 6 Child Custody Quiz 6</td>
<td>Due by 11:59 PM EST on Sunday of Week 7</td>
<td>Assigned Reading: Chapters 14 &amp; 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Final Exam Covers Chapters 9-15</td>
<td>Final Exam (Open Book) Activates 1:00 AM EST on Monday of Week 8 - Due by 11:59 PM EST on Sunday of Week 8</td>
<td>Assigned Reading: Chapter 16 &amp; 17</td>
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