



College of Education

Education Studies and Human Relations

education.uiowa.edu/eshr

ESHR: Couple and Family Informal Concentration Area (ICA)

Understanding families in all iterations has value in various careers through which the goal is to advocate for and support families. Courses in the *Couple and Family ICA* will help you understand the nature of interpersonal and intimate relationships, the inner workings of family systems, individual and family development, how the family fits into the larger society, and how to help families under stress or in crisis.

The *Couple and Family ICA* pairs well with other ESHR ICAs such as the *Cognition, Learning, and Development ICA* and *Trauma-Informed Advocacy ICA*. Students often choose another major, minor, or certificate to enhance their learning in this area. See below for suggestions for pairing with the *Couple and Family ICA*.

Major, Minor, Certificate Suggestions

Majors/Minors

[Communication Studies](#)

[Criminology, Law, and Justice](#)

[Ethics and Public Policy](#)

[Gender, Women's and Sexuality Studies](#)

[Political Science](#)

[Psychology](#)

[Social Work](#)

Certificates

[Aging and Longevity Studies](#)

[Critical Cultural Competence](#)

[Leadership Studies](#)

[Resilience and Trauma-Informed](#)

[Perspectives](#)

[Writing](#)

Career opportunities for students with an ESHR focus on “couple and family” may include family social service programs, childcare centers, preschool programs, 4-H and youth development programs, mental health, and substance abuse centers, child and domestic abuse centers and runaway shelters, family policy analyst/advocate, assisted living, adult day services, and nursing homes.

Students with this focus in ESHR may be well-positioned for graduate work in human development and family studies, child life, social work, couple and family therapy, mental health counseling, school counseling, school psychology, and psychology program(s).

Course suggestions

(Students are encouraged to take one or two courses from each skill/content area.)

Interpersonal Relationships Related to Couples and Families

PSQF:4145/CSED:4145 Marriage and Family Interaction

Contemporary American couple, marriage, and family relationships; mate selection.

PSQF:4162 CSED:4162 Introduction to Couple & Family Therapy

Evolution of the family therapy movement and issues related to functional and dysfunctional family systems; significant models of family therapy and specific techniques.

Human Development

CSED:4173 Trauma Across the Lifespan

Current theory and practice models related to trauma and crisis intervention; overview of multi-system level definitions of trauma experience (historical, individual, interpersonal, family, organizational, community, global); various approaches to trauma response theory; unique contributions that counselors offer (strength, resiliency, coping); commitments to multicultural and systems factors; macro- to micro-level understanding of trauma.

PSQF:2116 Applied Child and Adolescent Psychology

Overview of child and adolescent development, psychopathology, and basic-level intervention; foundation for working in

applied child and adolescent mental health settings; typical areas of psychological difficulty, including developmental disorders, ADHD, depression, anxiety, substance use; contextual and environmental factors, including abuse, poverty, neglect.

PSQF:4106 Child Development

Theories and research findings about the physical, social, emotional, and intellectual growth and development of children. Requirements: junior standing.

PSQF:4133 The Adolescent and Young Adult

Psychological and social aspects of adolescence and young adulthood; emphasis on theory, research, and practical applications.

Helping Skills

CSQF/PSQF:1102 Introduction to Helping Skills

Problem solving, interviewing skills, and entry-level techniques of mindfulness, motivational interviewing, active listening, crisis management, and conversation facilitation. Use of positive psychology to understand the nuances of human communication; explore the continuum of human emotionality and the impact of emotion on communication and interaction, particularly within helping relationships.

PSQF:2115 Introduction to Counseling Psychology

Have you ever wanted to learn more about counseling and psychotherapy approaches to addressing mental health? Are you curious how contemporary social and cultural issues have an impact on our mental health? Have you wondered how psychologists can enact change at the individual and societal level? This course is designed to answer these questions and to provide an overview of the profession of counseling psychology.

Counseling psychology is a profession that helps clients remedy problems, engage in prevention strategies, and develop and enhance their strengths and skills. Counseling psychologists also study social and cultural factors of mental health, such as race and racism, sexism, and other forms and systems of oppression, as well as social justice and community activist approaches to create change at the individual and societal level.

Specific topics to be covered in this course will include the definition and history of counseling psychology, the theory and practice of psychotherapy, career counseling, multiculturalism and social justice, suicide, counseling skills, social/cultural issues, ethics, and various applications of counseling psychology.

PSQF:3104 Multicultural Counseling and Psychology (if not taken to meet the Diverse Perspectives requirement)

Introduction to multicultural competencies and its importance to counseling, psychology, and helping professions; psychological concepts and research pertaining to privilege; racism, race, culture, sexual orientation, social class and classism, and their application in culturally adapted psychotherapy interventions; how these matters and other cultural identities and constructs are handled and used in applied psychology and counseling; focus on intersection of research and practice.

CSQF:4195 Ethics in Human Relations & Counseling (if not taken to meet ESHR Core requirement)

Morality and ethics; ethical issues; models and techniques for effective ethical decision making in personal and professional interactions.

CSQF:4199 Counseling for Related Professions (if not taken to meet ESHR Core requirement)

Counseling theories and techniques; ethical and multicultural considerations; small-group discussions, demonstrations, lectures.

Internship Experiences

While not a part of the 30 credits that contribute to the ESHR major, we encourage students interested in this concentration area to include several internship and practicum experiences in their coursework as they earn their BA. Please visit with the ESHR advisor about how to find and register for these opportunities that may help to customize your experiential informal learning background.

Faculty Liaison

[Stacey McElroy-Heltzel](#), Assistant Professor, Counseling Psychology

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