

Application Process: Psychology 432A: Parenting

Thank you for your interest in this seminar! The application process is straight forward. We have a “permission of the instructor required” system for this course for two reasons; (1) so that students “know what they are getting into” before starting the course, given its unusual structure, and (2) to allow some flexibility with prerequisites. The course enrollment is limited.

To apply, simply send to Dr. Smith (smithp@upei.ca) an email that provides:

- (1) Your name and student number.
- (2) Confirmation that you have read the course description below.
- (3) An attached copy of your academic audit. (Please note that the course is not open to students who have taken or are taking Family Sciences 472, Parent-Child Interaction.)

Thank you!

Psychology 432C: Parenting

Dr. Philip Smith

Mondays, 1:30 – 4:30pm, Fall, 2016

PREREQUISITES: Psychology 101, 102, 201, 251 or 278 and 279, and permission of the instructor. This course normally is open to fourth-year students who have completed some relevant third-year courses; applications from third-year students will be considered.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Students in this seminar consider a broad range of psychological issues in parenting, exploring the nature of parenting within the context of reciprocal relationships between parents and children. Given particular attention are questions about whether and how parenting influences children, and whether and how parenting can be supported and modified. Parenting within diverse family structures, and within families facing an array of challenges (e.g., poverty, exceptionality, inter-parental violence) will be explored. Student contributions include critical reading, analysis, and writing about theory, research, and practice regarding controversial issues in the field; presentations at each week’s seminar meeting; and, development of either a knowledge translation analysis or a research proposal addressing an issue in parenting education and support in Prince Edward Island.

I hope that as a result of this seminar all participants will:

- learn deeply about the complexities of parenting
- care deeply about what needs to be done to support positive parenting
- collectively develop one or more ideas that will make a positive difference in support of parenting in Prince Edward Island
- improve skills and confidence in:
 - critically reading and analysing scholarly writing
 - contributing to scholarly discussion
 - oral presentation
 - written presentation
- be excited by the opportunity to build knowledge and understanding with other thoughtful and engaged people.

SEMINAR READINGS AND PRESENTATIONS:

Each week we will all critically read and analyse two (or, occasionally, three) assigned articles or chapters. Each week each student will make a one-minute, five-minute, or 15-minute presentation on the topic for the week. Each week we will discuss the readings and presentations as a group, and identify key themes that emerge from our considerations.

1. One-minute presentations (seven or eight students per week): You will present something about the topic for the week from outside the assigned readings, that is, something we would not know if we had only done the assigned readings. This might be something from research, or practice, or a reflection of the issue in the media. Please practice, with a timer, your presentation; you will be alerted at one minute, and cut off at two! You will do six one-minute presentations over the semester, three by mid-semester and three after mid-semester.
2. Five-minute presentations (two or three students per week): As above, you will present on the general theme something we would not know from the assigned readings, but here you will use at least two references from peer-reviewed journal articles. You will do two five-minute presentations during the semester, one by and one after mid-semester.
3. Fifteen-minute presentations (two or three students per week): Each student doing a 15-minute presentation will present one of the assigned readings for that week. Students will decide between themselves who will present which reading. The 15-minute presentation is being made to people who already have read the chapter or article, and so its purpose is to foster further critical thinking and discussion. This is an opportunity to be creative, and stimulating. You will do two 15-minute presentations during the semester, one by and one after mid-semester.

By 10:00 pm on the Thursday before each class, each student who is not doing a 15-minute presentation that week will post on the Moodle site one open-ended question about each of

the assigned readings for the next class; presenters will weave responses to those questions into their 15-minute presentations.

Seminar presentations contribute 50% of the course grade.

SEMINAR DISCUSSION:

A unique opportunity of the seminar setting is reflective and engaged discussion about important topics. This seminar is structured so that you will be well prepared to contribute to discussion: you present each week, you complete a common set of assigned readings in advance of the seminar meeting; you will have posted a thoughtful question about each reading. It remains, then, to actually make substantive and frequent contributions to seminar discussions! Opportunities for discussion will be available after each one-, five-, and 15-minute presentation, and in concluding considerations.

Contributions to seminar discussion contribute 25% of the course grade.

KNOWLEDGE TRANSLATION ANALYSIS OR RESEARCH PROPOSAL:

The knowledge translation analysis and the research proposal are opportunities to (1) explore an area of interest to you that is not considered in detail in your seminar presentations, and (2) consider the needs and questions facing people working in parent education and support in Prince Edward Island.

Knowledge translation involves synthesizing scientific research and best practice in a way that is relevant for people faced with decisions about policy or practice. If you choose this option you will become familiar with the key literature on your topic of choice, and write a paper (five to seven pages) that could be useful to someone in Prince Edward Island working in the area.

You do not have time and scope in this seminar to plan and carry out a full quantitative or qualitative research study, but you can consider what research questions are important to people in parenting education and support in Prince Edward Island, and how one of those questions might be addressed. If you choose this option you will prepare a research proposal (five to seven pages) that presents the rationale for the research, considers relevant existing research and knowledge, and proposes a method to address the question. Identification of your topic area is due not later than 3 October. The paper is due on 12 December.

The knowledge translation / research proposal project contributes 25% of the course grade.