

## **Statement of Rationale for PSY-118 Marriage 101**

Marriage is, arguably, the cornerstone of society. In its most quintessential form, marriage provides a window into the kingdom of God as it was meant to be: intimate, covenantal, relational, and wholehearted. The marriage relationship is intended to provide the security to be ourselves as we presently are, fully flawed and broken, and the safety to grow deeper into who God desires us to be, holy and perfect in His image. The glimpses of God's kingdom seen in marriage have the potential to transform a society from being encompassed in hopelessness and hurt to one of hope and healing; when we are loved well by others, we can then give love.

As much as the marriage relationship has the power to shape society, it is also strongly influenced by societal and cultural messages. It is a relationship easily bent to conform to societal norms and twisted by generations of painful relational beliefs and behaviors. As such, the modern view of marriage is too often far from the holy union God intended.

The purpose of this course is to provide students with a foundation for understanding intimate relationships that draws from scientific research and Biblical theology. Students will then use this knowledge to critically analyze societal, cultural, and personal narratives about relationships and identify how these narratives positively and negatively influence present beliefs and behavior patterns.

### **Statement on Division Level**

Though this course is an upper division psychology course, which draws heavily from scientific research in the field of psychology, the course content and information is presented in such a way that students from any discipline can fully engage and excel in this course. All theories and concepts in which major students may have prior instruction will be thoroughly explained in a way that is adequate and approachable for non-major students taking this course.

Students will be required to interact with primary sources, specifically scientific literature in the form of empirical research articles. In anticipation that students outside of the STEM majors may have difficulty understanding the structure and voice of scientific literature, we will be providing a scaffolding approach to readings of this type. Early in the course, articles will be annotated to help students understand the purpose of the structure and flow, as well as identify important information within an article. Later articles will no longer be annotated to encourage further student engagement directly with the text.

### **Certification Criteria**

1. Identify foundational theories that offer explanations of social, political, economic, and/or cultural phenomena
  - a. Reading: *Loving with the Brain in Mind: Neurobiology and Couple Therapy* (Fishbane, 2013).

- b. Reading: *Reimagining Your Love Story: Biblical and Psychological Practices for Healthy Relationships* (Gurney, 2019).
  - c. Reading: Coregulation in romantic partners' attachment styles: A longitudinal investigation (Hudson, 2014)
- 2. Apply foundational theories to analyze contemporary problems or controversies
  - a. Reading: Intercultural couples and families (Maynigo, 2017)
  - b. Reading: Gender similarities hypothesis (Hyde)
  - c. Reading: Why women still can't have it all (Slaughter, 2012)
  - d. Lecture: Love in the 21st Century
  - e. Lecture: Roles of Men and Women
  - f. Lecture: Purity Culture
- 3. Make personal and social application of various theories—informed by a Biblical perspective
  - a. Reading: Is it a sin to marry a non-Christian (Ortberg, 2005)
  - b. Reading: “Wholehearted parenting: Daring to be the adults we want our children to be” (Brown, *Daring Greatly*)
  - c. Reading: Parenting advice for intercultural couples: A systemic perspective (Bhugun, 2017)
  - d. Assignment: Relational Self Awareness Journal
  - e. Assignment: Family Love Template
  - f. Assignment: Mentor Couple Interview Paper
  - g. Lecture: Sex in Intimate Relationships
  - h. Lecture: The Art of Fighting Fair
  - i. Lecture: Communication- The Lifeblood of Relationships

### **Student Learning Outcome**

Students will apply appropriate foundational theories to analyze social, political, economic, and/or cultural phenomena.

1. Assignment: Mentor Couple Interview
2. Reading: Hookup culture (Solomon, 2017)
3. Reading: Gender similarities hypothesis (Hyde)
4. Lecture: Relational Self Awareness
5. Lecture: Love in the 21st Century
6. Lecture: Expected & Unexpected Challenges