



## Master Course Syllabus

For additional course information, including prerequisites, corequisites, and course fees, please refer to the Catalog: <https://catalog.uvu.edu/>

**Semester:** Spring

**Year:** 2025

**Course Prefix:** FAMS

**Course and Section #:** 1150 008

**Course Title:** Marriage and Relationship Skills

**Credits:** 3

### Course Description

Guides students in building a lasting intimate relationship of their own and in understanding and teaching relationship maintenance and improvement strategies based on large-scale scientifically derived marriage and relationship principles. Utilizes cutting edge research on factors and issues related to relationship success and outcome including whom and when to marry and how to build stable and happy relationships over time. Stresses increased understanding of desirable relationship outcomes and how to achieve them.

### Course Attributes

This course has the following attributes:

- General Education Requirements
- Global/Intercultural Graduation Requirements
- Writing Enriched Graduation Requirements
- Discipline Core Requirements in Program
- Elective Core Requirements in Program
- Open Elective

Other: *Click here to enter text.*

### Instructor Information

**Instructor Name:** Dr. Ethan Jones    Email: [ethan.jones@uvu.edu](mailto:ethan.jones@uvu.edu)    Office phone: 801-863-0000    Office location: Clarke Building CB210G

### Student Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion, students should be able to . . .

1	Analyze the empirical evidence and importance of becoming emotionally and psychologically healthy before and during romantic relationships.
2	Define ethical and moral issues that underpin the study and intervention of marriage and other relationships.
3	Identify the dynamics of family background, gender, singlehood, sex, friendship, attraction dating, and mate selection, and how they influence and relate to romantic relationships.
4	Articulate the roles of work and family as well as material resources.
5	Describe the influence of power, decision making, and communication.

**Upon successful completion, students should be able to . . .**

6	Apply skills in conflict resolution within romantic relationships.
7	Examine the dynamics of divorce, remarriage, and step-parenting.

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## ***Course Materials and Texts***

Markman, H. J., Stanley, S. M., & Blumberg, S. L. (2010). *Fighting for your marriage: A deluxe revised edition of the classic best seller for enhancing marriage and preventing divorce*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Van Epp, J. (2007). *How to avoid falling in love with a jerk*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

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## ***Course Requirements***

### **Course Assignments, Assessments, and Grading Policy**

#### Knowledge Assessments

This course and its assignments are experiential in nature. Therefore, students who learn and enjoy the class the most are those who come to class consistently, on time, and participate. Successful students also complete assigned readings and put their full efforts into the assignments.

Each assignment has a purpose and a desired outcome upon completion. You will turn in all assignments via Canvas. It is important that you do the assignment well in advance because Canvas can be temperamental. If, for some reason, you are unable to turn an assignment in via Canvas, please email (jeremy.boden@uvu.edu) the assignment to the instructor *before* class begins or bring a hard copy at the beginning of class. Failing to turn the assignment in on the designated due date and by the designated time will likely result in a zero for the assignment.

For all of the assignments, doing the absolute minimum requirements might not be enough for full points. Achieving full points for each assignment is awarded to those students who can show that they went “*above and beyond*” what was expected of them and who displayed significant understanding of the content and how it applies to the assignment.

Below is a list and description of each assignment for this course:

1. ***Engagement Points***: Attendance, in-class participation, and completing assigned readings are vital to your success and the learning process in this course. Therefore, you will record your daily attendance, participation, and completion of assigned readings in the Engagement Points record which is embedded in the class schedule and is located near the end of the syllabus. Do not lose your Engagement Points record, as you will need to show it as proof of your work at the end of the semester. Your ***Engagement Points*** are broken down into the following categories:
  - a. Attendance and Participation (on-time attendance) = 5 points per class (“A” on your class schedule)
    - i. For these points, you need to: (1) come to class and *stay for the entire class period* and (2) be actively engaged in the class (while making comments is not necessary for full points—it is hard to imagine a student getting full participation points all semester and never making a comment or asking a question whether in your small groups or to the class as a whole.). Push yourself to be involved in small group discussions and full class discussions. You should not give yourself points if you are consistently on your mobile device (e.g., phone, laptop, tablet,

- etc.), doing homework from other courses or engaged in other activities that are not related to the course.
- ii. If you miss class due to an excused absence (see below), lectures might be recorded and posted on Canvas. You will need to watch the recording and write a 1-page, double-spaced paper and email it to me before the module is complete for full points for attendance. It will be on your honor to watch the entire lecture. For unexcused absences, you can complete the same process for up to three class days. After that, you will receive a zero for missed days but I'd still encourage you to watch the lectures.
- b. Having your reading done *before* class = 5 points per readings ("R" on your class schedule)
    - i. You earn 5 points if you read the entire reading assignment from beginning to end by the assigned date. This should involve marking your reading and noting key points and may include writing down questions you might have or noting parts you don't agree with. You earn 3 points if you read most or half of the days reading assignment. You earn 0 points if you did not read. You can "make up" readings by reading after the assigned day for 2 points. If you do not attend class on days when readings are due, you can still receive credit for reading if you complete the assigned chapters or articles before class begins on that particular day.
    - ii. There will be approximately 45 days of class. As such, depending on the circumstances that arise this semester, there will be approximately 400 Engagement Points (subject to change) possible for the semester. However, as I understand that life happens, you will be graded for a lower amount of points. I usually calculate 95% of the total points possible and use that number. Therefore, you can miss a day or two or miss a reading or two and still be able to meet all of the requirements for this part of the class. Please evaluate yourself and give yourself a score after every class period—don't try to "recall" your scores at the end of the semester. This will obviously be **on your honor** which is purposely integrated into the course so that you can learn the importance of integrity in all of your academic, professional, and personal relationships. At the end of the semester you will add up your points and print, sign your name, and hand it in on the last day of class.
2. *Preparation Quizzes*: There will be at 20-25 quizzes administered on Canvas. These quizzes will be due by 11:59 PM on the day the reading is designated on the syllabus. The quizzes will be open-book and contain multiple-choice and True/False options.
  3. *Final Exam*: The final exam will be comprehensive and will cover what you have learned throughout the semester. The exam will be worth 50 points. More details will be given throughout the semester and during the last week of the semester.
  4. *Personal Reflection Assignments (PRA)*: There will be three personal reflection assignments dispersed throughout the semester. All writing assignments should be typed in 12-point font, double-spaced with 1-inch margins and in Times New Roman font. For this PRA there will be three steps. As you write the paper, please break them up into paragraphs and title each section. You do not need a title page.
    - a. **PRA #1—Dealbreakers or Expectations (40 points)**: Please see the assignment description on Canvas.
    - b. **PRA #2—Healthy Me Assessment (50 points)**: Please see the assignment description on Canvas.
    - a. **PRA #3—My Sexual Script\* (20 points)**: Please see the assignment description on Canvas.
  5. *Marriage and Relationship Interview Assignment (MRIA)* (35 points each for #1-4; 45 points for #5):
    - a. One of the best ways to learn about relationships is to learn from those who are currently in relationships or are seeking to have one. Therefore, you will be asked to conduct several interviews

throughout the semester—single individuals, dating or engaged couples, newlywed couples, short-term married couples, and long-term married couples. Please see the assignment description on Canvas.

Student Responsibility/Likelihood of Success

If a student needs clarification on any course assignment, then it is his/her responsibility to request clarification from the instructor. To increase the likelihood of successful performance on any course assignment, the student is strongly encouraged to attend class, take notes and read assigned materials.

Assignments/Participation:

Engagement points	(TBD)
3 Personal Reflection Assignments	
Deal Breakers and Expectations (PRA #1)	(30 points)
Healthy Me (PRA #2)	(50 points)
My Sexual Scripts (PRA #3)	(20 points)
4 Interview Assignments (MRIA)	(140 points)
1 Key Assignment (MRIA #5)	(45 points)
Approximately 20 Quizzes	(approximately 200 points)
6 Experiential and Application Journals	(30 points)
Randomized In-class Assignments	(TBD)
Final Exam	(50 points)
<b>Total Points = TBD</b>	

Grading Scale

94% – 100% = A	80% – 82% = B-	66% – 69% = D+
90% – 93.9% = A-	76% – 79% = C+	63% – 65% = D
86% – 89% = B+	73% – 75% = C	60% – 63% = D-
83% – 85% = B	70% – 72% = C-	0% – 59% = F

Additional Considerations:

1. Excused/Unexcused Absence Policy: Acceptable reasons for an excused absence are: a) family emergency/official obligation, b) illness, c) representing the University at official events, and d) religious holy days. If a student misses a course assignment due to an excused absence, then she/he must submit written verification. The instructor must receive advance notification for family obligation, University representation, or religious holy day absence. The instructor must be informed of family emergency or illness absence within 48 hours of the first day of absence due to the event. If written verification for an appropriate excuse is received, the instructor will provide a revised due date for either the original assignment or an alternative assignment of equal value. If the student fails to meet the revised due date, then she/he will be given a zero (0) for the assignment.
2. Late Work Policy: In general, I do not accept late work or provide extensions. The assignments and their due date are laid out for the entire semester. Please plan ahead. Nevertheless, I understand there are the occasional extenuating circumstances or official university-excused absences in which I will accept late assignments. This is perhaps one of the most difficult parts of my responsibilities as an instructor. Much of it relies on the honor and integrity of the students. Again, my best advice is to plan ahead and complete the assignments well before the due dates.

Therefore, there are some acceptable reasons for an excused absence are:

- a) family emergency/official obligation
- b) physical illness
- c) representing the University at official events
- d) religious holy days
- e) significant mental health issues

If a student misses an assignment due to an excused absence, then she/he/they must submit written verification. The instructor must receive advance notification for family obligation, University representation, or religious holy day absence. The instructor must be informed of family emergency or illness absence within 72 hours of the first day of absence due to the event. If written verification for an appropriate excuse is received, the instructor will provide a revised due date for either the original assignment or an alternative assignment of equal value. If the student fails to meet the revised due date, then she/he will be given a zero (0) for the assignment.

*I will accept one late assignment per semester without an excuse verification. This can be one quiz or one written assignment.*

- 3. Extra credit: You can earn up to 25 points extra credit points during the semester. Extra credit can be earned by:
  - a) **Extra Engagement Points** (TBD points): Completing more than the required attendance, readings, and comments and questions.
  - b) **End of Semester Course/Instructor Evaluations** (5 points): Please see the assignment description on Canvas.
  - c) **READY/RELATE Assessment (5 points)**: Please see the assignment description on Canvas.
  - d) **Supplemental Readings** (TBD points): Please see the assignment description on Canvas.

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## Required or Recommended Reading Assignments

Week 1:

- Day 1: No Readings
- Day 2: Syllabus

Week 2:

- Day 3: No Readings
- Day 4: Van Epp Intro., Ch. 1 – 2

Week 3:

- Day 5: Van Epp Ch. 3
- Day 6: Getting Our Hearts Right Reading (Found in Canvas)

Week 4:

- Day 7: Bradbury Reading (Found in Canvas)
- Day 8: Van Epp Ch. 4 – 5

Week 5:

- Day 9: Van Epp Ch. 6 & 8
- Day 10: Stosny Reading (Found in Canvas)

Week 6:

- Day 11: No Readings
  - Day 12: Van Epp Ch. 7 & 9
- Week 7:
- Day 13: Van Epp Ch. 10 – 11
  - Day 14: No Readings.
- Week 8
- Day 15: No Readings.
  - Day 16: Van Epp Ch. 12 – 13 and Tashiro Reading (Found in Canvas)
- Week 9:
- Day 17: Markman Intro. & Ch. 1
  - Day 18: No Readings
- Week 10:
- Day 19: No Readings
  - Day 20: Claxton Reading (Found in Canvas) Markman Ch. 3
- Week 11:
- Day 21: Markman Ch. 2
  - Day 22: Markman Ch. 4 & 5
- Week 12:
- Day 23: Markman Ch. 6
  - Day 24: Markman Ch. 7 & 8
- Week 13:
- Day 25: No Readings
  - Day 26: Whisman Reading (Found in Canvas)
- Week 14:
- Day 27: Markman Ch. 9 & 11
  - Day 28: Markman Ch. 10
- Week 15:
- Day 29: Markman Ch. 12
  - Day 30: Markman Ch. 13-17

### **General Description of the Subject Matter of Each Lecture or Discussion**

- Week 1:
- Day 1: Get to know you and brief discussion on family of origin.
  - Day 2: Syllabus review and course expectations.
- Week 2:
- Day 3: Theoretical foundations of love and relationships.
  - Day 4: The relationship and attachment model plan.
- Week 3:
- Day 5: Healthy Me: What is emotional and mental health? Understanding our own attachment styles.
  - Day 6: Healthy Me: Putting in the work.
- Week 4:
- Day 7: Mate selection: Science of attraction.
  - Day 8: Mate selection: Predictors of future marital happiness and RAM dynamic #1.
- Week 5:
- Day 9: Gay and lesbian dating and committed romantic relationships. Communication and family backgrounds.
  - Day 10: Abuse in romantic relationships.

Week 6:

- Day 11: Abuse in romantic relationships continued.
- Day 12: RAM dynamic 1: What are your patterns?

Week 7:

- Day 13: Ram dynamics 2 and 3: Trust and reliance.
- Day 14: Social Cognitions and romantic relationships.

Week 8

- Day 15: Social Cognitions and romantic relationships continued.
- Day 16: RAM dynamics 4 and 5: Physical intimacy before marriage. Discussion on commitment.

Week 9:

- Day 17: Introduction to models of marital stability and satisfaction.
- Day 18: Continued discussion on marital stability and satisfaction.

Week 10:

- Day 19: The transition to marriage.
- Day 20: The transition to parenthood gender and romantic relationships.

Week 11:

- Day 21: Communication: It's not about communication.
- Day 22: Communication: It's not about communication continued. Filters and raw spots.

Week 12:

- Day 23: Communication: Understanding negative patterns and creating safety.
- Day 24: Understanding and repairing disconnection in romantic relationships.

Week 13:

- Day 25: Bringing communication and conflict resolution together.
- Day 26: Stresses and strains in relationships.

Week 14:

- Day 27: Protecting and nurturing friendships: Keeping it fun.
- Day 28: Protecting and nurturing friendships: Being supportive.

Week 15:

- Day 29: Sexual intimacy in committed relationships: Foundations for "good enough" sex lives.
- Day 30: Core beliefs and forgiveness. Bringing it all together.

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## ***Required Course Syllabus Statements***

### **Generative AI**

#### *Use of Artificial Intelligence*

*AI programs are not a replacement for your human creativity, originality, and critical thinking. Writing, thinking, and researching are crafts that you must develop over time to develop your own individual voice. At the same time, you should learn how to use AI and in what instances AI can be helpful to you.*

*The use of generative AI tools (e.g. ChatGPT, Google Bard, etc.) is permitted in this course for the following activities:*

- *Brainstorming and refining your ideas;*
- *Fine tuning your research questions;*
- *Finding information on your topic;*
- *Drafting an outline to organize your thoughts; and*
- *Checking grammar and style.*

*The use of generative AI tools is not permitted in this course for the following activities:*

- *Impersonating you in classroom contexts, such as by using the tool to compose*

*discussion board prompts/responses assigned to you or content that you put into a Teams/Canvas chat.*

- *Completing group work that your group has assigned to you, unless it is mutually agreed upon that you may utilize the tool.*

- *Writing a draft of a writing assignment.*

- *Writing entire sentences, paragraphs or papers to complete class assignments.*

*You are responsible for the information you submit based on an AI query (for instance, that it does not violate intellectual property laws, or contain misinformation or unethical content). Your use of AI tools must be properly documented and cited in order to stay within university policies on academic honesty.*

*Any student work submitted using AI tools should clearly indicate what work is the student's work and what part is generated by the AI. In such cases, no more than 25% of the student work should be generated by AI. If any part of this is confusing or uncertain, please reach out to me for a conversation before submitting your work.*

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### **Using Remote Testing Software**

This course does not use remote testing software.

This course uses remote testing software. Remote test-takers may choose their remote testing locations. Please note, however, that the testing software used for this may conduct a brief scan of remote test-takers' immediate surroundings, may require use of a webcam while taking an exam, may require the microphone be on while taking an exam, or may require other practices to confirm academic honesty. Test-takers therefore shall have no expectation of privacy in their test-taking location during, or immediately preceding, remote testing. If a student strongly objects to using test-taking software, the student should contact the instructor at the beginning of the semester to determine whether alternative testing arrangements are feasible. Alternatives are not guaranteed.

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## ***Required University Syllabus Statements***

### **Accommodations/Students with Disabilities**

Students needing accommodations due to a permanent or temporary disability, pregnancy or pregnancy-related conditions may contact UVU [Accessibility Services](#) at [accessibilityservices@uvu.edu](mailto:accessibilityservices@uvu.edu) or 801-863-8747.

Accessibility Services is located on the Orem Campus in BA 110.

Deaf/Hard of Hearing students requesting ASL interpreters or transcribers can contact Accessibility Services to set up accommodations. Deaf/Hard of Hearing services can be contacted at [DHHservices@uvu.edu](mailto:DHHservices@uvu.edu)

DHH is located on the Orem Campus in BA 112.

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### **Academic Integrity**

At Utah Valley University, faculty and students operate in an atmosphere of mutual trust. Maintaining an atmosphere of academic integrity allows for free exchange of ideas and enables all members of the community to achieve their highest potential. Our goal is to foster an intellectual atmosphere that produces scholars of integrity and imaginative thought. In all academic work, the ideas and contributions



of others must be appropriately acknowledged and UVU students are expected to produce their own original academic work.

Faculty and students share the responsibility of ensuring the honesty and fairness of the intellectual environment at UVU. Students have a responsibility to promote academic integrity at the university by not participating in or facilitating others' participation in any act of academic dishonesty. As members of the academic community, students must become familiar with their [rights and responsibilities](#). In each course, they are responsible for knowing the requirements and restrictions regarding research and writing, assessments, collaborative work, the use of study aids, the appropriateness of assistance, and other issues. Likewise, instructors are responsible to clearly state expectations and model best practices.

Further information on what constitutes academic dishonesty is detailed in [UVU Policy 541: Student Code of Conduct](#).

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### **Equity and Title IX**

Utah Valley University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age (40 and over), disability, veteran status, pregnancy, childbirth, or pregnancy-related conditions, citizenship, genetic information, or other basis protected by applicable law, including Title IX and 34 C.F.R. Part 106, in employment, treatment, admission, access to educational programs and activities, or other University benefits or services. Inquiries about nondiscrimination at UVU may be directed to the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights or UVU's Title IX Coordinator at 801-863-7999 – [TitleIX@uvu.edu](mailto:TitleIX@uvu.edu) – 800 W University Pkwy, Orem, 84058, Suite BA 203.

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### **Religious Accommodation**

UVU values and acknowledges the array of worldviews, faiths, and religions represented in our student body, and as such provides supportive accommodations for students. Religious belief or conscience broadly includes religious, non-religious, theistic, or non-theistic moral or ethical beliefs as well as participation in religious holidays, observances, or activities. Accommodations may include scheduling or due-date modifications or make-up assignments for missed class work.

To seek a religious accommodation, a student must provide written notice to the instructor and the Director of Accessibility Services at [accessibilityservices@uvu.edu](mailto:accessibilityservices@uvu.edu). If the accommodation relates to a scheduling conflict, the notice should include the date, time, and brief description of the difficulty posed by the conflict. Such requests should be made as soon as the student is aware of the prospective scheduling conflict.

While religious expression is welcome throughout campus, UVU also has a [specially dedicated space](#) for meditation, prayer, reflection, or other forms of religious expression.