Understanding the Modern United States Military Family

Weber State University

Course Syllabus

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**Course Number and Title**

CHF 4310 Understanding the Modern United States Military Family

**Time and Place:**

Hybrid Course: Lecture and Online

McKay Education Building

**Instructor**

Pamela Payne, Ph.D., CFLE

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**Welcome**

Welcome to CHF 4310! I am very excited that you have decided to enroll in this course to learn more about families who are impacted by military service.

**Course Description:**

This course is designed to assist you in understanding the structure and formation of each service branch as well as the experiences of families serving in the U.S. Military focusing on both Active duty and Reserve components using Family Systems Theory, Risk and Resiliency Theory and Ambiguous Loss Theory. In recent years, many changes have taken place in the military family landscape. The knowledge gained in this course should provide you with insight into the complex experiences of today’s U.S. Military Families. The information provided in this course is designed to assist students to be effective in professional settings working with military personnel and their families, and is a starting foundation for those interested in pursuing professional civilian careers working with military families in a variety of settings (e.g., nonprofit organizations, the U.S. Military, and others). This course will focus on different components of family life that specifically impact military families. The course format will include (1) readings, (2) online lectures, (3) quizzes, (4) exams, and (5) online and in class discussion.

Prerequisites: CHF 1400, 1500, 2400

**Objectives (assessments are in italics):**

Upon completion of this course students should be able to:

* Demonstrate and discuss the basic structure of the U.S. military and its branches including each branch’s motto, mission, structure, terms/acronyms.

*Quizzes, exams*

* Describe changes in recent U.S. military demographics.

*Quizzes, Exams*

* Evaluate differences and challenges associated with both Active and Reserve components.

*Discussions, papers, quizzes, exams*

* Describe changes in recent U.S. Military demographics.  
  *Discussions, papers, quizzes, exams*
* Evaluate the emotional and lifestyle impact of the deployment cycle on service members, children and families.  
  *Discussions, papers, quizzes, exams*
* Compare and contrast differences and challenges for families in both Active and Reserve components of the U.S. Military.

*Discussions, papers, quizzes, exams*

* Appraise services available to active military service members, returning veterans and their families.

*Discussions, papers, quizzes, exams*

**Weekly Course Topics:**

The following topical outline includes the due dates for all assignments. Weekly discussions will be posted on the course Canvas page in the news items. Each week, the instructor will post the discussion and chat topics for the upcoming week. It is the student’s responsibility to read these news notices and to have read the material for the week.

**Course Texts/Readings:**

**\***Schading, B. (2007). A Civilian’s Guide to the U.S. Military. Writer’s Digest Books, Cincinnati, OH. ISBN # 978-1-58297-408-8.

\* This book is available on Amazon.com and via the Weber State University bookstore. You will need the book for this class.

\*See readings listed below in Topical Outline for additional readings that can be found online via Canvas.

**General Course Policies**

1. To participate in this online course, students MUST have DAILY, reliable access to Canvas and the internet.
2. Assignments must be turned in by the required date and time.
3. **Students are expected to spend approximately 9 hours per week on work related to this course for each unit enrolled.**
4. You should check Canvas announcements daily for new information related to this course.
5. Email will be answered within 48 hours.
6. Work turned in early will be held until the due date and graded with the rest of the papers or assignments, unless the student makes prior arrangements to receive feedback prior to submission of the final draft.

**Assignments and Basis for Student Assessments**

**Lectures:**

PowerPoint lecture notes will be posted at the start of the term in the “content” section of the course. These will be organized to correspond with the learning modules for the course. Additionally, video and audio clips may be posted in each module where appropriate. I will post these clips in multiple formats to allow students easy access. The lecture notes are NOT intended to replace your course readings. Lecture notes should, instead, be used to help guide your readings.

**Quizzes:**

There will be 7 quizzes given during the course term. All quizzes will be multiple-choice. Questions will be taken from your readings and online PowerPoint’s. Since this is an online course these quizzes will be made available online for you to respond to with open notes and open book/readings**.** Due to this open format the quizzes will hold only a moderate weight in your class points. Quizzes will be between 15-40 questions, and you will have 2 hours to take them. Each quiz will be available for 1 attempt. Quizzes will be active for at least 3 days time.

If for any reason the system has an error or outage during the time of a students quiz attempt, it is their responsibility to email the instructor and verify their login time with Canvas. The instructor will attempt to reset a quiz if there is an outage that impacts students.

**Exams:**

Students will be expected to take 3 exams during this course. Exams will be conducted via the Weber State University testing center. Exams may consist of multiple choice, true-false, matching, short answer, and/or essays. Exams will be open for at least 3 days. Students may utilize scratch paper provided by the testing center but they may NOT utilize notes, books, or other study material during the exam. Exams will be no more than 2 hours.

**Online Discussions:**

For each week of the course the instructor will start discussion threads. These threads are designed to make the students think and to try and answer questions that may be sensitive. **You are expected to respond at least twice to each thread**. You will be graded as follows: 5 points for answering the thread starter using course materials, and 5 points for your second post. Posts that do not use course materials to back up their arguments will not be given credit. The discussion section is intended to give the students a chance to discuss the material as it regards real world situations. In essence, the discussion board is designed to allow students to gain a more in-depth understanding of how the course material is relevant to our everyday lives. This of course means that students must be willing to listen to alternative points of view to their own, and to accept that not everyone views the world the way they do, nor does everyone fit the statistics of the course text and research. Discussions are open for 4 days each week, and you may reply at any time during the four days that they are open.

**Papers:**  You will be required to complete 2 short paper during this course. This paper should be 5-10 pages (double-spaced). There will be 5 possible short paper topics posted in the course content (“Paper Topics”), you need to respond to 2 of the 5 topics. Additional instructions can be found on the Topics page in the content section. This paper is due DUE DATE TO BE DETERMINED @ 11:59pm, but can be completed and submitted starting on DATE TO BE DETERMINED. All submissions will be considered final. See paper topics at end of syllabus.

**Attendance:** Students are required to attend class and participate in online discussions. Attendance and participation at live classes and discussion will be assessed. Attendance is more than simply showing up. Students must actively attend and participate in the course in order to receive full points for attending.

**Possible Points:**

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| --- | --- |
|  |  |
| Attendance | 70 points |
| Quizzes | 7 @ 20 points = 140 points |
| Exams | 3 @ 50 points = 150 points |
| Online Discussions | 14 @ 10 points = 140 points |
| Paper | 2 @ 50 points = 100 points |
| **Total Points Possible** | 600 points possible |

**Grading**

**Rubric**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| GRADE DISTRIBUTION | | |
| A | 93% - 100% | 558-600 |
| A- | 90% - 92% | 540-557 |
| B+ | 87% - 89% | 522-539 |
| B | 84%-86% | 504-521 |
| B- | 80% - 83% | 480-503 |
| C+ | 77% - 79% | 462-479 |
| C | 74%-76% | 444-461 |
| C- | 70% - 73% | 420-443 |
| D+ | 67% - 69% | 402-419 |
| D | 64%-66% | 384-401 |
| D- | 60% - 63% | 360-383 |
| E | 59% or less | 359 or less |

**POLICIES:**

**Extra Credit Policy:**

There is no extra credit in this course.

**Late Policy:**

An assignment turned in late will be reduced by 10% of its total value for every day it is late including weekends.

**Attendance Policy:**

This course is offered hybrid, which means that part of the course will be conducted online. Students are only required to be online for as much time as it takes them to do discussions and to download any articles for the week.

**Missed Assignment Exams Policy:**

Students will be allowed to make-up a quiz only on rare occasions for justifiable, extenuating circumstances. Students need to submit a written request attaching supporting documentation in an electronic format, pdf files are preferable (e.g. doctors verification). Students will not be allowed to make-up quizzes for non-academic reasons (e.g. family vacation, early holiday travel). All make-ups will receive a 20% deduction.

**ADA:**

Any student requiring accommodations or services due to a disability must contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) in room 181 of the Student Service Center. SSD can also arrange to provide course materials (including this syllabus) in alternative formats if necessary. For additional information, go to the following URL:<http://departments.weber.edu/ssd/>

**Closure of Campus Policy:**

In the event of disease, natural disaster, or some other reason that the campus is closed, this course will resume online through the WSU Online system. Please login into this course via the WSU Online System to receive further instructions: [http://online.weber.edu/](http://online.weber.edu/webct/entryPageIns.dowebct)

**Notification of Objectionable Materials**

As part of this course, we will be covering topics that may be uncomfortable. The instructor has noted class topics in the topical outline and will make reasonable attempts to notify students of potentially objectionable material. If a particular topic makes you uncomfortable, please notify the instructor to discuss possible alternatives.

**Statement of Copyrighted Materials**

Students are advised that all lecture notes, lectures, study guides and other course materials disseminated by the instructor to the students, whether in class or online, are original materials and as such reflect intellectual property of the instructor or author of those works. All readings, study guides, lecture notes and handouts are intended for individual use by the student. Students may not distribute or reproduce these materials for commercial purposes without the express written consent of the instructor. Students who sell or distribute these materials for any use other than their own are in violation of the University’s Intellectual Property Policy (<http://www.weber.edu/iso/heoa_p2p_compliance.html> ). Violations of the instructors copyright may result in course sanctions and violate the Code of Academic Integrity.

**Subject to Change Statement**

Information contained in the course syllabus, other than the grade policies, may be subject to change with reasonable advance notice, as deemed appropriate by the instructor.

**Readings**:

Text:

1. Schading, B. (2007). A Civilian’s Guide to the U.S. Military. Writer’s Digest Books, Cincinnati, OH. ISBN # 978-1-58297-408-8.
   * This book is available on Amazon.com and at the Bookstore.

Readings on CANVAS by Module:

**Module 1**

1. Sheppard, S.C., Malatras, J.W., & Israel, A.C. (2010). The impact of deployment on U.S. military families. *American Psychologist*, 65, 6, pp. 599-609. Doi: 10.1037/a0020332

Booth, B., Wechsler Segal, M., Bell, D.B., Martin, J.A., Ender, M.G., Rohall, D.E., & Nelson, J. (2007). What we know about army families: 2007 update. Prepared for the Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation Command by Caliber International. <http://www.mwrbrandcentral.com/HOMEPAGE/Graphics/Research/whatweknow2007.pdf>

* Pages 17-21, 29-30, Chapter 2 & 5

1. Whitechurch, G.G., & Constantine, L.L., (1993). Systems Theory. In P.G. Boss, W.J. Doherty, R. LaRossa, W.R., Schumm, & S.K., Steinmetz (Eds.) *Sourcebook of Family Theories and Methods, A Contextual Approach* (pp. 325-352).
2. Boss, P. (2004 ). Ambiguous loss research, theory, and practice: reflections after 9/11. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 66, pp. 551-566.
3. Boss,P. (2007). Ambiguous loss theory: challenges for scholars and practitioners. *Family Relations,* 56, pp. 105-111.
4. Palmer,C. (2008). A Theory of risk and resilience factors in military families. *Military Psychology,* 20, pp. 205-217.
5. Watson Wiens, T., & Boss, P. (2006). Maintaining Family Resiliency Before, During, and After Military Separation. In C.A. Castro, A.B., Adler, & T.W. Britt (Eds.) *Military Life: The Psychology of Serving in Peace and Combat, Vol 3.* (pp. 13-38). Westport, CT: Praeger Security International.

**Module 2**

1. U.S. Army Deployment Support OPREADY Handbook. Part II: The Deployment Cycle. p.7-13.
2. Huebner, A.J., Mancini, J.A., Wilcox, R.M., Grass, S.R., Grass, G.A. (2007) Parental deployment and youth in military families: Exploring uncertainty and ambiguous loss. *Familiy Relations, 56 (2)*, 112-122. Doi: 10.1111/j.1741-3729.2007.00445.
3. Faber, A.J., Willerton, E., Clymer, S.R., MacDermid, S.M., Weiss, H.M. (2008). Ambiguous Absence, Ambiguous Presence: A Qualitative Study of Military Reserve Families in Wartime. *Journal of Family Psychology,* 22 (2), 222-230.
4. Tollefson, T.T. (2008). Supporting spouses during a military deployment. *Family Community Health,* 31 (4), pp. 281-286.
5. Barker, L.H., & Berry, K.D., (2009). Developmental issues impactive military families with young children during single and multiple deployments. *Military Medicine,* 174, pp. 1033-1040.
6. Doyle, M.E., & Peterson, K.A., (2005). Re-entry and reintegration: returning home after combat. *Psychiatric Quarterly,* 76 (4), pp. 361-370. DOI: 10.1007/s11126-005-4972-z
7. Demographics Report Section III and IV (p 73-133 in PDF).
8. Booth, B., Wechsler Segal, M., Bell, D.B., Martin, J.A., Ender, M.G., Rohall, D.E., & Nelson, J. (2007). What we know about army families: 2007 update. Prepared for the Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation Command by Caliber International. <http://www.mwrbrandcentral.com/HOMEPAGE/Graphics/Research/whatweknow2007.pdf>

* Chapter 4

**Module 3**

1. Harrison,J., & Vannest, K.J. (2008). Educators supporting families in times of crisis: military reserve deployments. *Preventing School Failure, 52* (4), pp. 17-23.
2. Lester, P., Peterson, K., Reeves, J., Knauss, L., Glover, D., Magil, C., Duan, N., Saltzman, W., Pynoos, R., Wilt, K., & Beardslee, W., (2010). The long war and parental combat deployments: effects on military children and at home spouses. *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, 49*, 4, pp. 310-320.
3. <http://www.gibill.va.gov/benefits/history_timeline/index.html>
4. Soldier to Student Article
5. Huebner, A.J., & Mancini, J.A. (2008). Supporting youth during parental deployment. *The Prevention Researcher, 15*. [www.tpronline.org](http://www.tpronline.org)
6. Huebner, A.J., Mancini, J.A., Bowen, G.L., Orthner, D.K.. (2009). "Shadowed by war: Building community capacity to support military families." *Family Relations* *58*(2), 216-228. Doi: 10.1111/j.1741-3729.2008.00548.x
7. [www.vets.arizona.edu](http://www.vets.arizona.edu) & http://www.weber.edu/vetaffairs
8. [http://www.operationmilitarykids.org](http://www.operationmilitarykids.org/public/home/aspx)

Paper topics

You must complete 2 of the following paper topics during the semester. You may not repeat the same topic. Your paper should be 5-10 pages and should be double spaced in APA format.

1. Choose a topic that corresponds to one of the course topics and find at least 3 research articles that relate to the topic. Summarize each article and write about the impact on military families and implications for policy. You must answer the following questions:
   1. Who does the article pertain to? A specific branch of the military or all branches? Active duty or Reserve/Guard?
   2. What does the study examine? How do they examine the topic (e.g., survey, interview)? Do they answer the questions that they pose?
   3. What are questions that you have after reading the article? How would you address this topic in a study of your own?
   4. How can the information from each study be used to assist military families?
2. Find a popular media article (e.g., Newsweek, Time, etc.) that discusses an issue that military families face today (or in the recent past, no earlier than 2005). Compare this media article to at least 1 research article that we used in class (or one that you found on your own) in terms of how they address the issue and how the article is presented. You must address the following questions for each article:
   1. Who does the article pertain to? A specific branch of the military or all branches? Active duty or Reserve/Guard?
   2. What is the issue? How do they examine the topic (e.g., survey, interview)? Do they answer the questions that they pose?
   3. What are questions that you have after reading the article? How would you address this topic in a study of your own?
   4. How can the information from each article be used to assist military families?
3. Find a program that targets Military children (such as Operation Military Kids or OMK) and review the program. Evaluate how this program addresses some of the issues that we have discussed during the course. You must address the following questions:
   1. What is the goal or mission of the program? Provide a history of the program.
   2. Who may participate in the program? How many people participate in the program?
   3. What activities are involved and how do they relate to the goals or the program?
   4. How does the program relate to the information that you have learned about military families in this course? Describe at least 2 ways in which the program relates to issues military families face.
4. Find a tv show (e.g., Army Wives) or a movie that deals with issues faced by military families. Provide a summary of the movie or show and discuss how it relates to issues addressed during the course. You should spend NO more than 1 page summarizing the show/movie and the remainder of the paper focused on issues addressed and how it relates to the course material. You must cite at least 1 article from the course readings.
5. If none of these paper topics appeal to you and you have a better idea, you may write a written proposal (no more than 1 page) and submit it to the instructor for approval.

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|  | **Dates** | **Topic** | **Readings** |
| **Module 1** | **Weeks 1-5** | **Introduction, History, and Theory** |  |
|  | Week 1 | Introduction to the course, course outline, study tips, and assignments. Changes and Issues for Military Families | Sheppard, Malatras, & Israel, 2010, Booth, et al., 2007 Chapter 2 |
|  | Week 2 | The Army, The Navy, The Marines, The Air Force | Schading Chapter 2 – 5 |
|  | Week 3 | Commissioned vs. Non-Commissioned Officers |  |
|  | Week 4 | What do we know about Active Duty, Guard & Reserve Military Families? | Booth, et al. 2007 p. 17-21, 29-30; Booth, et al. 2007 Chapter 5 |
|  | Week 5 | Family Systems Theory & Theory of Risk and Resiliency & Ambiguous Loss Theory | Whitechurch & Constantine, 1993; Boss, 2004 & Boss, 2007; Palmer, 2008 & Watson, Wiens, & Boss, 2006 |
|  | End of Week 5 | **Exam 1** |  |
| **Module 2** | **Weeks 6-10** | **Deployment, Reunification, Active Duty and Reserve Families** |  |
|  | Week 6 | Deployment | Part II OPREADY Handbook, 2009 Demographics Report Section II (p 69-71 in pdf) & Huebner, 2007 |
|  | Week 7 | Deployment and Families | Faber, 2008 & Tollefson, 2008 |
|  | Week 8 | Reunification and Redeployment | Barker & Berry, 2009 & Doyle & Peterson, 2005 |
|  | Week 9 |  |  |
|  | Week 10 | Active Duty and Reserve Families | Demographic Report Section III and IV (p. 73-133 in pdf) & Booth et al., 2007 Chapter 4 |
|  | End of Week 10 | **Exam 2** | Paper 1 due |
| **Module 3** | **Week 11-15** | **Family Support, Education and Community Involvement** |  |
|  | Week 11 | Family Support | Harrison, 2008 & Lester, 2010 |
|  | Week 12 | GI Bill | <http://www.gibill.va.gov/post-911/history-timeline/> |
|  | week 13 | Educating Veterans Post War | From Soldier to Student Article |
|  | week 14 | Community Supports | Huebner 2008 & Huebner 2009 |
|  | week 15 | Veteran Programs in Communities | [www.vets.arizona.edu](http://www.vets.arizona.edu), <http://www.weber.edu/vetaffairs> , <http://www.operationmilitarykids.org/public/home.aspx> |
|  | Finals Week | **Exam 3** | Paper 2 Due |