

**WILMINGTON UNIVERSITY**  
**COLLEGE OF SOCIAL & BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES**  
**BASIC COURSE INFORMATION**

**COURSE TITLE:** Families and Crisis

**COURSE NUMBER:** PSY 453

**I. COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course will define what is meant by family crisis, identify some of the major theoretical frameworks for studying families and crisis, consider major lifestyle transitions, and explore the major catastrophic crises families face. It will also examine resources and strengths that enable families to deal with crisis more adequately.

**II. MAJOR INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS:**

**GOAL A:**

Become familiar with theories and research methods in the fields of family crisis and resilience.

**Learning Outcomes:** The student will:

- A-1 Examine the major theoretical frameworks for studying families in crisis.
- A-2 Explain what is meant by situational stressors, the potential crises involved in this area, and the issues to be addressed at the personal and social levels for more effective functioning.
- A-3 Explain methodologies, assessment procedures, and data analytic issues in the study of family stress and coping.

**Goal B:**

Understand the major catastrophic crises families face.

**Learning Outcomes:** The student will:

- B-1 Define what is meant by family crisis.
- B-2 Analyze commonly studied stressors facing adults and children in families, historically and today.
- B-3 Describe stages of the family life cycle and crises associated with those stages.

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- B-4 Recognize unique elements of crises experienced by culturally diverse families.
- B-5 Appreciate the importance of multiple layers of influence on families and their stress and coping processes.
- B-6 Examine the issues and implications of family crisis in their own and other's lives.

**Goal C:**

Understand resources to help families cope with crisis.

**Learning Outcomes:** The student will:

- C-1 Examine the resources and strengths that enable some families to weather crises better than other families.
- C-2 Describe the roles that gender, culture, and socioeconomics play in coping with trauma and stress.
- C-3 Describe how families respond to and manage stress across situations and over time.
- C-4 Explore community resources available to families in crisis.

**Goal D:**

Become knowledgeable about how to work with families who have experienced a crisis.

**Learning Outcomes:** The student will:

- D-1 Identify issues facing professionals who work with families in crisis.
- D-2 Identify effective methods/different interventions employed by professionals and clinicians to help families cope with crisis.
- D-3 Analyze how to foster resilience in family systems in their local community.

**Goal E:**

Demonstrate appropriate written and oral communication skills.

**Learning Outcomes:** The student will:

- E-1 Write clearly, concisely, and appropriately using correct English grammar, punctuation, usage, mechanics, sentence structure, and vocabulary.
- E-2 Use appropriate APA format for scholarly writings.
- E-3 Speak with confidence, clarity, and conciseness.

E-4 Research, prepare, and deliver professional presentations.