

**WILMINGTON UNIVERSITY**  
**COLLEGE OF SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES**  
**COURSE SYLLABUS**

**COURSE TITLE:** Step-Parenting & Blended Families

**COURSE NUMBER:** SOC 469

*Prerequisite(s): PSY 101 or SOC 101*

**FACULTY CONTACT INFORMATION:**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course will focus on understanding complex kinship relationships that develop through stepparenting and blended families. The course will include a discussion of various forms of parent-child relationships, parenting roles and authority as it relates to being a step-parent, understanding different variations and challenges of blended families, common issues among children in blended families, and various topics such as discipline, roles, communication, managing emotions, and parenting styles in blended families.

**RATIONALE:**

Blended families have become more common in society. Understanding the special needs and demands of creating successful blended families has become more important in strengthening families overall. Children raised in strong families are better prepared for success in life and in their relationships.

**I. COURSE OBJECTIVES**

**GOAL A:** Evaluate complex kinship relationships in blended families.

Learning Outcomes: The student will:

- A-1** Explain various kinds of kinship relationships in blended families
- A-2** Describe different types of custody patterns
- A-3** Discuss the possible relationship difficulties that could occur in blended families
- A-4** Analyze the social-psychological process of forming a new family
- A-5** Describe how former spouse/partner relationships affect blended families
- A-6** Discuss the impacts of divorce on new family formation

**GOAL B:** Describe various forms of parent-child relationships in the context of blended families.

Learning Outcomes: The student will:

- B-1** Assess relationships between custodial parents and child(ren)
- B-2** Assess relationships between non-custodial parent and child(ren)
- B-3** Explain the complications of step-father step-children relations
- B-4** Explain the complications of step-mother step-children relations

- B-5** Explain the complications of step-sibling and half-sibling relationships
- B-6** Explore co-parenting in new family formation

**GOAL C:** Analyze authority within parenting and step-parenting roles.

Learning Outcomes: The student will:

- C-1** Explore issues of favoritism between children, parents, and step-parents
- C-2** Describe the role of step-parents in family bonding, discipline, and celebration
- C-3** Explore potential areas of family conflict, including the role of parents outside of the blended family
- C-4** Evaluate the role of parental authority in discipline
- C-5** Outline parental roles related to managing children and setting family behavior expectations

**GOAL D:** Recognize shared concerns and potential family issues in blended families.

Learning Outcomes: The student will:

- D-1** Identify...