COURSE JUSTIFICATION
FAMILY RESOURCES 445: FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION METHODOLOGY

1. What is the purpose and structure of this course?

In FamR445, students prepare for careers as family life educators and complete requirements for the Family Life Education certification (CFLE). Family life educators conduct workshops and family sessions on effective parenting, marital communication, anger management, conflict resolution and prevention of substance abuse. Students read contemporary materials, hear lectures, attend in-class workshops by community professionals and plan and implement hands-on projects. They convert knowledge they have gained in previous courses concerning 8 Family Life Education substance areas into parent and child activities. In addition, they fulfill two CFLE requirements: Human Sexuality and Family Life Education Methodology.

Students who sign up for Service Learning work in addition to the core aspects of the course, volunteer their services at a Family Education Center’s family meetings conducted on campus two times a month. Each Service Learning student will volunteer from 30-60 hours per semester. At their volunteer site, students learn ways to educate parents and work with small groups of children to encourage democratic family life. They learn that to contribute and volunteer are personally beneficial.

2. Why is this course being requested?

In 2000, the Family Resources program earned approval status from the National Council on Family Relations (NCFR) to offer the coursework portion of the Family Life Education Certification (CFLE). One condition of this approval was that a formal course in Family Life Education Methodology be instituted in the program by 2004. (Up to this date, NCFR approved us to teach this course as a 491: Topics in Family Development: Family Life Education Methodology). We are now submitting this request to fulfill our agreement and to keep our NCFR approved status.

If the request is approved, we will maintain our FLE accreditation. If the request is not approved we will need to renegotiate our status with NCFR and may lose our approved status. The provisional certification in Family Life Education is useful to our students and as a recruitment and grant-receipt tool. It signals approval of our courses by the major professional association in family studies in the country.

FamR 445 also fills a need that our students need more systematic training in helping skills before they do human services field work. The helping skills targeted in this course are listed, below.
FamR 445 systematically exposes students to the solution-focused, strengths based, democratic form of parent education, based in Adlerian psychology and used in almost every parent education program (7 of the 9) used in the United States. This course fills the need of providing focused and applicable training.

The course also introduces Service Learning into the program and qualifies faculty and administrators to apply for Service Learning and experiential learning funds.

[The specific human services skills, knowledge and experience that students are expected to acquire by the end of the semester include how to:

- Prepare themselves for a helping profession (including how to apply for graduate training);
- Understand children's motives in relation to four major “misguided goals”;
- Develop and use self-knowledge in human service work and in their own families;
- Build a democratic family and teach others how to do so;
- Encourage, support and cooperate with their partners and show others how to do the same;
- Encourage, support and cooperate with their children and show others how to do the same;
- Guide and discipline children, both in homes and at school;
- Coordinate family members through family council meetings and show parents and children how to conduct such meetings;
- Teach parents democratic parenting methods;
- Teach children democratic family structures and processes;
- Develop a child curriculum in concepts such as: developing social interest, belonging through contributing, respecting others, active listening, using I messages, win-win conflict resolution, organizing family meetings, and other concepts;
- Write lesson plans, produce materials and conduct these lessons (using story reading and discussion; dramatic enactments; dramatic free play, expressive arts and crafts and large group cooperative play) with children in the Family Education Center;
- Write short parent-education lectures, prepare the Power Point presentations and help professionals conduct these sessions;
- Design child-friendly, healthy, light meals and desserts, shop for these, manage money, prepare and serve these meals at the Family Education Center and provide recipes and menus to parents;
- Recruit parents, organize and set up for large parent education meetings;

3. How will the content be organized?}
The course will follow the topic outline of the main textbook, Bredehoft & Walcheski (2003). **Family Life Education: Integrating Theory and Practice.** The authors demonstrate how information in the 10 substance areas of the Family Life Education Certificate are applied to design and conduct human services in various social service programs. Students will learn how to convey useful information in these ten areas to parents and children through education and counseling:

- Families in Society
- Internal Dynamics of Families
- Human Growth and Development
- Human Sexuality
- Interpersonal Relationships
- Family resource management
- Parent Education and Guidance
- Family, Law and Public Policy
- Ethics and
- Family Life Education Methodology

Each topic will be supplemented with readings from the second textbook, Watts & Carlson (1999), *Interventions and Strategies in Counseling and Psychotherapy.* These authors specify how the strengths-based, solution-focused, democratic approach to family education is implemented in parent education, open-form parent counseling, couples therapy, play therapy and sex education.

Students will apply this information by completing four hands-on learning projects. They will design parent education lessons and materials and help professionals teach these. They will design group activities on democratic family life for children, write lesson plans, produce materials and help Service Learning Students implement these lessons.

Service Learning Students will implement projects in their volunteer work at the Family Education Center. They will run children’s activity groups and learn and do research on how professionals conduct parent education sessions. They will receive group supervision and plan each week in an extra hour of class.

4. What other courses at UHM closely parallel the proposed course and in what way will the latter make a distinct contribution?

FamR445 resembles SPEECH 490: “Helping Relationships”, course, in that it deals with “the application of personal and interpersonal elements affecting communication of human service professionals.” However, it goes far beyond these topics in its content and applications.
It resembles Social Work 391: Junior Practicum, in its applied focus. However, FamR 445 focuses on Family Life Education applications and on prevention of problems, while Social Work applications focus on case management work and intervention into families once problems already occur. Also, almost all Social Work courses are restricted to Social Work majors and thus are unavailable to our students.

Similarly, FamR 445 resembles some Counseling and Guidance courses, but those are at the graduate level, and focus on school counseling rather than family preventive services.

FamR 445, its Service Learning opportunities and professional associations would be open to students from all majors, since cross-departmental diversity is valued and pursued by our program.

5. Where does the proposed course fit into the current and future curriculum?

FamR 445 should be an intermediate, upper division course. Students should take this course after they have taken FamR 230: Human Development; FamR 340: Family Development; FamR 341: Parenting and FamR 442: Marriage Development. They would also benefit from having taken at least one other human development course (e.g., Infancy/toddler hood; Childhood; or Adolescence).

Students should take FamR 445 before they take FamR 492: Internship and FamR 482W: Senior Seminar, and the course should be required for students pursuing human services careers, taken BEFORE their internship experience in those fields.

6. Why is the number of credits and level justified? Explain the prerequisites and the absence thereof.

Service Learning courses (e.g., Ethnic Studies 381) provide variable numbers of credits depending on the number of extra classroom hours and volunteer service hours that students put in per week. A basic 3 credits are assigned to the course due to the fact that 150 minutes of classroom-based, lecture, demonstration, discussion and group work are required of the students per week.

In addition, Service Learning students will earn an additional 2-3 credits. These credits are based on the formula specified in the instructions in this document for number of credits in relation to
number of hours per week of classroom instruction or of lab/experiential instruction. Service Learning students must attend an additional hour of classroom-based service instruction, planning and supervision, held right after the regular class. (50 minutes= one additional credit). They must also volunteer an average of 2.5 to 5 extra hours per week in human services volunteer work at the Family Education Center.

Students volunteering an average 2.5 hours (150 minutes) per week will receive one additional credit (for a total of 5 credits for the course). Students volunteering 5 extra hours per week at the Family Education Center (300 minutes) per week will receive a total of 6 credits for the course: 3 for the core portion of the course; 1 for the one-hour per week service learning instruction and two for the additional 300 minutes of applied, supervised work.

Recommended prior or concurrent courses for this course are FamR 341: Parenting or FamR 442: Marriage Development. Knowledge and skills from these courses assure that students have adequate grounding in theories of family structures, dynamics and either parent-child or couples relationships for this more advanced and applied family relationship work.

7. How will the course assist students to achieve the critical skills and competencies expected of the CTAHR graduates?

Written Communication: students will write reports, parent lectures, child lessons, clinical experience journals, systematic observations and primary research reports. Writing Intensive status will be requested.

Oral Communications: Service Learning students will prepare oral presentations for parents and children; all students will present their 4 projects orally and with Power Point as well.

Analytical/Problem Solving Skills: students are faced with the real life problems as they design and carry out children’s group activities, parent education sessions and as they plan, recruit for and organize large parent meetings, including providing a buffet meal. They exercise clinical problem solving when they determine children’s motives in misguided behavior and when they evaluate intervention possibilities.

Personal characteristics: students will be working with children, parents, and community professionals and among themselves. Families and professionals outside their department and peer group
will evaluate their personal characteristics. They will need to exhibit professional characteristics.

**Human relations skills:** Students will need to work in groups to achieve real world products under typical time pressures. They will need to demonstrate professional attitudes, sensitivity to others, etiquette, team work and non-discriminatory behavior to succeed in this service learning aspect of the course.

**Business management skills** will be directly tapped as service-learning students take on the responsibility of planning, managing money, shopping for, preparing and serving child-friendly and healthy buffet meals at the Family Education Center. Service learning students will also balance budgets in purchasing supplies and equipment for Family Education Center activities.

**Real World Experience:** Work at the Family Education Center is real world work, similar to many human services positions. Students will work side by side with counseling professionals. They will observe how family educators, counselors and therapists work with families; they will work directly with children; and they will receive direct supervision on their work with children each week.

**Computer Skills.** Students will use word processing applications for reports and other communications; spreadsheet applications for budgets and planning; graphics applications for publicity, recruitment and activities; Internet and SPSS applications for research and evaluation projects.

**Global Perspective.** Service learning students will be working with children and parents from varying cultures and will be modifying procedures and behaviors to fit cultural needs. Researchers will involve Service Learning students in evaluations of cultural resonance of these methods to families from different cultural groups who attend the meetings.

8. **How will students be evaluated?**

Students will be evaluated on the core content of lectures, readings and professional workshop demonstrations by taking a mid-term and final comprehensive test. They will produce four applied projects in groups of 3 students. These will be evaluated for their professional effectiveness and accuracy. They will produce a clinical experiences log and summary, which will be graded as a written report.
The Service Learning students will be monitored in their volunteer work and supervised each week by the instructor and other professionals from the Family Education Center. Their major supervisor will evaluate them at the mid point and end of the semester. The children and parents they serve will be asked to fill in an evaluation of their student group leaders at the end of the semester.

Further details about evaluation and grading are provided in the course description.

9. **What are the minimum qualifications for teaching this course? Is a qualified instructor now available?**

   Minimum qualifications for teaching this course would be a Masters degree in Child and Family Studies, Human Development, Social Work, Education, Psychology or related field; experience in conducting parent-education and family life workshops; and experience working with parents and youth. Desired qualifications are Family Life Education Certification and/or professional licensure in counseling, social work, psychology, education or a related field.

10. **How will the course be financed, assuming no further cutbacks?**

    Any funds required beyond the normal departmental operating funds will be secured with Service Learning or experiential learning grants (e.g., for professional workshops or supervision). If grant funds are not available the course will be modified accordingly, e.g., the provision of supervision and workshops by community professionals will be reduced.

11. **Has the course been offered before? Is there a demand for it?**

    The course was offered as a 491: Topics in Family Development: Family Life Education Methodology. My understanding was that 25-30 students signed up for a version of this course that had been developed by a community instructor who had not yet taught for the department. My understanding was that a number of students attended the first classes, but then dropped the course.

    There are many indications that there is a demand for more hands-on applications of Family Resources skills, including the interest shown in this earlier course offering. Many FamR students say they want to pursue counseling and other human services degrees. The course is recommended for students planning to do human services work for their internships.
12. Is the course cross-listed with another department? No.