



Spring 2026 Syllabus

## HDFS 2313–421: Courtship and Marriage

### Instructor Information

Fatmanur Cifci

[Fatmanur.Cifci@unt.edu](mailto:Fatmanur.Cifci@unt.edu)

Matthews Hall 316 or via Zoom (<https://unt.zoom.us/j/9727685891>)

**Office Hours:** Mondays 3–4:30 pm; Thursdays 1–3 pm (by appointment)

**Phone Number:** 940–565–2185

### Course Description, Structure, and Objectives

**Course Description:** The study of dating, courtship, and marriage relationships.

**Objectives for courses in the UNT Language, Philosophy, and Culture Core Curriculum:**

1. To develop critical thinking skills,
2. To develop communication skills,
3. To develop personal responsibility,
4. To develop social responsibility.

**Course Prerequisites:** This is a 2000–level course and has no prerequisites.

**Course Format:** The course will be 100% distance education and administered through the Canvas Learn system at UNT and will include 14 modules over 16 weeks. Content will primarily be communicated from textbook readings and online materials. The online content provides students with considerable flexibility in how they approach and process the material. Students can review content at any point and as often as desired. The overall goal of the provided material is to replicate the presentation in the traditional classroom. Students will explore topics such as relationship conflict, communication, power dynamics, family structures, and more. As a student in this course, the goal is for you to leave the class with healthy relationship skills such as appropriate conflict management, communication, safe dating practices, and knowledge on family dynamics.

## Required/Recommended Materials

### Required Textbook:

Stinnett, N., Stinnett, N., & DeGenova, M., Rice, F. (2017). *Intimate relationships, marriages, and families* (9<sup>th</sup> ed.). Oxford University Press.

**Technology requirements for courses with digital materials:** This course has digital components. To fully participate in this class, students will need internet access to reference content on the Canvas Learning Management System. If circumstances change, you will be informed of other technical needs to access course content. Information on how to be successful in a digital learning environment can be found at Learn Anywhere (<https://online.unt.edu/learn>).

### Creating an Inclusive Learning Environment

I value the many perspectives students bring to our campus. Please work with me to create a classroom culture of open communication, mutual respect, and inclusion. All discussions should be respectful and civil. Although disagreements and debates are encouraged, personal attacks are unacceptable. Together, we can ensure a safe and welcoming classroom for all. If you ever feel like this is not the case, please stop by my office and let me know. We will discuss our classroom's habits of engagement and I also encourage you to review UNT's student code of conduct so that we can all start with the same baseline civility understanding ([Code of Student Conduct](#)) (<https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct>)

### How to Communicate with Your Instructor

Please contact me if you have any questions about the course. The best way to do this is to send me a message through the Canvas inbox tool. You can also email me via campus email account: [Fatmanur.Cifci@unt.edu](mailto:Fatmanur.Cifci@unt.edu). My goal is to respond to messages within 15 hours, Monday through Friday. However, if you do not receive a response back within the 48-hour time frame between Monday and Friday, resend the message as it may have gotten lost in cyberspace. I usually reply to emails within 24 hours during the weekend. During busy times, my inbox becomes rather full, so if you contact me and do not receive a response within two business days, please send a follow up email. A gentle nudge is always appreciated.

### Rules of Engagement

Rules of engagement refer to the way students are expected to interact with each other and with their instructors. Here are some general guidelines:

- While the freedom to express yourself is a fundamental human right, any communication that utilizes cruel and derogatory language on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected under applicable federal or state law will not be tolerated.

- Treat your instructor and classmates with respect in any communication online or face-to-face, even when their opinion differs from your own.
- Ask for and use the correct name and pronouns for your instructor and classmates.
- Speak from personal experiences. Use “I” statements to share thoughts and feelings. Try not to speak on behalf of groups or other individuals’ experiences.
- Use your critical thinking skills to challenge other people’s ideas, instead of attacking individuals.
- Avoid using all caps while communicating digitally. This may be interpreted as “YELLING!”
- Be cautious when using humor or sarcasm in emails or discussion posts as tone can be difficult to interpret digitally.
- Avoid using “text-talk” unless explicitly permitted by your instructor.
- Proofread and fact-check your sources.
- Keep in mind that online posts can be permanent, so think first before you type.

See these [Engagement Guidelines](https://clear.unt.edu/online-communication-tips) (<https://clear.unt.edu/online-communication-tips>) for more information.

### Technical Assistance

Part of working in the online environment involves dealing with the inconveniences and frustration that can arise when technology breaks down or does not perform as expected. Here at UNT we have a Student Help Desk that you can contact for help with Canvas or other technology issues.

**UIT Help Desk:** [UIT Student Help Desk site](http://www.unt.edu/helpdesk/index.htm) (<http://www.unt.edu/helpdesk/index.htm>)

**Email:** [helpdesk@unt.edu](mailto:helpdesk@unt.edu)

**Phone:** 940-565-2324

**In Person:** Sage Hall, Room 130

**Walk-In Availability:** 8am–9pm

**Telephone Availability:**

- Sunday: noon–midnight
- Monday–Thursday: 8am–midnight
- Friday: 8am–8pm
- Saturday: 9am–5pm

**Laptop Checkout:** 8am–7pm

For additional support, visit [Canvas Technical Help](#)

### Syllabus Change Policy

The instructor reserves the right to make changes to the course schedule to maintain the best possible learning environment. However, if changes are made, students will be notified via email and an announcement will be posted on Canvas under the “Announcements” tab.

### Attendance Policy

This course takes place 100% online. All interactions will take place in Canvas. Students are expected to check Canvas regularly for course updates and to complete all coursework on Canvas by the designed due dates listed online.

### Assessing Your Work

1. Introduction Discussion board	10 points
2. Discussion boards: 5 @ 10 points each	50 points
3. Midterm	100 points
4. Final exam	100 points
5. Pecha Kucha Presentation	100 points
6. Pecha Kucha Reflection	100 points
7. ARTS	100 points
<b>Total points</b>	<b>560 points</b>

The following grading scale will be used:

504–560= A, 503–448, =B, 447–392=C, 391–336= D, < 336= F

**\*\*No late work will be accepted.**

All initial discussion board posts are due by Wednesdays, and peer replies are due by Fridays.  
All the other assignments are due by Sundays.

These due dates are specified for you to split your work throughout the week.

All work turned in after the deadline will receive a grade of zero unless the student has a [university-excused absence](#) and provides documentation **within 48 hours** of the missed deadline.

Course Requirements/Schedule			
Week	Topic & Assignments & Due Dates	Chapters	Possible Points
<b>Week 1</b> 1/12 – 1/18	<b>Intro to Relationships</b>	<b>Chapter 1</b>	
	<i>Intro posts</i> Initial post due Wed. 1/14 @ 11:59 PM Peer post due by Fri 1/16 @ 11:59 PM	<i>In Canvas</i>	10 pts
<b>Week 2</b> 1/19 – 1/25	<b>Singlehood</b>	<b>Chapter 3</b>	
	<i>Discussion 1</i> Initial post due Wed. 1/21 @ 11:59 PM Peer post due by Fri 1/23 @ 11:59 PM	<i>In Canvas</i>	10 pts
	<i>PK topics sign off</i> 1/25 @ 11:59 PM	<i>In Canvas</i>	
<b>Week 3</b> 1/26 – 2/1	<b>Attraction and Attachment</b>	<b>Chapters 4 &amp; 5</b>	
	<i>ART 1</i> 2/1 @11:59 PM	<i>In Canvas</i>	20 pts
<b>Week 4</b> 2/2 – 2/8	<b>Defining Love</b>	<b>Chapters 5 &amp; 6</b>	
	<i>Discussion 2</i> Initial post due Wed. 2/4 @ 11:59 PM Peer post due by Fri 2/6 @ 11:59 PM	<i>In Canvas</i>	10 pts
<b>Week 5</b> 2/9 – 2/15	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Chapter 2</b>	
	<i>ART 2</i> 2/15 @11:59 PM	<i>In Canvas</i>	20 pts
<b>Week 6</b> 2/16 – 2/22	<b>Power and Communication Sexual Relationships</b>	<b>Chapters 9 &amp; 10</b>	
	<i>Discussion 3</i> Initial post due Wed. 2/18 @ 11:59 PM Peer post due by Fri 2/20 @ 11:59 PM	<i>In Canvas</i>	10 pts
	<i>ART 3</i> 2/22 @11:59 PM	<i>In Canvas</i>	20 pts
<b>Week 7</b> 2/23 – 3/1	<b>Family Planning</b>	<b>Chapter 11</b>	
	<i>PK Presentation</i> 3/1 @11:59 PM	<i>In Canvas</i>	100 pts

<b>Week 8</b> 3/2 – 3/8	<i>Midterm Exam</i>	<i>All material covered</i>	100 pts
<b>THANKSGIVING BREAK (9–15 MARCH)</b>			
<b>Week 9</b> 3/16 – 3/22	<b>Pregnancy and Childbirth</b>	<b>Chapter 12</b>	
	<i>Discussion 4</i> Initial post due Wed. 3/18 @ 11:59 PM Peer post due by Fri 3/20 @ 11:59 PM	<i>In Canvas</i>	10 pts
<b>Week 10</b> 3/23 – 3/29	<b>LGBT Families and P–C Relationships</b>	<b>Chapters 7 &amp; 13</b>	
	<i>PK Reflection</i> 3/29 @11:59 PM	<i>In Canvas</i>	100 pts
<b>Week 11</b> 3/30 – 4/5	<b>Work and Family</b>	<b>Chapter 8</b>	
	<i>Discussion 5</i> Initial post due Wed. 4/1 @ 11:59 PM Peer post due by Fri 4/3 @ 11:59 PM	<i>In Canvas</i>	10 pts
<b>Week 12</b> 4/6 – 4/12	<b>Conflict and Violence</b>	<b>Chapter 15</b>	
<b>Week 13</b> 4/13 – 4/19	<b>Divorce and Repair</b>	<b>Chapters 16 &amp; 17</b>	
	<i>ART 4</i> 4/19 @11:59 PM	<i>In Canvas</i>	20 pts
<b>Week 14</b> 4/20 – 4/26	<b>Final Exam Preparation</b>		
	<i>ART 5</i> 4/26 @11:59 PM	<i>In Canvas</i>	20 pts
<b>Week 15</b> 4/27 – 5/3	<i>Final Exam</i>	<i>All chapters since midterm</i>	100 pts

*Students will be notified by Eagle Alert if there is a campus closing that will impact a class and the above calendar is subject to change. Please review the following pdf for more information: [Emergency Notifications and Procedures Policy \(PDF\)](#).*

### Discussions (60 pts)

We will have 6 discussion boards (each 10 pts), including introduction posts, in class which you will be required to engage in. The discussions are a way for you to interact with your peers in a manner that allows you to grow and stretch your thinking. To be successful, a few items need to be included in your discussion First and foremost, you must relate your discussion back to your readings. This is why it is extremely important to read the material.

Once you are ready to participate:

- Please reply to the prompt question and **respond to at least one other participant's posts.**
- The original post requires a **minimum of 200 words** in length and all responses to peers should be at least 100 words.
- **Go beyond "I agree with you,"** to relating their posts to the course material.
- **Grammatical error-free writing** is required.
- **You must cite the course materials in your DB posts and include BOTH in-text citations and references list.**
- You will not be able to see others' posts until you reply to the prompt.
- **Initial posts to discussion boards are due on Wednesdays and replies are due on Fridays.**

Please pay attention to due dates around initial post times and response to peers as these dates differ. The dates for participation can be found below in the course syllabus. You must participate within the assigned dates to earn credit. Discussions cannot be made up after the closing date. Late postings for discussions will not earn any credits (i.e., posting after the assigned dates; for example, initial post after 1/21 or peer reply after 1/23 for discussion #1). The bottom line is that discussions cannot be made up later.

**Dates assigned for each discussion:**

Discussion question #Introduction (initial post due: 1/14; peer reply due: 1/16)

Discussion question #1 (initial post due: 1/21; peer reply due: 1/23)

Discussion question #2 (initial post due: 2/4; peer reply due: 2/6)

Discussion question #3 (initial post due: 2/18; peer reply due: 2/20)

Discussion question #4 (initial post due: 3/18; peer reply due: 3/20)

Discussion question #5 (initial post due: 4/1; peer reply due: 4/3)

**Pecha Kucha Presentation (100 pts)**

Each student will examine varying cultural/religious beliefs and customs for dating, courtship, marriage, and family life for a group/location. For this assignment, each student will create a presentation containing a minimum of 15 slides but no more than 20 slides, each set at 20 seconds. More information and a grading rubric will be posted on Blackboard. The Pecha Kucha presentation is due Sunday, March 1<sup>st</sup> at 11:59 pm.

You need to upload your presentation as a **Microsoft PowerPoint**. Do not use Google Slides. For PK presentations, you must make an audio record yourself over the PowerPoint presentation. You do not have to show yourself if you record yourself in a video.

**Pucha Kucha Reflection (100 pts)**

After completing your presentation, you will be required to view a minimum of FIVE recorded presentations posted on the class PK discussion board and write a 3–4 page reflection paper. The Pecha Kucha reflection is due Sunday, March 29<sup>th</sup> at 11:59 pm.

### Exams (200 pts)

You will be completing two exams this semester (a midterm and a final). The first will take place during mid-term week. The second will take place during your final exam time. These exams will be comprised of multiple choice or true/false questions and will cover material read in your textbook. The second exam will NOT be comprehensive. Your exams will be online and open book. You are expected to take each test with no outside help other than your text and accompanying lecture materials. Exams will be time (2 minutes per question). This is sufficient time to respond thoughtfully and to check your answers. It is highly recommended that you study and be prepared beforehand since you will not have time to look up each item during the actual exam. You may NOT copy any test items or look at any copied test items from this course: Doing so is an honor code violation.

### ARTS (100 pts)

You will be completing 5 ART activities, (each 20 pts) and there will be fun activities like true false questions, open-ended questions, survey questionnaires, games, art pictures, and music selections that you must submit before the due dates. For ART 1, you must have TWO completed questionnaires attached with this activity, so please note two separate sets of answers for you and for whom you ask the questionnaires.

## University and Classroom Policies

### Standards for Academic Integrity

Every student in my class can improve by doing their own work and trying their hardest with access to appropriate resources. Students who use other people's work without citations will be violating UNT's Academic Integrity Policy. Please read and follow this important set of [guidelines for your academic success](https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-003) (<https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-003>). If you have questions about this, or any UNT policy, please email me or come discuss this with me during my office hours.

Students caught cheating or plagiarizing will receive a "0" for that particular assignment or exam [or specify alternative sanction, such as course failure]. Additionally, the incident will be reported to the Dean of Students, who may impose further penalty.

According to the UNT catalog, the term "cheating" includes, but is not limited to:

- a) use of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, or examinations;
- b) dependence upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments;
- c) the acquisition, without permission, of tests or other academic material belonging to a faculty or staff member of the university;
- d) dual submission of a paper or project, or resubmission of a paper or project to a different class without express permission from the instructor(s); or
- e) any other act designed to give a student an unfair advantage.



The term "plagiarism" includes but is not limited to:

a. the knowing or negligent use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment; and b. the knowing or negligent unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.

Please review [Academic Integrity Policy \(PDF\)](#)

### **Acceptable Student Behavior**

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The university's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at <http://deanofstudents.unt.edu>.

### **Prohibition of Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation (Policy 16.004)**

The University of North Texas (UNT) prohibits discrimination and harassment because of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected under applicable federal or state law in its application and admission processes; educational programs and activities; employment policies, procedures, and processes; and university facilities. The University takes active measures to prevent such conduct and investigates and takes remedial action when appropriate.

### **ADA Statement**

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at <http://disability.unt.edu>. You may also contact them by phone at (940) 565-4323.

### **Retention of Student Records**

Student records pertaining to this course are maintained in a secure location by the instructor of record. All records such as exams, answer sheets (with keys), and written papers submitted during the duration of the course are kept for at least one calendar year after course

completion. Course work completed via the Canvas online system, including grading information and comments, is also stored in a safe electronic environment for one year. You have a right to view your individual record; however, information about your records will not be divulged to other individuals without the proper written consent. You are encouraged to review the Public Information Policy and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) laws and the university's policy in accordance with those mandates at the following link:

<http://essc.unt.edu/registrar/ferpa.html>

### **Emergency Notification & Procedures**

UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify students with critical information in the event of an emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). In the event of a university closure, please refer to Canvas for contingency plans for covering course materials.

### **Access to Information – Eagle Connect**

Students' access point for business and academic services at UNT is located at: [my.unt.edu](http://my.unt.edu). All official communication from the University will be delivered to a student's Eagle Connect account. For more information, please visit the website that explains Eagle Connect and how to forward e-mail [Eagle Connect](https://it.unt.edu/eagleconnect) (<https://it.unt.edu/eagleconnect>).

### **Sexual Assault Prevention**

UNT is committed to providing a safe learning environment free of all forms of sexual misconduct, including sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. Federal laws (Title IX and the Violence Against Women Act) and UNT policies prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex, and therefore prohibit sexual misconduct. If you or someone you know is experiencing sexual harassment, relationship violence, stalking, and/or sexual assault, there are campus resources available to provide support and assistance. UNT's Survivor Advocates can assist a student who has been impacted by violence by filing protective orders, completing crime victim's compensation applications, contacting professors for absences related to an assault, working with housing to facilitate a room change where appropriate, and connecting students to other resources available both on and off campus. The Survivor Advocates can be reached at [SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu](mailto:SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu) or by calling the Dean of Students Office at 940-565- 2648. Additionally, alleged sexual misconduct can be non-confidentially reported to the Title IX Coordinator at [oeo@unt.edu](mailto:oeo@unt.edu) or at (940) 565 2759.

### **Important Notice for F-1 Students taking Distance Education Courses**

#### **Federal Regulation**

To read detailed Immigration and Customs Enforcement regulations for F-1 students taking online courses, please go to the [Electronic Code of Federal Regulations website](http://www.ecfr.gov/) (<http://www.ecfr.gov/>). The specific portion concerning distance education courses is located at Title 8 CFR 214.2 Paragraph (f)(6)(i)(G).

The paragraph reads:

(G) For F-1 students enrolled in classes for credit or classroom hours, no more than the equivalent of one class or three credits per session, term, semester, trimester, or quarter may be counted toward the full course of study requirement if the class is taken online or through distance education and does not require the student's physical attendance for classes, examination or other purposes integral to completion of the class. An online or distance education course is a course that is offered principally through the use of television, audio, or computer transmission, including open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, or satellite, audio conferencing, or computer conferencing. If the F-1 student's course of study is in a language study program, no online or distance education classes may be considered to count toward a student's full course of study requirement.

### SPOT Course Evaluation

Student feedback is important and an essential part of participation in this course. SPOT is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT. This short survey will be made available at the end of the semester to provide you with an opportunity to evaluate how this course is taught.