Course Title:
Current Problems in Human Relations

Course Number:
HR 5013-490

Course Description:
Over the course of the semester, we will review and discuss numerous current problems relevant to human relations (including both a domestic as well as an international focus). We will examine each topic in order to illuminate the complexity and contradictions inherent in each issue. In addition, we will jointly review a book, Nickel & dimed, that is intended to provide you with applied insight into some of the topics that we will be covering.

Course Dates:
January 2 – April 30, 2014
Last day to enroll or drop without penalty: December 4, 2013

Site Director:
This is a three-credit hour online course. Please see your local Site Director or e-mail our online site coordinator at aponline@ou.edu

Professor Contact Information:
Course Professor: Shannon Bert, Ph.D.
Mailing Address: Department of Human Relations
601 Elm Ave
PHSC 706
Norman, OK 73019
Telephone Number: (405) 325-1766
Fax Number: (405) 209-2555
E-mail Address: Bert@ou.edu
Virtual Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday 9:30 – 12:30 PM CST
Professor availability: The professor will be available via e-mail to students during the above listed Virtual Office Hours and other methods by arrangement.

Textbook(s) and Instructional Materials:
Student materials are available at the OU Follett Bookstore located at 1185 Asp Avenue; Norman, OK.
Orders can be placed online at www.oklahoma.bkstr.com. Faxed orders may be placed 24 hours a day at (405) 325-7770. Representatives are available by phone at (405) 325-3511 or (800) 522-0772 (toll-free) or E-mail at 0831mgr@fheg.follett.com from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Thursday; 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Friday; and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday (CST). Summer hours: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday (CST). (Text prices are available online.)


4. Materials posted on the OU Desire to Learn (D2L) system: Access D2L at http://learn.ou.edu; enter your OU NetID (4+4) and password, and select course to access material. Please contact your local Site Director if you require assistance.

You can find an excellent resource on APA style and general academic writing at Purdue University’s Owl website located at http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/

Note: Follett is the Advanced Programs contractual textbook provider. Should text changes become necessary after publication of the course syllabus, Advanced Programs will facilitate text returns/refunds only for texts purchased through Follett.

OU E-Mail:
All official correspondence from distance learning instructors will be sent only to students’ ou.edu address.

Online Learning Resource Center:
The Online Learning Resource Center of the University of Oklahoma’s College of Arts and Sciences Online Program is here to serve you and assist you with any questions, problems, or concerns you may have. For assistance go to http://casweb.ou.edu/olr/ or contact us by telephone at: (405) 325-5854 or Email: casonline@ou.edu

Course Objectives:
The goal of this course will be to familiarize you with some of the complex social issues that impact the human experience and that have implications for human relations. We will be examining the ways in which the larger social context impacts individuals’ experiences, and visa versa. Finally, we will be analyzing the multiple dimensions that are of significance to individuals’ and communities’ experiences of these current problems. These include the importance of factors such as race, gender, class, culture, nation of origin, popular culture, etc. It is expected that by the end of the course you will not only be familiar with some of the issues impacting individual and social health and wellbeing, but that you will also be able to provide a thoughtful analysis of these issues.

Course Outline:
Over the course of the semester you will be expected to complete all assigned reading in a timely fashion. You will additionally be expected to participate in class discussions using the discussion forum on D2L, and you will complete reflection papers, a book review, and a final paper. The course will be divided into modules, each with its own participation assignments. In addition, you will be expected to complete two major assignments – a two-part book review and a final paper.

Checking D2L:
Regular updates and relevant information regarding the course will be posted to the “headlines” page on D2L (that is the main page you access when you first log on). This will include module-specific information and updates. In order to ensure that you do not miss any new information of relevance to the course, you will be responsible for checking the “headlines” page at least once each week. Additional information, links, and documentation will be posted on the “contents” page. Please also see the “links” page for websites that may be of interest to you and that are relevant to the course. Finally, all assignments are due in the relevant “dropbox.”

Assignments, Grading and Due Dates:

Participation assignments:
Over the course of the semester, you will be expected to complete numerous participation assignments. These assignments will ensure that you are staying up-to-date on your reading and will allow you interact with the material. Given that this is an online course, these participation assignments are an essential aspect of the class and will provide you with an opportunity to communicate both with the instructor as
well as with your classmates. Participation assignments will consist of discussion forum posts and reflection papers.

During weeks that discussion forum posts are due, you will be expected to make a posting to the relevant forum on D2L. A framing question related to the material to be covered will be posted. You will be expected to respond to this question as well as to at least one of your classmates. Thus, your first post should be a response to the posed question, while your second post should be a respectful and insightful response to one of your classmates. The discussion forum will remain open for one week. Please see below for the relevant due dates. You will receive a grade out of 10 for each discussion post you make. You will receive a 0 for any unmade postings, and all late postings will be subject to a 50% grade reduction.

During weeks that reaction papers are due, you will be expected to prepare a brief paper in response to the assigned material. Your reaction papers should be typed using 12-pt font and standard margins and should be two to three pages long. Your paper should be written as you would any other academic paper and should be proofread and spell and grammar checked. You should consider the goal of the chapter author(s) and your reactions to their statements (do you agree or disagree and why?). You should also consider whether the author(s) changed the way you think about the topic, whether you learned something new from the article, how it fits with the rest of what we are learning, etc. The more thorough and thoughtful your paper is, the higher your grade will be. Reaction papers will receive a grade out of 10. Late papers will be subject to a 50% grade reduction.

At the end of the semester, your two lowest participation grades will be dropped.

**Book review:**

In addition to the weekly readings, you are expected to complete a book review of *Nickel and Dimed*. This review will have two components. First, you are expected to participate in a class discussion regarding the book. The relevant discussion forum on D2L will remain open for one week. During this time, you will be responsible for posting your reactions to the assigned text (in response to a provided framing question). In addition, you are expected to respond to at least two postings made by your classmates. Accordingly, you are expected to make a minimum of three postings. Please see below for the relevant due dates.

Your first posting should reflect your reactions to the assigned text. You should comment on the text, including your thoughts on how it fits in with what we are learning in class. You should also provide your own reactions to the author’s experiences and comments. Finally, your responses to your classmates should include respectful agreement or disagreement with them or comments on their reflections. You will receive a score out of 10 for each posting you make, giving you a total final score out of 30 for each discussion topic. Thoughtful postings that reflect independent and critical thought will receive the highest scores. You will receive a 0 for any unmade postings, and all late postings will be subject to a 50% grade reduction.

You will additionally be expected to complete a written review of the text. Your book review should be at least five double-spaced pages in length, should conform to conventional formatting instructions, and should follow correct APA formatting guidelines. You are not required to use outside sources in your review. Rather, I am interested in your perspective. However, if you do include outside sources, these should be cited appropriately.

In preparing your review I would like for you to provide a critical analysis of the assigned text. I would like you to evaluate the ways in which it relates to the concepts that we have covered in class while providing your personal reflections on the author and her experiences. This will be your opportunity to respond to the author. Your book review papers will receive a grade out of 100, with the most thorough and thoughtful reviews receiving the highest grades. Late reviews will receive an automatic 10-point deduction for each day that the paper is late.

Additional instructions will be posted on D2L closer to the time that the review is due.
Final papers:

You will need to hand in a final paper discussing a current problem of your choice (you are responsible for identifying an issue that you consider to be a current problem for human relations). You may select an issue we covered in class or you may select an entirely new topic (e.g., teenage drug use, urban homelessness, women’s mental health, the school experience of immigrant children, etc.). It is highly recommended that you select an aspect of a problem to discuss; this will make your paper more manageable (e.g., rather than looking just at drug use in general, look at teenage drug use or discuss urban homelessness, etc.) You will need to submit your topic to me for approval by the designated date and time. **If you do not submit a topic on time, 10 points will automatically be deducted from your final paper grade.**

Your paper should include an overview of the problem that you have selected. You should explain the various dimensions of the problem (e.g., the ways that race, class, gender, culture, etc. interact when considering this problem) and the reasons why you have selected it as a current problem for human relations. In addition, you should provide an analysis of some of the ways in which the problem can be addressed (what has already been done, why has this worked or not worked, what do you think should be done to address the problem and why, etc.). You need to use at least seven sources for your paper, of which no more than two may be reports published by governmental, non-governmental, and/or non-profit organizations. The remainder of your sources needs to be scholarly books and/or journal articles. Only one of these may be a chapter we covered in class. Your paper should be approximately seven to ten pages long and should be typed, double-spaced, and should use conventional margins. Finally, your paper needs to conform to APA formatting guidelines.

Your paper will receive a grade out of 100. **Late papers will receive an automatic 10-point deduction for each day the paper is late.** Final grades will be assessed in the following manner: 10 points for stylistic considerations (correct use of APA format, font, margins, page length, etc.); 60 points for content (the thoroughness of your discussion of the problem you selected, the completeness of your analysis of potential solutions to the problem, etc.); 30 points for critical thinking (the degree to which you provide a thoughtful analysis of the dimensions of the problem, the thoughtfulness of your discussion of potential solutions to the problem, etc.)

If you would like to receive feedback on an early draft of your paper, please contact me earlier rather than later in order to arrange a date by which you need to submit a draft. **I will not accept early drafts the week before your papers are due.**

More details regarding your final papers will be posted to D2L closer to the due date. Specific instructions for each participation assignment, including formatting instructions, can be found on the “contents” page of D2L. **Please note that all deadlines are 5PM CST.**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assigned Reading</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 2nd</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Course Begins – Familiarize yourself with the D2L site for the course</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>Course Overview and getting to know one another</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Introduction Post</td>
<td>Friday, Jan. 10th by 5:00 PM CST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 6th – 10th</td>
<td>Gender, Race, Class and Difference</td>
<td>Zinn et al. (2011) Chapters 1, 5, 7, 8, 9, and 10</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>Gender, Race, Class and Difference</td>
<td>Zinn et al. (2011) Chapters 11, 15, 18, 19, 22, 23, and 24</td>
<td>Reaction Paper #1 (over any chapter(s) assigned thus far)</td>
<td>Friday, Jan. 24th by 5:00 PM CST</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan. 13th – 17th</td>
<td>Gender, Race, Class and Difference</td>
<td>Zinn et al. (2011) Chapters 27, 29, 31, 33, 34, 38, and 41</td>
<td>Discussion Forum: Race and Gender</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 4</td>
<td>Gender, Race, Class and Difference</td>
<td>CQ Researcher (2010) Chapter 3</td>
<td>Reaction Paper #2</td>
<td>Friday, Feb. 7th by 5:00 PM CST</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 5</td>
<td>Women’s Rights</td>
<td>CQ Researcher (2010) Chapter 3</td>
<td>Post #1 (Original Post): Wednesday, Jan. 29th by 5:00 PM CST</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 3rd – 7th</td>
<td>Women’s Rights</td>
<td>CQ Researcher (2010) Chapter 3</td>
<td>Post #2 (Response to a classmate): Friday, Jan. 31st by 5:00 PM CST</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 6</td>
<td>Women’s Rights</td>
<td>Begin Reading Ehrenreich (2008) – pages 1 - 78</td>
<td>Discussion Forum: Women’s Rights</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 10th – 14th</td>
<td>Women’s Rights</td>
<td>Begin Reading Ehrenreich (2008) – pages 1 - 78</td>
<td>Post #1 (Original Post): Wednesday, Feb. 12th by 5:00 PM CST</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Post #2 and #3 (Response to 2 classmates): Friday, Feb. 21st by 5:00 PM CST</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Assigned Reading</td>
<td>Assignment</td>
<td>Due Date</td>
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<td>Week 8</td>
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<td>Finish Reading Ehrenreich (2008) ~ pages 158 - 235</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<td>Mar. 24th – 28th</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 9</td>
<td>Different Forms of Violence</td>
<td>Zinn et al. (2011) Chapters 12 and 14</td>
<td>Reaction Paper #3</td>
<td>Friday, Mar. 7th by 5:00 PM CST</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar. 3rd – 7th</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 10</td>
<td>Different Forms of Violence</td>
<td>CQ Researcher (2010) Chapters 1 and 2</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<td>Mar. 10th – 14th</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 11</td>
<td>Different Forms of Violence</td>
<td>CQ Researcher (2010) Chapters 7 and 8</td>
<td>Discussion Forum: Terror</td>
<td>Post #1 (Original Post): Wednesday, Mar. 19th by 5:00 PM CST</td>
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<td>Mar. 17th – 21st</td>
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<td>Research Final Paper Topics</td>
<td>Post #2 (Response to a classmate): Friday, Mar. 21st by 5:00 PM CST</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 12</td>
<td>Different Forms of Violence</td>
<td>CQ Researcher (2010) Chapter 9</td>
<td>Reaction Paper #4</td>
<td>Friday, Mar. 28th by 5:00 PM CST</td>
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<td>Mar. 24th – 28th</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 13</td>
<td>Thanksgiving Break</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Enjoy time with family and friends</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<td>Mar. 31st – Apr. 4th</td>
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<td>Week 14</td>
<td>Nickel and Dimed</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Book Review Paper: Nickel and Dimed</td>
<td>Friday, Apr. 11th by 5:00 PM CST</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apr. 7th – 11th</td>
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<td>Week 15</td>
<td>Disaster as a Current Problem</td>
<td>Zinn et al. (2011) Chapter 13; CQ Researcher Chapter 4</td>
<td>Reaction Paper #5</td>
<td>Friday, Apr. 18th by 5:00 PM CST</td>
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<td>Apr. 14th – 18th</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 16</td>
<td>Disaster as a Current Problem</td>
<td>CQ Researcher Chapter 6, 10, and 11</td>
<td>Discussion Forum: Disaster Preparedness</td>
<td>Post #1 (Original Post): Wednesday, Apr. 23rd by 5:00 PM CST</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apr. 21st – 25th</td>
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<td>Post #2 (Response to a classmate): Friday, Apr. 25th by 5:00 PM CST</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 17</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Final Papers</td>
<td>Wednesday, Apr. 30th by 5:00 PM CST</td>
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<td>Apr. 28th – 30th</td>
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</table>
Grading:

This is a letter-graded course: A, B, C, D, or F. A = 90-100%; B = 80-89%; C = 70-79%; D = 60-69%; F = 60%>. Grades will be weighted in the following manner:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percent of Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation assignments</td>
<td>50%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Book review discussion</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Book review paper</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final paper</td>
<td>30%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Notice: Failure to meet assignment due dates could result in a grade of I (Incomplete) and may adversely impact Tuition Assistance and/or Financial Aid.

Policy for Late Work:
Please contact the professor regarding his/her policy for late work

Attendance Policy:
In addition to interaction via Desire2Learn and e-mail contact, students are required to contact the instructor via e-mail or telephone BEFORE the beginning of the course term for an initial briefing. Although physical class meetings are not part of this course, participation in all interactive, learning activities is required.

Student assignments and student/instructor communications will be conducted via Desire2Learn, although students may contact the instructor via telephone, postal mail, e-mail, or fax as needed

Incomplete Grade Policy:
A grade of “I” is not automatically assigned, but rather must be requested by the student by submitting to the instructor a “Petition for and Work to Remove an Incompleted Grade” form. An “I” can never be used in lieu of an “F” nor can an “I” be assigned because of excessive failure to participate in class activities.

Technical Support Information:
If you experience technical problems, contact Information Technology by visiting their website at: http://webapps.ou.edu/it/ or contacting them by telephone at: (405) 325-HELP (4357).

Procedures for Completion of Course Evaluation:
Upon completion of the course students should go to the Advanced Programs Distance Learning webpage and click on the applicable semester link under “Course Evaluations” which will direct them to the evaluation. The evaluation will take approximately five minutes to complete. Completion of the online evaluation is an important tool allowing Advanced Programs to gain information and student feedback for improvement of courses.

Your responses will be kept confidential. They will be reviewed by the department and only supplied to the professor once grades for the course have been submitted.

Important information you should know about online courses:
- To sign on to Desire2Learn (D2L), log in using your 4+4 and your OU network password (note that this is the same 4+4 and password that you use to access your OU email). Once you are logged in, please look for “My Courses,” locate your course and click on it. Remember to check your course site on D2L every day.
- Students enrolled in online courses may be required to take the CAS student orientation in Desire 2 Learn. To take the orientation, sign-on to D2L and then click on “Self Registration” at the top left corner of the page. Information about and instructions for the orientation can be found at http://casweb.ou.edu/olr/public/students/orientation.htm
POLICIES AND NOTICES

Attendance/Grade Policy

Note: Attendance/absences do not apply to online courses. However, participation in all course activities is extremely important to student success in online courses.

Excused absences are given for professor mandated activities or legally required activities such as emergencies or military assignments. It is the policy of the University to excuse absences of students that result from religious observances and to provide without penalty for the rescheduling of examinations and additional required class work that may fall on religious holidays. Unavoidable personal emergencies, including (but not limited to) serious illness; delays in getting to class because of accidents, etc.; deaths and funerals, and hazardous road conditions will be excused.

If you are obtaining financial assistance (TA, STAP, FA, VA, Scholarship, etc.) to pay all or part of your tuition cost, you must follow your funding agency/institution’s policy regarding “I” (Incomplete) grades unless the timeline is longer than what the University policy allows then you must adhere to the University policy. Students who receive Financial Aid must resolve/complete any “I” (Incomplete) grades by the end of the term or he/she may be placed on “financial aid probation.” If the “I” grade is not resolved/completed by the end of the following term, the student’s Financial Aid may be suspended and the student ineligible for further Financial Aid.

Students are responsible for meeting the guidelines of Tuition Assistance and Veterans Assistance. See the education counselor at your local education center for a complete description of your TA or VA requirements.

Academic Honesty

Honesty is a fundamental precept in all academic activities and … [you] have a special obligation to observe the highest standards of honesty. Academic misconduct in any form is inimical to the purposes and functions of the University and is therefore unacceptable and is rigorously proscribed. Academic misconduct includes:

- cheating (using unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise), plagiarism, falsification of records, unauthorized possession of examinations, intimidation, and any and all other actions that may improperly affect the evaluation of a student’s academic performance or achievement; assisting others in any such act; or attempting to engage in such acts.

All acts of academic misconduct will be reported and adjudicated as prescribed by the student code of the University of Oklahoma. All students should review the Student’s Guide to Academic Integrity.

Accommodation Statement

The University of Oklahoma is committed to making its activities as accessible as possible. For accommodations on the basis of disability, please contact your local OU Site Director.

Course Policies

Advanced Programs policy is to order books in paperback if available. Courses, dates, and professors are subject to change. Please check with your OU Site Director. Students should retain a copy of any assignments that are mailed to the professor for the course.

Copyright

Any and all course materials, syllabus, lessons, lectures, etc. are the property of professor teaching the course and the Board of Regents of the University of Oklahoma and are protected under applicable copyright.

For more information about Advanced Programs, visit our website at: http://www.goou.ou.edu/
INSTRUCTOR VITA
Shannon S.C. Bert, Ph.D.

Education
• 2001 BA in Psychology, University of Oklahoma
• 2004 MA in Developmental Psychology, University of Notre Dame
• 2006 Ph.D. in Developmental Psychology, University of Notre Dame
• 2005 – 2007 Doctoral Fellowship, Georgetown University

Current Positions
• 2007 – Present Assistant Professor; Department of Human Relations; University of Oklahoma; Norman, OK.
• 2008 – Present Graduate Program Instructor; Advanced Programs – Department of Human Relations; University of Oklahoma; Norman, OK.
• 2008 – Present Adjunct Assistant Professor; Women’s and Gender Studies Program; University of Oklahoma; Norman, OK.
• 2010 – Present Adjunct Assistant Professor; Liberal Studies Program; University of Oklahoma; Norman, OK.

Frequently Taught Advanced Programs Courses
• HR 5403 Psycho-Social Development
• HR 5743 Violence Against Women and Children
• HR 5013 Current Problems in Human Relations
• HR 5970 Special topics/Seminar: The Prevention/Intervention of Critical Social Issue

Major Areas of Teaching and Research Interest
• Developmental Theory
• Applied Research Methods and Advanced Research Methods
• Research for Human Relations
• Protective Factors and Resilience
• Biracial/Multiracial Identity Development
• Prevention and Intervention Programs for Disadvantaged Populations
• Emergent Adulthood
• Current Problems
• Violence Against Women and Children
• Women, Work, and the Family

Representative Publications and Presentations

Refereed Publications


Book Publications


Chapter Publications


Presentations


Carothers, S.S. (2004, August). Social support as a coping resource for at-risk children exposed to negative life events. Poster session presented at the meeting of the American Psychological Association, Honolulu, HI.


Symposia Presentations


Representative Major Professional Affiliations

- American Psychological Association (APA)
- Society for Research in Child Development
- Society for Research on Adolescence
- APA, Division 35 – The Society for the Psychology of Women
- APA, Division 35 – Section 1, Psychology of Black Women

Representative Honors and Awards Received

- Received University of Notre Dame KANEB Teaching Certificate
- Listed in Cambridge Who’s Who Among Executive and Professional Women Psychologists
- Received University of Oklahoma New Faculty Seminar Certificate for “High Attendance”
- Received University of Oklahoma, Research Council Junior Faculty Award in 2008
- Received University of Oklahoma, College of Arts and Sciences Junior Faculty Award in 2009 and 2010
- Selected to participate as a protégé in the University of Oklahoma, Office of the Vice President of Research, Excellence in Proposals Pilot Project.
Representative Major Professional Affiliations

- American Psychological Association
- Society for Research in Child Development
- Society for Research on Adolescents

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