

AMBERTON UNIVERSITY
e-COURSE SYLLABUS

CSL6730.E1 Family Life Ministry
Fall 2026

PROFESSOR INFORMATION:

Professor: Chris Bedard, PhD, LMFT
Amberton Extension: 972-279-6511
Amberton Email: **CBedard@amberton.**

COURSE INFORMATION:

CSL6730.E1 Family Life Ministry
Level: Graduate
Beginning Date of Session: Saturday, Sept 12
Ending Date of Session: Thursday, Nov 19

Student access available to the Student Portal: Saturday, Sept 12.

Students enrolled in distance learning courses are not assessed any additional fees for security or identity verification.

PREREQUISITES:

None

TEXTBOOK(S) AND REQUIRED MATERIALS:

Title: Family Ministry
Author: Charles M Snell
Publisher: Zondervan Publishing House
Year Published: 1995
Edition: Edition Number
ISBN: 13: 9780310429104
Price: Available at <http://amberton.ecampus.com>

Students should verify enrollment in course before purchasing textbooks. Textbook information and ordering options are available through the Amberton Virtual Bookstore. Since no books are sold on campus, students should plan accordingly and purchase their books in advance of the first day of class, allowing time for shipping.

LINKS TO COUNSELING HANDBOOKS

MA in Clinical Mental Health Counseling

<https://amberton.edu/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/CMH-Handbook-1-5-26.pdf>

MA in Marriage and Family Therapy

<https://amberton.edu/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/MFT-Handbook-1-5-26.pdf>

MA in School Counseling

<https://amberton.edu/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/MA-SC-Handbook-June-2025.pdf>

APA REQUIREMENT:

APA (American Psychological Association) style is most commonly used to cite sources within the social sciences. This resource, revised according to the 7th edition, offers examples for the general format of APA research papers, in-text citations, endnotes/footnotes, and the reference page. For more information, please consult the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, (7th ed.). All coursework at Amberton University will comply with the standards contained in the APA Publication Manual.

COURSE COMPETENCIES:

The course presents an introduction to the field of family life ministry. The focus will be on the design, development, and delivery of a comprehensive family ministry with emphasis on preventive and therapeutic resources for families in the church and in the community. The theological foundations for a ministry to families will be explored.

UPON COMPLETION OF THE COURSE, THE STUDENT WILL BE COMPETENT IN:

1. Defining family ministry and understanding the role of family life ministry in the local church.
2. Discussing the major decisions a church and church leadership make before initiating a ministry to families.
3. Describing a theological and biblical basis for family life ministry and the nature of the family.
4. Formulating an approach to counseling in the local church for various church contexts.
5. Analyzing the common barriers to family life ministry and discussing approaches to deal with those barriers.
6. Formulating a plan to minister to the needs of families in the local church through the use of a congregational needs analysis.
7. Identifying and discussing various forms of family life ministry that are applicable to a range of church contexts.
8. Applying principles of preventive ministry with therapeutic ministry to provide a holistic approach to family needs.
9. Describing family ministry as an outreach to the local community to meet the needs of families in the community.
10. Evaluating the competencies and skills necessary to function as a family life minister in a local church.
11. Understanding the needs of diverse family forms in the local church as they apply to the planning of a family life ministry.
12. Describing the design, development, and delivery of a comprehensive family life ministry for a local church.
13. Describing a parenting ministry for a congregation.
14. Describing a ministry to families at various stages of the life cycle.
15. Experimenting with AI tools to develop strategies to be presented to church leadership as it relates to Family Life Ministry.

ACQUIRED SKILLS

1. Therapeutic Skills
2. Critical Thinking
3. Developing Family Life Ministry Plan

COURSE POLICIES:

STUDENTS' RESPONSIBILITIES:

This syllabus contains information, policies, and procedures for a specific course. By enrolling, the student agrees to read, understand, and abide by the policies, rules, regulations, and ethical standards of Amberton University as contained in the current university catalog and schedule of classes.

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Regular and punctual class attendance and engagement is expected at Amberton University. In case of an absence, it is the student's responsibility to contact the professor as soon as possible. If a student intends on withdrawing from a course, it is the student's responsibility to follow the university's policy on formally withdrawing from a course. **Ceasing to attend classes does not constitute an official withdrawal.**

Attendance in a lecture course is defined as punctual arrival to, and engagement in, a full lecture session. A Student in a lecture course missing more than 20% (two class periods for weekday classes or one class period for Saturday classes) of the class meetings may be assigned a grade of an "F" or withdrawn at the discretion of Amberton University.

Attendance in a distance learning course is defined as active participation in the weekly online class sessions. “Active participation” can be defined as: submitting an academic assignment, taking an exam, engaging in an interactive tutorial, participating in an online discussion forum (or chat session), or initiating (or responding to) a communication with a faculty member about an academic assignment or the subject matter of the course. A student not meeting these requirements may be assigned a grade of an “F” or withdrawn at the discretion of Amberton University.

PLAGIARISM POLICY:

Plagiarism is the presentation of someone else’s work as though it were your own. If you use another person’s words, ideas, or information; or if you use material from an outside source – whether a book, magazine, newspaper, business publication, broadcast, speech, or electronic media – you must acknowledge that source. Plagiarism is a violation of the University’s code of student ethical conduct and is one that is taken seriously. Amberton University operates on an honor system; therefore, honesty and integrity are essential characteristics of all who are associated with the institution. All Amberton students are expected to abide by the honor system and maintain academic integrity in all their work. Amberton University and its instructors monitor student work for plagiarism and reserve the right to submit such work to technology-based plagiarism detection services and applications at any time.

Self-plagiarism means reusing work that you have already published or submitted for a class. It can involve:

- Resubmitting an entire paper
- Copying or paraphrasing passages from your previous work

Self-plagiarism misleads your readers by presenting previous work as completely new and original. Students may not submit the same paper in substance in two or more classes without prior written permission of the instructors involved.

Amberton University students who use Artificial Intelligence (AI) generated content must adhere to the following policies:

Originality: Students must avoid presenting AI generated content as their own original work. It is essential to acknowledge the involvement of AI in the content creation process in order to maintain academic and ethical standards.

Paraphrasing: When using AI generated content, students must rephrase and/or modify the generated text. Paraphrased AI generated content should also be properly cited.

Acknowledgement: When using AI generated content in any assignment, proper credit must be given to the AI system that generated the content. <https://apastyle.apa.org/blog/how-to-cite-chatgpt>

Students agree that by taking this course, all required assignments may be subject to submission for a textual similarity review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism and self-plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism in future papers. Use of Turnitin.com service is subject to the Usage Policy posted on the Turnitin.com website.

Turnitin is a writing improvement and plagiarism prevention tool which uses special algorithms, to compare text-based student submissions to the Turnitin database and other online sources. Turnitin produces a detailed **similarity report** that can be customized and viewed by instructors and students.

Turnitin “Draft Coach” is a Google based add-on to Turnitin which supports students in developing high-quality academic writing; and serves as an integrity coach. Draft Coach helps address errors and improve the quality of student’s writing by highlighting grammar mistakes, identifying incorrectly cited sources, and scanning for similarity across several databases. By providing formative feedback on how to address citation issues, incorrect grammar, and matches with the Turnitin database, Draft Coach provides explanations to help students become more confident writers, capable of producing higher quality work both in academics and in the workplace.

COURSE OUTLINE AND CALENDAR:

This course meant to be a practical look at Family Life Ministry. The text combined with the assignments will help students begin thinking through and how to create, define, and being a Family Life Ministry. The assignments are meant to help reflect on practicalities. The final project will serve as a final application of the course materials and assignments.

The text is a great primer for how Family Ministry can be formed and applied to a congregation. Its suggested to begin reading as soon as possible.

We will have 3 Zoom classes throughout the class. Each Zoom class will be focused on discussing aspects of Family Life Ministry. The classes will combine both lecture and group discussions. I will record the classes as well.

Week	Topic	Assignment	Competencies Covered	Due Date
1 Zoom Class #1 6-8pm	Introduction	Text Reading		Zoom Class #1 Sept 17, 6-8PM
2		Text Reading		
3	Observation of Families	Reflection Paper	1,11,13	Sept 26
4				
5 Zoom Class #2, 6-8pm	Biblical Basis for Family Ministry	Response to Questions	2,3,4,5,7,10	Oct 10 Zoom Class #2, 6-8pm
6				
7	Personal Application of Family Ministry	Response to Questions	2,3,4,7,10	Oct 24
8	AI Assignment	AI Assignment	17	Oct 31
9 Zoom Class 3, 6-8pm				Zoom Class #3, 6-8pm
10	Congregational Needs Analysis/Ministry Plan of Action	Application Paper	3,6,8,9,12	Nov 18

GRADING CRITERIA:

Observation: 50

Biblical Basis of FM: 100

Personal Application: 100

Congregational Needs: 150

TOTAL: 400

Graduate

92 – 100 A

82 – 91 B

72 – 81 C

62 – 71 D

Below 62 F

GRADE NOTIFICATION AND INSTRUCTOR FEEDBACK:

Students should review instructor feedback provided through Moodle or Amberton CampusWeb Portal. Final grades are processed approximately one week after the session and may be viewed through the student portal. Grades will not be released by phone or through unsecured channels. University instructors will not leave a message with comments or grades in any type of media that is not secure.

For questions regarding grades after the semester has ended, students should use their university email account and contact the instructor at the faculty email address as provided above in Professor Information area.

INCOMPLETE GRADES:

An "I" (Incomplete) grade is granted only at the professor's discretion for emergencies or illness.

Students have 30 days from the end of the session to complete the course requirements. If the conditions are not met within this 30-day window, the "I" automatically converts to an "F".

HOW TO WITHDRAW FROM A COURSE:

To be official, the class withdrawal must be in writing and signed by the student requesting the withdrawal; no withdrawal is accepted verbally. Please review the "Schedule of Classes" (online or in-print) for procedures for class changes or withdrawals and the refund policy and schedule.

COURSE DELIVERY METHODOLOGY:

This course is delivered through Moodle. Students are expected to have reliable internet access, basic computer skills, the ability to upload/download files, use Amberton email, and submit assignments in the required format. Students needing assistance should use the Amberton SSO support/ticket process.

HOW TO ACCESS YOUR COURSE:**SINGLE SIGN-ON (SSO) INSTRUCTIONS FOR AMBERTON UNIVERSITY:**

Students should access Amberton systems through the Single Sign-On portal at <https://sso.amberton.edu>. After logging in, students can access Moodle, Amberton email, CampusWeb, and other assigned applications. Students who need help accessing SSO should submit a support request through the SSO support option or contact support@amberton.edu.

MOODLE TUTORIAL:

Upon successful log in and access to the Moodle learning platform, there is a Student Moodle Tutorial course available, to learn about the basics of Moodle. Simply click on the link for the Student Moodle Tutorial and read through the various learning topics: Navigating; Communicating; Assignments & Exams; Grades; and Student Resources.

COURSE COMMUNICATIONS:

Students will communicate with faculty through the Moodle Learning Platform or the Amberton University email system.

EMAIL COMMUNICATION:

Students are expected to use their Amberton email account and Moodle for course communications. Students must use their official university email account for all university related communication and should check their Amberton emails regularly for course and university notices.

Upon completion of a session, all communication and course specific information is removed from the Moodle system. If a student needs to maintain a record of communications or assignments, the student is strongly encouraged to print out or download these items to a disk for their own records.

FORMAT AND SUBMISSION OF ASSIGNMENTS:

Assignments must be submitted through the appropriate Moodle assignment link unless otherwise directed by the instructor. Students are responsible for submitting files in the format required by the instructor.

INSTRUCTOR/COURSE EVALUATION:

Students will have the opportunity to complete an anonymous course and instructor evaluation near the end of the session. Instructions and dates will be provided through Moodle and/or Amberton email.

RESEARCH RESOURCES:

The Amberton Library provides access to full-text articles, peer-reviewed databases, and research tools, with options like Interlibrary Loan (ILL) and TexShare for items outside its collection. For research assistance, students can connect with library staff during operating hours via email (library@amberton.edu), phone (972-279-6511 ext. 185), "How-to" videos, live online chat, or in person at the Garland campus. The online library is available through Single Sign On (SSO).

MICROSOFT OFFICE 365 EDUCATION:

Amberton University students may access Microsoft 365 Education resources as provided by the university.

GOOGLE WORKSPACE FOR EDUCATION:

Amberton students are assigned a Google Workspace for Education account, including Amberton Gmail, Google Drive, Google Docs, Sheets, and Slides. Students should use their Amberton Google account for course-related work when required.