



# Delivering Relationship Education to College Students

**How-To Guide**

January 2010

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# Delivering Relationship Education to College Students

## Background

Young adults are typically eager to learn about relationships and how to succeed in them. Some are considering engagement/marriage whereas others are looking for guidance on how to make smart choices when it comes to dating partners. With a rate of 3.5 divorces per 1,000 people,<sup>1</sup> many young adults have experienced the break up of their parents and are fearful of that same fate. College students are desperate to have only one, happy marriage, and they don't know whether this is possible anymore.<sup>2</sup>

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The college years bring the need to negotiate new life roles and relationships. These years in particular are a time during which skill-based education may positively influence future relationships. University students polled about marriage responded that one receives the same benefits from a committed relationship as from a healthy marriage.<sup>3</sup> During this time of emerging adulthood students have an opportunity to test their beliefs about sex, fidelity, relationships and commitment.

The vast majority of marriage preparation courses are designed for high school students or for couples who have already decided to marry. Little work has

targeted college students, a group old enough to have had substantial dating experience but not yet be committed to a particular partner.

This How-to Guide is intended for practitioners and community-based organizations that wish to effectively provide marriage/relationship education (MRE) programs to college students. This guide outlines how to market, prepare, and deliver MRE in a university setting.

## Service Delivery Strategies/Format

There are two primary strategies to consider when structuring your service delivery. The two formats include MRE as a class or as an campus-wide/off-campus workshop.

- 1) University classroom setting. Learning opportunities include traditional academic methods (lectures, class discussion, readings) together with experiential and self-discovery assignments deemed essential to the subject matter. Classes offer from one to three credits and result in a grade. A class will generally



last anywhere from 10 to 16 weeks, although some may be offered as shorter intercessions. Some universities will offer numerous opportunities to enroll in the class while others may only offer it once a year. Instructors generally represent members of the faculty and/or are graduate students involved with psychology or social work. See Appendix 1 for a sample syllabus for a college intercession for undergraduate and graduate students.

a student group such as a sorority/fraternity, residence hall or special interest group. They are generally led by a facilitator who may be a peer, a community leader or a professor. This format is better suited for couples, although relationship education for individuals is also appropriate for students who aren't in an exclusive relationship, who aren't engaged, or who may not attend with a partner. An example of a program co-sponsored by a student group is included as Appendix 2.

2) Campus-wide or off-campus setting. There are other opportunities both on and off campus to deliver MRE. These sessions are typically less formal than the university classroom setting and are offered in a more concentrated period of time (four to twelve hours). They may occur on a weekend day or on a weekly basis, and are likely to be hosted (or co-hosted) by

There are unique attributes and challenges to each strategy, and MRE programs will have to weigh the pros and cons of each to determine what will work best for their programs. The chart below outlines some of the benefits and challenges of each service delivery strategy.

Classroom Setting		Campus-wide/Off-Campus Setting	
Benefits	Challenges	Benefits	Challenges
Instructor/ professor is subject matter expert	Difficult to get a new curriculum accepted into a college	Many curricula exist that can be adapted to meet the needs of the audience	Compressed time frame may require programs to eliminate some material and/or offer multiple workshops to teach core skills so that attendees are not overwhelmed with information
Attendance is required	Women are more likely to enroll	Professors from various academic departments may offer extra credit for attendance; could meet campus participation requirements for some student groups	Attendance is voluntary
Long duration, provides opportunity to cover material in-depth	Must have a professor or department head to champion your syllabus	Can recruit participants from multiple student groups.	Other groups may compete for on-campus and/or community facilities

Classroom Setting		Campus-wide/Off-Campus Setting	
Benefits	Challenges	Benefits	Challenges
Earning college credits acts as an incentive to participate	Program flexibility and the ability to make modifications may be difficult due to university restrictions and protocols	Flexibility around class time (in the evenings, on weekends, etc.)	Scheduling around other campus events may be difficult
Interest in topic creates high demand for course	Limited number of classes and times offered each semester may leave interested students unable to participate	Services can also be open to the general public	

## Marketing

Couple relationships is a very hot topic among young adults, and anything focused on discussing relationships will likely generate a lot of interest on college campuses. However, programs need an effective marketing message to attract students and to get them to participate in an MRE class or event. There are overarching themes relevant

Programs may want to consider developing a Facebook page to promote services and link “friends” to information about healthy relationships. A link to the Facebook page can also be added to a program’s existing website to drive this audience to services. Twitter may be a useful marketing approach for programs that want to instantly notify students of upcoming events and programming.

for this audience that can be applied to marketing messages for social networking sites. Social media and social networks have become a popular and integral part of life for most young people – including college students. Social networks like Facebook and Twitter connect individuals to one another and allow them to instantly share information. Web sites like YouTube provide students with on the spot access to educational and entertaining video on a multitude of topics.

Programs may want to consider developing a Facebook page to promote services and link “friends” to information about healthy relationships (for more detailed information, see the NHMRC Tip Sheet “Marketing Your Healthy Marriages and Relationships Program on the Web” <http://www.healthymarriageinfo.org/docs/marketingyourhmrprogramontheweb.pdf>.) A link to the Facebook page can also be added to a program’s existing website to drive this audience to services. Twitter may be a useful marketing approach for programs that want to instantly notify students of upcoming events and programming. Another marketing strategy to instantly connect with students is to send real time updates via Facebook

and Twitter while events are going on to give students who may not be in attendance an idea of what services are like. Similarly, YouTube may be utilized to post catchy commercials for upcoming events, clips of relationship tips and/or communication skills to provide examples of what attendees will learn during workshops and reinforce skills. An example of how one MRE program uses social media to market to college students can be found by visiting [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com) and searching for **Relationship-U**.

In addition to using media sites that are popular among college students, marketing messages and images must resonate with the real life situations this audience deals with regularly. Using language like “navigating the dating game” and “finding Mr./Ms. Right” may be effective for college students, as they likely have dating experience and may be on the path to selecting a partner for a committed relationship.<sup>4</sup>

## Recruitment

Recruiting college students for relationship education services is unique. Students spend most of their time on and around campus which narrows down the area for direct recruitment. However, the service delivery structure selected by a program will directly impact recruitment activities.

A relationship education program offered for credit might be promoted to students within a particular department, such as Social Work, Human Development and Family Studies. This more than likely will limit the amount of students from other disciplines who can participate. A recruitment strategy for programs integrating

the MRE program as a for-credit course might be to incorporate the material as a unit in an already established core curriculum (e.g. Psychology, Sociology).<sup>5</sup> This strategy expands the recruitment potential to more than just the students majoring in a related field. Regardless of how the MRE material is provided it is necessary to have faculty and professors championing the program to students. It is useful for programs to develop relationships within a particular department of the university.

MRE services provided as campus-wide or off-campus programs will need a recruitment strategy that is broader in scope to reach students within various sectors of the university. This also entails developing targeted strategies to connect with specific groups. For example, some programs have partnered with campus counseling centers, student government groups, residence halls, sororities/fraternities, student faith-based organizations and other groups to offer relationship education to their members. Other programs have developed marketing products (e.g. billboards, fliers, pens, t-shirts, etc.) and focused recruitment efforts for upcoming events in “high traffic” areas like dorms,

Recruitment has shown to be effective when done one-on-one. A program may want to consider reserving booth space in the Student Union or other high traffic area to distribute fliers, promotional items and to sign students up as Facebook friends and for upcoming workshops. For an organization not directly affiliated with the university, connecting with a student organization to co-sponsor events may facilitate this process; this encourages the organization’s members to attend while endorsing the services to the rest of the student body.

student union buildings, campus bookstores, etc. One program places coasters which contain conversation starters and relationship Q & A in student unions and food courts. The coasters direct students to the program's Facebook page for more information about upcoming events. Other programs have recruiters ride campus buses while holding life size posters to generate interest for upcoming events.<sup>6</sup> Examples of workshop fliers and other promotional items are provided as Appendices 3-6.

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Many student organizations require members to participate in a certain number of personal and/or professional development events. A relationship education program may fulfill these requirements. It is beneficial for a program to be knowledgeable about these requirements and highlight how the program meets a student's need. Connect with the officers of the student organizations so they can refer members to your program. Additionally, your recruiter can attend a meeting for the organization to recruit one-on-one.

## **Learning Styles and Facilitation/ Peer Involvement**

Although university students are familiar with a classroom setting, a traditional lecture presentation

may not be the best method for teaching relationship skills. This audience uses various forms of technology on a daily basis, likes variety and is generally very good at multitasking. In order to keep the attention of students, programs must present the material in a way that is current, varied, and requires the students to actively participate. Further, make sure you are using a curriculum that is geared toward individuals and healthy relationships as opposed to one for married couples. Part of learning about relationships for this audience is understanding what type of partner they want and being familiar with what makes a relationship healthy.

One MRE program for university students incorporates several different teaching methods including <sup>7</sup>:

- Quizzes
- Video clips
- Lecture
- Small group activities
- Weekly readings
- Journaling
- Questionnaires
- Interviews with volunteer "mentor couples" and parents

Creating materials that are visually attractive and relevant for a young adult audience will also help participants stay engaged. Examples of a workbook intended for workshops held on a college campus are provided as Appendix 7.

The facilitator of the program is essential to its success. Most programs provided on a university campus might be led by a professor or faculty member. While this can be effective as these individuals will likely be viewed as "credible experts," incorporating a student "co-facilitator" or peer groups

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Graduate students or students who have completed the program and have been trained in the curriculum can serve as co-facilitators. Co-facilitators who are aware of the challenges and realities faced by students can help adapt the concepts and skills presented to apply to students’ current life situations. Similarly, establishing peer groups to advise the program on everything from teaching strategies and presentation techniques to marketing and recruitment will create student “buy in” in the program and may result in greater participation.

## Special Topics for Discussion

University students who are experiencing this time of “emerging adulthood” may very well be the most receptive audience to relationship education. This age group is typically interested in developing relationships, whether casual or committed, and may therefore be more open to learning about relationships.<sup>8</sup> An openness to relationship education on the part of students allows programs to introduce skills that can be used in future relationships and marriage as well as address some of the issues that are prevalent in young adult relationships.

One topic that programs may want to incorporate into discussions with university students is sex. According to responses from university students, of those who say they are “in an exclusive relationship,” nearly forty percent report sexual relations with someone other than their partner.<sup>9</sup> Infidelity within exclusive relationships and

casually “hooking up” with someone without the intention of entering into a committed relationship are common experiences among university students.<sup>10</sup> The issues of sex and relationships are likely familiar to students, and relationship education programs have a unique opportunity to discuss the pros and cons of these behaviors as well as provide skills to prevent and/or address conflicts that may arise as a result.

Another area for discussion is the prevalence of physical aggression among young adults; one-third of students report having experienced slapping and shoving.<sup>11</sup> Programs may want to establish partnerships with campus providers who educate students on the characteristics of violent relationships, date rape and sexual assault; sometimes these services are co-located in campus counseling centers. Similarly, programs may offer discussion about the positive characteristics students want in a partner. Students may practice the communication and conflict management skills in the curriculum to arm themselves with the tools to confront challenges in relationships whenever they may arise.

For more information about sex and dating violence among young adults, programs may want to review the following resources and Web sites:

- “What 20-Somethings Are Saying About Pregnancy, Sex, and Childbearing: Finding from Focus Groups” [http://www.thenationalcampaign.org/resources/pdf/Briefly\\_20\\_Somethings\\_Focus\\_Group\\_Summary.pdf](http://www.thenationalcampaign.org/resources/pdf/Briefly_20_Somethings_Focus_Group_Summary.pdf)
- “Magical Thinking: Young Adults’ Attitudes and Beliefs About Sex, Contraception, and Unplanned Pregnancy” <http://www.thenationalcampaign.org/resources/pdf/pubs/MagicalThinking.pdf>
- [www.thesafespace.org](http://www.thesafespace.org).

## Evaluation

As with any educational program, evaluating the program’s impact on participants and receiving feedback about services is an important step. Evaluating programs serving university students may be of particular interest since there is limited information about delivering MRE to this population.<sup>12</sup> One element of evaluation is learning about the participants’ experiences and suggestions for improving the program.

Understanding what students like and don’t like about the experience provides valuable information for programs to use when making mid-course changes, deciding how to use resources, and adding components to the program. Assessing what the students want and giving it to them (when possible) will increase the likelihood that they will have a positive experience and encourage others to participate.

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Experienced researchers at the university might be able to help programs develop evaluation questions or suggest existing surveys and questionnaires to use. Responses like the ones listed below are the result of strategic evaluation questions to assess a program’s impact on the beliefs and/or behaviors of the participating students.

“I learned that it is important to make decisions in relationships and not just ‘slide’ into a serious relationship.”

“The most important thing I learned is that communication is the key and the importance of being yourself and keeping your values.”

“I learned to think more about the other person’s point of view and not to create unfair expectations.”

“(I learned) that you can’t pick someone as a ‘make over’ project—pick someone who is right for you.”

“I never stopped to think of finding a good match from the beginning or choosing a ‘real partner,’ I used to always look at how I could change someone.”

Universities may have experienced staff, faculty and/or graduate students interested in conducting a more in-depth evaluation to provide the program with additional information as well as enhance the field. A rigorous evaluation of an MRE program for college students uses a variety of measures to compare students who receive MRE services to those who do not.

## Conclusion

College students are at a time in their lives when learning about healthy relationships can offer a large impact. MRE programs can be offered as a course for credit or as an off-campus workshop. Marketing and recruitment strategies should be reflective of this population's use of social networking sites and should involve strategic partnerships with the university's professors and with student organizations. In addition, the university setting provides an excellent opportunity for rigorous evaluations conducted by graduate students and/or university staff.

***The National Healthy Marriage Resource Center (NHMRC) would like to thank Courtney Harrison MPA, Leah Rubio and Charles Sauro, MSW of the Resource Center for their contributions to this How-To Guide. This is a product of the NHMRC, led by co-directors Mary Myrick, APR, and Jeanette Hercik, PhD, and project manager, Patrick Patterson, MSW, MPH.***

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<sup>1</sup> National Marriage and Divorce Rate Trends. National Vital Statistics System. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Retrieved on November 17, 2009 from [http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/mardiv\\_tables.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/mardiv_tables.htm).

<sup>2</sup> Levine and Cureton

<sup>3</sup> Fincham, Florida State University

<sup>4</sup> Nielsen, Pinsof, Rampage, Solomon, Goldstein

<sup>5</sup> Fincham, Stanley, Rhoades

<sup>6</sup> Fincham, Stanley, Rhoades

<sup>7</sup> Nielson, Pinsof, Rampage, Solomon, Goldstein

<sup>8</sup> Fincham, Stanley, Rhoades

<sup>9</sup> Ibid

<sup>10</sup> Fincham, Stanley, Rhoades

<sup>11</sup> Molidor, C., Tolman, R., and Kober, J.(2000). Gender and Contextual Factors in Adolescent Dating Violence *The Prevention Researcher. Vol 7, No. 1*

<sup>12</sup> Nielsen, Pinsof, Rampage, Solomon, Goldstein

<sup>13</sup> Responses provided by students participating in a "Relationship U" workshop sponsored by the Oklahoma Marriage Initiative

## Appendix 1 - Sample Course Syllabus

Family & Child Development • Human Environmental Sciences • College of Education & Professional Studies

### FMCD 4960 CRN# Relationship Dynamics

Days: 1/9/09                      Time: 5:00 PM – 10:00 PM                      Place: HES 201  
          1/10/09                      8:00 AM – 6:00 PM

#### **Instructor & Contact Information**

Instructor: Nate Cottle, Ph. D., CFLE  
Office: 202 C Human Environmental Science  
Phone: (405) 974-5793  
E-mail: ncottle@ucok.edu

#### **Office Hours:**

By appointment

#### **Course Description**

This course is an overview of relationship dynamics in the context of romantic relationships. Evidenced-based curriculums which focus on the development of relationship skills and theories of healthy relationship dynamics will be explored. This course will benefit individuals in their personal and professional lives.

#### **General Objectives**

Upon completion of this course the student should be able to do:

1. Explore in-depth the major theories of healthy relationship dynamics
2. Review the relevant research regarding successful, romantic relationships
3. Learn and practice skills associated with healthy, intimate relationships
4. Examine the connection between theory regarding relationships and research exploring relationship outcomes

#### **Textbook**

None. Students will be provided with a student workbook and additional readings as necessary.

#### **Instructional Methods**

This class will employ a variety of instructional methods, such as lecture, guest speakers, class assignments, small group interaction, participation and audiovisual components.

#### **Methods of Evaluation**

Grades for this class will be based on an average of the total points earned from the following:

In-Class Assignments/Practice	20%	20 points
Attendance	20%	20 points
Assessments (Pre and Post)	30%	30 points
Exam	<u>30%</u>	<u>30 points</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100 points</b>

Grades are calculated based upon the percentage of the total points:

90.0% to 100%	90 points or more	A
80.00% to 89.9%	80 to 89 points	B
70.0% to 79.9%	70 to 79 points	C

60.0% to 69.9%	60 to 69 points	D
0% to 59.9%	Less than 60 points	F

The provisions here in do not constitute a contract between the student and the College or professor. These provisions may be modified or changed as deemed necessary at the sole discretion of the instructor. When necessary, appropriate notice of changes will be given to the student.

**Graded Work Descriptions**

**Attendance:** Due to the length of this course, attendance is mandatory to complete this course successfully. Students may not miss either of the two sessions. Students who are late arriving for a class session, including after class breaks will lose 5% for each time they are late up to 20% of their total grade. **Attendance is worth 20 points or 20% of the final grade.**

**In-Class Assignments:** A number of in-class assignments will be given during the class. Some may be written, while others may be participatory. To get credit for these assignments, you must participate actively in the learning process and complete the assignments. No makeup assignments will be given. **Collectively, these assignments will be worth 20 points or 20% of your final grade.**

**Assessments:** To evaluate the overall learning and effectiveness of the presentation of this course, students will complete a pre- and post-test assessment of their knowledge and attitudes toward romantic relationships. These assessments will be complete during the class. **These will be worth 30 points or 30% of your final grade.**

**Exam:** A comprehensive exam will be given at the end of class to assess the overall retention of course content. This examination may include both multiple choice and short answer questions. **This newsletter will be worth 30 points or 30% of your final grade.**

**Late Assignments:** Due to the nature of the intercession, no late assignments will be accepted and none can be made up after the class dates. There are no exceptions to this policy.

**Regent’s Statement on Course Workload and Homework – OSRHE II-2-34**

*It is expected that a full-time college student will spend a minimum amount of time each week in class attendance and study out of class approaching a 40-hour workweek. A person employed on a full-time basis should not simultaneously expect to maintain a full-time academic schedule. At the undergraduate level, this means that for each hour in class, a student is expected to spend at least two hours doing homework. For a two credit-hour class, a student is expected to spend four (4) hours per week doing homework.*

**ADA Statement:**

Students with disabilities who need special accommodations should make their request by contacting the coordinator of Disabilities Support Services, Kimberly Fields at 974-2549. The office is located in the Nigh University Center, Room 309. Students should also notify the instructor of special accommodation needs by the end of the first week of class.

**For All FMCD Graduates:**

All FMCD graduates will participate in an internship and symposium in their last semester on campus. Part of the requirements for this internship is to submit a portfolio of your academic and

work experiences. Please save this syllabus for your portfolio and begin a file on each FMCD class you take. Create files to accumulate employment certification, meetings, conferences, certifications, student activities, volunteer activities, etc.

**Academic Integrity:**

For the purpose of this class, the following has been defined.

**Academic Dishonesty:** Includes both the "giving" and "taking" of improper assistance in examination as well as any other form of attempting to gain credit for work that is not that of the students; not adhering to correct procedures for identification of sources in reports and essays, etc., and intentional misrepresentation or attempt to gain undeserved, intellectual advantages by cheating, plagiarism, and unauthorized possession of exams. The UCO student handbook has further details.

**Academic integrity:** includes student conduct. It is your responsibility to conduct yourself in a professional, ethical manner in and out of class. Conduct violations may be taken up with the professor, the chair of the department and the UCO student conduct officer (See UCO student handbook for guidelines).

The professor reserves the right to deduct points whenever flagrant or repeated violations of class expectations occur.

**Other Imperative Information:**

**Emergency Policy for Finals' Week:** If an emergency occurs that prevents the administration of final examination, the student's final course grade will be calculated based on the work in the course completed to that point in time and the faculty member's considered judgment. Final exams will not be rescheduled, and a grade of "I" will not be given as a result of the missed exam.

**Punctuality:** Class will begin and end promptly at the appointed times. Professionals are on time – so plan your life on class according (weather, traffic, parking, family responsibility, appointment, etc.) and do not be late. (Refer to attendance policy).

**Grades:** a passing grade is not guaranteed. All work must be completed and submitted to receive credit for the course. In order to advance as FCS major, a "C" or better must be obtained in this course. According to the Graduate College, Graduate students cannot make more than 2 "C's" during their Master's program.

**Professionalism in Submitted Work:** all assignments submitted in this course should be neat, legible, and reflect a student's best work. Points will be deducted for poor grammar, punctuation, spelling, etc. Remember: your submitted work reflects the professional image you want to project- to me and to others.

**Classroom manners:** Conduct yourself with honor and respect for the members of your class and the guest in the classroom. No pagers or cell phones should interrupt the class. Be attentive and awake in class. No whispering or private disruptive conversations with your peers.

**Electronic Devices:** Please turn off electronic equipment before class. No tape recorder allowed unless you have the permission of the professor and/or equity officer. Laptops may only be used to take notes, not surfing the web, emailing, or playing games.

**FLE/FCS Computer Lab:** The lab is located in HES 206. The lab times are posted on the door. Please be responsible and use good judgment when using the computers (no food or drinks allowed, no inappropriate sites).

**Tentative Course Schedule:**

**Day 1**

- 5:00 – 5:30 Introductions and Course Overview
- 5:30 – 6:00 Pre-Course Assessment
- 6:00 – 6:45 Discussion of personality and interaction styles
- 6:45 – 7:30 Dinner Break
- 7:30 – 10:00 Presentation: “How not to marry a Jerk” Curriculum

**Day 2**

- 8:00 – 10:00 Presentation: “Within My Reach” Curriculum
- 10:00 – 10:15 Break
- 10:15 – 12:15 “Within My Reach” Curriculum, continued
- 12:15 – 1:00 Lunch Break
- 1:00 – 3:00 “Within My Reach” Curriculum, continued
- 3:00 – 3:15 Break
- 3:15 – 4:15 “Within My Reach” Curriculum, concluded
- 4:15 – 6:00 Post-Course Assessment and Final exam

## Appendix 2 - Sample Engaged and Seriously Dating Couples Workshop Flyer



**THE ENGAGED AND SERIOUSLY DATING  
COUPLES WORKSHOP**

Friday, April 11, 7–10p.m.  
&  
Sat., April 12, 8:30a.m.–1:30p.m.

Arkansas Union (ARKU) 510 & 511  
on the U of A Campus

Please register online for this FREE event at  
[www.nwamarriages.com](http://www.nwamarriages.com)

Sponsored by Chi Alpha

Funding for this project was provided by the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Grant No. 90FC0004. Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families.

### Appendix 3 - Sample Dating Event Flyer

A Discussion  
about Dating

Wednesday, October 1st

Union Theater

7:30-9pm

From just hanging out to almost wedded bliss, we want to give you the skills needed to develop healthy relationships and answer your burning questions.

brought to you by NWA Healthy Marriages  
[www.nwamarriages.com](http://www.nwamarriages.com)  
sponsored by BCM

### Appendix 4 - Sample Healthy Relationships Billboard

Go Out  
with your eyes wide open

**Healthy Relationships Now.  
Happy Marriages Later.**

Learn More At: [www.be-real.info](http://www.be-real.info) • 1-888-4Together

Funding is provided through a grant from: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services—Healthy Marriage Demonstration Grant #90-FE-0001/01. The opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this training and associated material are those of the author(s)/presenter(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families.

alabamacommunity  
healthymarriageinitiative

Monday, July 23 2007

## Appendix 5 - Sample University Campus Event Flyer

# Know What I Mean?

**Communicate Better in Relationships**

**FIND US ON FACEBOOK @ RELATIONSHIP U**

**Tuesday, November 10**  
**6:00 pm - 8:00 pm**  
**Classroom Building 313**  
**Oklahoma State University**

University Health Services   
Human Development and Family Science 

Register on Facebook @ Relationship U  
or call Kristin at 877-435-8033

*Door Prizes*

*Dating Tips*

**RELATIONSHIP U**  
Brought to you by the Oklahoma Marriage Initiative

## Appendix 6 - Sample University Campus event promotional coaster



# Appendix 7.1 - Sample University Campus Event Workbook

## Expectations

Expectations are our beliefs or assumptions about how we think things will be or the way things should be in a given situation.

We each have expectations about what are acceptable and unacceptable behaviors, roles and responsibilities in relationships, etc.

**"Our happiness and satisfaction in marriage depend largely on whether our current experience matches up with what we expected it to be like."**

Expectations can cause problems when...

- Unaware
- Unreasonable
- Unspoken

RELATIONSHIP U

*Expectations can cause problems for couples if they are not brought out in the open and discussed safely.*

### What to do about Expectations

- Become aware.
- Check to see if they are reasonable.
- Communicate them to your partner.
- Be willing to meet each other's most important and reasonable expectations.

**Remember, if you are not in a relationship right now, think about what you hope for in the future and what is realistic.**

### Discussion:

- How do you think a marriage should work?
- Who does the housework? Yard work? Car maintenance?
- How much time should a couple spend together?
- Do you want children? How do you want to raise your children?

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# RELATIONSHIP U

## Playing the Relationship Game?

- 2 Three Keys to a Great Relationship
- 3 7 Principles of Smart Love
- 4 Expectations in Relationships

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OKLAHOMA MARRIAGE INITIATIVE

## Three Keys to a Great Relationship



These three simple ideas can help each of us to better maintain our relationships and build a solid foundation for a lifetime together.

**"Decide, Don't Slide"** reminds us that we have complete power and control over our decisions. Few things in life are guaranteed, but by making informed, conscious, decisions we raise the odds for favorable outcomes and reduce the chance of being surprised with unexpected, and oftentimes unpleasant, consequences.

**"Make it Safe to Connect"** creates an open line of communication that in turn nurtures a sense of connectedness with our partner. Feeling connected helps build trust, security and confidence in being able to sustain a marriage for a lifetime.

It's easy to blame our partner for the difficult times experienced in marriage by saying "if he would just..." or "if she wouldn't..." THEN it would be all better.

**"Do Your Part"** helps each partner focus on the impact of his/her own choices and actions. We have all heard that the "sum is greater than the parts." In other words, fulfilling relationships are realized when couples understand that two contributing partners, doing their own part, create something that is stronger and more satisfying than anything they can achieve on their own as individuals.

**"These simple ideas, if acted on, can change the world for a couple."**

-Scott Stanley

**For example:**

- A guy, instead of reacting and getting angry or irritated by something his girlfriend does, remembers to "make it safe to connect" and cools down, is "doing his part" for the relationship.
- A couple who's been struggling with their budget, doesn't slide into an impulsive purchase, and works together to decide what they want most to do with their money and needs.
- A couple decides to talk each week and decide what they are going to do as a together during the holidays, rather than letting things slide.
  - A woman remembers an important presentation her boyfriend is anxious about, and says something encouraging to him during lunch. She's "doing her part."

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## Seven Principles of Smart Love

**Seek a Good Match**  
Define: \_\_\_\_\_

**Pay Attention to Values**  
Define: \_\_\_\_\_

**Choose a Real Partner, Not a "Make-over" Project**  
Define: \_\_\_\_\_

**Don't Try to Change yourself to Be Somebody Else**  
Define: \_\_\_\_\_

**Expect Good Communication/Don't Run From Conflict**  
Define: \_\_\_\_\_

**Don't Play Games, Pressure or Manipulate Someone**  
Define: \_\_\_\_\_

**Have a Bottom Line**  
Define: \_\_\_\_\_

**Think about the 7 Principles of Smart Love.... and your current or past relationship. Answering the questions below will help you identify things to change or work on in a current relationship. If you are not in a relationship right now, doing this exercise may help you understand problems in a past relationship and what to pay attention to in the future.**

- Describe how well you and your partner match each other?
- Do you share values about issues such as respect, commitment, responsibility and faithfulness?
- Does this person have serious problems that need fixing?
- Do you feel like you have to be somebody else to make this relationship work?
- How well do you communicate? How much conflict do you have?
- Is your relationship based on games and manipulation? What are the things you need and want in a relationship?

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## Appendix 7.2 - Sample University Campus Event Workbook

### The Love Pyramid

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## Sliding vs Deciding

Examples of Slides in Relationships...

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

"Go  
Slow...Go  
Smart!"  
~Marlene Pearson

**Sliding**

Sex

**Deciding**

Sex

Going slowly helps people decide whether there is a foundation upon which to develop a relationship. Sex-too-soon can lead couples to stay together because of constraints rather than the quality of the relationship.

*"It is not wise to test the depth of a river with both feet"*

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## Relationship **U**

Dating doesn't come with a textbook

- 2 Three Keys to a Great Marriage
- 3 Personality Color Wheel
- 4 Sliding vs. Deciding

[www.myspace.com/relationshipu](http://www.myspace.com/relationshipu)  
 Facebook Page Relationship U

## Appendix 7.3 - Sample University Campus Event Workbook

### Time Out

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When we need a Time Out we will say

To calm down during a Time Out I will

### Try it out!

- One person starts as the Speaker, the other starts as the Listener.
- The Speaker talks about something he/she thinks is fun, interesting or exciting.
- After a few minutes, you'll switch roles.  
(Be sure to talk about something fun--NOT a problem!)

Speaker Listener Technique

Rules for the Speaker

- Speak for yourself, don't mindread!
- Keep statements brief. Don't go on and on.
- Stop to let the listener paraphrase.

Rules for the Listener

- Paraphrase what you hear.
- Focus on the speaker's message. Don't rebut.

Rules for Both

- The speaker has the floor.
- Speaker keeps the floor while the listener paraphrases.
- Share the floor.

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The Goal

Is for each person to feel understood by the other.

Is NOT agreement.

Is NOT to solve a problem.

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### Know What I Mean?

Communicate Better in Relationships

- 2 Three Keys to a Great Relationship
- 3 Communication Danger Signs
- 4 Time Out & Speaker Listener Technique

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