I. RATIONALE:
Blended families have become more common in society. Understanding the special needs and demands of creating successful blended families has become more important in strengthening families overall.

II. COURSE DESCRIPTION:
This course will focus on understanding complex kinship relationships that develop through step-parenting and blended families. The course will include a discussion of various forms of parent-child relationships; parenting roles and authority as it relates to being a step-parent; understanding different variations and challenges of blended families; common issues among children in blended families; and various topics such as discipline, roles, communication, managing emotions, and parenting styles in blended families.

III. MAJOR INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS:

GOAL A: Understanding complex kinship relationships in blended families
Learning Outcomes: The student will:
A-1 Explain various kinds of kinship relationships in step-families
A-2 Describe different types of custody patterns
A-3 Discuss the possible relationship difficulties that could occur in step-families
A-4 Analyze the social-psychological process of forming a new family
A-5 Describe how former spouse relationships impact step and blended families
A-6 Discuss impacts of divorce on the “new” family formation

GOAL B: Understanding various forms of parent-child relationships
Learning Outcomes: The student will:
B-1 Discuss relationships between custodial parents and child(ren)
B-2 Discuss relationships between non-custodial parent and child(ren)
B-3 Analyze the complications of step-father step-children relations
B-4 Analyze the complications of step-mother step-children relations
B-5 Analyze the complications of step-sibling and half sibling relationships
B-6 Explore co-parenting in “new” family formation

GOAL C: Understanding step-parenting roles and authority
Learning Outcomes: The student will:
C-1 Explore issues of favoritism between children and step-parents
C-2 Discuss the “role” of step-parents related to family bonding, discipline, and celebration
C-3 Explore potential areas of family conflict including acknowledgement of the “other” parent outside the step-family circle

GOAL D: Learning about shared concerns in blended families
Learning Outcomes: The student will:
D-1 Be able to explain parental authority in discipline
D-2 Be able to outline parental roles related to managing children and setting family behavior expectations
D-3 Be able to identify communication breakdowns
D-4 Be able to explain emotional “triggers” in managing emotions in blended family relationships
D-5 Identify factors that affect remarriage stability

GOAL E: Identify potential family crisis problems more likely to occur in blended families
Learning Outcomes: The student will:
E-1 Compare and contrast family financial obligations and status between men who remarry and women who remarry
E-2 Identify potential sources of abusive relationships
E-3 Describe appropriate and inappropriate step-sibling relationships

GOAL F: The student will use appropriate written and oral communication skills
Learning Outcomes: The student will:
F-1 Write clearly, concisely, and appropriately using correct English grammar, punctuation, usage, mechanics, sentence structure, and vocabulary.
F-2 Use appropriate APA format for scholarly writings.
F-3 Speak with confidence, clarity, and conciseness.
F-4 Research, prepare, and deliver professional presentations