

Sociology of the Family

William Paterson University

Course Description:

This course focuses on current social changes affecting American families, with particular emphasis on the intersections of families with other social institutions and social inequality. We will first explore common assumptions about the “traditional family,” comparing this image with a brief overview of historical facts about American family life over the past two centuries. We will then examine how macro forces and systems of social inequality shape family life. Then, we will analyze four current major transformations in American family life: the changing relationship between work and family life; new trends in dating, intimacy, and marriage; new patterns of parenting; and the increasing diversity of families. In our discussions of all of these topics, we will explore the social and political implications of these changes for men, women, and children, and for society.

Student Learning Outcomes:

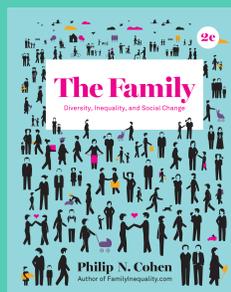
1. Assess and compare sociological approaches and methodologies (i.e., surveys, observational research, historical research, secondary data analysis) for studying the family.
2. Identify ethical dimensions (i.e., anonymity, informed consent) of various approaches to studying the family.
3. Ask meaningful questions regarding human behavior (i.e., parenting, the construction of gender, sexuality) and social problems (i.e., domestic violence) in the context of the family/family life.
4. Explain and employ social science theories (i.e., functionalist, conflict and exchange perspectives), evidence (i.e., published survey and field research) and data (publicly available data sets such as the General Social Survey) to address complex social problems and their impact on the family/family life (i.e., poverty, racism and ageism).

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK:

The Family: Diversity, Inequality, and Social Change

2nd edition 2018

Philip N. Cohen
ISBN: 978-0393639322



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I will get back to you within 24 hours.

Student Zoom Hours:

By appointment only.
<https://calendly.com/wchristensen/student-hours> or use this code:



Please Note:

This is a fast-paced online class. An entire 14 week semester will be completed in 7 weeks. Please keep up with the work and let me know as soon as you get behind so I can help you catch up!

ASSIGNMENTS:

20% Chapter Quizzes: Each week there are 2 chapter quizzes. They are not timed and are meant to help you check your learning as you read.

20% Discussion Posts: Each week there are 2 discussion prompts that you must respond to on Blackboard.

20% Family History Paper: You will interview women of 2 different generations about their life choices and compare their responses in a 4-5 page paper.

40% Exams: During the semester you will take 2 open-book exams. These will be posted on Blackboard at 8am on the day of the exam, and must be submitted by 12 Midnight the same day. You will have 2 hours to complete each exam.

*** All assignments will be graded within a week of completion.**

Our Virtual Classroom:

- The diversity that students bring to this class are a resource and strength. I intend to present materials that are respectful of diversity: gender, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, and culture.
- We are all responsible for maintaining a positive learning environment in this class. I encourage you to participate in online discussions, to raise questions, and make observations. Sociology touches on areas of deeply held beliefs and sensitive issues. While students should feel free to explore their own perspectives on issues, students are also expected to be respectful of others. I ask that we all listen with an open mind to each other's views. Be sure to refrain from personal attacks and back up your statements with supporting evidence. This does not mean that you can not disagree, only that you must do so respectfully.

PANDEMIC STATEMENT:

- We are still very much in the middle of a pandemic and this may impact your work in this course. Many of you may be dealing with economic stress, work disruptions, childcare issues, etc. If you feel like you cannot complete assignments or exams on time, please let me know ASAP. Please do what you need to do to stay safe and healthy!

COURSE POLICIES:

Grammar and spelling count! Be sure to carefully edit each assignment and post to the online discussion. Spelling and grammar errors will reduce your grade.

Citing your work: Plagiarism You are required to follow proper citation procedures for all assignments and online posting. If something is not your own original idea, it needs a citation. Plagiarism and academic dishonesty will not be tolerated.

Accommodations: If you require accommodations to participate in, or to complete the work in this course, please let me know ASAP so that we can make the necessary arrangements.

FINAL GRADES:

A 94-100	100	C 73-76	76
A- 91-93	93	C- 70-72	
B+ 88- 90	90	D 60-69.9	
B 83-87	87	F <60	
B- 80-82	82		
C+ 77-79	79		

Schedule		
	Reading & Watch	Assignment
Week 1: Family Sociology and Family History	Chapter 1 "A Sociology of the Family" Chapter 2 "The Family in History" "Pew Family Trends" "The Nuclear Family is No Longer the Norm" "A Date With Your Family" "Where Does the Nuclear Family Come From?" "How Did the Nuclear Family Break Down?"	Discussion 1: <i>What is a Family?</i> Discussion 2: <i>Explaining Nuclear Family Decline</i> Chapter 1 Quiz Chapter 2 Quiz
Week 2: Race & Ethnicity And Unequal Families	Chapter 3 "Race, Ethnicity, and Immigration" Chapter 4: "Families and Social Class" "We Just Feel Like We Don't Belong Here" "The Welfare Queen is a Lie" "Welfare and the Politics of Poverty" "How an Immigrant Family Moves Through Trauma"	Discussion 1: <i>Interracial Families</i> Discussion 2: <i>Online Poverty Simulation Activity</i> Chapter 3 Quiz Chapter 4 Quiz
Week 3: Gender & Sexuality	Chapter 5: "Gender" Chapter 6: "Sexuality" "How Parents Influence Kids Gender Roles" "Raising "Theybies" "On Equal Pay Day" "LGBT People Talk to Their Families About Coming Out"	Discussion 1: <i>Family Chores</i> Discussion 2: <i>Gender and Advertisements</i> Chapter 5 Quiz Chapter 6 Quiz
	MID TERM EXAM	
Week 4: Love, Romance, and Marriage	Chapter 7 "Love and Romantic Relationships" Chapter 8: "Marriage and Cohabitation" "If You Want a Marriage of Equals, The Date As Equals" "Rising Share of U.S. Adults are Living Without a Spouse or Partner" "The Reality of Hook Up Culture" "When Did Marriage Become about Love?" "The History of Marriage" "No On One" part 1 and 2	Discussion 1: <i>Dating Scripts</i> Discussion 2: <i>Marriage and Changing Names</i> Chapter 7 Quiz Chapter 8 Quiz

	Reading & Watch	Assignment
Week 5: Raising Children, Divorce & Remarriage	Chapter 9: "Families and Children" Chapter 10: "Divorce, Remarriage, and Blended Families" "The pandemic has highlighted many challenges for mothers, but they aren't necessarily new." "Class Differences in Child-Rearing Are on the Rise" "Single moms struggle with housing, childcare, employment in the pandemic" "Unequal Childhoods" Annette Lareau "A Brief History of Divorce" "Parents Tell Stepkids What They Really Think"	Discussion 1: <i>Motherhood During the Pandemic</i> Discussion 2: <i>Divorce During the Pandemic</i> Chapter 9 Quiz Chapter 10 Quiz
	Family History Paper Due	
Week 6: Families & Work, and Family Violence & Future of Families	Chapter 11: "Work & Families" Chapter 13: "The Future of the Family" "Among 41 countries, only U.S. lacks paid parental leave" "Explained: Why Women Are Paid Less Than Men" "More Dads Are Home Taking Care of Children Than Ever Before" "How Poor Families are Struggling to Make Ends Meet" "More middle-class earners are struggling" "4 Progressive Policies that Make Families Stronger" "Redesigning the workplace to be family-friendly"	Discussion 1: <i>Parental Leave Policies</i> Discussion: <i>Policy Proposal</i> Chapter 11 Quiz Chapter 13 Quiz
	Final Exam	