Sociology 120: Marriage and the Family

University of Wisconsin–Madison
Tues & Thurs, 9:30-10:45am

Location: Online

Fall 2020

Administrative Information

Course Website: https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/214940

Use Google Chrome as your browser!

Professor

Name: Prof. Felix Elwert

Office Hours: Tue & Thu 11:00-noon

By appointment at https://felix-elwert.youcanbook.me

Your booking will generate a Zoom link (Zoom is free via UW)

Email: elwert@wisc.edu

Teaching Assistants

Name Office Hours Location Email

Jill Richardson Tue 11-noon, Thu 1-2PM online jerichardson@wisc.edu

Madeline Brighouse Glueck Fri 9-10 (by appt.) online brighouseglu@wisc.edu

Fri 10-11 (open)

Jin Hyung Kim Wed 12-1PM, Thu 5:30-6:30 online kim669@wisc.edu

Xiaomei Sun Mon 9-10AM, Wed 9-10AM online xsun95@wisc.edu

See section syllabi on Canvas for section meeting times and locations and announcements.

Credits: 3. Approximately 10 hours of lecture, section, and readings/homework per week.

Requisites: None

Course Designation: Breadth - Social Science

Level: Elementary

L&S Credit: Counts as Liberal Arts and Science credit in L&S

Modern syllabi are insanely long. You still have to read this entire document. I'm sorry!

"I thoroughly enjoyed the class and would recommend it to other students!"

"Coming into this course I thought it would be an easy A, and it was not. One has to work and study a lot in order to get a good grade in this course."

Course evaluations, Fall 2017

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The family is a fundamental building block of social life, in at least two senses. First, families provide the context in which individual lives unfold—they set the stage for birth, life, love, and death. In this sense, families are "private institutions." Second, families have consequences for the greater good—they educate children and care for the elderly, but they also generate and perpetuate social inequalities. In this sense, families are "public institutions" that matter for society as a whole.

This course will examine families as private and as public institutions from the perspectives of family sociology and social demography. The course will focus primarily on aggregate patterns and historical trends within and between groups as defined by class, race, and gender, and less on individual experiences.

A major goal of this course is to learn about differences in family structure throughout history and in the contemporary United States. While it may be tempting to assume that there can only be one "best" or "natural" way to organize family life, research indicates that the family is constantly changing and adapting. What may work in one situation may not work in another: the consequences of family structure and family behaviors often depend on their context.

Sociology 120 is an introductory course designed for inquisitive students who are new to sociology. Seniors and other students with a background in social science are welcome, of course, but may alternatively wish to consider the more advanced family course Soc 640.

FORMAT

Lectures: All lectures are streamed live (synchronously), via Canvas. You must complete all required readings *before* class. Have your notes ready and be prepared to ask and answer questions through the online chat function. Lectures will assume that you have completed the readings, draw attention to select issues from the required readings, and also present new material not covered in your readings. I will post lecture outlines on the course website a few hours before lecture. Please print these outlines to facilitate note taking, or load them on a device of your choice for electronic note taking.

Sections: Section meetings are held online, via Canvas. You must complete all required readings *before* class. Weekly discussion sections give you the opportunity to engage with the material more deeply. Section discussions are an integral part of this course, and section attendance is required. Your TA will distribute a separate section syllabus with further instructions. Sections are your time to shine!

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Understand key facts about the American family in history and present, its diversity, and its changing nature. Analyze key social-science theories and arguments about the family. Identify central arguments exchanged in recent family debates. Connect course material to the daily news through written assignments.

REQUIREMENTS

There are five requirements for passing Soc 120: (1) Doing the readings, (2) section attendance and participation, (3) weekly online reading quizzes, (4) two news reflections, and (5) two midterm exams.

1. Readings: The majority of your readings are drawn from the textbook:

Required: Cherlin, Andrew J. 2021. *Public and Private Families: An Introduction,* Ninth Edition. Boston: McGraw-Hill.

The textbook and all additional required and recommended readings are available on Canvas.

To access the entirety of Cherlin's textbooks as an eBook, go to the course website on Canvas, click "McGraw-Hill Connect," then click "Connect Library," where you will see the textbook, which you can annotate.

You'll also be able to access the textbook as a SmartBook via the reading quizzes (filed under "Assignments" on Canvas). However, please note that the eBook (under Connect Library) and the SmartBook (that comes with the assignments) are not interlinked, so your highlights in one will not transport to the other. You're free to choose whichever way of accessing Cherlin's textbook works best for you.

The best browser for accessing the online content is Google Chrome.

I have intentionally kept the required reading load for this course at a very moderate level (under 30 pages in most weeks). In return, you will engage the material in depth. You may find it helpful to team up with a group of classmates to discuss the readings (your TAs will help you find study partners in section). We encourage you to contribute the fruits of your out-of-class discussions in lecture and in section. You will enjoy this class more and get a better grade.

The last page of thus syllabus contains a bibliography of additional optional readings. These are great books that will allow you to dig deeper. Take a look.

2. Reading Quizzes: Starting Tuesday, September 8, before (almost) every lecture, you will complete an online reading quiz on the required readings. Access these quizzes under "Assignments" on Canvas. The quizzes will become active a few days before the due date, so you can take them at your leisure. You can take each quiz as often as you wish *before* its deadline, until you are satisfied with your score. Your quiz scores will account for a total 10% of your final grade. This is a big deal.

For your convenience, the online quizzes for your *textbook* readings link to the relevant passages in the textbook. Additionally, the quizzes may contain questions about the required readings that are not part of your textbook, which are not linked from within the quiz.

3. Sections: Section is an important component of this course, accounting for 16% of your final grade (11% participation, 5% attendance). Because we've never held online sections before, we reserve the right to adjust the weight of sections participation for your final grades until October 1, when the final weight will be announced.

Thoughtful *section participation* is key. You will be graded on the *quality*, and not just the frequency, of your section participation. You should prepare for section. Complete all readings in advance of section and contribute your questions, reflections, and observations. Engage your classmates creatively and constructivel and advance the discussion.

Section attendance is required. For most of you, section will be held online. You may miss up to two section meetings without penalty, no questions asked. It is your responsibility to make up all missed work and to borrow notes from a classmate. Your attendance grade will drop to 2% with your third absence, and to 0% with your fourth absence. Please note that 5% for attendance is a big deal: 5% can amount to a full letter grade of your final grade. If you have a medical or other emergency that prevents you from attending several section meetings, please email both Professor Elwert and your TA to notify us. Sections begin on Thursday, September 8. (NB: If you're in a Monday section, your first section will occur asynchronously; watch for an email announcement.)

- **4. News Reflection:** You will compose two short assignments on current news related to select topics in Soc 120, accounting for a total of 14% of your final grade (7% each). The purpose is to connect what you have learned in class to what's going on in the world around you. For each reflection, you will find two news articles on a given topic from approved sources that have appeared after September 1, 2017. You will first summarize each article in up to two sentences and then write an insightful 300-word mini-essay relating your articles to the material you learned in class. Reports are due electronically at 9:15AM on the due dates noted in the syllabus. *Late assignments will receive a grade of zero without exception.* Plan to submit your assignment well head of the deadline. Please see the instructions posted on the course website for details.
- **5. Exams:** You will take two online midterm exams on Canvas, accounting for 60% of your final grade. All material presented in lecture and in your required readings is fair game. The exams will consist of multiple-choice questions that emphasize concepts, facts, and mechanisms discussed in class and in your readings. Additionally, each exam will include several fill-in-the-blank questions and two mini essays. The exams are non-cumulative. Since I appreciate that everybody may have a bad day once in a while, I will give greater weight to your better midterm score: your higher score will count more (35%) and your lower score will count less (25%).

No "final" exam: Your online schedule may list a "final exam" time during exam period. Pay no attention to it. There is no "final exam" in Soc 120 during exam period.

If you must miss an exam: Unfortunately, a class of this size cannot accommodate make-up exams. If students are compelled to miss the <u>first</u> exam because of serious illness, a serious family emergency, or a *required* university-sponsored activity, their second exam will simply count more. In other words, there is no penalty for missing the <u>first</u> exam. Nevertheless, I *strongly* recommend that you take it. Past experience suggests that it is a bad idea to skip the first midterm hoping for a better grade on the second—too much will ride on the second exam. Besides, success requires practice. Students compelled to miss the second exam must demonstrate compelling cause *prior* to the exam or receive a score of zero on the missed second midterm.

Online proctoring: Honorlock will proctor your two midterms exams on Canvas. Honorlock is an online proctoring service that allows you to take your exam from the comfort of your home. You do not need to create an account, download software or schedule an appointment in advance. Honorlock is available 24/7, and all that is needed is a computer, a working webcam and microphone, your ID, and a stable internet connection.

To get started, you will need Google Chrome and download the Honorlock Chrome Extension.

When you are ready to complete your assessment, log into Canvas, go to your course, and click on your exam. Clicking "Launch Proctoring" will begin the Honorlock authentication process, where you will take a picture of yourself, show your ID, and complete a scan of your room. Honorlock will be recording your exam session through your webcam, microphone, and recording your screen. Honorlock also has an integrity algorithm that can detect search-engine use, so please do not attempt to search for answers, even if it's on a secondary device.

Honorlock support is available 24/7/365. If you encounter any issues, you may contact them through live chat on the <u>support page</u> or within the exam itself. Some guides you should review are Honorlock MSRs, Student FAQ, Honorlock Knowledge Base, and How to Use Honorlock.

We will schedule a mock exam (ungraded) to give you a chance to familiarize yourself with the online exam system and Honorlock well ahead of time.

Grading Summary:

Exams:	60%	35% for your higher midterm score, 25% for your lower score.
Section Attendance:	5%	Up to two absences without deductions, 2-0% thereafter.
Section Participation:	11%	Quality and preparedness are key.
News Reflections	14%	7% each; no late submissions for any reason.
Reading Quizzes	10%	10 quizzes—we count your 8 best.
Total	100%	

Curve: Final grades will be curved to a median grade of B. Straight As are reserved for consistently excellent work. Experience suggests that approximately 15-20% of students will earn this distinction. Sustained effort is a prerequisite for a passing grade. Fs are individually earned and not the result of a curve.

OTHER COURSE POLICIES

Online office Hours: Use them! This is your chance for one-on-one conversations with the professor and your TA. Schedule your meeting online (see the first page of this syllabus).

We look forward to meeting you!

Grade disputes: You may contest grades on your exams or assignments *up to two weeks* after each exam or assignment has been returned to you. Please raise minor issues (e.g. computational errors in your score) with your TA. Any substantive concerns about the contents of your answer should be discussed with the professor. We pledge to review all concerns without prejudice. Your score may go up or down as a result of the review.

Email Etiquette: Due to the large size of this class, please adhere to the following rules. If you have questions or concerns, always check the course website and syllabus first. If you can't find what you need there, contact your TA. If issues remain, make an appointment to see Prof. Elwert during online office hours.

Email is a professional communication tool, and proper form matters (e.g. salutation, syntax, signature). This website provides great guidance for emailing professors and TAs: www.wikihow.com/Email-a-Professor. We try to respond to all emails within two business days.

Accommodations. Please send the professor an email by the end of the second week of classes if you are eligible for special arrangements or accommodations for testing, assignments, or other aspects of the course. This may be the case if English is your second language or if you experience a physical or psychological condition that makes it difficult for you to complete assignments and/or exams without some modification of those tasks. Accommodations are provided for students who qualify for disability services through the McBurney Center. Their website has detailed instructions about how to qualify: http://www.mcburney.wisc.edu/. If you become eligible (or anticipate becoming eligible) after the start of the semester, please email your instructors right away.

If you wish to request a scheduling accommodation for religious observances, send an email by the end of the second week of the course stating the specific date(s) for which you request

accommodation. Following UW policies, we will accommodate religious observances if you make a timely request early in the term. See the university's web page for details: https://kb.wisc.edu/page.php?id=21698.

Academic honesty. As with all courses at the University of Wisconsin, you are expected to follow the University's rules and regulations pertaining to academic honesty and integrity. The standards are outlined by the Office of the Dean of Students at http://www.students.wisc.edu/doso/academic-integrity/.

According to UWS 14, academic misconduct is defined as:

- seeks to claim credit for the work or efforts of another without authorization or citation;
- uses unauthorized materials or fabricated data in any academic exercise;
- forges or falsifies academic documents or records;
- intentionally impedes or damages the academic work of others;
- engages in conduct aimed at making false representation of a student's academic performance;
- assists other students in any of these acts.

For a complete description of behaviors that violate the University's standards as well the disciplinary penalties and procedures, please see the Dean of Students' website. If you have questions about the rules for any of the assignments or exams, please ask your instructor or one of the TAs.

Departmental notice of grievance and appeal rights. The Department of Sociology regularly conducts student evaluations of all professors and teaching assistants near the end of the semester. Students who have more immediate concerns about this course should report them to the professor or to the chair, 8128 Social Science.

Department learning objectives. Beyond the specific substantive and methodological content I will cover in this course, I have designed this course to achieve the following instructional objectives designated as priorities by the Department of Sociology.

- Critical Thinking about Society and Social Processes: Sociology graduates can look beyond the surface of issues to discover the "why" and "how" of social order and structure and consider the underlying social mechanisms that may be creating a situation, identify evidence that may adjudicate between alternate explanations for phenomena, and develop proposed policies or action plans in light of theory and data.
- See Things from a Global Perspective: Sociologists learn about different cultures, groups, and societies across both time and place. They are aware of the diversity of backgrounds

and experiences among individuals. They understand the ways events and processes in one country are linked to those in other countries.

Copyright, Intellectual Property, Usage of Audio Recorded Lectures Statement

Lecture materials and recordings for Felix Elwert are protected intellectual property at UW-Madison. Students in this course may use the materials and recordings for their personal use related to participation in this class. Students may also take notes solely for their personal use. If a lecture is not already recorded, you are not authorized to record my lectures without my permission unless you are considered by the university to be a qualified student with a disability requiring accommodation. [Regent Policy Document 4-1] Students may not copy or have lecture materials and recordings outside of class, including posting on internet sites or selling to commercial entities. Students are also prohibited from providing or selling their personal notes to anyone else or being paid for taking notes by any person or commercial firm without the instructor's express written permission. Unauthorized use of these copyrighted lecture materials and recordings constitutes copyright infringement and may be addressed under the university's policies, UWS Chapters 14 and 17, governing student academic and non-academic misconduct.

COURSE OUTLINE

Subject to change; please monitor your email for announcements.

All non-textbook readings are available on the course website.

Complete all readings in preparation for the listed date.

September

3 Introduction

Recommended: Angier, "The Changing American Family."

8 Kinship & Course Logistics

Required: Cherlin, pp. 4-11

Quiz 1 due (Canvas)

10 Early Family History

Required: Goldthorpe, Family Life in Western Societies, pp. 8-16

Recommended: Coontz, "What's Love Got To Do With It?"

Recommended: Goody, The European Family, Chapters 3-5

Quiz 2 due (Canvas)

15 U.S. History I

Required: Cherlin, pp. 35-43

Required: Coontz, "The Evolution of American Families"

Recommended: Goldthorpe, Family Life in Western Societies, Ch. 2, pp.18-40

Recommended: Adams, "Education for Extinction: American Indians and the

Boarding School Experience, 1875-1928."

Quiz 3 due (Canvas)

17 U.S. History II

Required: Cherlin, pp 51-64

Required: Fischer and Hout. "The Family in Trouble: Since When? For Whom?"

Recommended: Cherlin, "American Marriage in the Early 21st Century", pp. 33-

43.

Quiz 4 due (Canvas)

22 Sociological Approaches to the Family & Research Methods

Required: Cherlin, pp. 12-31

Quiz 5 due (Canvas)

24 Gender

Required: Cherlin, Chapter 3

Required: Orenstein, "What's Wrong with Cinderella?"

Recommended: Maglaty, "When Did Girls Start Wearing Pink"

Recommended: West and Zimmerman, "Doing Gender"

Quiz 6 due (Canvas)

29 Class, Status, and Families

Required: Cherlin, Chapter 4

Recommended: Schmidt and Mollica, "Impact of Childhood Trauma Reaches

Rural Wisconsin."

Quiz 7 due (Canvas)

October

1 African American Families

Required: Cherlin pp. 44-48, 117-132

Recommended: Franklin, "African Americans and the Birth of Modern

Marriage"

News Reflection #1 (Gender and Families) due at 9:15AM

Quiz 8 due (Canvas)

6 Race, Interracial Marriage

Required: Cherlin, pp.133-145

Quiz 9 due (Canvas)

8 Sexual Orientation

Required: Cherlin, pp. 48-51; 154-164

Quiz 10 due (Canvas)

13 Sex

Required: Cherlin, pp. 164-184

Required: Wade, "The Promise and Peril of Hookup Culture."

Recommended: Wade and Heldman, "Hooking Up and Opting Out—Negotiating

Sex in the First Year of College."

Recommended: Armstrong et al, "Is Hooking Up Bad for Young Women?"

Quiz 11 due (Canvas)

15 Midterm I

Exam administered via Canvas, normal class time.

20 Marriage and Cohabitation I

Required: Cherlin, Chapter 7

Quiz 12 due (Canvas)

22 Marriage and Cohabitation II

Required: Waite, "Does Marriage Matter?"

Quiz 13 due (Canvas)

27 Work and Families I

Required: Cherlin, pp. 214-217; 256

Recommended: Bianchi, "Maternal Employment and Time with Children:

Dramatic Change or Surprising Continuity?"

Recommended: Kiesling, "Paid Child Care for Working Mothers? All It Took Was a

World War."

Quiz 14 due (Canvas)

29 Work and Families II

Required: Cherlin, pp. 217-230

Required: Hochschild, "Joey's Problem"

Required: Wade, "The Modern Marriage Trap."

Quiz 15 due (Canvas)

November

3 Children and Parents

Required: Cherlin, Chapter 9

Required: Lareau, "Invisible Inequality" (Reader)

Quiz 16 due (Canvas)

5 Old Age and Widowhood

Required: Cherlin, Chapter 10

Quiz 17 due (Canvas)

10 Divorce I

Required: Cherlin, pp. 321-329

Quiz 18 due (Canvas)

12 Divorce II: Consequences and Causality

Required: Cherlin, pp. 329-337

Recommended: Li, "The Impact of Divorce on Children's Behavior Problems"

Required: Elwert, notes on causality (course website)

News Reflection #2 (Parents and Children) due at 9:15AM

17 Remarriage and Stepfamilies

Required: Cherlin, pp. 338-346

Quiz 19 due (Canvas)

19 Same-Sex Marriage

Required: Cherlin, 205-206; 406-407.

Required: TBA

Recommended: Meezan & Rauch, "Gay Marriage, Same-Sex Parenting, and

America's Children"

Quiz 20 due (Canvas)

24 Legal Approaches to the Family; Domestic Violence

Required: Minow: Redefining Families

Required: Cherlin, Chapter 11

Quiz 21 due (Canvas)

THANKSGIVING BREAK NOV 23-26

December

1 Family Change At Home and Abroad

Required: Cherlin, Chaper 13

Recommended: Lesthaeghe, "The Unfolding Story of the Second Demographic

Transition"

Recommended: Cherlin, "American Marriage in the Early 21st Century", pp. 43-50

Quiz 22 due (Canvas)

3 Public Policy

Required: Cherlin, Chapter 14

Quiz 23 due (Canvas)

8 Separating Children from Parents

Required: Cherlin: 242-243, 308-309.

Quiz 24 due (Canvas)

10 Midterm II

Exam administered via Canvas, normal class time.

Note: The second midterm is *not* cumulative.

There is no "final exam" during exam period.

REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDED READINGS (EXCEPT TEXTBOOK)

All of these readings are available online on the course website under "content."

Angier, Natalie. 2013. "The Changing American Family." *The New York Times*, Nov 26, 2013. http://www.nytimes.com/2013/11/26/health/families.html?pagewanted=all& r=0

Bianchi, Suzanne M. 2000. "Maternal Employment and Time with Children: Dramatic Change or Surprising Continuity?" *Demography* 37:401-414.

Cherlin, Andrew. 2005. "American Marriage in the Early Twenty-First Century.: *The Future of Children* 15(2):33-55.

Coontz, Stephanie. "What's Love Got to Do with It? A Brief History of Marriage." Pp. 30-36 in Cherlin, Andrew J. (ed.), 2008, *Public and Private Families: A Reader* (5th edition). New York: McGraw Hill.

England, Paula, and Reuben J. Thomas. 2007. "The Decline of the Date and the Rise of the College Hook Up." Pp. 151-162 in Arlene S. Skolnick and Jerome H. Skolnick, *Family in Transition* (14th edition). Boston: Pearson.

Goldthorpe, J.E. 1987. Family Life in Western Societies: A historical sociology of family relationships in Britain and North America. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Chapter 2.

Goody, Jack. 2000. *The European Family: An Historico-Anthropological Essay*. Oxford: Blackwell. Chapters 3-5.

Hochschild, Arlie R. 1989. The Second Shift. London: Penguin. Chapter 4 (Joey's Problem).

Lareau, Annette. "Invisible Inequality: Social Class and Childrearing in Black Families and White Families." Pp. 82-105 in Cherlin, Andrew J. (ed.), 2008, *Public and Private Families: A Reader* (5th edition). New York: McGraw Hill.

Lesthaeghe, Ron. 2010. "The Unfolding Story of the Second Demographic Transition." *Population and Development Review* 36(2):211-251.

Meezan, William, and Jonathan Rauch. "Gay Marriage, Same-Sex Parenting, and America's Children." Pp. 327-338 in Cherlin, Andrew J. (ed.), 2008, *Public and Private Families: A Reader* (5th edition). New York: McGraw Hill.

Minow, Martha. 1998. "Redefining Families: Who's In and Who's Out?" pp. 7-19 in K.V. Hansen and A.I. Garey (eds.), *Families in the United States: Kinship and Domestic Politics*, Temple University Press: Philadelphia.

Orenstein, Peggy. 2006. "What's Wrong with Cinderella?" New York Times, Magazine, Dec, 24, 2006.

http://www.nytimes.com/2006/12/24/magazine/24princess.t.html?pagewanted=all& r=0

Risman, Barbara, J (Ed.). 2010. *Families as They Really Are*. New York: Norton. (Various Chapters)

Maglaty, Jeanne. 2011. "When Did Girls Start Wearing Pink?" http://www.smithsonianmag.com/arts-culture/When-Did-Girls-Start-WearingPink.html?c=y&page=1

Waite, Linda J. 1995. "Does Marriage Matter?" Demography 32:483-507.

West, Candance, and Don H. Zimmerman. "Doing Gender." Pp. 47-56 in Cherlin, Andrew J. (ed.), 2008, *Public and Private Families: A Reader* (5th edition). New York: McGraw Hill.

FURTHER READING

This is a short list of great books for further reading. Many of these books are highly engaging reads and would ideally supplement your studies. Take a look!

Amato, Paul R. et al. 2009: *Alone Together: How Marriage in America is Changing*. Harvard University Press.

Casper, Lynne M., and Suzanne M. Bianchi. 2002. *Continuity and Change in the American Family.* Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Cherlin, Andrew J. 1992. *Marriage, Divorce, Remarriage*, revised and enlarged edition. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Cherlin, Andrew J. 2009. *The Marriage-Go-Round: The State of Marriage and Family in America Today*. Knopf.

Coontz, Stephanie et al. 2008. American Families: A Multicultural Reader. New York: Routledge.

Coontz, Stephanie. 2005. *Marriage, a History: How Love Conquered Marriage.* New York: Penguin.

Cott, Nancy F. 2000. *Public Vows: A History of Marriage and the Nation*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Edin, Kathryn, and Maria Kefalas. 2007. *Promises I can Keep: Why Poor Women Put Motherhood Before Marriage.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Goody, Jack. 2000. The European Family: An Historico-Anthropological Essay. Oxford: Blackwell.

Griffin, John Howard. 2004. Black Like Me. San Antonio: Wings Press. (NB: any edition works)

Hochschild, Arlie R. 1989. The Second Shift. London: Penguin.

Lareau, Annette. 2003. *Unequal Childhoods: Class, Race, and Family Life.* University of California Press.

Laumann, Edward O. et al (eds.). 1994. *The Social Organization of Sexuality: Sexual Practices in the United States.* Chicago: Chicago University Press.

Romano, Renee C. *Race Mixing: Black-White Marriage in Postwar America*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Wade, Lisa. 2017. American Hookup: The New Culture of Sex on Campus. Norton.