



Soc 120: Marriage & Family

This course will explore the theoretical, historical, and sociological research on marriage and the family. Looking specifically at families in the United States, students will learn how families adapt to social, economic, and political environments and changes. Students will also analyze current trends in familial development and critically examine how families' experiences are shaped by different factors, including race, gender, class, sexuality, disability, citizenship, and more. Using a comparative approach to families, which emphasizes diversity and sources of inequality, this course will help students understand emerging family forms as well as the challenges and opportunities families face in contemporary society.

Learning Goals:

- Apply sociological concepts and theories to social issues, human behaviors, and everyday life.
- Develop the necessary skills to examine how historical, political, and economic changes affect American families.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the sociological patterns of families.
- Analyze the multicultural patterns of families and evaluate their influence on the American family.
- Evaluate research methodologies involved in the study of families.

Course Materials:

- Required: Cohen, Philip N. *The Family: Diversity, Inequality, and Social Change* (3rd edition)
 - You do not need to buy any special access code, merely the textbook or eBook access
- Any supplemental readings, videos, and activities will be provided on Canvas

Classroom & Inclusion Policy

This course is an opportunity for us to learn about many different people's perspectives, including the perspectives of other students in the class. To create an environment where all voices are heard and valued, we must respect each other and allow for each other's growth and development. Whether in class or discussion, we should aim to create a brave space where we can all share and develop our ideas. To do this, I ask that we each try to observe the following guidelines:

- Approach each topic and discussion with a sense of openness and willingness to challenge your own ideas.
- Animosity or disrespect towards any student, teacher, or guest speaker is unwelcome.
- Critique and discuss *ideas* and *facts*, but not people.

- Never assume you know what other people are thinking or what groups they represent.
- Be mindful of how much you contribute (Is it too much or too little? Whose voices are not being heard?)
- Be aware of how your own experiences shape your perspective as well as the perspectives of your classmates.
- Respect and actively listen to your classmates when those perspectives are different or in disagreement with your own.

If, at any point, you have concerns about the class or discussion, please feel free to talk to Sydney or me.

Course Format

There will be three 50-minute lectures each week. Two will be synchronous, and one will be asynchronous. This is subject to change throughout the semester. A separate course guide will be handed out in the first week of class. It will give you information about how to access course materials and lectures.

Discussion Sections

In addition to our class meetings on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, you are required to attend a discussion section once a week with Sydney Alhadeff, the teaching assistant for this course. You should be enrolled in one of the sections below. If you are not enrolled by the first day of class or want to change sections, please email Sydney at alhadeff2@wisc.edu. You may not switch sections without Sydney's permission.

Section	Day and Time
301	Tuesday 8:50 – 9:40 AM
302	Tuesday 9:55 – 10:45 AM
303	Tuesday 11:00 – 11:50 PM
304	Tuesday 12:05 – 12:55 PM

Accommodations & Accessibility

I aim to make this course and the topics/materials covered in it accessible to ALL students, regardless of ability or previous educational experiences. Students with accommodations should **present their UW McBurney Visa to the instructor and teaching assistant within the first two weeks of class.** This helps us provide you with the best possible experience and make all the necessary accommodations.

Especially given current events, we highly encourage all students to keep us in the loop regarding illnesses, family emergencies, or any other personal situations that come up during the semester. We understand this continues to be a stressful moment in history and that many of you have work, caretaking, or family responsibilities that have been impacted. We are more than happy to work with you within certain limits but ask that you keep us informed.

Grades & Assignments

Criteria	% of Grade	Details & Due Dates
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Attendance and Participation	25%	Lecture: - Attend 2 synchronous lectures per week - Complete 1 asynchronous lecture per week - Participate in in-class activities and/or any polls, discussion posts, surveys, etc. related to class
		Discussion Section: - Attend discussion sections each week - Actively participate in class discussions as well as in any activities or written exercises
Assessments *Online quizzes completed on Canvas. Open note and open book. Students may NOT work together or with tutors, etc.	45%	Assessment #1 (15%) <i>Due Feb. 26 at 11:59 PM</i>
		Assessment #2 (15%) <i>Due Mar. 26 at 11:59 PM</i>
		Assessment #3 (15%) <i>Due May 5 at 11:59 PM</i>
Written Assignments *Submitted online to Canvas, 3 pgs. each	30%	Media Analysis (15%) <i>Due Mar. 17 at 11:59 PM</i>
		News Analysis (15%) <i>Due Apr. 14 at 11:59 PM</i>

Attendance and Participation

You are asked to attend two classes each week on Monday and Wednesday and keep up with course readings. Attendance will be taken at each class. Since this course is online, the participation grade for lectures will be based on your engagement in in-class and pre-class activities like polls, short surveys, discussion posts, and breakout sessions. These activities should only take a few minutes and will not be difficult to complete. They are simply a way to keep everyone engaged and make sure that you are keeping up with the class readings and material. This will make the assessments much easier and ensure that everyone is getting the most out of this course.

I understand, of course, that things come up, and you won't always be able to attend class for various reasons. For that reason, you will get three unexcused absences over the course of the semester. As a matter of courtesy, we ask that you tell either Sydney or me that you will not be able to attend if possible. If something keeps you from attending more than three classes (including discussions), please talk to me as soon as possible.

*This is subject to change.

Assessments

The assessments will be online quizzes with a mixture of multiple-choice, short answer, and essay questions. They will be open note and open book, but students may NOT work on them together or with tutors. Failure to follow this rule will result in severe grade penalties.

With that said, these tests are not meant to be overly difficult. If you have been keeping up with the readings and attending lectures, you should be able to do well on them. Since the

assessments are also open book and open note, they will ask that you apply critical thinking skills to the topics covered in class. Many of the questions will require you to synthesize and analyze the information you have been given.

Written Assignments

You will have two written assignments, one due mid-March and the other due mid-April. For each one, you will use the concepts, theories, and research covered in class to analyze a media representation of the family AND one news story about families. Each of these will be 3 pages long, and they will be submitted via Canvas. At least three weeks before each is due, you will be given further specifications regarding the topic, format, and requirements, including a detailed rubric. If you have any questions after the specifications are handed out, I would be more than happy to set up a time to talk with you.

Late Policy

If you cannot complete the assignments by the due date, please let me know as soon as possible. Aside from emergencies, I will not accept ANY requests for extensions 48 hours before the assignment is due, and it is up to the discretion of the instructor and TA about when and when not to grant extensions.

For each day an assignment is late, your grade will be lowered one half letter grade (B papers will automatically become BC papers). Late assignments will not be accepted past one week following the due date and will receive an F or no points.

Grading Standards

The grading scale for the course is as follows:

- A = 92-100
- AB = 87-91
- B = 82-86
- BC = 77-81
- C = 70-76
- D = 60-69,
- F = 59 or below.

Academic Integrity

The Office of the Dean of Students defines academic misconduct to include, but is not limited to the following:

- Seeks to claim credit for the work or efforts of another without authorization or citation (**plagiarism**)
- Uses unauthorized materials or fabricated data in any academic exercise (using notes for a closed book online exam)
- Forges or falsifies academic documents or records (**having a friend sign you in for attendance when you are absent**)
- Intentionally impedes or damages the academic work of others
- Engages in conduct aimed at making false representation of a student's academic performance (altering test answers and submitting the test for re-grading)
- Assists other students in any of these acts

To prevent academic dishonesty, **all written assignments will be run through Turnitin.com**. This service checks your assignment against all written assignments available online, in other courses, and at other universities.

Department Learning Goals

Beyond the specific substantive and methodological content covered in the course, the course has been designed to achieve the following instructional objectives designated as priorities by the Department of Sociology:

- ***Critically Evaluate Published Research:*** Sociology graduates will be able to read and evaluate published research as it appears in academic journals and popular or policy publications.
- ***Communicate Skillfully:*** Sociology majors write papers and make oral presentations that build arguments and assess evidence in a clear and effective manner.
- ***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, structure, and consider the underlying social mechanisms that may be creating a situation. They can identify evidence that may adjudicate between alternate explanations for phenomena as well as 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 residents of the United States. They understand the ways events and processes in one country are linked to those in other countries.
- ***Work effectively in groups:*** Students will improve their skills in understanding group dynamics and working well with people from different backgrounds with different strengths and weaknesses.

Concerns & Department Contact

The Department of Sociology embraces the notion that intellectual community is enriched and enhanced by diversity along a number of dimensions, including race, ethnicity and national origins, gender and gender identity, sexuality, class, age, ability, and religion. Your suggestions are encouraged and appreciated! Please let me know ways to improve the course's effectiveness for you personally or for other students.

While formal evaluations of the course and section will be administered at the end of the term, I will be administering a more informal midterm evaluation of the course about halfway through the course. I do this so that I can better gauge what you as students are finding helpful as well as areas for improvement or change.

The Department of Sociology distributes student evaluations of all instructors and teaching assistants near the end of the semester. Students who have more immediate concerns about this course should report them to the instructor (ehight@wisc.edu) or the department chair (socchair@ssc.wisc.edu). The main office of the Department of Sociology is located at 8128 Sewell Social Science.

Course Schedule, Readings, and Important Dates

Class Date	Topic	Readings	Important Dates
Week 1			
M: Jan. 25	Introduction	No Readings	Jan. 31 @ 11:59p: Intro Survey Due
W: Jan. 27	What is a family?	Cohen, Ch. 1	
F: Jan. 29	What is a family?		
Week 2			
M: Feb. 1	History of the Family (Pt. 1)	Cohen, Ch. 2	
W: Feb. 3	History of the Family (Pt. 2)		
F: Feb. 5	Myths about the Family	Coontz, On Marriages (watch video)	
Week 3			
M: Feb. 8	Race & Ethnicity (Overview)	Cohen, Ch. 3 (76-104, 111-115)	
W: Feb. 10	Intersectionality	Collins: "Like One of the Family" (skim)	
Fr: Feb. 12	Immigration & the Family	Baca Zinn et al., Ch. 5 (65-76) (skim)	
Week 4			
M: Feb. 15	Theories of Social Class	Cohen, Ch. 4 (118-155)	
W: Feb. 17	Social Class and Mobility		
F: Feb. 19	Class and Parenting	Lareau, Unequal Childhoods (skim)	
Week 5			
M: Feb. 22	Sex & Gender	Cohen, Ch. 5	Feb. 22 - Feb. 26: Assessment #1
W: Feb. 24	Gender Socialization & Doing Gender		Feb. 26 @ 11:59p: Assessment #1 Due
F: Feb. 26	Gender and Work	Film: TBD	
Week 6			
M: Mar. 1	Sexuality	Cohen, Ch. 6	
W: Mar. 3	Sexuality & The Family		
F: Mar. 5	Reproductive Justice		

Week 7			
M: Mar. 8	Social Construction of Intimacy	Baca Zinn et al., Ch. 8	Mar. 14 @ 11:59p: Mid-Semester Survey Due
W: Mar. 10	Dating Rituals & Mate Selection		
F: Mar. 12	Sex Before Marriage & Hook-Up Culture	Wade, "What's so cultural about hookup culture?"	
Week 8			
M: Mar. 15	Current Trends in Marriage (pt. 1)	Baca Zinn et al., Ch. 13	Mar. 17 @ 11:59p: Media Analysis Due
W: Mar. 17	Current Trends in Marriage (pt. 2)		
F: Mar. 19	Benefits of Marriage	Baca Zinn, Ch. 9 (166-169)	
Week 9			
M: Mar. 22	Division of Labor	Cohen, Ch. 11	Mar. 22 – Mar. 26: Assessment #2 Mar. 26 @ 11:59p: Assessment #2 Due
W: Mar. 24	Care Work, Conflict and Solutions		
F: Mar. 26	Changing Lives, Resistant Institutions	Gerson, "Changing Lives, Resistant Institutions" (skim)	
Week 10			
M: Mar. 29	Social Construction of Childhood/Parenting & Parenting Trends	Cohen, Ch. 9	
W: Mar. 31	Why (Not) Have Children?		
F: Apr. 2	Disability & Families	Video TBD	
Week 11			
M: Apr. 5	Historical Trends in Divorce	Cohen, Ch. 10	
W: Apr. 7	Causes/Consequences of Divorce & Remarriage		
F: Apr. 9	Family & Environmental Change	Jamieson, "Families, relationships and 'environment'" (skim)	
Week 12			
M: Apr. 12	Intimate Partner Violence	Cohen, Ch. 12	Apr. 14 @ 11:59p: News Analysis Due
W: Apr. 14	Family Violence		
F: Apr. 16	TBD		

Sociology 120
Spring 2021
Mo/We/Fri 9:55AM-10:45AM

Instructor: Elena Hight
Email: ehight@wisc.edu
Office Hours: TBD

Week 13			
M: Apr. 19	Family & the State	Baca Zinn et al., Ch. 14	
W: Apr. 21	Welfare and Future of Family Policies		
F: Apr. 23	The Aging of Society	Baca Zinn et al., Ch. 5 (77-84)	
Week 14			
M: Apr. 26	Future of the Family (Pt. 1)	Cohen, Ch. 13	Apr. 30 - May 5: Assessment #3
W: Apr. 28	Future of the Family (Pt. 2)		May 5 @ 11:59p: Assessment #3 Due
F: Apr. 30	Wrapping Up		

*All dates and topics are subject to change at the discretion of the professor.