

Sociology 120: Marriage and the Family

University of Wisconsin – Madison

Mon, Wed, and Fri, 9:55-10:45am

4 credits

Location: 6104 Sewell Social Sciences
Spring 2022

Instructor: Jill Richardson

Office: Zoom

Office Hours: Tuesdays 9am-11am* by appointment

*Or any other time we are both available, by appointment

Email: jerichardson@wisc.edu

TA: Ana Gonzales-Cain

Office Hours: Wednesdays and Fridays, 11am-12pm

Location: 2418 Sewell Social Sciences

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See section syllabi on the course website for section meeting times and locations, readings, and announcements.

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 play a major role in generating and perpetuating social inequalities. In this sense, families are “public institutions” that matter for society as a whole.

Conversely, society as a whole impacts families. The lives of each member of each family are shaped by gender, race, class, sexual identities, disability, immigration status, laws, religion, technology, and so on. Families are impacted by the societies around them.

This course will examine families how families impact society and how society impacts families from a variety of perspectives of family sociology and social demography. The course will focus on aggregate patterns and historical trends within and between groups as defined by class, race, and gender. We will learn about how sociologists know what they know, and how qualitative and quantitative research work together to inform our understanding of families. In doing so, we will develop our sociological imaginations and increase literacy in engaging with sociological research.

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 a fundamental

constant in family structure is change. Consequently, it is a major goal of the course to evaluate critically our own assumptions about family structures and processes.

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

You should read all assigned material before class. Have your notes ready and be prepared to ask and answer questions. Lectures will draw attention to select issues from the required readings, but also present new material not covered in the readings. You are responsible for all material covered in lecture in addition to everything covered in the required readings. To facilitate note taking during lecture, I will post PowerPoints on the course website a few hours before lecture. Please bring them to class either printed or electronically.

If you need to miss a lecture, video will be available on Canvas under the Zoom module (streamed live and video recorded). Lecture attendance is not graded, but attending lecture is strongly recommended because it will help you with the graded components of the course.

Sections

Weekly discussion sections give you the opportunity to engage with the material on a deeper level. Thoughtful participation is key. Prepare for section! Complete all readings in advance of section and contribute your questions, reflections, and observations. Engage your classmates creatively and constructively and advance the discussion. Section discussions are an integral part of this course, and section attendance is mandatory. Your TA will distribute a separate section syllabus with further instructions. Sections are your time to shine!

COVID-19

For spring 2022, instructors and students should consult the following website for current campus health and safety guidance: covidresponse.wisc.edu.

REQUIREMENTS

There are four requirements for passing Soc 120: (1) Discussion posts, (2) section attendance and participation, (3) 3 short papers, and (4) two exams.

Readings

All required and recommended readings, videos, and podcasts are available on Canvas in Modules, and even more readings are available in Files.

I have intentionally kept the required reading load for this course at a very moderate level (under 40 pages in most weeks). In return, I ask that you engage the material in depth. You may find it helpful to team up with a group of classmates to discuss the readings – or read and interact with your classmates' discussion posts on Canvas. 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.

I have uploaded several readings to Canvas, all available under Files. These readings present topics that are covered in lecture but are not (exhaustively) covered in your required readings. I recommend that you take a look and read around.

Discussion Posts

Discussion posts are designed to guide your engagement with the readings. You will post 10 discussion posts during the semester and reply to one of your peers' posts. Discussion posts are due by class time each Monday *unless otherwise noted*. Each discussion post is worth 3% of your grade, for a total of 30% of your grade for all 10. Discussion posts are graded for completion rather than a letter grade.

Because discussion posts are intended to require you complete and engage with readings prior to attending class each week, no late work will be accepted unless you have extenuating circumstances like a disability, illness, or family emergency. Instead, you are given the choice of which 10 weeks you complete discussion posts out of 13 opportunities to do so. If an emergency comes up and you do need an extension, please contact your TA.

Section Attendance and Participation

Section attendance and participation are important components of this course, accounting for 15% of your final grade. **Section attendance is required.** You may miss up to two section meetings without penalty, no questions asked. It is your responsibility to make up all missed work, to obtain any handouts distributed in class, and to borrow notes from a classmate.

Please refer to your TA's syllabus for details about how section attendance and participation will be graded. Note that if you have a medical or other emergency that prevents you from attending several section meetings, email your TA to notify her of the circumstances.

Short Papers

You will compose three short papers on topics related to family sociology, accounting for a total of 20% of your final grade. Papers are due electronically by class time on the dates noted in the syllabus. Late assignments will lose 10% per day late unless you receive an extension.

If you need a short extension, please ask for one before your assignment is already late if possible. Self-care is important and pulling all-nighters or completing papers while under extreme stress is not conducive to learning. If you need a few extra days to complete a paper, for any reason, your TA and I will say yes unless we have a good reason we are unable to do so.

The first two papers will be given a letter grade, worth 8% of your final grade each. The purpose of this assignment is to make connections between different readings and concepts and what is going on in the world around you. The third paper will be graded for completion, worth 4% of your final grade. This paper will be a reflection on what you learned during the semester.

Exams

You will take two exams, accounting for 35% 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. 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 exam score: your higher score will count more (20%) and your lower score will count less (15%).

Notes:

- Your online schedule will list a “final exam” time. Pay no attention to it. There is no “final exam” in Soc 120 after classes end.
- Canvas weights both exams equally. Unless you score the same on both exams, this will make your grade on Canvas appear lower than your actual grade.

If You Miss the First Exam: Unfortunately, a class of this size cannot accommodate make-up exams. If students are compelled to miss the first exam because of serious illness, a serious family emergency, leaving early for spring break, or a required university-sponsored activity, their second exam will simply count more. In other words, there is no penalty for missing the first 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 a single 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.

If you suffer from ADHD, test anxiety, or any other disability, I recommend you apply to the McBurney Center for accommodations. Some students qualify for testing accommodations like time and a half or testing in a small group setting.

Grading Summary

Discussion Posts:	30%	10 posts worth 3% each
Exams:	35%	20% for your higher score, 15% for your lower score.
Section Attendance:	15%	Up to two absences without deductions.
Short papers:	20%	<u>Worth 8%, 8%, and 4% of your grade</u>
Total	100%	

Grading Scale

A	93-100
AB	88-92
B	83-87
BC	78-82
C	70-77
D	60-69
F	0-59

All grades will be rounded to the nearest integer.

OTHER COURSE POLICIES

Office Hours: Use them! This is your chance for one-on-one conversations with Jill and your TA. We can answer your questions about how to do your assignments.

Grade disputes: You may contest exam grades after exams and assignments have been returned in section. 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 Jill.

Accommodations: Please send the professor an email by the end of the second week of the course 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 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/>. Provide a copy of your accommodations request to the instructor by the end of the second week of class. We try to reserve rooms and proctors by the third week in class, so we must know of all accommodations by then.

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; campus policy requires that religious observances be accommodated 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 your TA.

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.

COURSE OUTLINE

Subject to change; please monitor course announcements.

All readings are available on the course website. Do your required readings in preparation for Monday of each week unless otherwise noted.

<u>Monday</u>	<u>Wednesday</u>	<u>Friday</u>
Week 1: Jan 26-28 C. Wright Mills, " The Promise ." (Due Wed)		
	<u>Introduction I</u> Recommended: Angier, "The Changing American Family."	<u>Introduction II</u>
Week 2: Jan 31-Feb 4 KILLSBACK. 2019. "A nation of families: traditional indigenous kinship, the foundation for Cheyenne sovereignty" pp. 41-43 Champagne. "Kinship and Tribal Nations." Coontz, "The Evolution of American Families" (Due Wed) We Colonials: Sodomy Laws in America (Due Wed)		
<u>Kinship</u> Due: Discussion post 1.	<u>Family History I</u> Due: Discussion Post 2 Recommended: Goody, The European Family, Ch. 3-5 Goldthorpe, Family Life in Western Societies, Ch. 2, pp.18-40	<u>Family History II</u> <i>Videos:</i> Coverture and Breadwinner/Homemaker Marriages
Week 3: Feb 7-11 bell hooks. <i>Ain't I a Woman</i> . Chapter 1. Gonzales et al. 2007 "Eugenics as Indian Removal: Sociohistorical Processes and the De(con)struction of American Indians in the Southeast."		
<u>Family History III</u> Due: Discussion Post 3 Recommended: Popova. 2014. "A Visual History of Romantic Friendship."	<u>Family History IV</u>	<u>U.S. Families by the Numbers</u> Recommended: Fischer and Hout. "The Family in Trouble: Since When? For Whom?"
Week 4: Feb 14-18 Give Methods a Chance podcast – CJ Pascoe on Ethnographic Research Smith. "The Standard North American Family." <i>Video:</i> Kimberle Crenshaw TED Talk (Due Fri)		
<u>Theoretical Frameworks</u> Due: Discussion Post 4	<u>Research Methods</u> Recommended: Give Methods a Chance podcast – Christopher	<u>Intersectionality</u>

	Wildeman on Quantitative Data Analysis	
Week 5: Feb 21-25 West and Zimmerman. “Doing Gender” Wade & Ferree. “Men and Masculinities”		
<u>Gender</u> Recommended: Maglaty, “When Did Girls Start Wearing Pink?” Due: Discussion Post 5	<u>Gender</u>	<u>Gender</u> Videos: Sex & Gender minorities
Week 6: Feb 28-Mar 4 Landale and Oropesa. 2007. “Hispanic families: Stability and change.” Chung. <i>Saving Face</i> . Chapter 2		
<u>Race, Class, and Immigration</u> Recommended: Omi & Winant. 2014. <i>Racial Formation in the United States</i> . Pp. 1-16. Franklin, “African Americans and the Birth of Modern Marriage” Due: Discussion Post 6	<u>Race, Class, and Immigration</u> Recommended: Livingston. Virginia is For Lovers. Chung. <i>Saving Face</i> Ch. 3 (skim) Enchautegui and Menjivar. 2015. “Paradoxes of Family Immigration Policy Separation Reorganization and Reunification.”	<u>Race, Class, and Immigration</u> Due Mar 4: Short Paper 1
Week 7: Mar 7-11 Acosta. <i>Amigas y Amantes</i> . “As Long As You Wear a Dress” Martin & Kazyak. “Heteroromantic Love and Hetero-Sexiness in Children’s G-Rated Movies.”		
<u>Sexual Identities</u> Recommended: Gayle Rubin. Thinking Sex. Ward. <i>Not Gay: Sex Between Straight White Men</i> . Mize & Manago. 2018. “Precarious Sexuality: How Men and Women are Differentially Categorized for Similar Sexual Behavior.” Due: Discussion Post 7	<u>Sexual Identities</u>	<u>Exam #1</u> <i>The exam is in person unless you have testing accommodations or you choose to take it online using Honorlock.</i>
Spring Break – Mar 12-20		
Week 8: Mar 21-25 Wade: “The Promise and Peril of Hookup Culture.” Waite, “Does Marriage Matter?”		

<u>Courtship, Dating, & Hookups</u> Due: Discussion Post 8 <i>Videos</i>	<u>Sex</u> Recommended: Riecke et al. "After Experiences of Unwanted Sex, Queer Women Think Men are 'Stupid'" Geronimus and Korenman, "The Socioeconomic Consequences of Teenage Childbearing Reconsidered"	<u>Marriage and Cohabitation</u>
Week 9: Mar 28-Apr 1 Hochschild. 1989. <i>Joey's Problem</i> . Comic: The Gender Wars of Household Chores. Collins & Mayer. 2010. <i>Both Hands Tied</i> . Introduction.		
<u>Marriage & Cohabitation</u>	<u>Same-Sex Marriage</u> Recommended: Meezan & Rauch, "Gay Marriage, Same-Sex Parenting, and America's Children"	<u>Work and Families I</u> Recommended: Wade, "The Modern Marriage Trap." Yglesias. " Basic Parenting Gets Fathers a Gold Star, and Other Things I Learned on Paternity Leave ." Bianchi, "Maternal Employment and Time with Children: Dramatic Change or Surprising Continuity?" Due: Discussion Post 9
Week 10: Apr 4-8 Sherman. <i>Those Who Work, Those Who Don't</i> . Chapter 4 pp. 159-end Lareau. <i>Invisible Inequality</i> .		
<u>Work and Families II</u> Recommended: Damingier. 2019. "The Cognitive Dimension of Household Labor." Due: Discussion Post 10	<u>Children & Families I</u>	<u>Children & Families II</u>
Week 11: Apr 11-15 Dow. <i>Mothering While Black</i> . Introduction Chung. <i>Saving Face</i> . Chapter 4.		
<u>Children & Families III</u> Due: Discussion Post 11	<u>Divorce I</u>	<u>Divorce II</u>
Week 12: Apr 18-22 Li, "The Impact of Divorce on Children's Behavior Problems"		
<u>Divorce III</u> Due: Discussion Post 12 Due: Short Paper #2	<u>Remarriage & Stepfamilies</u>	<u>Aging & the Elderly</u>

Week 13: Apr 25-29

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

Peterson. "[Other Countries Have Social Safety Nets. The U.S. Has Women.](#)"

Global Family Change

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

Due: Discussion Post 13

Public Policy

Due: Short Paper 3

Contemporary Family

Issues

Week 14: May 2-6**Contemporary Family**

Issues

Exam Review**Exam #2**