

Marriage & Family in the U.S.

SOCY 3016

Spring 2018

Tuesday & Thursday 3:30-4:45

Classroom: RAMY N1B23

Instructor: Jennifer Pace

Office: Ketchum 371

Office Hours: Thursdays 4:45-6:00pm

Email: Jennifer.Pace@colorado.edu

**Note: I will return emails within 48 hours, excluding weekends.*

Course Description:

Sociology is the scientific study of society, social institutions, and social relationships. We all have experience living in society and interacting with other people. Sociology, however, is an unfamiliar way of looking at the familiar. The goal of this course is to embark on a comparative and historical examination of marriage and the family within the U.S. context. This course will emphasize changing family roles and family structures, as well as consider alternatives to the nuclear family and traditional marriage. We will explore both old and new definitions of family. This course has prerequisites: SOCY 1001, and SOCY 3001 or 3011. It is also restricted to junior/senior SOCY majors; or consent of the instructor.

Required Text: Cherlin, Andrew J. 2009. The Marriage-Go-Round: The State of Marriage and Family in America Today. New York, NY: Vintage Books.

**All additional readings will be available on our D2L course website.*

Grading: Grading for this course will be determined by the following breakdown:

Participation & Assignments	25%
Paper #1: Current Research on Marriage & Family	25%
Paper #2: Policy Proposal	25%
Final Exam	25%
TOTAL	100%

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Participation & Assignments (25%): Because we will be working collaboratively and because there will be regular in-class discussions and exercises, it is essential that you attend class and that you are prepared to participate. *Participation will be worth 5% of your overall grade* and will be calculated by your attendance and participation in class discussions. *Assignments will be worth 20% of your overall grade.* There will be 14 assignments collected over the course of the semester. 12 will count toward your grade. The week's assignment will *either* be a summary of the week's readings or an "interview & report." See below for details.

***Weekly Summaries:** Every week (by class time on **Tuesday**), you should prepare for class by writing a **summary of ALL of the week's readings** along with **three discussion questions**. Your summary of the week's readings should be approximately ½-1 page in length (**typed**). Handwritten summaries/questions will not be accepted. Summaries should demonstrate that you have read each of the readings assigned for the week. Your discussion questions should be based on the readings for the entire week. You will use these summaries/questions to facilitate your participation in class and/or group discussions.

- I will collect your summaries 12 weeks of the semester (see schedule for dates).
- I will collect summaries on *either* Tuesday or Thursday of the week.
- You may skip two summary weeks without penalty (10 summaries will be counted toward your grade).
- There will be no options for turning summaries in early OR late.

***Interview & Report #1: Exploring Partnership** This is your opportunity to explore marriage & partnership in a real world environment and bring your feedback to our class. You should interview at least two people (outside of class) about their experiences with **marriage and/or partnership**. You should develop at least three questions to ask your interviewees about their experiences. Those questions should be informed by class discussion about marriage and family. *Your written report of the interview should be typed, approximately one page, and include the questions you asked, the responses you received, and your thoughts about what you learned.* (Make sure you **do not** include any identifiable information about the people you interviewed. You want to keep their identities private and confidential.) This assignment is due on 2/15/18 in class.

***Interview & Report #2: Exploring Families** This is your opportunity to explore marriage & partnership in a real world environment and bring your feedback to our class. You should interview at least two people (outside of class) about their experiences in **different family forms**. Ideally, your two interviewees should vary in their experiences with family forms (i.e., stepfamily, biological, nuclear, same-sex, single-parent, other). You should develop at least three questions to ask your interviewees about their experiences. Those questions should be informed by class discussion about marriage and family. *Your written report of the interview should be typed, approximately one page, and include the questions you asked, the responses you received, and your thoughts about what you learned.* (Make sure you **do not** include any identifiable information about the people you interviewed. You want to keep their identities private and confidential.) This assignment is due on 5/03 in class.

Paper #1: Current Research on Marriage & Family (25%): In a 5-7 page paper, you will explore current research on marriage and families on the website for the Council for Contemporary Families. The website for the organization *Council for Contemporary Families* serves as a clearinghouse for emerging family research in sociology and related disciplines. For this paper, you will go to the website below and identify several pieces of related research that you will use as the basis for your paper. The website is www.contemporaryfamilies.org. *Additional information will be given later in the semester. This paper is due on 2/22/18 in class.* (*Late papers will be penalized 10 points for each day they are late.)

Paper #2: Policy Proposal (25%): You will develop a 5-7 page paper addressing either: coupling/marriage (such as legal benefits or rights), or family life (such as work or childcare policies). In this paper, you will use course materials and outside academic (and possibly other) materials to develop a set of (or single, if sufficiently developed) policy proposals to address an issue facing contemporary families. *Additional information will be given later in the semester. This paper is due on 4/05/18 in class.* (*Late papers will be penalized 10 points for each day they are late.)

Final Exam (25%): There will be a final exam worth 25% of your overall grade. Exam material will be drawn from lectures, readings, and other course content/activities. The exam will consist of a combination of True/False, essay, and short answer questions. Exam questions will synthesize content from across course topics from each section of the course. More details will be provided closer to the exam date. The final exam will be scheduled during finals week (*Exam Make-Up Policy: Missed exams can only be made up with official documentation of an extenuating circumstance (see details below).*)

OTHER IMPORTANT COURSE INFORMATION

Grading Scale:

Letter	Percentage	Description
A	93-100	Exceptional: Exceeds all required elements of the assignment, and the quality of the work is considerably greater than what is required.
A-	90-92	
B+	88-89	Good: Meets all required elements of the assignment, and the quality of the work is better than what is required.
B	83-87	
B-	80-82	
C+	78-79	Average: Meets all required elements of an assignment, no more, no less. Quality of assignment is satisfactory for college level work.
C	73-77	
C-	70-72	
D+	68-69	Below average: Does not meet all the required elements of the assignment, and/or the quality is below satisfactory.
D	63-67	
D-	60-62	
F	59 and below	Failing: Almost none of the requirements of the assignment are met and/or the quality of the assignment is unacceptable.

Extenuating Circumstances:

The University of Colorado authorizes extenuating circumstances. Anticipated extenuating absences must be cleared with the instructor prior to the event, (and whenever possible, at the beginning of the semester). An independent official must verify unanticipated or emergency circumstances. Examples of such absences/circumstances and the required documentation/verification are as follows:

Anticipated

Official university function
Required court or jury appearance
Required military obligation
Religious observances

Required Documentation

University official authorizing the absence
Clerk of the Court
Copy of orders, or commanding officer
Student initiated request

Emergency/Unanticipated

Extraordinary illness or injury
Death of family member
Closed campus/inclement weather
Open campus/inclement weather
Required employment travel

Required Documentation

Physician
Copy of death certificate/notice of services
No verification required
Highway department closed road verification
Immediate supervisor

Disability:

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit to me a letter from Disability Services as soon as possible so that your needs can be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities. Contact: 303-492-8671, Center for Community N200, and <http://www.Colorado.EDU/disabilityservices>. If you have an undocumented disability that impacts you in your student role, please see me during the first two weeks of class to discuss options. Exams/tests for students **who qualify for accommodations through Disability Services** can be administered by Sociology Staff Mondays 3:30 – 5:00, Tuesdays 3:00 – 5:00, Wednesdays 9:30 – 1:30, and Fridays 12:30 to 3:00. Exams/tests must be scheduled through the Sociology Staff at least one day in advance. **The student must be approved by the student's Disability Access Coordinator** to have accommodations provided. Please provide the student's accommodation letter to the staff along with the Sociology exam/test proctoring form. More information can be found at this link: <http://www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices/faculty-staff/working-disability-services-students/providing-accomodations>. Students needing to cancel an exam/test scheduled with Sociology Staff need to communicate with the professor and Sociology Staff no less than 2 hours before the scheduled exam/test. Students should expect that exams/tests will be proctored, and that they will be observed in person. A proctor is allowed to check materials that the student has in her/his possession. Items such as notes, books, and calculators cannot be used by the student unless confirmed by the professor prior to the exam. Personal items may not be taken into the testing area. Food, drinks, and gum (excluding water) are not allowed in the testing area unless it is an authorized accommodation. Students are responsible for bringing her/his own supplies and references, as have been permitted by the professor or per the student's accommodations letter. If a student is suspected of academic dishonesty during an exam, Sociology staff will inform the professor who will determine any consequences.

Religious Observance:

Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to reasonably and fairly deal with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments, or required attendance. If you have a religious observance conflict, you will need to provide written proof of the conflict and I will work with you on an individual basis to address the issue. It is your responsibility to review the syllabus, note any possible conflicts, and discuss alternatives with me at the beginning of the semester.

See full details at http://www.colorado.edu/policies/fac_relig.html

Academic Honesty:

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in this class. All students of the University of Colorado at Boulder are responsible for knowing and adhering to the academic integrity policy of this institution. Violations of this policy may include: cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, lying, bribery, threatening behavior, and aid of academic dishonesty. Those found to be in violation of the Honor Code will be reported to the Honor Code Council. Please refer to www.colorado.edu/honorcode to view the specific guidelines. If you have any questions related to this policy, please contact the Honor Code Council at honor@colorado.edu.

Classroom Behavior:

Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Those who fail to adhere to such behavior standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, color, culture, religion, creed, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity and gender expression, age, disability, and nationalities.

My Policies:

1. No laptops or cell phones are allowed in lecture. If you have an accommodation that allows the use of a laptop, please see me outside of class so we can discuss your accommodations.
2. There are no "make-ups" or "early turn-ins" for in-class work/assignments/quizzes.
3. If you miss class, it is your responsibility to find out what you missed. For in-class notes, please contact one of your classmates (see "class contacts" at the end of this syllabus).
4. In this class, as in many sociology classes, our discussion will often focus on controversial issues that may arouse intense feelings and disagreement. While enthusiastic discussion and debate of these issues is wholeheartedly encouraged, insensitive or inappropriate comments will not be tolerated.
5. As the instructor, I reserve the right to ask you to leave if I believe your comments and/or actions are contributing to a classroom environment where not all individuals (myself included) feel respected and safe.

6. Please do not get up and leave class, or start packing up to leave, before our time is up. Please avoid consistent lateness to class. It is distracting to both me and the other students. If you must leave early or come late, please let me know ahead of time. Repeatedly disrupting class by being late/leaving early will have a negative impact on your in-class participation grade. For repeated tardiness, you may also be asked to leave class for the day.

Peer Contact Information (your first source for missed material)

Name _____ Email/Number: _____

Name _____ Email/Number: _____

Name _____ Email/Number: _____

Course Schedule:

Week	Topic	Readings (Due by Tuesday each week) (*D2L)	DUE & Events
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Unit 1: FOUNDATIONS: History, The Modern Family, & Marriage in the U.S. Context

Week 1 1/16 & 1/18	Introduction, Core Concepts, & Sociological Imagination	Syllabus *Mills	
Week 2 1/23 & 1/25	History of Marriage & Family	Cherlin Ch. 1-3 *Coontz_Evolution	-Summary #1 due
Week 3 1/30 & 2/01	Family Forms and Functions	*Coontz_Family Crisis *Smith *Holstein&Gubrium	-Summary #2 due
Week 4 2/06 & 2/08	Parents & Children	*Hays_Parenting *Mollborn_Teen *Lareau_CC	-Summary #3 due
Week 5 2/13 & 2/15	Modern Marriage	Cherlin Ch.4&5 *Gerstel&Sarkisian *Edin et al	-Exploring Partnership: Interview & Report due Thurs
Week 6 2/20 & 2/22	The (Messy) Politics of Marriage	*Heath *Weigt *Whitehead	-Summary #4 due - Current Research Paper DUE Thurs

Unit 2: INEQUALITIES: Race, Class, and Gender in Marriage & Family

Week 7 2/27 & 3/01	Gender	*Chesley *Coltrane *Walzer	-Summary #5 due
Week 8 3/06 & 3/08	Race/Ethnicity	*Hondagneu&Avila *Coontz_Underclass *Pyke	-Summary #6 due
Week 9 3/13 & 3/15	Social Class	Cherlin Ch. 7 *Edin_Retreat Marriage *Hays_Welfare *Mollborn et al	-Summary #7 due
Week 10 3/20 & 3/22	Intersectional Analyses	*Cheng *Shows&Gerstel *Elliott	-Summary #8 due

<i>Unit 3: The Changing Landscape of Marriage & Family Life</i>			
Week 11 3/27 & 3/29	SPRING BREAK	N/A	N/A
Week 12 4/03 & 4/05	Same-Sex Marriage & Families	*Powell *Stacey&Biblarz *Berkowitz&Marsiglio	-Summary #9 due -Policy Paper DUE Thurs
Week 13 4/10 & 4/12	Cohabitation	*Smock et al *Sassler&Miller *Manning&Smock *Manning&Cohen	-Summary #10 due
Week 14 4/17 & 4/19	Marital Dissolution & Stepfamilies	Cherlin Ch.8 *Amato *Sweeney	-Summary #11 due
Week 15 4/24 & 4/26	Single Parent Families	*Goldschieder *Coles *Hertz	-Summary #12 due
Week 16 5/01 & 5/03	Exam Review & Course Wrap Up	N/A	-Exploring Families – Interview & Report DUE Thurs

Final Exam Week: May 5-9