

I. CATALOG DESCRIPTION:

A. Department Information:

Division: Social Science
Department: Sociology
Course ID: SOC 130
Course Title: Marriage and the Family
Units: 3
Lecture: 3 Hours
Laboratory: None
Prerequisite: None

B. Catalog and Schedule Description: A descriptive and analytical survey of the structure and process of contemporary families and marriages. Includes analysis of these relationships as intimate relationships and social institutions.

II. NUMBER OF TIMES COURSE MAY BE TAKEN FOR CREDIT: One

III. EXPECTED OUTCOMES FOR STUDENTS:

Upon successful completion of the course the student should be able to:

- A. Identify, describe, and critically evaluate the structure and functions of the family in the U.S., both historically and in contemporary society.
- B. Identify, describe, and critically evaluate class and racial/ethnic variations in U.S. families.
- C. Explain how families are established, maintained, and changed
- D. Identify, describe, and critically evaluate methods of research used by sociologists of marriage and the family.
- E. Use library and internet resources to locate current as well as classic research in the sociology of marriage and the family and write a critical essay.
- F. Draw conclusions regarding contemporary U.S. marriage and families.
- G. Analyze social interaction between family members using sociological concepts and insights.
- H. Critically analyze the information presented and apply this information to an understanding of their own lives.

IV. COURSE CONTENT:

- A. Marriage and the Family in Perspective
 1. The changing family
 2. Studying marriage and the family
 3. The family in historical perspective
- B. The Individual and Developing Relationships
 1. Gender roles and socialization
 2. Love and loving relationships
 3. Sexuality and sexual expression throughout life
- C. Individual and Marital Commitments
 1. Choosing others : dating and mate selection
 2. Singlehood, cohabitation, and other nonmarital living arrangements
 3. Marriage and communication in intimate relationships
- D. Parents and Children
 1. To be or not to be a parent : more choices, more constraints
 2. Raising children : contemporary prospects and pitfalls
 3. Racial and ethnic families : strengths and stresses

- E. Conflicts and crises
 - 1. Families and work : facing the economic squeeze
 - 2. Family violence and other crisis-related issues in family life
 - 3. Separation and divorce
- F. Changes and Transitions
 - 1. Remarriage and stepfamilies : life after divorce
 - 2. Aging and family life : grandparents, the widowed, and caregivers
 - 3. The family in the twenty-first century

V. METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

- A. Lectures in basic theories, concepts and data
- B. Read text, other reading materials as assigned, CD's, DVD's and other media sources
- C. Class and group discussion of significant issues and topics
- D. Analytical/critical thinking/writing exercises. Writing assignment/Application of concepts
- E. Use internet to find information

VI. TYPICAL ASSIGNMENTS:

- A. Read text and other sources; read the information on the sociological perspective of marriage and the family in your text.
- B. Class and group discussion
 - 1. Class discussion: Identify your family's social location. What is it and how has it influenced your life? Pinpoint specific influences.
 - 2. Group discussion: Identify some taken-for-granted, deeply held cultural assumptions about families and family life in the U.S. today.
- C. Analytical/critical thinking/writing exercises
 - 1. Read in the text the section pertaining to research methods including ethics in research.
 - a) Devise a set of interview questions designed to encourage interviewees to discuss the role of family in their personal lives.
 - b) Interview women and men who are representative of the major racial and ethnic groups in Southern California.
 - c) Evaluate your research method, including sampling and ethics, according to standards developed in your text.
 - d) Evaluate the information you acquired, using sociological concepts and standards.
 - 2. In your assigned reading, you read interviews with working class families, conducted to obtain their views on race, ethnicity, the economy and the family.
 - a) How does the author respond to the currently popular belief that the American family is crumbling, that we need to "return to family values"?
 - b) Express your own reflections on this issue, being careful to support your views using the sociological perspective.
 - 3. Collect comic strips, political cartoons, jokes, and advertisements from print media and the internet that feature families and/or roles of persons in families.
 - a) Analyze the presentations using first structural functionalism, then conflict theory.
 - b) Discuss the similarities and differences between these two paradigmatic analyses.

VII. EVALUATION(S):

Methods and frequency of evaluations will vary from instructor to instructor but may include:

A. Methods of Evaluation:

1. Objective and subjective examinations (for lecture and reading assignments).
Typical questions include:
 - a) Which paradigm focuses on the tasks that the family performs for society:
 - i. social conflict
 - ii. symbolic interactionism
 - iii. social-exchange
 - iv. structural-functionalism
2. Subjective evaluation of student writing and application of concepts.
Students are evaluated on their ability to apply course concepts to what they read or experience.
3. Analysis of critical thinking and analytical essays. Evaluation is based on clarity of thought and expression, the ability to present and analyze well reasoned arguments supported by evidence.

B. Frequency of Evaluation:

1. One mid-term examination
2. One final examination
3. A minimum of written assignments, approximating a total of 10 pages

VIII. TYPICAL TEXT(S):

Benokraitis, Nijole V. *Marriages and Families: Changes, Choices, and Constraints, 4th Ed.*, Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 2002.
Bernard, Jessie. *The Future of Marriage*, New York: Bantam Books, 1973.
Collins, Randall and Scott Coltrane. *Sociology of Marriage and the Family: Gender, Love, and Property*, Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Co., 2001.
Coltrane, Scott. *Families and Society*, Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Co., 2004.
Coontz, Stephanie, *The Way We Never Were*, New York: Basic Books, 1992.
Hochschild, Arlie. *The Second Shift*, New York: Avon Books, 1989.
Lamanna, Mary Ann, and Agnes Riedmann. *Marriages and Families: Making Choices in a Diverse Society, 8th Ed*, Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Co., 2003.
Pleck, Joseph. *Working Wives/Working Husbands*, Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1973.
Rubin, Lillian B. *Families on the Faultline*, New York: Harper Collins, 1994
Schwartz, Mary Ann A. and Barbara Marlience Scott. *Marriages and Families: Diversity and Change, 4th Edition*, Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 2003.
Seccombe, Karen and Rebecca L. Warner. *Marriages and Families: Relationships in Social Context*, Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Co., 2004..
Strong, Bryan, Christine DeVault, Barbara W. Sayad, and Theodore F. Cohen. *The Marriage and Family Experience: Intimate Relationships in a Changing Society, 8th Ed.*, Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Co., 2001.

IX. OTHER SUPPLIES REQUIRED OF STUDENTS: None