

SOCIOLOGY OF THE FAMILY
(SOC 4610)
University of Georgia
Maymester 2008

Instructor: Dr. Melissa Landers-Potts
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Office Hours: By appointment

REQUIRED TEXT:

1. Cherlin, Andrew J. (2005). Public & Private Families: An Introduction (5th ed.). McGraw Hill Higher Education: New York
2. Bel-Jean's Packet (plus two in-class Handouts)

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- To gain an understanding of the nature of the American family in its present form(s)
- To be knowledgeable about historical changes in the form and function of the American family over time
- To understand the profound effects that race/ethnicity, social class, and gender have on our experiences within families
- To be familiar enough with the statistical data regarding families to use it in support of your position on issues regarding the Family.
- To be able to apply the knowledge gained in this class to your own experiences—past, present, and future—of family.

COURSE FORMAT:

The course will use a variety of formats, including lectures, discussions, video clips, and interviews

EVALUATION:

EXAMS (200 points)

There will be two exams (including the final exam). The format of the exams will include multiple choice, true false, and short answer questions.

MAKEUPS for exams will be given ONLY to those students providing valid documentation regarding serious incident(s) that precluded them from taking the scheduled exams. **THE INSTRUCTOR MUST BE CONTACTED ON OR BEFORE THE EXAM DAY TO MAKE ARRANGEMENTS FOR A MAKEUP**, or a makeup will not even be considered. Official excuses are due upon the day you return to class. The instructor reserves the right to determine the seriousness or validity of an excuse.

Students must be on time to class on exam day.

IN-CLASS SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS (90 points)

Class discussions will be based on the reading material contained in the Bel Jean's packet. Students will be assigned to small discussion groups of approximately five students for the semester. Groups will meet during class time to discuss each of the eleven readings.

Groups should rotate the assignment of a 'group leader' who will be responsible for writing down the group's responses to discussion questions. The group's responses will be graded on the basis of their insightfulness, thoughtfulness, and the thoroughness with which they answered the question. All students in a given group will receive the same number of points (9 possible points for each discussion). Students not present for the discussion will receive zero points. The best ten of the eleven discussion scores for each individual will be added together at the end of the semester to comprise the discussion score.

DISCUSSION GROUP POINTS MAY NOT BE MADE UP FOR ANY REASON.

INTERVIEW

Each student will conduct one 15-20 minute face-to-face interview with an individual who is knowledgeable about or experienced in the family issue on which you are focusing. The information sheet provided by the instructor for your specific article includes suggestions on whom to interview and the interview questions you should use. You will need to create a minimum of two of your own interview questions.

>> INTERVIEW WRITE-UP GUIDELINES

1. Introduce the person you interviewed, tell why they were appropriate as an interviewee for this project, discuss your relationship to this person, and provide any other interesting background information about them.
2. Report the Interview: Feel free to choose the format in which you would like to report this information. You may transcribe questions and answers verbatim, or you may discuss the most important points of the conversation in more of an essay form. Do what works best for you, but be sure to convey the richness of the discussion.
3. Discuss the Interview: Provide feedback on your opinions or reflections regarding the interviewees' responses. Do you agree/disagree? If so, why, why not? What are your thoughts on the topic?

Due dates for the papers are staggered during the Maymester, and the dates are written on top of the information sheets for each topic. It is your responsibility to know when your paper is due.

No late write-ups will be accepted. Hard (paper) copies only (i.e., No e-mailed papers).

GRADE CALCULATION SUMMARY

Exam #1:	100 points
Final Exam:	100 points
In-Class Discussions	90 points
<u>Interview Write-up</u>	<u>25 points</u>
Total Possible Points	315 points

Grades correspond to the number of points earned at semester's end as follows:

A = 315-293	B+ = 282-276	C+ = 249-244	D = 226-190
A- = 292-283	B = 275-260	C = 243-228	F = <190
	B- = 259-250	C- = 227-219	

SYLLABUS:

May 13-14

REVIEW AND DISCUSS SYLLABUS & CLASS REQUIREMENTS

INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLOGY OF THE FAMILY

Cherlin: Chapter 1, "Public and Private Families" pp. 3-34

May 14 and May 15 (*Class will begin at 9:45am on the 15th)

HISTORY OF THE FAMILY

Cherlin: Chapter 2, "The History of the Family" pp. 35-75

Reading 1: Coontz, S. (2005). Marriage, a History: From Obedience to Intimacy or How Love Conquered Marriage (pp. 1-12). London: Viking Penguin.

>>> The missed class time will be made up by having you watch a streaming video of a Work/Family panel of local parents/community members for the Work/Family topic listed below for May 30-June 2: Feel free to watch it early! The link is listed below, and you must have Real Player downloaded onto your computer in order to watch it.

May 16-19

GENDER AND THE FAMILY

Cherlin: Chapter 3, "Gender and Families" pp. 77-108

Reading 2: Coltrane, S. & Adams, M. (2003). Men's Family Work: Child-Centered Fathering and the Sharing of Domestic Labor. In A. and J. Skolnick (Eds.). Family in Transition (pp. 115-128). Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

May 20-21

SOCIAL CLASS AND THE FAMILY

Cherlin: Chapter 4, "Social Class and Families" pp. 110-141

Reading 3: Find and bring a current (2007) newspaper article about poverty in Athens to discuss in your groups

May 22

>> **EXAM #1**

May 23-27 (May 26 = No Class: Memorial Day)

SEXUALITY & SOCIETY

Cherlin: Chapter 6, "Sexualities," pp. 183-213

Reading 5: [HANDOUT] Denizet-Lewis, B. "Whatever Happened to Teen Romance?," New York Times Magazine, May 30, 2004, pp. 30-55.

May 28-29

COHABITATION & MARRIAGE

Cherlin: Chapter 7, "Cohabitation and Marriage," pp. 215-255

Reading 6: Conlin, M. "Unmarried in America," Business Week, October 20, 2003, pp. 106-124.

May 30-June 2

WORK, FAMILIES, AND CHILDCARE

Cherlin: Chapter 8: "Work and Families," pp. 257-289

Reading 8: **Print this out yourself from the following website:**
Hirschman, L. (2006). Homeward Bound: The Truth About Elite Women.
<http://www.prospect.org/web/page.wv?section=root&name=ViewWeb&articleId=10659>

→ Watch Streamed Video of Work/Family Panel from Spring semester, 2008--The URL is below:

<http://real.cc.uga.edu/ramgen/socichfd4610/3parents.rm>

The students will need to have Real Player installed on their machines. The Player is a free download if they don't already have it. They can just go to: <http://www.real.com/>

June 3

DIVORCE

Cherlin: Chapter 12: "Divorce," pp. 401-436

Reading 10: Amato, P. (2001) Lifespan Adjustment of Children to Their Parents' Divorce," In S. Ferguson (Ed.). Shifting the Center: Understanding Contemporary Families. Mountain View, CA: Mayfield.

June 4

>> **EXAM #2 (FINAL EXAM)**

Additional Information Regarding SOCI 4610:

- * Any student NOT reporting to class on Tuesday, May 13 will experience an instructor-initiated withdrawal from the course.
- * All academic work must meet the standards contained in "A Culture of Honesty." Students are responsible for informing themselves about those standards before performing any academic work.
- * The course syllabus is a general plan for the course. Deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.