This course is designed to introduce students to major issues related to families and relationships, with a focus on sociological perspectives and policy implications. Families and primary relationships are a fundamental part of our life experiences. This course is designed to introduce you to the historical and contemporary contexts that have shaped the meanings and importance of families in society.

This section of SYG 2430 fulfills General Education requirements (S, D), but does NOT fulfill the Writing Requirement (Gordon Rule/WR).

Course Objectives:

- Review the history of family life as a context for understanding contemporary family issues and debates.
- Examine important contemporary aspects of relationships and families including the prevalence of different family experiences, the range of social norms concerning families and relationships, and the arguments and evidence used to support different interpretations and concerns about family life.
• Define and apply major sociological approaches to issues related to families and relationships, including approaches that focus on a) forms and functions; b) conflict; c) the processes of interaction and negotiation; and d) the importance of gender.

• Examine how sociologists study families and relationships and how sociological evidence contributes to policy debates and decisions.

• Be able to evaluate and discuss some of the critical implications of family change, especially as they related to social policy and legal issues.

• Develop an awareness of the diversity among contemporary families in the United States as well as cross-cultural variations.

The course begins with a discussion of how we define "the family" and the diversity of meanings and family forms. We will review historical background for understanding families and relationships as well as important sociological frameworks for studying relationship and family issues. We will distinguish between the "private" and "public" aspects of families as they relate to the privacy of intimate relationships and public concerns about the roles of families in society.

**General Education Objectives:**

This course fulfills requirements for the Social and Behavioral Sciences (S) and Diversity (D) categories. The objectives for each of these General Education categories are listed below:

**Social and Behavioral Sciences (S)** Social and behavioral science courses provide instruction in the history, key themes, principles, terminology, and underlying theory or methodologies used in the social and behavioral sciences. Students will learn to identify, describe and explain social institutions, structures or processes. These courses emphasize the effective application of accepted problem-solving techniques. Students will apply formal and informal qualitative or quantitative analysis to examine the processes and means by which individuals make personal and group decisions, as well as the evaluation of opinions, outcomes or human behavior. Students are expected to assess and analyze ethical perspectives in individual and societal decisions.

**Diversity (D)** Diversity courses provide instruction in the values, attitudes and norms that create cultural differences within the United States. These courses encourage students to recognize how social roles and status affect different groups in the United States. Students are expected to analyze and evaluate their own cultural norms and values in relation to those of other cultures, and to distinguish opportunities and constraints faced by other persons and groups.

Topics include:

• Diversity and Inequality: social class, race-ethnicity, and gender
• Love, Sexuality, Partnership, and Marriage
• Parents and children
• Conflicts and Crises: Economic strains, family violence, and divorce
• Changes and Transitions: Remarriage, step-families, and aging
Our discussions will analyze the different sides of contemporary debates about social change and public policy, drawing on current media and press coverage, political discourse, and policy discussions.

**Required Text:**

**NOTE** - I do not recommend buying an earlier edition – the material has changed over the years, and all exams, reading assignments, and coursework will use the 8th edition.

+ occasional readings posted E-Learning -- [http://lss.at.ufl.edu](http://lss.at.ufl.edu) [see detailed, on-line schedule and updates]

Study materials, including practice exam questions, are available on-line on the publisher's web pages (see E-Learning for link). If you purchased a new textbook, you have free access to the most current on-line study materials from the publisher; if you bought a used copy or rented, you may purchase access to the on-line study materials (recommended, not required).

**Course Requirements**

**Readings:** Readings are assigned for nearly every class. You are strongly encouraged to do the readings before each class. You are also encouraged to read a major newspaper and to peruse on-line resources regularly. Note that the New York Times is now available for free online to UF students, and we will be accessing and discussing articles regularly. Please feel free to email clippings, links, and comments to the Instructor.

**Attendance and In-Class Work:** The course combines material from lecture, discussion, and assigned readings as well as the internet. Class attendance is expected and strongly recommended – much of the in-class presentation and discussion will be different from the textbook and readings. Short, in-class assignments are given throughout the term (~10-14) to help focus thoughts and stimulate discussion. These are collected the same day in class and provide the basis for the Class Attendance grade (16 points total; ~ 1-2 points each).

Make-up (or excused) assignments will be allowed in the case of excused absences as defined by UF policy. You should inform the instructor via email if you will be absent, and bring in written documentation of excused absences in advance, when possible (e.g., university activities), or within one week of the absence.

Acceptable reasons for excused absences according to UF policy include illness, religious holidays, military obligation, and the twelve-day rule ([https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx](https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx)). Should you miss a class for any reason, you are responsible for informing yourself of announcements and material that were covered in class.

You may miss up to two in-class assignments (unexcused) without penalty; further unexcused missed assignments will be deducted from your grade.
In-class assignments may be given at the beginning or end of class, or at any time in between. If you miss an assignment because you arrived late or left early, you may receive no more than half of the credit for that day’s assignment.

If you do not miss any in-class assignments or miss only one, you will receive up to 2 points extra credit at the end of the semester.

**Syllabus quiz:** Students will be required to complete the online syllabus quiz during the first week of class -- due at 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, January 21 (worth 4 points).

**Take-Home Assignments:** There will be two (2) take-home assignments (~3-4 pages) during the term. Instructions and due dates will be posted on E-Learning. These assignments are worth **15 points each (30 points total).** You must turn in completed assignments electronically on E-Learning **no later than class time (10:40 am) on the posted deadline and turn in a hard copy in class** -- late work will be accepted only with the approval of the instructor if there are serious circumstances. You should come prepared to class on the due date ready to discuss your assignment.

**Exams:** There are three exams in the course -- two are in-class exams, and the third exam is given during the final exam period. There is also an optional paper (see below). Three of these four items (3 exams and 1 paper) will be counted toward the course grade at **50 points each.** You can use the optional paper to substitute a poor exam grade OR a missed exam. If you complete all three exams AND the paper, I will drop your lowest grade of the four. Make-up exams will be arranged only with documentation of a **serious reason** (i.e., serious illness, medical problem, death in family). Requests for a make-up exam must be arranged at least 24 hours PRIOR to the exam (except in emergency).

**Optional Paper:** An optional paper of 5-7 pages may be submitted as part of this course. This paper counts for 50 points (same as an exam). The specific details of the **paper assignment will be posted on E-Learning. Late papers will not be accepted.** You are strongly encouraged to consult with the instructor or TA, preferably early in the semester.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Requirement</th>
<th>Points</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Syllabus quiz</td>
<td>4 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-class assignments</td>
<td>16 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take-home assignments (2)</td>
<td>30 points (15 each)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exams (3)</td>
<td>150 points (50 each)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>200 points</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Paper (optional: can replace an exam grade)</td>
<td>50 points</td>
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</table>

All course work, including written assignments and exams, **must be your original and individual work.** Any cheating or plagiarism, including copying of on-line materials without clear attribution, will result in a failing grade and disciplinary action. You are responsible for keeping a back-up copy of written work that you turn in. **Written assignments must be submitted electronically on E-Learning in Word format (.doc, .docx, or .rtf) -- no other formats are accepted. All writing assignments including the optional paper are checked using Turnitin.**

*** This course does **not** fulfill the Writing Requirement. ***
**The schedule of exams will not change. Please plan accordingly.** The schedule for readings and take-home assignments may change – the syllabus and any updates or changes will be posted online. Students are responsible for checking the on-line syllabus regularly.

**Grading Structure for SYG 2430:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Non-passing grades:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>92-100</td>
<td>184-200</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>89-91.9</td>
<td>178-183.9</td>
<td>C-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>86-88.9</td>
<td>172-177.9</td>
<td>D+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>81-85.9</td>
<td>162-171.9</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>79-80.9</td>
<td>158-161.9</td>
<td>D-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>76-78.9</td>
<td>152-157.9</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70-75.9</td>
<td>140-151.9</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The grades in this course include both plus and minus grades. For more information, including potential implications of minus grades, go to: [http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/regulationgrades.html](http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/regulationgrades.html)

See also: [www.isis.ufl.edu/minusgrades.html](http://www.isis.ufl.edu/minusgrades.html). Note that any grade of C- or lower grade is not considered a passing grade for the course.

As a General Education Course, SYG2430 is designed to address each of the following General Education Student Learning Outcomes.

**Content** is knowledge of the concepts, principles, terminology and methodologies used within the discipline. Students demonstrate competence in the terminology, concepts, methodologies and theories used within the discipline. The Content SLO is assessed through the exams and reviewed in the in-class assignments and class discussion.

**Communication** is the development and expression of ideas in written and oral forms. Students communicate knowledge, ideas, and reasoning clearly and effectively in written or oral forms appropriate to the discipline. The Communication SLO is assessed through the Take-Home Assignments as well as the Optional Paper.

**Critical Thinking** is characterized by the comprehensive analysis of issues, ideas, and evidence before accepting or formulating an opinion or conclusion. Students analyze information carefully and logically from multiple perspectives, using discipline specific methods, and develop reasoned solutions to problems. The Critical Thinking SLO is assessed through specific questions on the exams as well as the Take-Home Assignments and Optional Paper.
Course Policies

Academic Honesty

All students registered at the University of Florida have agreed to comply with the following statement: "I understand that the University of Florida expects its students to be honest in all their academic work. I agree to adhere to this commitment to academic honesty and understand that my failure to comply with this commitment may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from the University."

In addition, on all work submitted for credit the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment."

All course work, including written assignments and exams, must be your original and individual work. Any cheating or plagiarism, including copying of on-line materials without clear attribution, will result in a failing grade and disciplinary action. You are responsible for keeping a back-up copy of your paper. All written assignments must be submitted electronically on E-Learning (and are checked using Turnitin).

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation. Contact the Disability Resources Center (http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/) for information about available resources for students with disabilities.

Counseling and Mental Health Resources

Students facing difficulties completing the course or who are in need of counseling or urgent help should call the on-campus Counseling and Wellness Center (352-392-1575; http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/).

On-Line Evaluation

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in the course by completing online evaluations at https://evaluations.ufl.edu. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/.

The online evaluations are important to UF and can affect decisions on merit raises, promotion and tenure, and teaching awards. They are important to other students -- summaries of numerical responses are publicly available to assist students in choosing courses. They are also important to me. I will be teaching the course again, and I appreciate your feedback -- what worked and what could be better. To encourage students to complete the evaluations, collective incentives will be announced in the last few weeks of the course, including possible extra credit points.

Additional policies and helpful hints to help you navigate through the course:

- Don’t miss class, and be prompt. If you need to come in late or leave early, please inform the Instructor and do not disrupt the rest of the class.
- If you need to miss any part or all of a class session, be sure to get the notes from another student. You are responsible for getting any missed notes, discussion content, video or audio content, and announcements.
• Don’t put off the readings – you should come prepared for each class, and keep up with the readings for each week.
• Do ask questions! You will have opportunities to ask questions, and the Instructor and TA each are available in their offices or on-line during designated office hours. Please feel free to drop in with questions, to discuss class work or assignments, or to discuss issues more generally.
• Do get to know the Instructor and TA, and get to know your classmates.
• Don’t wait till the end of the semester to get notes you missed, clarify questions about grades, discuss an excused absence, or ask questions about course material.
• Questions about grades must be addressed in writing to the Instructor using the Mail function in E-Learning, and must be resolved prior to the last day of class (except for the last exam).
• Do keep up with current events in the newspaper, TV news, etc., and look for connections to course material.
• Please be considerate in class. Don’t wear earbuds in class. Silence your cell phone, and don’t read the paper, text your friends, check facebook/twitter/instagram or engage in other non-class related activities while in class.
• I do not encourage using laptop computers or ipads/tablets in class. Research has shown that taking hand-written notes is more effective for learning and retaining material. In addition, electronic devices (laptops, tablets, smartphones) can be a strong source of distraction to you and the people around you. If you need to use a laptop or tablet to take notes, you should only have a note-taking or word-processing program open – no games, puzzles, texting, email, facebook or other social media, surfing the web, etc.
• “Don’t just come to class – be present.”
• Do keep an open mind and listen to different viewpoints.

Schedule and Assigned Readings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>READING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 1</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 7 Introduce course, syllabus, requirements</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan. 9 Defining &quot;Family&quot;</td>
<td>ch. 1 (pp. 1-10)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Week 2</strong> Studying Relationships and Families</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan. 12 Assessing Myths and Family Changes</td>
<td>ch. 1 (pp. 11-25)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan. 14 Conceptual frameworks</td>
<td>ch. 2 (pp. 27-41)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 16 Theories and Methods, and Ethics</td>
<td>ch. 2 (pp. 41-54)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Week 3</strong> Historical Perspectives</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Jan. 19  HOLIDAY

Jan. 21  History of Families ch. 3 (pp. 55-73)
Jan. 23  “Modern” Families ch. 3 (pp. 73-81)

Week 4  Social Class, and Inequalities

Jan. 26  Social Class and Families  Cherlin chapter - on E-Learning (under "Lessons")
Jan. 28  Economic Restructuring, Inequalities, Defining Social Class
Jan. 30  Racial and Ethnic Diversity ch. 4 (pp. 83-111)

Week 5  Gender, Economics, and Policy Concerns

Feb. 2  Gender Concepts ch. 5 (pp. 112-120)
Feb. 4  Gender – Inequality and “Doing” Gender ch. 5 (pp. 121-142); ch. 13 (pp. 384-389)
Feb. 6  Social Class, Race-Ethnicity, and Gender

*** Take-Home Assignment 1 due as hard copy in class + electronic submission on E-Learning by 10:40 am – come prepared to discuss in class!!

Week 6  Exam 1 + Love

Feb. 9  Discussion and Review – bring review outlines + questions!
Feb. 11  EXAM 1 - IN CLASS
Feb. 13  Love: Meanings and Theories ch. 6 (pp. 144-172)

Week 7  Love, Sexuality

Feb. 16  Love, continued
Feb. 18  Sexuality ch. 7 (pp. 174-192)
Feb. 20  Sexuality, Kinsey's research ch. 7 (pp. 192-208)

Week 8  Dating
Feb. 23  Dating  ch. 8 (pp. 209-228)
Feb. 25  Dating, continued  ch. 8 (pp. 228-239)
Feb. 27  Singlehood  ch. 9 (pp. 242-256)

March 2-6  SPRING BREAK

Week 9  Singlehood, Cohabitation, Marriage
Mar. 9  Living Single, Cohabitation  ch. 9 (pp. 256-263)
Mar. 11  Marriage  ch. 9 (pp. 264-267); ch. 10 (pp. 269-276)
Mar. 13  Marriage  ch. 10 (pp. 277-300)

Week 11  Exam 2 + Child-bearing
Mar. 16  Discussion and Review – bring review outlines + questions!
Mar. 18  EXAM 2 - IN CLASS
Mar. 20  Babies – Trends, Reasons, and Processes  ch. 11 (pp. 301-314)

Week 12  Child-bearing - trends, decisions, and contemporary concerns
Mar. 23  Infertility, Adoption, Childless/Childfree  ch. 11 (pp. 314-331)
Mar. 25  Discussion of optional paper + Fertility

*** Optional Paper due as hard copy in class + electronic submission on E-Learning by 10:40 am.

Mar. 27  Parenthood  ch. 12 (pp. 332-343)

Week 13  Parenting, Family Challenges
Mar. 30  Parents, Child Maltreatment  ch. 12 (pp. 344-362); ch. 14 (pp. 405-411)
Apr. 1  Grandparents  ch. 16 (pp. 475-479)
Apr. 3  NO CLASS
Week 14  Caregiving, Aging, and Family Challenges

Apr. 6  Balancing Work, Family, and Caregiving  ch. 13 (pp. 370-384; 389-392); ch. 16 (pp. 486-491)

Apr. 8  Family Challenges

*** Take-Home Assignment 2 due as hard copy in class + electronic submission on E-Learning by 10:40 am – come prepared to discuss in class!!

Apr. 10  Families in Later Life  ch. 16 (pp. 464-472; 484-486)

Week 15  Family Challenges and Conflict

Apr. 13  Family Challenges and Inequalities

Apr. 15  Conflict and Intimate Partner Violence  ch. 14 (pp. 394-405; 418-419; 426-427)

Apr. 17  Separation and Divorce  ch. 15 (pp. 429-447)

Week 16  Constructing New Families

Apr. 20  Re-partnering, Constructing New Families  ch. 15 (pp. 447-461)

Apr. 22  LAST CLASS – Discussion, Synthesis, Review

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*** Wednesday, April 29  3:00 -5:00 p.m.  3rd EXAM  ***

Little Hall, room 101 (usual classroom)

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** Topics may shift according to the pace of the class. Deadlines and exam dates will not change. Students are responsible for checking the on-line syllabus weekly for updates, changes, or announcements.