

Introduction to Marriage and Families

SYG 2430 / Section 452A

University of Florida

Spring 2022

Class is scheduled to meet in person in Turlington Hall / TUR 2303

Meeting Times: Tuesdays 8:30-10:25 AM (Period 2-3) and Thursdays 9:35 AM-10.25 AM (Period 3)

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Office Hours: TBA

Course Website: <http://elearning.ufl.edu> (Canvas)

Course Description & Instructional Methods

Families and primary relationships represent our first and most important connections, and they are a central part of our life experiences. They define our identities and shape our socialization, opportunities, and constraints in fundamental ways.

This course is designed to introduce students to some of the major issues related to families and relationships, with a focus on sociological perspectives, policy implications, and an emphasis on diversity and equity. This course will introduce you to the historical and contemporary contexts that have shaped the meanings and importance of families in society. We emphasize the diversity of people and families in the United States and other highly industrialized societies, while drawing insights from cross-cultural and historical comparisons. This section of SYG 2430 fulfills General Education requirements (S.D) but does NOT fulfill the Writing Requirement. As a general education course, this course provides an overview of social perspectives and processes and an introduction to Diversity. Specific course objectives are listed below, followed by information about General Education (S.D).

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 and attitudes concerning families and relationships and how they have changed over time, the diversity of contemporary families, and the arguments and evidence used to support different interpretations, concerns, and policy solutions regarding family life.
- Define and apply major sociological approaches (at the macro-, meso-, and micro-levels) to issues related to families and relationships, including approaches that focus on a) the forms and functions of families in society; b) conflict and inequalities; c) ecological and developmental perspectives; d) interaction, negotiation, and exchange; and e) gender. We will also discuss intersectional, critical race theory, and queer theory as they inform our understanding of relationships and families in society.
- Examine and evaluate how sociologists study families and relationships, the ethical concerns that guide family research and policy, and how to evaluate and interpret sociological evidence to contribute to policy debates and decisions.
- Evaluate and discuss common aspects of families and relationships, including love, dating, cohabitation, marriage, and childbearing, as well as conflict, family violence, divorce, and repartnering and blended families. We will also assess some of the critical implications of family change, especially as they relate to social policy and legal issues.
- Develop an awareness of the diversity among contemporary families in the United States as well as the ways that social class and economics, gender and gender identity, race and ethnicity, sexuality, and ability influence family lives within U.S. society. The course begins with a discussion of how we define "the family" and the diversity of families. 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 "public" and "private" aspects of families as they relate to the privacy of intimate relationships and the public concerns about the roles of families in society.

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General Education Objectives

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.

As a General Education Course, SYG2430 is designed to address each of the following General Education Student Learning Outcomes regarding Content, Communication, and Critical Thinking.

- 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 quizzes and written assignments.
- 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 Assignment and Discussion Boards.
- 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 quizzes as well as the Take-Home Assignment and Discussion Boards.

Topics include:

- Diversity and Inequality, social class, race-ethnicity, gender, and sexuality
- Love, Sexuality, Partnership, and Marriage; Parents and children
- Conflicts and Crises: Economic strains, family violence, and divorce
- Changes and Transitions: Remarriage, stepfamilies, and aging and caregiving.

Our discussions will analyze the different sides of contemporary debates about social change and public policy, drawing on current media and press coverage and policy discussions.

Required Text:

- **The Family: Diversity, Inequality, and Social Change, 3rd edition. (2021). Philip N. Cohen. Norton. I do NOT recommend buying an earlier edition.**
- The textbook is available online as an eBook through UF All Access, which provides affordable access from the first day of class and for the duration of the term. If you choose to get the e-book, you will need to log into the bookstore's All Access Page to Opt-In to the textbook; the cost will be billed to your UF account. Specific instructions will be provided in Canvas in the first week of class.
- You may also choose to buy or rent a physical book through the UF bookstore (or any vendor, like Chegg, amazon, etc.). If you buy or rent a hard copy, you do not need to purchase access to the publisher's materials online (InQuizitive). Explore your options and choose the format that works best for you. Feel free to email me with questions.
- I do not recommend buying the earlier edition-the material has changed, and all quizzes, reading assignments, and coursework will use the current edition.
- Occasional online readings, audio or video materials –links are included in the schedule below. Links for the readings are available within the Modules on E-Learning: <http://elearning.ufl.edu>.

Course Materials:

This course is designed to be student-friendly in both pedagogical and financial terms. The modules and related readings are organized to provide students with practicality in accessing the course materials. In this regard, students can follow the schedule of the course content in the Modules/Canvas, while they can find the related readings for the modules in the Files/Canvas.

Please keep in mind that the course modules may include articles/readings, presentations, hand-outs, and videos. Items listed in the instructions of each module are not optional, they are all required.

Course Requirements:

1. **Quizzes (30% of the final grade):** Students are required to complete the assigned quizzes, which will usually include multiple-choice, true-false, and fill-in-the-blanks: fifteen questions per quiz at 1 point per question -- 15 pts per quiz/30 minutes per quiz. The aim is to evaluate students' comprehension of the related terminology and perspectives explained in the course materials. Quizzes are to be submitted by the assigned date and time. Therefore, please carefully note the day and time that the assignments are due.
2. **Discussion Posts and Group Responses (40% of the final grade):** Students are expected to write a discussion post on a given theme or question in the instructions, which are published for each discussion assignment. Moreover, students are required to write a response post to one of their classmates' discussion posts. Discussion posts are worth 40 points and worth 40% of the final course grade and are to be submitted within the assigned date and time frame. Please review the instructions carefully for how to complete the post and repost.
3. **Take Home Assignment (30% of the final grade):** There will be one take-home assignment (~5 pages). Instructions will be posted on E-Learning. This assignment is worth 80 points. You must turn in the completed assignment electronically on E-Learning, and you should be prepared to discuss your work in class. Late work will be accepted with the approval of the instructor if there are serious circumstances. Completed assignments will be submitted to Turnitin.com, which reviews written work for plagiarism and appropriate citation.

Assignment	Points	Total Points	%
5 x Quizzes	30 (each)	150	30
3 x Discussion Posts and Group Responses	40 (each)	120	40
1 x Take Home Assignment		80	30
Total grade		350	100 %

Course Policies:

Attendance and Class Work: The course combines material from lecture, discussion, and assigned readings as well as the internet. Students are expected to join the in-person class actively and regularly since they are required to complete the required assignments. I will not be taking roll, but attendance and participation (via Zoom or in person) are important to your success in the course.

If you are isolating because of COVID risk or exposure, you should NOT plan to attend the class. 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; written documentation of excused absences should be submitted if available. If you miss class because of illness, family emergency, or other excused absence (including absences covered by DRC accommodations), you must email the instructor to arrange for access to missed material and any make-up work. Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies. [Click here to read the university attendance policies.](#)

Acceptable reasons for excused absences according to UF policy include **illness, religious holidays, university activities, and military obligation**. Should you miss a class for any reason,

you are responsible for informing yourself of announcements and material that were covered in class

Quiz Policy: Without exceptions, all students are equally required to complete the quizzes. Make-up or late quizzes can be arranged in case of illness, emergency, or other serious reason. Requests for a make-up quiz should be arranged at least within 24 hours PRIOR to the quiz (except in emergency).

Make-up Policy: Make-up assignments can be provided under two conditions. First, students should let the instructor know prior to missing the assignment whenever possible. If the inconvenience is sudden and unexpected, the student is responsible for informing the instructor within 24 hours following the deadline of the assignment. Second, make-ups will only be provided in **documented** excuses. Please DO NOT ask for a make-up exam unless you DO have a signed document for your absence. Students should provide a signed document, which proves the excuse(s) of the student.

If the student does not fulfil these two conditions (both, at the same time), make-up may not be offered.

Assignment Policy: Students are required to complete the course requirements including assignments in time. Late assignments without any prior notice will be considered following the conditions of make-up assignments. Students may ask for extensions prior to the due dates of the assignments if they have legit excuses.

COVID-Related Information:

As we are starting this semester in the context of a continued pandemic, you are expected to wear a mask indoors in the classroom (regardless of vaccinations status). You are strongly encouraged to get vaccinated. Please be sure to keep up with any new announcements regarding UF policy covid-19 updates at <https://coronavirus.ufl.edu/university-updates>

University of Florida Policies:

University Policy on Accommodating Students with Disabilities: Students requesting accommodation for disabilities must first register with the Dean of Students Office (<https://disability.ufl.edu/>). The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation. You should submit accommodation request at the beginning of the term, if possible, and you must submit this documentation prior to submitting assignments or taking the quizzes or exams. Accommodations are not retroactive; therefore, students should contact the office as soon as possible in the term for which they are seeking accommodations.

University Policy on Academic Misconduct: Academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the University community. Students should be sure that they understand the UF Student Honor Code at <https://archive.catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/1617//advising/info/student-honor-code.aspx>.

Honor Code and Student Conduct Code:

Campus Resources: [Health and Wellness](#)

U Matter, We Care: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit U Matter, We Care website (<https://umatter.ufl.edu/>) to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.

Counseling and Wellness Center: Visit the Counseling and Wellness Center website (<https://counseling.ufl.edu/>) or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.

Student Health Care Center: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need or visit the Student Health Care Center website (<https://shcc.ufl.edu/>).

University Police Department: Visit UF Police Department website (<https://police.ufl.edu/>) or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).

UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; Visit the UF

Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website (<https://ufhealth.org/emergency-room-trauma-center>).

Academic Resources:

E-learning technical support: Contact the UF Computing Help Desk (<https://helpdesk.ufl.edu/>) at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.

Career Connections Center: Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services (<https://career.ufl.edu/>).

Library Support: Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources (<https://uflib.ufl.edu/find/ask/>).

Teaching Center: Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352- 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring (<https://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/>).

Writing Studio: 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers (<https://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>).

Student Complaints On-Campus: Visit the Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code webpage for more information (<https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-%20code-student-conduct-code/>).

This course is designed to offer a safe space for each individual where all students are welcome to share their own ideas while being respectful for others. As every other topic in academia, sociology includes sensitive subjects through which people share their personal experiences. which may make them feel vulnerable. In that case, I expect all students to show utmost courtesy to each other, and utmost care not to perform any kind of aggression or interrupting behavior.

Online Course Evaluation Policy: Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens and can complete evaluations through the email, they receive from GatorEvals, in

their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

Getting Help:

For issues with technical difficulties for E-learning in Canvas, please contact the UF Help Desk at:

- Learning-support@ufl.edu
- (352) 392-HELP-select option 2
- <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>

Important Note: Any requests for make-ups due to technical issues MUST be accompanied by the ticket number received from LSS when the problem was reported to them. The ticket number will document the time and date of the problem. Students MUST email the instructor within 24 hours of the technical difficulty if they wish to request a make-up.

Other resources are available at <https://distance.ufl.edu/>

Grade	Grade Points	Percent
A	4.0	93-100
A-	3.67	90-92
B+	3.33	88-89
B	3.0	83-87
B-	2.67	80-82
C+	2.33	78-79
C	2.0	73-77
C-	1.67	70-72
D+	1.33	68-69
D	1.0	63-67
D-	.67	60-62
E	0	59-Below

- Please note that a C or higher is needed to pass the course. Anything lower than a C (including C-) does not count as a passing grade for Gen Ed or other credit.

(Tentative) Course Schedule:

Modules	Topics	Date	Quizzes	Assignments
Introduction	Review of Syllabus	Jan 6 ,2022		
Module 1	Defining and Studying Families	Jan 11, 2022 / Jan 15, 2022		
Module 2	Sociology of Families	Jan 18, 2022 / Jan 20, 2022	Jan 24, 2022 Quiz 1 due by 11:59 p.m.	
Module 3	History of Families	Jan 25, 2022 / Jan 27, 2022		Discussion Board 1 –initial post due (11:59 p.m.) on Jan 28, Friday; responses to 2 classmates’ posts are due by 11:59 p.m. on January 30, Sunday.
Module 4	Race and Ethnicity, and Immigration	Feb 1, 2022 / Feb 3, 2022	Feb 7, 2022 Quiz 2 due by 11:59 p.m.	
Module 5	Social Class	Feb 8, 2022 / Feb 10, 2022		

Module 6	Gender	Feb 15, 2022 / Feb 17, 2022	Feb 21, 2022 Quiz 3 due by 11:59 p.m.	
Module 7	Sexuality	Feb 22, 2022 / Feb 24, 2022		
Module 8	Love and Romantic Relationships	March 1, 2022 / March 3, 2022		Discussion Board 2 –initial post due (11:59 p.m.) on March 4, Friday; responses to 2 classmates' posts are due by 11:59 p.m. on March 6, Sunday.
Module 9	Marriage and Cohabitation	March 15, 2022 / March 17, 2022	March 21, 2022 Quiz 4 due by 11:59 p.m.	
Module 10	Families and Children	March 22, 2022/ March 24, 2022		
Module 11	Divorce, Remarriage, and Blended Families	March 29, 2022 / March 31, 2022	April 4, 2022 Quiz 5 due by 11:59 p.m.	
Module 12	Work and Families	April 5, 2022 / April 7, 2022		Discussion Board 3 –initial post due (11:59 p.m.) on April 8, Friday; responses to 2 classmates' posts are due by 11:59 p.m. on April 10, Sunday.

Module 13	Family Violence and Abuse	April 12, 2022 / April 14, 2022		
Module 14	The Future of the Family	April 19, 2022		April 20, 2022 Take Home Assignment due by 11:59 p.m.

NO FINAL EXAM

Disclaimer: All readings, assignments, and assessment tools are subject to change. Some readings or assignments may be added or deleted with prior notice from the instructor. Deadlines and quiz dates will not change.