

# SYG2430 Introduction to Marriage and Families

## Fall 2024

**Location:** McCarty Hall A G186

**Time:** MWF Period 7 (1:55 PM - 2:45 PM)

**Course website:** <https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/520585>

**Instructor:** Won-tak Joo (3344 Turlington Hall / [wjoo@ufl.edu](mailto:wjoo@ufl.edu))

**Office hours:** M 11:40 AM - 12:40 PM

### TAs

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### COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to introduce students to some of the major issues related to marriage and families, with a focus on sociological perspectives, policy implications, and an emphasis on diversity. 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.

### GENERAL EDUCATION OBJECTIVES

This section of SYG 2430 fulfills General Education requirements (S, D), but does not fulfill the Writing Requirement. A minimum grade of C is required for General Education credit.

- **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 exams and reviewed in the 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 in-class group activities.

- **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 writing assignment and in-class group activities.

### REQUIRED TEXTS

- Cohen, P. N. (2024; 4<sup>th</sup> edition). *The Family: Diversity, Inequality, and Social Change*. W. W. Norton & Company (Available as an e-book through UF All Access)
- Additional readings will be available for free through Canvas.
- The readings encompass multiple theoretical perspectives and interpretations, as well as different sources and types of evidence. Our use of readings will highlight critical engagement of all perspectives and evidence covered, rather than endorsing one perspective over others.

### COMMUNICATION

All inquiries concerning the course should be sent through Canvas or to [wjoo@ufl.edu](mailto:wjoo@ufl.edu). Emails must include SYG2430 in the subject line. Please allow at least 24 hours during regular business hours (M - F, 9 AM - 5 PM) to respond to your email inquiries.

### GRADING POLICY

- **In-class group activity (20%)**: every student will be assigned to one of groups of five members / one or two group activities will be given each week / all activities are done in class / individuals submit their activity report
- **Three exams (20% × 3)**: 40 yes or no + multiple choice questions / from textbook + extra readings + lectures + lecture slides / not cumulative
- **Writing assignment (20%)**: interview one of your family members or relatives (except for your parents or siblings) and write their family history (detailed instructions will be given on the course website) / 5% for the interview plan (Oct 6) + 15% for the final paper (Nov 17); ≤3 pages, 12pt, single space

### GRADING SCALE

A	94-100	B+	87-<90	C+	77-<80	D+	67-<70	E	0-<61
A-	90-<94	B	84-<87	C	74-<77	D	64-<67		
		B-	80-<84	C-	70-<74	D-	61-<64		

For information on current UF grading policies for assigning grade points, see <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/#gradestext>.

### COURSE POLICIES

- Electronic devices are *required* for in-class activities.
- Students are expected to read the required readings before the lecture so that they are prepared to do in-class activities. Additional weekly readings, if any, will be uploaded one week ahead of the lecture day.
- Students are required to be present at every lecture.
- Any missed exams or assignments will receive a score of 0 (zero). No other provisions will be available for make-up work unless discussed *in advance* with verifiable documentation.

- Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>.

### **EVALUATION POLICY**

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this 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/>.

### **UNIVERSITY POLICY ON ACCOMMODATING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Students requesting accommodation for disabilities must first register at the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, <https://disability.ufl.edu/>). The Disability Resource Center will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation. 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://www.dso.ufl.edu/scer/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>.

### **LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE STATEMENT**

- In SYG2430, there may be content on historical background and sociological concepts about marriage and families. Multiple sources, types of evidence, and interpretations are included, and differing interpretations of historical events are discussed with an emphasis on diverse theoretical perspectives rather than privileging one over the other. The class emphasizes maintaining accuracy and objectivity and skills to evaluate evidence and claims. Discussions of history are case- or data-driven rather than rooted in ideology or advocacy, and students can draw their own conclusions.
- SYG 2430 may touch on topics germane to identity, but as subjects of study and not advocacy; in that spirit, this course examines diverse perspectives rather than privileging one over the other. Discussions of identity are case- or data-driven rather than rooted in ideology or advocacy. Grading of assignments and/or exams focuses on understanding of content rather than adopting a specific opinion.
- SYG 2430 may discuss systemic theories as they relate to sociological perspectives, but it considers them in the context of other theoretical approaches and includes a critique of diverse theoretical perspectives. The course may explore various theoretical concepts, including systemic racism, sexism, oppression, or privilege, without endorsing any specific viewpoint. It also does not treat inequalities or injustice as inherent, but instead discusses theoretical perspectives that explain whether and how social structures may create and reproduce inequalities. Such processes are viewed as contingent and negotiated and often contested rather than natural or determined. The course cites relevant facts based on research demonstrating how institutions are social contexts that shape inequalities within the United States and globally. Grading of assignments and/or exams focuses on understanding of content rather than adopting a specific opinion.

## SCHEDULE

Week	Readings
W1 Aug 18-	(Aug 19-21: no class) Introduction
W2 Aug 25-	C1: A Sociology of the Family C2: The Family in History
W3 Sep 1-	(Sep 2: Labor Day) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More than half of Americans live within an hour of extended family (<a href="#">link</a>)</li> <li>• Young adults in U.S. are much more likely than 50 years ago to be living in a multigenerational household (<a href="#">link</a>)</li> </ul>
W4 Sep 8-	C3: Race, Ethnicity, and Immigration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family life is changing in different ways across urban, suburban and rural communities in the U.S. (<a href="#">link</a>)</li> </ul>
W5 Sep 15-	C4: Families and Social Class <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How the American middle class has changed in the past five decades (<a href="#">link</a>)</li> </ul>
W6 Sep 22-	(Sep 23: Exam 1) C5: Gender
W7 Sep 29-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• STEM Jobs see uneven progress in increasing gender, racial and ethnic diversity (<a href="#">link</a>)</li> <li>• The mark of a woman's record: Gender and academic performance in hiring (<a href="#">link</a>)</li> </ul>
W8 Oct 6-	(Oct 6 11:59 PM: writing assignment, interview plan) C6: Sexuality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is no 'gay gene.' There is no 'straight gene.' Sexuality is just complex, study confirms (<a href="#">link</a>)</li> </ul>
W9 Oct 13-	C7: Love and Relationships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What consent looks like (<a href="#">link</a>)</li> <li>• 10 facts about Americans and online dating in 2019 (<a href="#">link</a>)</li> </ul>
W10 Oct 20-	C8: Marriage and Cohabitation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A peek inside the black box: What marriage means for poor unmarried parents (<a href="#">link</a>)</li> </ul> (Oct 25: Exam 2)
W11 Oct 27-	C9: Families and Children
W12 Nov 3-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diverging destinies: How children are faring under the second demographic transition (<a href="#">link</a>)</li> </ul>
W13 Nov 10-	(Nov 11: Veterans Day) C10: Divorce, Remarriage, and Blended Families <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Divorce and the Great Recession (<a href="#">link</a>)</li> <li>• Divorce rates are now dropping (<a href="#">link</a>)</li> <li>• Marriage, divorce, and the COVID-19 pandemic in the U.S. (<a href="#">link</a>)</li> </ul>
W14 Nov 17-	(Nov 17 11:59 PM: writing assignment, final paper) C11: Work and Families <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parenthood, gender and work-family time in the United States, Australia, Italy, France, and Denmark (<a href="#">link</a>)</li> <li>• Some gender disparities widened in the U.S. workforce during the pandemic (<a href="#">link</a>)</li> </ul>

W15 Nov 24-	(Nov 25-29: Thanksgiving)
W16 Dec 1-	C12: Family Violence and Abuse (Dec 4: Exam 3)