

Introduction to Marriage and Families

SYG 2430 – Section 28749 & 28750

Online Course

Spring 2024

3 Credit Hours

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Office Hours: Wednesdays 1:30-3:30 pm, Zoom or 3349 Turlington (in-person)

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

Course Description

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 and policy implications. We will begin with a discussion of how we define "family" and the diversity of families. We will examine the historical and contemporary contexts that have shaped the meanings and importance of families in society. We will review the important sociological frameworks and research methods for studying relationship and family issues. We will 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. We will also analyze "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.

The course is comprised of **Dr. Koropecyj-Cox's** (In UF sociology) recorded lectures & supplemented materials from various source to enhance the understanding. There will not be live meetings nor in-person meetings in this course. Click on "Start here" page from Canvas for more introductory videos for the course.

Learning Outcomes

This section of SYG 2430 fulfills General Education requirements (S, D), but does NOT fulfill the Writing Requirement. There are no pre-requisites for the course.

As a general education course, this course provides an overview of social perspectives and processes and an introduction to Diversity, with an emphasis on the following 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.

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 with regard to 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 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 quizzes and exams as well as the Take-Home Assignments and Optional Paper.

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, political discourse, and policy discussions.

Course Materials

Required Textbook: The Family: Diversity, Inequality, and Social Change, 3rd edition. (2020). Philip N. Cohen. Norton. (Available as an eBook through UF All Access)

- This textbook has been selected in part because of its affordability. This course is participating in **UF All Access** (<https://www.bsd.ufl.edu/AllAccess/>), which provides access to the eBook from the first day and is billed to your UF bill. See Canvas for more information on how to sign up.
- Alternatively, you may buy or rent a new or used hard copy - choose the option that works best for you. You do not need to purchase access to the publisher's materials online (InQuizitive).
- I **do not** recommend buying the earlier edition – the content has changed, and all exams, reading assignments, and coursework will use the 3rd edition.

Course Requirements

Course Format

This is a fully online course. Online classes are not easier than face-to-face lecture classes. To succeed in an online class, you must be extremely motivated and well organized. You will need to purchase the required textbook listed above by the first day of the course. Other course materials are available via Canvas. As in all courses, unauthorized recording and unauthorized sharing of recorded materials is prohibited.

A computer with a reliable internet connection is required for this course. If you experience issues with Canvas, please contact the UF Computing Help Desk by phone (352)392-HELP, or visit their physical location in the HUB (<http://helpdesk.ufl.edu/>).

The typical class structure will consist of learning modules in Canvas, which include:

- Watch video/PowerPoint lectures (by Dr. Cox)
- Read assigned chapters
- Participate in online discussions
- Take Quizzes
- Complete Written Exercises

It is important to understand that this is not a self-paced class or an independent study. You will have assigned deadlines, and work must be submitted on time. You may not save up your assignments to complete in the last weeks or days of the semester. We have no face-to-face class meetings, and you will complete your work asynchronously - which simply means that you will be working on it at different times than your colleagues. You can log into the class to do your work at whatever time is convenient for you as long as you are meeting class deadlines (usually Sundays at midnight).

Course Communication and Feedback

Email – I will be communicating with you regarding grades and assignments. If you need to get in touch with me, the best method is via email. Generally, I will reply to emails within 24 hours and will provide feedback on assignments within 72 hours. You may also post questions pertaining to the course on the **General Discussion Board**. These questions will be answered within 24 hours. All email and other communication in the course should be respectful, civil, and professional – see **Netiquette Guidelines** in Canvas.

Canvas - If you are having trouble with this course or its material, you may also send messages to me through the Canvas system (using the “Inbox” function on the left-hand side). **Announcements** will be posted to this course whenever necessary. Please do check your Canvas email regularly, and make sure your Canvas emails are being forwarded to your UF email address.

Course Assignments and Grading

Syllabus Quiz & Small Polls

At the beginning of the course, there will be a quiz on this syllabus, to ensure we all start the course with the same understanding and expectations **[You will only be able to progress to subsequent modules once you have achieved full marks]**. The quiz will be available on Canvas under the “Quizzes” tab. You will also complete 2 small polls/quizzes throughout the semester. These points will be given as **bonus** at the end of the semester and will NOT appear on Canvas grade. **(worth 20 points total)**

Syllabus Quiz - 10 points

Student Questionnaire - 5 points

Sexuality Knowledge Quiz - 5 points

Quizzes

Seven quizzes will be assigned. Quizzes can be found on Canvas under the “Quizzes” tab and will be automatically evaluated. Quiz questions/answers are randomly displayed and drawn from substantial test banks which cover the previous and current week’s readings and lectures. Quizzes will be open for the duration of the week (Monday 12:00 am to Sunday 11:59 pm). You will have 30 minutes to complete each quiz. Your lowest quiz grade will be dropped at the end of the semester. **(worth 240 points total)**

Discussion Boards

For 5 weeks, you will be required to comment on the Discussion Board on Canvas. Specific prompts and instructions (including length of your post) will be specified within each Discussion Board. Each week that you post on the Discussion Board, you should also respond to two other posts. Your initial posts are worth 50 points each and are due by Friday 11:59 pm each week (this is to allow enough time for responses). Each response to another student is worth 5 points apiece and are due by Sunday 11:59 pm. The discussion board will be open at the beginning of the prior module to give you time to review the module instructions and complete any assigned work as part of the module. **(worth 240 points total)**

Response Paper

You will submit 2 response papers over the course of the semester. These assignments are designed to allow you to explore sociological research, media, and current events in your area of interest in relation to our course. Each assignment’s page (under the “Assignments” tab on Canvas) will include specific instructions as well as a detailed rubric. These assignments generally require substantial time and effort. The instructions will be available several weeks before their respective due dates –please plan accordingly. **(worth 320 points total)**

Response Paper 1 – Exploring Sociological Research – 160 points.

Response Paper 2 – Media Analysis – 160 points.

Evaluation and Grading Scale

| Assignment Weights | Percent |
|---|----------------|
| Discussion boards (4 x 50) + responses (4 x 10) | 30% |
| Quizzes (6 x 40) | 30% |
| Response paper (2 x 160) | 40% |
| Total | 100% |

Grading Scale

| Grade | Percentage | Points |
|-------|------------|---------------|
| A | 94 - 100 | 752 - 800 |
| A- | 90 - <94 | 720 - 751 |
| B+ | 87 - <90 | 696 - 719 |
| B | 84 - <87 | 672 - 695 |
| B- | 80 - <84 | 640 - 671 |
| C+ | 77 - <80 | 616 - 639 |
| C | 74 - <77 | 592 - 615 |
| C- | 70 - <74 | 560 - 591 |
| D+ | 67 - <70 | 536 - 559 |
| D | 64 - <67 | 512 - 535 |
| D- | 60 - <64 | 480 - 511 |
| E | Below 60 | 479 and below |

Grades will not be rounded. They are based on the total points you earn over the course of the semester. All point scores for each assignment are listed above.

*A minimum grade of C is required for General Education credit

Course Policies and Procedures

Attendance Policy – Success in this course is dependent on your active participation throughout the semester. You are expected to log into Canvas several times a week and complete course assignments. Even if your work is completed, you still need to login to ensure that you have seen all announcements, etc. It is your responsibility to check updates related to the course. Attendance will be taken based on your completion of course assignments. You will receive a 0 on all missed assignments unless you have a valid excuse (<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>) with documentation (<https://care.dso.ufl.edu/instructor-notifications/>).

Make Up Work – Discussion boards, quizzes, and small polls will be open for the duration of the weekly topic they cover. Larger assignments are done on your own time, with advance notice of due dates.

- **Discussion boards** require engagement with other students; therefore, late Discussion posts and responses will not be accepted.
- **Late quizzes** (within one week of the posted deadline only) will count for no more than half credit (up to 25 points).
- **Response papers** submitted late will have points deducted (10% per day, up to 5 days or 50%) unless you have made specific prior arrangements with the instructor. Any assignments submitted more than 5 days late will not count for credit.

Respect – Disrespectful behavior will not be tolerated in our class. Our virtual classroom will serve as a place where everyone has a chance to speak and learn. As

we communicate throughout the semester online, I expect each of us to listen and hear other students' experiences and respect our differences.

Academic Honesty – You are expected to comply with the University of Florida Honor Code, which states:

We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment."

Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated in this course. UF's full Honor Code can be found here: <https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>.

All assignments submitted through Canvas in this course are run through the plagiarism checker, Turnitin.

Disability Accommodations – Students requiring accommodations must first register with the Disability Resource Center (DRC). The DRC will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations, which should be submitted to me as soon as possible in the course. The DRC is located in Reid Hall and can be found online here: <https://disability.ufl.edu/students/accommodations/>.

Course Evaluation – At the end of each semester, 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/>.

Campus Resources

Health and Wellness

If you have concerns or challenges during the semester, you are encouraged to connect with the Dean of Students Office – U Matter We Care (<https://umatter.ufl.edu/>) for support or guidance. The Academic Advising Office (<https://www.advising.ufl.edu/>) and the advisors within your major or college are also available to provide guidance as you navigate the semester and your program of study at UF.

For students facing difficulties completing the course or who are in need of health care, counseling, or other support –

- *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](#) 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](#).
- *University Police Department*: Visit [UF Police Department website](#) 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](#).
- *GatorWell Health Promotion Services*: For prevention services focused on optimal wellbeing, including Wellness Coaching for Academic Success, visit the [GatorWell website](#) or call 352-273-4450.

Academic Resources

- E-learning technical support: Contact [the UF Computing Help Desk](#) 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.
- [Library Support](#): Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.
- [Teaching Center](#): Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352-392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.
- [Writing Studio](#): 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.
- Student Complaints On-Campus: Visit [the Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code webpage](#) for more information.
- On-Line Students Complaints: View [the Distance Learning Student Complaint Process](#).

Course Schedule

| Date(s) | Module/Topic | To Do (complete in the order listed on the Module page) | Due this week |
|------------|---|--|--|
| 1/8 – 1/14 | Module 1: Introduction and Defining Family | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review “Start Here” section. • Read syllabus and complete the syllabus quiz [You will not be able to move forward in the course if you do not pass it with a 10/10.] • Complete student questionnaire • Read Cohen ch.1 (p. 2-16) • Watch Module 1 lectures and other videos | <p>- Syllabus quiz - Student questionnaire</p> |
| 1/15-1/21 | Module 2: Theories, Methods, & Ethics | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Cohen ch.1 (p. 16-33) • Read Benokraitis ch.2 (pp. 27-41) and (pp. 41-54) – available on Canvas as pdf file • Watch Module 2 lectures and other videos • Complete review tables for methods and theories (optional) • Take Quiz #1 • Begin Discussion Board #1 | <p>- Quiz #1</p> |
| 1/22-1/28 | Module 3: History of Families | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Cohen ch.2 (p. 34-75) • Watch Module 3 lectures and other videos • Complete review table for history (optional) • Complete Discussion Board #1 (initial post + 2 responses) | <p>- Discussion board #1</p> |
| 1/29-2/4 | Module 4: Social Class & Economics | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Cohen ch.4 (p. 118-155) • Watch Module 4 lectures and other videos • Take Quiz #2 • Begin Discussion Board #2 | <p>- Quiz #2</p> |
| 2/5-2/11 | Module 5: Racial & Ethnic Diversity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Cohen ch.3 (p. 76-117) • Watch Module 5 lectures and other videos • Complete Discussion Board #2 (initial post + 2 responses) | <p>- Discussion board #2</p> |

| Date(s) | Module/Topic | To Do (complete in the order listed on the Module page) | Due this week |
|--|--|---|---|
| 2/12-2/18 | Module 6: Gender & Families | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Cohen ch.5 (p. 156-195) • Watch Module 6 lectures and other videos • Read Cohen ch.11 (p. 398-407) • Take Quiz #3 • Begin Discussion Board #3 | - Quiz #3 |
| 2/19-2/25 | Module 7: Love, Relationships, & Dating | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Cohen ch.7 (p. 236-271) • Watch Module 7 lectures and other videos • Complete Discussion Board #3 (initial post + 2 responses) | - Discussion board #3 |
| 2/26-3/3 | Module 8: Sexuality & Sexual Expression Throughout Life | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take Sexuality Knowledge Quiz • Read Cohen ch.6 (p. 196-235) • Watch Module 8 lectures and other videos • Take Quiz #4 | - Sexuality Knowledge Quiz - Quiz #4 |
| 3/4-3/17 (Spring Break 3/9- 3/17) | Module 9: Singlehood & Cohabitation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Cohen ch.8 (p.297-301, p.316-317) • Watch Module 9 lectures and other videos • Begin response paper #1 | |
| 3/18-3/24 | Module 10: Marriage as an Institution & Interpersonal Relationship | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Cohen ch.8 (p. 272-296, 301-315) • Watch Module 10 lectures and other videos • Take Quiz #5 • Work on response paper #1 | - Quiz #5 |
| 3/25-3/31 | Module 11: To Be or Not to Be a Parent | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Cohen ch.9 (p. 318-358) • Watch Module 4 lectures and other videos • Complete response paper #1 | - Response paper #1 |
| 4/1-4/7 | Module 12: Parenthood & Work- Family Concerns | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Cohen ch.9 (p. 336-357) • Read Cohen ch.11 (p. 407-435) • Watch Module 12 lectures and other videos • Take Quiz #6 • Begin Discussion Board #4 | - Quiz #6 |

| Date(s) | Module/Topic | To Do (complete in the order listed on the Module page) | Due this week |
|-----------|---|--|------------------------------|
| 4/8-4/14 | Module 13: Family Violence and Abuse | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Cohen ch.12 (p. 436-474) • Watch Module 13 lectures and other videos • Complete Discussion Board #4 (initial post + 2 responses) • Work on response paper #2 | - Discussion board #4 |
| 4/15-4/21 | Module 14: Divorce, Remarriage, and Blended Families | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Cohen ch.10 (p. 361-396) • Watch Module 14 lectures and other videos • Take Quiz #7 • Work on response paper #2 • Complete course evaluation | - Quiz #7 |
| 4/22-4/24 | Module 15: Aging, Caregiving, and Future Family Issues | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Cohen ch.13 (p. 477-506) • Watch Module 15 lectures and other videos • Complete response paper #2 | - Response paper #2 |

NO FINAL EXAM 

*Dates are subject to change.