

# Introduction to Marriage and Families

## Prof. Tanya Koropecyj-Cox

SYG 2430 – class #13988 – Summer B 2022

**Class will meet in person on  
Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays**  
Period 3 (11:00 AM - 12:15 AM)  
McCarty A – Room G186

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The class will meet each day in person. Class sessions will include lectures, discussion, and in-class assignments. The specific tasks for each module and any additional course materials are posted on Canvas. You are expected to complete the work for each module online, including readings, take-home assignments, discussion boards, and weekly quizzes.

Note – The most current version of the syllabus will be available in Canvas. You are responsible for checking Canvas and your email each day (summer moves fast) for any announcements or other important information.

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### Department of Sociology and Criminology & Law

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Phone: 294-7177

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Office hours: Tuesdays 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm and Wednesdays 9:30 – 10:30 am.

In person – drop in (no appointment needed), or email for an appointment or zoom meeting.

Teaching Assistant: Keelyn Taylor

Email: [keelyntaylor@ufl.edu](mailto:keelyntaylor@ufl.edu)

3347 Turlington Hall

Office hours: Mondays 9:30 am – 10:30 am, Thursdays (zoom) 9:30 – 10:30 am

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

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This is a 6-week in-person course - welcome!

We will use E-Learning/Canvas (<http://elearning.ufl.edu>) extensively. Class material is organized on Canvas by week and module. Reading assignments and the schedule of topics are posted, as well as announcements, assignment instructions, discussion boards, grades, and other resources.

It is your responsibility to check E-Learning frequently to access these materials. All work must be submitted electronically on E-Learning. Please be sure to contact Dr. Koropecyj-Cox or the TA early in the term if you have any questions about accessing or using E-Learning.

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. The pandemic has brought many of these issues

into focus, highlighting the strength and resilience of families as well as the strains, difficulties, inequalities, and conflicts that may be part of people's family experiences.

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:**

- Compare different definitions of family and identify the key features that are emphasized in each definition. Evaluate how different definitions and perspectives influence public discussions and social policy, including the ethical perspectives that influence these processes.
- 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, and the diversity of contemporary families.
- Review and assess the arguments and evidence used to support different interpretations, concerns, and policy solutions with regard to 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 some 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.

### **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.

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, step-families, 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.

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### **Required Text:**

- **Textbook: The Family: Diversity, Inequality, and Social Change, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition. (2021). Philip N. Cohen. Norton. (Available as an ebook through UF All Access)**
  - UF All Access info...
  - **I do not recommend buying an earlier edition** - the material has changed, and all quizzes, reading assignments, and coursework will use the current edition.
  - This textbook was selected in part because it is an affordable option. You may buy or rent, get new or used, and choose hard copy or digital. You are encouraged to compare the options and choose the one that works best for you, but be sure that you get access to the book as early as possible to keep up with course material. **You do not need to purchase access to the publishers' online resources.**

- 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>.

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## Course Requirements

**Readings:** Readings are assigned for nearly every class. You are strongly encouraged to do the readings before each class. **Be sure to keep up with the reading -- the summer term is intensive, and there is little time to make-up for missed reading later!** You are also encouraged to read a major newspaper (e.g., New York Times, Washington Post, available free online) and to peruse on-line resources regularly. Please feel free to email clippings, links, and comments to the Instructor or post them on Twitter using our course hashtag: #syg2430tkc.

**Attendance and In-Class Work:** The course combines material from lecture, discussion, and assigned readings as well as the internet. Class attendance is required. We will not be taking roll, but attendance and participation are important to your success in the course.

Short, in-class assignments will be given during class meetings (~2-3 per week) to help focus thoughts, stimulate discussion, or review important material. These are submitted during class time and comprise the In-Class Activity grade (**~1.5-2 points each – 30 points total; 2 lowest/missed grades will be dropped**).

Material from class sessions will be included in quizzes -- in-class presentation and discussion may be different from the textbook and readings. Class meetings also provide an opportunity for students to share comments and insights, ask questions, and listen to others.

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.

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.

Acceptable reasons for excused absences according to UF policy (<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>) include illness, religious holidays, university activities, and military obligation. Should you miss a class for any reason, you are responsible for obtaining any announcements and material that were covered in class.

You may miss up to two in-class assignments (unexcused) without penalty (the lowest 2 grades will be dropped); further unexcused missed assignments will be deducted from your grade.

**Exams – Midterm and Final:** There will be two required exams, a Midterm (on Monday, July 18), and a Final Exam on Friday, August 5. These exams will be given in class using scantrons. Make-up exams can be arranged in case of a serious reason or emergency. Requests for a make-up exam must be arranged at least within 24 hours PRIOR to the exam (except in emergency).

## Week 1/Module 1 Assignments (online):

- **Syllabus quiz** -- due at 11:59 p.m. on Thursday, June 30 (worth **5 points**).

- **Student questionnaire** -- due at 11:59 pm on Thursday, July 1 (worth **5 points**)

**Weekly -- Quizzes:** There will be 5 online quizzes, due on **Mondays by 10:00 am**, worth **20 points each (80 points total)**. **The lowest quiz grade will be dropped**. Make-up or late quizzes can be arranged in case of a serious reason or emergency. Requests for a make-up quiz must be arranged at least within 24 hours PRIOR to the quiz (except in emergency).

**Weeks 2 and 5 -- Discussion Board Posts & Responses:** There will be 2 required participations on the Discussion Board on Canvas. Specific prompts and instructions (including the length of your post) will be described for each Discussion Board. For each discussion, you are required to submit an initial post as well as responses to two other posts. Your initial posts are worth 30 points each and are due by Thursday 11:59 pm in week 2 and week 5 (this is to allow enough time for responses). Responses to another student (x2) are worth 5 points each and are due by Sunday 11:59 pm in week 2 and week 5. The discussion board will open at the beginning of the prior module to give you time to review the instructions and complete the assigned work (**worth 30 points each; 60 points total**). Late work will be accepted only with the approval of the instructor if there are serious circumstances.

**Week 4 -- Take-Home Assignment:** There will be one take-home assignment (~4 pages). Instructions will be posted on E-Learning. This assignment is worth **80 points and is due by 9:30 am on Thursday, July 21**. 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 only 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.

Course Requirement	Points
In-class assignments (~2-3/week; drop 2 lowest)	<b>30 points</b>
Syllabus quiz + questionnaire	<b>10 points</b>
Take-home assignment – due week 4	<b>80 points</b>
Discussion Boards (2 x 30 pts) – due week 2 & week 5	<b>60 points</b>
Quizzes (5 x 20 pts, drop lowest)	<b>80 points</b>
Midterm (70 pts) + Final (70 pts)	<b>140 points</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>400 points</b>

**Extra credit:** An extra credit opportunity will be announced in the last week, related to completion of the course evaluation – this is a collective incentive. Everyone will receive extra credit points based on the percentage of the class completing the online evaluation. Details will be posted on E-Learning.

**Students are responsible for checking the online syllabus and Canvas regularly for any updates and current information.**

#### Grading Structure for SYG 2430:

##### Passing grades:

Grade    Percent    Points

##### Non-passing grades (no GE credit)

Grade    Percent    Points

A	94-100	376-400 pts	D+	66-69.9	264-279.9 pts
A-	90-93.9	360-375.9 pts	D	60-65.9	240-263.9 pts
B+	86-89.9	344-359.9 pts	E	below 60	< 240 pts
B	82-85.9	328-343.9 pts			
B-	79-81.9	316-327.9 pts			
C+	76-78.9	304-315.9 pts			
C	70-75.9	280-303.9 pts			

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

**All course work, including quizzes, must be your original and individual work. Any cheating or plagiarism will result in a failing grade and disciplinary action.**

**\*\* The schedule of quizzes and deadlines will not change. Please plan accordingly. The schedule for readings may change – any updates or changes will be posted on Canvas. You are responsible for checking Canvas regularly for any updates and current information.**

## **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 online materials without clear attribution, will result in a failing grade and disciplinary action. You are responsible for keeping back-up files of your written assignments. All written assignments must be submitted electronically on E-Learning and are checked using Turnitin.

### **COVID-19**

In response to COVID-19, the following recommendations are in place to maintain your learning environment, to enhance the safety of our in-classroom interactions, and to further the health and safety of ourselves, our neighbors, and our loved ones.

- If you are not vaccinated, get vaccinated. Vaccines are readily available and have been demonstrated to be safe and effective against the COVID-19 virus. Visit [one.uf](http://one.uf) for screening / testing and vaccination opportunities.

- If you are sick, stay home. Please call your primary care provider if you are ill and need immediate care or the UF Student Health Care Center at 352-392-1161 to be evaluated.
- Course materials will be provided to you with an excused absence, and you will be given a reasonable amount of time to make up work.

### **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/>).

### **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 slides. You are encouraged to get to know your classmates and to get missed notes and discussion content from your classmates. Feel free to contact the TA with any questions.
- Don't put off the readings – you should come prepared for each class, and keep up with the readings for each chapter and module.
- Do ask questions! You will have opportunities to ask questions, and the Instructor and TA each have designated office hours on Zoom and/or Chat in Canvas. Please feel free to drop in with questions, to discuss classwork 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 term to ask questions or resolve grades or excused absences. Questions about grades must be addressed in writing to the Instructor using your UF email account and must be resolved prior to the last day of class (except for the last quiz).
- Do keep up with current events in the newspaper, TV news, etc., and look for connections to course material.
- Please be considerate in class and be mindful. Don't multitask during class time. You are expected to dress and behave appropriately and interact with respect.
- You are encouraged to engage in active learning both in and outside class – this includes writing notes (by hand), preparing outlines, and taking notes while reading. Research has found that highlighting text while you read (without taking notes) is generally less effective for learning than writing and outlining by hand.
- “Don't just come to class – be present.”
- Do keep an open mind and listen to different viewpoints.

**\*\*\* This course does not fulfill Writing Requirements. \*\*\***

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## Schedule of Topics and Deadlines

(see Canvas for details on assigned readings, assignments, quizzes, and instructions!!)

Week	TOPIC	
<b>Week 1</b>	<b>Introduction and Historical Background</b>	
June 27	Introduce course, syllabus, requirements	
June 28	Defining "Family" & Assessing Family Changes	Module 1
June 29	Family Change and Definitions; Begin Conceptual Frameworks	
June 30	History: Colonial era to Industrialization	Module 3
	<b>*** Syllabus quiz and student questionnaire due (11:59 p.m.)</b>	
July 1	History: "Modern" Families and Beyond	
	<b>*** Quiz 1 due (by Monday, 10:00 a.m.)</b>	
<b>Week 2</b>	<b>Studying Relationships and Families; Introducing Family Diversity</b>	
July 4	HOLIDAY – NO CLASS	
July 5	Conceptual frameworks	Module 2
July 6	Methods, Data, and Ethics	
July 7	Racial and Ethnic Diversity	Module 5
	<b>*** Discussion Board – initial post due (11:59 p.m.) on Thursday; responses to 2 classmates' posts are due by 11:59 p.m. on Sunday.</b>	
July 8	Racial and Ethnic Diversity, Immigration; Social Class	Module 4
	<b>*** Quiz 2 due (by Monday, 10:00 a.m.)</b>	
<b>Week 3</b>	<b>Social Class, Gender, and Sexuality</b>	
July 11	Social Class and Economic Constraints continued	
July 12	Gender: Socialization, Norms, Identities, and Interactions	Module 6
July 13	Gender Perspectives, Work and Power, and Social change	



July 14 Sexuality and Sexual Expression Module 8

July 15 Sexuality – continued; Review for Midterm

**\*\*\* Quiz 3 due (by Monday, 10:00 a.m.)**

**Week 4 Love, Relationships and Dating, Singlehood, Cohabitation**

July 18 MIDTERM

July 19 Love and Romantic Relationships Module 7

July 20 Dating and Mate Selection

July 21 Relationships, Conflict Module 13a

**\*\*\* Take-Home Assignment due (10:00 a.m.)**

July 22 Singlehood and Cohabitation Module 9

**\*\*\* Quiz 4 due (by Monday, 10:00 a.m.)**

**Week 5 Marriage, Childbearing, and Parenthood**

July 25 Cohabitation, Marriage Equality

July 26 Marriage as a Social Institution Module 10

July 27 Marriage Relationships

July 28 Childbearing, Adoption, Childlessness Module 11

**\*\*\* Discussion Board – initial post due (11:59 p.m.) on Thursday; responses to 2 classmates' posts are due by 11:59 p.m. on Sunday.**

July 29 Children and Parenthood Module 12

**\*\*\* Quiz 5 due (by Monday, 10:00 a.m.)**

**Week 6**

Aug 1 Work-Family Issues, Family Caregiving, and Aging Module 14a

Aug 2 Family Stress, Care of Dependents Module 13b

Aug 3 Separation, Divorce Module 13c

Aug 4          Repartnering, Remarriage, Blended Families

Module 14b

Aug 5          FINAL EXAM

\*\* Schedule of topics and readings may change depending on the pace of the class. Deadlines, quiz dates, and exam dates will not change.