

SOCI 226: FAMILIES & SOCIETY
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA-LINCOLN
SUMMER 2017 (June 5 – July 7)

Course Information

Instructor:	Dr. Larry Gibbs
Section #	501
Lecture Room	BURN 121
Lecture Times	MTWRF 11:00 am – 12:35 pm
Office	736 Oldfather Hall
Office Hours	TW 1:00 -2:00 pm or by appointment
Email	lgibbs2@unl.edu

Sociology Office: 402.472.6164; **Credits:** 3; **Prerequisite:** None

Course Description:

The family has long been considered an enduring social institution for the mere fact that most individuals grow up in families. There are a few themes that pervade the discourse on families in the U.S. today: 1) the decline of the family reflects a decline in society; 2) individualism is a destabilizing factor of the family; and 3) the family is not in decline but it is in transition – with families taking on numerous and complex forms. In this *Families and Society* (SOCI 226) course we will learn about the functions of the families and the diverse forms they have taken over time and across different groups. As a class, we will also use our sociological lens to identify, explore and understand the family based on the connections between our personal experiences (private family) and our social environment (public family).

Course Objectives:

Following the completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Define “family,” and describe the implications of such a definition;
- Demonstrate understanding of fundamental sociological theories and concepts relating to the family;
- Describe the role of the family institution in society currently and in the past;
- Recognize how gender, sexuality, social class and race/ethnicity influence the structure and functioning of families;
- Explore individual and societal factors impacting union dissolution and repartnering;
- Critically evaluate family policy initiatives and its implications for individuals and society.

Required Text:

Cherlin, Andrew J. (2017). *Public and Private Families: An Introduction* (8th Edition). New York: McGraw Hill. ISBN: 978-0-07-8027615-4. This textbook is available at UNL’s Bookstore.

Achievement Centered Education (ACE) Designation:

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln seeks to provide quality education to all its students. To that end, it has designated certain classes as ACE certified. These classes provide and assess specific learning outcomes. As an ACE certified class, *Families in Societies (SOCI 226)* will facilitate Learning Outcome #6 (using knowledge, theories, methods, and historical perspective appropriate to the social sciences to understand and evaluate human behavior) and Learning Outcome #9 (exhibit global awareness or knowledge of human diversity through analysis of an issue). ACE learning outcomes will be assessed by assignments, activities, writing exercises and exams.

Blackboard:

The Blackboard portal will be used for posting of syllabi, supplementary reading materials, outlines, grades, and other important course information and updates. If you have any limitations using Blackboard, notify me immediately, as computer access is a requirement of this class.

Course Requirements:

- Attendance: Attendance will be taken at every class.
- In-Class Activities: Points will be awarded for in-class activities (e.g. class presentations (individual and group); individual class activities).
- Reading Summaries & Discussion Questions: From week 2-4 students will provide a hard copy of summaries (1-2 pages) based on assigned readings. Additionally, during week 2-4 students will also have to write a response to a discussion question. More information will be given about the summaries during the first week of class.
- Quizzes: There are two (2) in-class quizzes for this course (Friday of weeks 1 and 3). The quizzes will cover topics during week 1 and 3 respectively. All quizzes contain multiple choice, true/false or fill in the blank questions.
- Exams: There are two (2) in-class examinations for this course (Friday of weeks 2 and 4). Exam 1 (week 2) will cover topics during weeks 1 and 2 and Exam 2 (week 4) will cover topics during weeks 3 and 4. Exams are essay/short-answer based.
- Debate: One of the final chapters cover the complex issue of family policies in the U.S. Students will be assigned to a team at the end of week 2 and meet to construct debate arguments. The class session prior to the debate presentation will be dedicated solely to debate preparation. More information will be given during the second week of class.
- Extra-Credit: All students will have the opportunity to gain extra-credit. Students will be able to earn 10 points (2% of total points) by completing a reflection paper (week 5).

Make-up exams and quizzes may be considered **under extreme circumstances, and at the instructor's discretion.**

Students who have conflicts due to representing the university (e.g. Band, Athletics, Theatre):

If you will have university related class conflicts, you need to submit official written documentation from the organization leader (e.g. director, coach) (highlighting your schedule) during the first week of class. If your schedule conflicts with a class (es), you must inform the Instructor via email about this conflict at least 2 weeks in advance, in order for a new assignment or exam date to be scheduled. Please note that make-up assignments or exams may vary from those originally given.

Assessments and Associated Points:

	Possible Points	Percent of Grade
Attendance	25	7.1
In-Class Activities	50	14.3
Reading Summaries & Discussion Questions	150	42.9
Quizzes (2)	25	7.1
Exams (2)	50	14.3
Debate	50	14.3
Total	350	100%

The following grading scale is applied:

A+ 97-100	B+ 87-89	C+ 77-79	D+ 67-69	F <=59%
A 93-96	B 83-86	C 73-76	D 63-66	
A- 90-92	B- 80-82	C- 70-72	D- 60-62	

Note: For Sociology majors/minors passing this course requires getting a C (73%) or higher.

Requisition for Re-evaluation of Exams:

If a student believes there was an error in the allocation of points they may submit, via email, a report detailing the error within 24 hours of assignment and score being received. For a request to be considered the student must provide relevant evidence from the assigned readings and/or lecture notes in support of the claim. Please note that re-grading means that the grade on the assignment may increase, not change at all, or decrease. **The score on the re-graded assignment will then be considered the student's final score.** Requests for re-evaluation of re-graded assignment or examination will not be accepted.

If a student is not satisfied with the response to a request for re-evaluation of an assignment grade, the student may contact the Chair of the Undergraduate Program in Sociology, in writing, to detail the complaint. Please note, however, that the Chair of the Undergraduate Program should be contacted only after a student has submitted a request for re-evaluation, as explained in the above paragraph, and only in the case that the student is unsatisfied with the Instructor's response to the initial request.

Students with Disabilities:

In accordance with the University policy, if a student has a documented disability and requires accommodations to obtain equal access in this course, he/she should contact the Instructor via email as soon as possible and make this need known. It is the policy of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln to provide flexible and individualized accommodation to students with documented disabilities that may affect their ability to fully participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. To receive accommodation services, you must be registered with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) office, 132 Canfield Administration, 472-3787 voice or TTY. Please contact the Service for Students with Disabilities (SSD) office as soon as possible to have them advance the paperwork to the instructor in a timely manner.

Course Conduct:

I place a high value on respectful conduct in the classroom, representing diversity and acknowledging different opinions and experiences. Here are some examples of expectations to support the best learning environment for everyone:

- ✓ Arrive in class on-time.
- ✓ I strongly discourage students from taking notes electronically because, in addition to being a distraction to others, it is associated with reduced classroom attention, poorer understanding and retention of material, lower exam scores, and worse overall course performance.
- ✓ Stay until the end of class time.
- ✓ Wait until the instructor is finished to pack up possessions.
- ✓ Only students who have a medical necessity and who are registered with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) office can do any recording of the class.
- ✓ Direct attention to the lesson and participate in all classroom activities.
- ✓ Conversations should only occur when the instructor asks the class to have a discussion.
- ✓ Contribute to class by raising your hand. Students will be acknowledged and asked to speak in turn.
- ✓ Minimize distractions to classmates (e.g. keep eating during lecture at a minimum).
- ✓ Engage in productive dialogue, even on controversial issues; for example focus on ideas, theories, and evidence using respectful language about people we disagree with.

Email Etiquette:

Many students are new to formal electronic communication, therefore this is a good time to learn how to create a professional electronic presentation of self. Electronic communication with your professors, instructors, recitation instructors, and other UNL personnel constitute formal, rather than conversational, correspondence. The style and tone of your emails should therefore be similar to business-style email correspondence. Therefore structure your email professionally by beginning with the appropriate salutation (e.g., Good Morning/Day/Afternoon Professor, Dr., Director, Dean, Provost, Chancellor, Mr., Ms., and Mrs. _____ (Last Name)). Unless otherwise instructed, UNL personnel should not be addressed as Hey/Hi/Hello/Yo/what's up _____ (First Name). **If you are unsure, it is always best to use professional titles (e.g. Professor or Dr. and last name).**

Likewise, if you prefer to be addressed by a different name other than what is listed on the official class roster, please inform me as soon as possible, so that you may be addressed appropriately.

When emailing please identify the course name (i.e. SOCI 226) and end the correspondence by signing your name. I generally respond to emails between 10:00 am - 3:00 pm, Monday-Friday. However, if you have not received a response within 24 business hours, please send a follow-up email.

Academic Integrity:

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln has set education objectives that aim to maintain academic integrity. Violations of academic integrity include, but are not limited to, *plagiarism, cheating, submitting unoriginal work in whole or part, fabrication or falsification, abuse of academic materials, complicity in academic dishonesty, and falsifying grade reports*. At minimum, any student found guilty of committing an act of academic dishonesty will receive a failing grade on the assignment, will be reported to the Chair of the Department of Sociology and the University Judicial Officer. Further academic and disciplinary sanctions may also be applied, however, including dismissal from the university. Students have been dismissed from the University for Violations of academic integrity. We therefore strongly urge you to maintain academic integrity.

If you are unaware of what constitutes academic dishonesty, please see an academic advisor, talk to your professor/instructor, and become familiar with the University's Academic Integrity Policy (See <http://stuafs.unl.edu/ja/code/three.shtml>).

Personal Identities & Class

The university blackboard system allows students to change personal information although the system resets every night. Not all students go by their legal name or find that the set information in Blackboard does not accurately portray who they are. Please send an email and let me know what your preferred name and pronouns are. For example, I prefer to be called Professor Gibbs or Dr. Gibbs and my preferred pronouns are him & he. Gender is central to the lives of many students and sex specific bathrooms are ubiquitous on campus. Gender neutral bathrooms can be harder to find; use link for locations: <http://involved.unl.edu/unl-gender-neutral-bathrooms>

DISCLAIMER: All content in this syllabus is subject to change as needs and circumstances develop. Any and all changes will be announced in class and posted on Blackboard and students are responsible for these revisions as announced.

Course Outline:

All readings should be completed before class on the day they are assigned. This schedule is subject to changes based on our movement through the material. You will be informed of all changes in class in advance.

Week	Day	Date	Topic(s)	Readings/Assignments/Exams
W1	M	6/5	Introduction to course; family defined.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chapters 1-5 ▪ 2 In-class activities
	TU	6/6	Sociological theory & families; family life & individualism; sociological viewpoint on families.	
	W	6/7	Origins of family & kinship; American family pre-1776, 1776-1990, 1900-present.	
	TH	6/8	Gender & families; social class & families.	
	F	6/9	Race/ethnicity & families; Quiz 1	
W2	M	6/12	Union formation; cohabitation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chapters 7-8 ▪ 4 Reading Summaries ▪ 1 Discussion Question ▪ 3 In-class activities
	TU	6/13	Marriage; social change & intimate unions.	
	W	6/14	Single earner-dual earner; division of labor in marriages.	
	TH	6/15	Work-family balance.	
	F	6/16	Exam 1	
W3	M	6/19	Roles of parents; barriers to effective parenting; children wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chapters 9-11 ▪ 4 Reading Summaries ▪ 1 Discussion Question ▪ 3 In-class activities
	TU	6/20	Modernization of old age; intergenerational support & ties	
	W	6/21	History of domestic violence; intimate partner violence (IPV).	
	TH	6/22	IPV cont'd; Sexual aggression & violence; explanations.	
	F	6/23	Domestic violence & policy; Quiz #2	
W4	M	6/26	Factors associated with union dissolution.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chapters 12 and 14 ▪ 4 Reading Summaries ▪ 1 Discussion Question ▪ 2 In-class activities
	TU	6/27	Union dissolution effects on children.	
	W	6/28	Repartnering; stepfamilies.	
	TH	6/29	Sources & statistics on Family in the US	
	F	6/30	Exam 2	
W5	M	7/3	Hybrid class – family & social policy	
	TU	7/4	NO CLASS - JULY 4TH – Independence Day	NO CLASS - JULY 4TH – Independence Day
	W	7/5	Family Policy Debate preparation	
	TH	7/6	Family Policy Debates	▪ Debate
	F	7/7	Hybrid class - Reflection Paper*	▪ Reflection Paper*