

Contemporary Family Issues
Sociology 325, Fall 2016
Tu & Th 12:30-1:45

Class Location: Burnett Hall Room 118

Dr. Kimberly A. Tyler
 717 Oldfather Hall

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Email: ktyler2@unl.edu

Office Hours: Tues: 11:15-12:15 & Thurs: 10:00-11:00 and by appt.

kim@ktresearch.net

Note: You are required to use Black Board (BB) for this course to view assignments, grades, announcements, discussion board, etc.

Objectives:

Through weekly lectures, readings, and class discussion, you will become familiar with some of the most up-to-date and seminal research on contemporary families including marriage and divorce and future of families, motherhood and the decision not to marry, gay fatherhood, parenting and social class, family violence, and the state of marriage and families. You will enhance critical thinking skills through class discussion, being a discussant leader, and through your journal entries. This course will entail a *substantial amount* of reading. In addition, you will be required to write a journal and a book review. Because this is an upper division level course, there also will be *substantial discussion (both small and large group) each class period* based on the assigned readings for that day. If you are adverse to class discussion and participation, this course may not be a good fit for you.

Required Books:

1. The Marriage-Go-Round: The State of Marriage and the Family in America Today.
Author: Andrew J. Cherlin
2. Promises I Can Keep: Why Poor Women Put Motherhood Before Marriage.
Authors: Kathryn Edin and Maria Kefalas
3. Gay Fatherhood: Narratives of Family and Citizenship in America. *Author:* Ellen Lewin
4. Unequal Childhoods: Class, Race, and Family Life, 2nd Ed. With an Update a Decade Later.
Author: Annette Lareau.
5. Fleeing the House of Horrors: Women who Have Left Abusive Partners.
Author: Aysan Sev'er

Course Requirements:

Discussant Role	15%
Exam #1	15%
Exam #2	20%
Book Review	15%
Applied Journal	20%
Journal Presentation	5%
Participation	10%

❖ **Course Requirements Described:**

Discussant:

Each student will be expected to share leadership of a small group by serving as a discussant for a *minimum of **three** class periods*. This will require you to come to class prepared to: (1) summarize the

readings, (2) have a list of questions for your classmates that will generate discussion, and (3) report back to the larger group. *You will be required to turn in your summary, notes, and questions at the end of the class period for which you are a discussant to receive a grade.* Below average grades will reflect lack of preparedness and lack of discussion within your group. Being unprepared (e.g. not presenting on the day in which you are a discussant because you forgot) will result in a score of 0. The class periods for which you will be a discussant will be assigned in advance. If you miss class, contact the instructor as soon as possible to see if you are a discussant for the following class period.

Exams:

There will be two (2) exams for this course. All exams are closed book/no notes and your exam will be taken in class during regular class time. Each exam will cover specific topics taught during the semester. Chapters covered for each exam are outlined below. The format for the exam will be announced in class.

Make-up Exams:

Make-up exams are only allowed under extreme circumstances, and at the instructor's discretion. Students must also provide documentation (e.g. medical emergencies). Make-up exams will be different from the exam given in class.

Book Review: You will be expected to write a book review over the semester that highlights the important findings from the Sev'er book. Your book review is due **November 29th**. Details for this assignment will be posted on Black Board.

Applied Journal:

Each student will be expected to apply sociological concepts to the world around them, including everyday life and the larger society. To do this, you will create an *Applied Sociology Journal* over the course of this class. Journal entries (~one page each in length) will include real world examples of concepts discussed in class. These can come from sources such as newspaper articles, magazine articles, journal articles, song lyrics, television shows, movies, etc. Your journal will help you comprehend practical applications of sociology and encourage critical thinking. Specific details will be posted on BB. A single journal entry is due **October 14th**. Your final journal is due **December 8th**.

Journal Presentation:

Each student will have an opportunity to share with the class their findings from their *Applied Sociology Journal*. This will be a brief presentation (~5 minutes). Details forthcoming on Black Board.

Participation: It is expected that students will have regular class attendance. In addition to attending class, you are strongly encouraged to be an active participant. Having done the readings will make participation easy and enjoyable. Your grade for this portion of the course will be reflective of not only your class attendance but also the depth of your engagement and participation.

Late Assignments: Please note that 10% will be docked off of your grade each day your assignment is late (this includes weekends). I will not grade papers that are submitted 3 days after the due date (including weekends).

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 two weeks of class. If your schedule conflicts with an assignment due date or an exam, 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.

Grading Scale

A+	98%-100%	B+	88%-90%	C+	78%-80%	D+	68%-70%
A	95%-97%	B	85%-87%	C	75%-77%	D	65%-67%
A-	91%-94%	B-	81%-84%	C-	71%-74%	F	<65%

*Final grades are not typically "rounded."

Grade Check Request:

Grade checks/reports for student athletes, scholarships, Greek society membership, etc. are handled in person by appointment. Please see me during office hours.

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. As a student, classroom conduct respectful to both the instructor and your classmates covers two broad areas:

1. Engaging in classroom behavior conducive to lecture and learning outcomes.

-I expect students to arrive in class on-time. Being late may cause students to miss important announcements. Also, arriving late and interrupting lecture/discussions are disruptive to other students. In addition, students should not leave early or pack up belongings before class is over. I will respect students by ending class on time. Please wait until the instructor is finished to pack up possessions.

-Students may not record this class using any form of electronic medium unless it is medically necessary and the student is registered with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) office.

-Students are expected to direct their attention to the lesson and participate in classroom activities. Conversations unrelated to class discussions will not be tolerated. If students have something to contribute to class discussion, they should raise their hand. Students will be acknowledged and asked to speak in turn.

-Minimize distractions to classmates.

2. I expect behavior that respects all members of the class. During the semester, we may examine controversial issues. I welcome differing viewpoints and encourage students to express their ideas without personally attacking or demeaning others.

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 in this course and will be reported to the Chair of the Department of Sociology and the University Judicial Officer. However, further academic and disciplinary sanctions may also be applied.

If you are unaware of what constitutes academic dishonesty, please see an academic advisor or become familiar with the University's Academic Integrity Policy (See <http://stuafs.unl.edu/dos/code>).

Personal Identities:

Not all students go by their legal name or find that the set information in Black Board does not accurately portray who they are. Please send me an email and let me know what your preferred name is (if different from Black Board). You can call me Professor Tyler or Dr. Tyler. When sending me an email, please address me as such and identify yourself (i.e., provide your full name) and the class (i.e., Soci 325).

SCHEDULE OF CLASS SESSIONS AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

The following is an outline for our progression through the material. Actual dates may change based on how rapidly we progress. All readings should be completed before class on the day they are assigned. You will be informed of any changes either in class or through BB. Not knowing about syllabus changes due to class absence **is not** a legitimate excuse for failure to complete course requirements.

DATE	BOOK/AUTHOR(S)	READINGS/ASSIGNMENT DUE
8/23	Review syllabus/course expectations/defining families	
8/25	<u>Marriage-Go-Round</u> - Cherlin	Ch. 1 (p. 3-35)
8/30		Ch.'s 2-3 (p. 36-86)
9/1		Ch.'s 4-5 (p. 87-143)
9/6		Ch.'s 6-7 (p. 144-180)
9/8		Ch. 8 (p. 181-202)
9/13	<u>Promises I Can Keep</u> - Edin & Kefalas	Intro & Ch. 1 (p.1-49)
9/15		Ch.'s 2-3 (p. 50-103)
9/20		Ch.'s 4-5 (p. 104-167)
9/22		Ch. 6 & Conclusion (p. 168-220)
9/27	Exam #1	

9/29	<u>Gay Fatherhood</u> - Lewin	Ch. 1 (p. 14-41)
10/4		Ch. 2 (p. 42-75)
10/6		Ch.'s 3-5 (p. 76-151)
10/11		Ch.'s 6-7 (p. 152-191)
10/13	Work on Journal	Email me one completed journal entry due Friday <u>October 14th</u> by 4:00 pm
10/18	Fall-Break – No Class	
10/20	<u>Unequal Childhoods</u> – Lareau	Ch.'s 1-3 (p. 1-65)
10/25		Ch.'s 4-5 (p. 66-103)
10/27		Ch.'s 6-7 (p. 107-160)
11/1		Ch.'s 8-12 (p. 163-257)
11/3		Ch.'s 13-14 (p. 261-341)
11/8	Exam #2	
11/10	<u>Fleeing the House of Horrors</u> – Sev'er	Intro & Ch.'s 1-3 (p. 3-58)
11/15		Ch.'s 4-5 (p. 59-103)
11/17	Work on Book Review	Ch.'s 6-7 (p. 104-138)
11/22	Group Meetings on Journals/Book Review	Ch.'s 8 & 10 (p. 139-158; p. 176-205)
11/24	No Class – Thanksgiving Break	
11/29	Presentations	Book Review (Sev'er) Due: Tues. 11/29
12/1	Presentations	
12/6	Presentations	
12/8	Presentations (Last Class)	Journal Due: Thursday 12/8
12/12-12/16	Finals Week	

IMPORTANT Points to Remember:

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1. Please turn off cell phones before the start of class (i.e., no texting during class).
 2. Recording of class is not permitted (see syllabus p. 3 for exception).
 3. If you are going to be late for a class or have to leave early, please inform instructor ahead of time.
 4. Do not make a habit of coming to class late or leaving early. This is unacceptable as it causes disruption and hampers learning for everyone.
 5. Only hard copies of written assignments will be accepted. The only exception is the single journal entry due Oct. 14th.
 6. I do not share notes so missed material must come from your classmates.
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UNL Student Resources:

UNL academic calendar: <http://registrar.unl.edu/academic-calendar-2016-2017>

Writing Center: <http://www.unl.edu/writing/home>

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS): <http://health.unl.edu/caps/>

Undergraduate Bulletin: <http://bulletin.unl.edu/undergraduate/>

Student Involvement: <http://involved.unl.edu/>

Department of Sociology: <http://soc.unl.edu>