

Department of Sociology
UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA—LINCOLN

FAMILIES AND SOCIETY

Fall 2017

COURSE INFORMATION:

Course Number:	SOCI 226.001	Lecture Times:	T/Th 11:00am - 12:15pm
Credits:	3 Hours	Lecture Room:	Hamilton Hall 110
Attributes:	ACE 6; ACE 9		

Contact Information

Instructor:	Professor David Warner	TA:	Jessica Morrow
Office:	Oldfather Hall 726	Office:	Oldfather Hall 735
E-mail:	soci226unl@gmail.com	E-Mail:	soci226unl@gmail.com
Office Hours:	T 9:30 – 10:30am, W 10:30am – 12 Noon, or by appointment	Office Hours:	M 11:00am – 12:30pm, Th 12:30 – 2:00pm, or by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The family has long been considered the primary and enduring social institution. Yet some argue individualism is undermining the stability of this core component of society. Others counter that the family is not in decline, but that it is in transition—with families taking multiple forms to meet changing social and economic circumstances. In this course, we will learn about the functions of families and the diverse forms they have taken over time and across different groups. As early socialization and caregiving usually take place within this institution, many of our ideas about the world are closely tied to our families. By examining families from a sociological perspective, however, we will challenge our preconceived notions and come to understand: (1) how family forms differ by gender, sexuality, social class, and race/ethnicity; and (2) how diverse families function in terms of companionship, parenting, and economic cooperation. At the end of the course, students will be equipped to discuss how the forms families take and the ways in which they achieve these functions relate to broad social changes in the U.S.

ACHIEVEMENT-CENTERED EDUCATION (ACE) & STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

The University of Nebraska—Lincoln seeks to provide quality education to all of its students and has certified that certain classes assess specific learning objectives. SOCI 226 will facilitate Learning Outcomes No. 6 and No. 9. Students successfully completing this course will:

- Describe the role of the family institution in society currently and in the past;
- Recognize how diversity—including, gender, sexuality, social class, and race/ethnicity—influence the structure and functioning of families;
- Understand that families operate as a vehicle of socialization, economic exchange, social norms and social support and thus affect our attitudes, values, and life choices;
- Describe how social trends and forces—such as population composition, economic restructuring, political change and public policy—affect families, both historically and contemporarily;
- Be familiar with the empirical methods of family sociologists, including how data are gathered and interpreted;

ACE learning objectives in this course will be assessed through in-class activities and examinations.

COURSE FORMAT:

As an introduction to family sociology, this course is primarily lecture-based. However, class participation is encouraged and expected. In-class activities and videos will periodically supplement lecture. Attendance is essential and expected.

Electronic recording of lectures and/or photographing lecture slides is not permitted for any reason.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK & READINGS:

There is one required textbook for this course:

Cherlin, Andrew J. 2017. *Public and Private Families: An Introduction* (8th Edition). New York: McGraw Hill. ISBN: 978-0-07-802715-4

You are also required to read several scientific and newspaper articles (available on Canvas):

Coontz, S. 2013. "Why Gender Equality Stalled." *The New York Times*, February 16th Edition: SR1.

Gootman, E. 2012. "When Branches Tangle in a Stepfamily Tree." *The New York Times*, October 4th Edition: E1.

Kimmel, M. 2008. "Hooking Up: Sex in Guyland." Excerpt from *Guyland: The Perilous World Where Boys Become Men* (pp. 190-216). New York: HarperCollins.

Lee, S.J., I. Altschul, and E.T. Gershoff. 2015. "Wait until Your Father Gets Home? Mother's and Fathers' Spanking and Development of Child Aggression." *Children and Youth Services Review* 52:158-166.

Polgreen, L. 2010. "One Bride for Two Brothers: A Custom Fades in India." *The New York Times*, July 16th Edition: A4.

Scott, E.K., A.S. London, and A.Hurst. 2005. "Instability in Patchworks of Child Care When Moving from Welfare to Work." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 67:370-386.

Sultan Ahmed, S., & Bould, S. 2004. 'One Able Daughter Is Worth 10 Illiterate Sons': Reframing the Patriarchial Family. *Journal of Marriage and Family* 5:1332-1341.

Yavorsky, J.E., C.M. Kamp Dush, and S.J. Schoppe-Sullivan. 2015. "The Production of Inequality: The Gender Division of Labor across the Transition to Parenthood." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 77:662-679.

ATTENDANCE:

Regular class attendance is essential for successful completion of this course. Not everything assigned for reading will be covered in lecture. Lectures will introduce material not covered in the assigned readings.

Students absent from lecture are responsible for getting notes from a fellow student. Please get the contact information of *three* students in class and record it in the box below.

Student Name	Email	Phone
1.		
2.		
3.		

Contact these students for notes if you miss class. If your student contacts stop attending, obtain contact information from 1-2 other students. *Notes are not posted on Canvas.*

Students with excused absences *may* be offered alternative arrangements to complete course requirements. See the "Attendance" under "Other Course Documents & Policies" on Canvas for additional information.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1) Assigned Readings

The [COURSE SCHEDULE](#) and reading assignments are at the end of the syllabus. They are also listed in the Canvas calendar. Complete these readings *before* the class session for which they are assigned.

The breadth of family sociology means that not everything assigned for reading will be covered in lecture. Study Guides for each textbook chapter are available on Canvas and provide you with a self-directed opportunity to identify the key points and assess your comprehension. These are not graded.

2) Midterm Examinations (100 points each)

There are two midterm examinations covering material from lecture, readings, and any in-class activities or films. The exams will consist of multiple choice (pick one correct answer) and multiple selection (pick all correct answers) style questions. The exams will be administered through the **Digital Learning Center** (DLC; <http://its.unl.edu/dlc>). Note that **testing times must be individually pre-scheduled**.

There are two testing windows for each midterm examination: a 1st Attempt Window in which you must make an attempt; and an optional Retake Window in which you may make two more attempts. You may sit for the exams at any time during these windows (see the [COURSE SCHEDULE](#) for the dates). Your highest score across all attempts on each exam will count toward your final grade.

Detailed information about DLC procedures can be found on under “Examinations” on Canvas.

4) Cumulative Final Examination (200 points)

The Final Exemption will be similar in format to the midterm exams. The Final will be administered in the Digital Learning Center (DLC) during a five day window that includes the University scheduled date for this course (see the [COURSE SCHEDULE](#)). As you may sit for the Final at the University designated time, the window complies with the Fifteenth Week Policy.

You are allowed ***only one attempt at the exam during this window*** because of the increased demands on the DLC during finals week. You are responsible for pre-scheduling your exam time and early sign-up is recommended. Time slots fill up quickly.

No make-up exam will be administered. Given the exam window, exam conflicts as defined by the University are not possible. Make your end of the semester travel plans accordingly.

5) Course Expectations & Engagement: (100 points)

Respectful conduct both in and out of the classroom, representing diversity, and acknowledging different experiences and opinions is essential for to learning. To that end, there are 100 course points available for overall class conduct and engagement. You will earn half of these points by (1) reading and acknowledging the Course Expectations Policy (available on Canvas under “Course Documents & Other Policies;” this should be completed by the date indicated on the [COURSE SCHEDULE](#)); you will earn the other half of these points by (2) engaging in behavior—throughout the semester—consistent with the terms of that Policy. Students may fail to earn points by engaging in behavior that violates the Policy’s terms and/or that otherwise undermines the classroom (or their classmates’) learning objectives.

Additionally, students may fail to earn points due to excessive absences (which will be assessed via random attendance checks), since this also signals disengagement in the course. Students who demonstrate exceptional classroom performance (e.g., regular and relevant engagement and participation) ***may*** be awarded additional points above the course maximum (at Professor Warner’s discretion and in consultation with the TA). The objective of these points is to encourage students to attend class and participate regularly.

COURSE EMAIL / INBOX COMMUNICATION:

All email communication in this course must be sent to soci226unl@gmail.com. This account is monitored by both the Professor and the TA. Messages will be answered within 24 hours during the week. Be sure to review the guide to *Engaging in Professional Electronic Communication* available on Canvas under “Other Course Documents & Policies.”

Important information will be distributed via Canvas Announcements. Be sure that you regularly check Canvas and adjust your notifications so that you are immediately notified of new announcements.

We will *not* be using Canvas’s built in Conversations/Inbox function because it is not secure. Messages sent to the Professor and/or the TA through the Canvas Inbox (“Send a Message”) feature or via their unl.edu addresses will not be answered. Students are also prohibited from emailing other students through Canvas Inbox. Students should contact their designated “course contacts” directly using the information recorded under [ATTENDANCE](#). Messages sent to other students via Conversations/Inbox are monitored and inappropriate contact (in violation of the UNL Student Code of Conduct) will be reported.

EXTRA CREDIT:

All students will have the chance to evaluate the course through two voluntary, anonymous Canvas surveys—a Mid-Semester Course Evaluation (8th week) and a Final Course Evaluation (15th week)—and will earn 10 points of extra credit for each. Completing both evaluations is worth 4% of the total course points (and is enough to move a student from a B+ to an A-, for example). Extra credit will be added to student scores at the end of the semester.

In the interest of fairness to all, extra credit opportunities will not be offered to individual students.

ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT MASTERY:

You will earn your final grade in this course based on your mastery of the material as indicated by your performance on each of the course requirements described above:

<i>Weight of the Course Requirements:</i>		
Midterm Examination 1	100 points	(20%)
Midterm Examination 2	100 points	(20%)
Final Examination	200 points	(40%)
Course Expectations & Engagement	100 points	(20%)
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Total Possible:	500 points	(100%)

To account for the fact that grading is an imperfect system for assessing mastery, your best performance on each of the course exams will be evaluated relative to the highest score across all attempts. E.g., if the highest score on Midterm Examination 2 is 90 points and your raw score is 80, then your weighted grade would be approximately 89% [(80/90) *100 = 88.9] and you would earn 88.9 points toward your final course grade.

Final grades will be determined based on the total number of points you have earned in the course. The minimum total point percentages for final course grades are as follows:

A+	=	97%	B+	=	87%	C+	=	77%	D+	=	67%
A	=	93%	B	=	83%	C	=	73%	D	=	63%
A-	=	90%	B-	=	80%	C-	=	70%	D-	=	60%
									F	<	60%

These percentage cut-offs are absolute and final grades will not be “rounded-up.”

ELECTRONIC NOTE-TAKING POLICY:

You may use a laptop or tablet to take notes in this course as specified in the guidelines of the “In-Class Laptop Use Contract” (find it under “Other Course Documents & Policies” on Canvas.) However, you are strongly discouraged 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.

Smartphones or other electronic devices may not be used for any purpose in this course and must remain stowed and powered-off /silenced at all times. Again, electronic recording of lectures and/or photographing lecture slides is not permitted for any reason.

SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln will provide flexible and individualized accommodations to students with documented disabilities that may affect their ability to participate fully in course activities or to meet course requirements. To receive accommodation services, students must be registered with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) office, 132 Canfield Administration, 472-3787 voice or TTY.

Students with documented disabilities should contact Professor Warner to set up an appointment for a confidential discussion of their individual needs for academic accommodation.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

Please familiarize yourself with the University’s Academic Integrity Policy in the UNL *Student Code of Conduct* (<http://stuafs.unl.edu/dos/code>). Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to: Cheating; Fabrication or Falsification; Plagiarism; Abuse of Academic Materials; Complicity in Academic Dishonesty; Falsifying Grade Reports; and Misrepresentation to Avoid Academic Work. Consistent with the Disciplinary Procedures described in the *Student Code of Conduct*, any student found committing acts of academic dishonesty will receive a failing final grade and will be reported to the University Judicial Officer.

GRADE CHECK FORMS:

Forms will be signed during Professor Warner’s Office Hours. The Teaching Assistant is not authorized to sign Grade Check Forms. Please plan accordingly.

CONFIDENTIALITY:

In compliance with *The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974* (FERPA), all identifying course materials, including exam scores, will be provided directly to each student via Canvas and will not be posted or otherwise made available in a public forum. Although students may sign a FERPA Waiver consenting to the release of such records to a parent, guardian, counselor, athletic coach, etc., the grades or progress of any student in this course will **NOT** be provided to or discussed with anyone but that student— except as necessary with the office of Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) or the Judicial Officer.

COURSE SCHEDULE & ASSIGNED READINGS:

UNIT 1: The Historical, Theoretical, and Research Foundations of Family Sociology

<i>Date</i>	<i>Class #</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Reading / Assignment Due</i>
T	8/22	1	<i>Introduction</i>
Th	8/24	2	Chapter 1
T	8/29	3	<i>The History of the Family</i>
Th	8/31	4	Chapter 2, Polgreen 2010

UNIT 2: Social Structural Variations Within and Between Families

T	9/5	5	<i>Gender & Sexuality in Families</i>	Chapter 3, Chapter 6 (pp. 156-167)
Th	9/7	6		<i>**Deadline to Acknowledge Course Expectations & Engagement</i>
T	9/12	7	<i>Social Class and Families</i>	Chapter 4, Sultan Ahmed & Bould 2004
Th	9/14	8		
T	9/19	9	<i>Racial/Ethnic Diversity in Families</i>	Chapter 5
Th	9/21	10		

MIDTERM EXAMINATION 1

T	9/26	11	1 st Attempt Window: Su 9/24-W 9/27 (No Class on T 9/26) Retake Window: Th 9/28-T 10/3	
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UNIT 3: Partnership, Marriage, and Family Life

Th	9/28	12	<i>Dating, Courtship, and Marriage</i>	Chapter 7; Chapter 6 (pp.168-179)
T	10/3	13		
Th	10/5	14		Kimmel 2008
T	10/10	15	<i>Work and Families</i>	Chapter 8; Yavorsky <i>et al.</i> 2015
Th	10/12	16		
T	10/17		<i>FALL BREAK—NO CLASS</i>	
Th	10/19	17		Coontz 2013
T	10/24	18	<i>Children and Parents</i>	Chapter 9
Th	10/26	19		
T	10/31	20	<i>Grandparenthood</i>	Chapter 10
Th	11/2	21	MIDTERM EXAMINATION 2 1 st Attempt Window: Th 11/2-M 11/6 (No Class on Th 11/2) Retake Window: T 11/7-Su 11/12	

UNIT 4: Instability, Social Change, and the Family Institution

T 11/7 22 *Family and Spousal Violence* Chapter 11; Lee *et al.* 2015

Th 11/9 23

T 11/14 24 *Union Dissolution and Repartnering* Chapter 12

Th 11/16 25

T 11/21 26 Gootman 2012

Th 11/23 *THANKSGIVING BREAK—NO CLASS*

T 11/28 27 *Families and Social Policy* Chapter 14; Scott *et al.* 2005

Th 11/30 28

T 12/5 29

Th 12/7 30 *Social Change and the Family Institution*

FINAL EXAMINATION WINDOW:

Saturday, December 9th — Wednesday, December 13th

(University Scheduled Time:
Monday 12/11, 3:30 –5:30 PM)

Remember: You can only make one attempt at the final. You are responsible for pre-scheduling your exam time and early sign-up is recommended. Time slots fill up quickly!

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