SOCI 226: Families and Society
Department of Sociology
University of Nebraska – Lincoln
Summer 2019 (May 20 – July 12)

Instructor Information:
Instructor: Jess Morrow
Office: 734 Oldfather Hall
Office Hours: MWF 10:00 – 11:00 AM
By appointment as needed

Course Description
The goal of Sociology is to better understand the social institutions at play in our everyday lives through the use of empirical research. The family holds an integral place in American society, in both the public and private spheres. Many of us grow up in families; for this reason, along with the functions of families, the family has long been considered an enduring social institution. Because this is a sociology course, marriage and the family will be examined as social institutions that are intricately connected to the rest of society. In this course, we will learn about the functions of families and the diverse forms they have taken over time and across different groups. This course explores issues relevant to family life at the beginning of the 21st century.

By examining families from a sociological perspective, we will challenge our preconceived notions about family, and come to understand: 1) How families and 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.

Achievement-Centered Education (ACE) & Student Learning Objectives
The University of Nebraska – Lincoln seeks to provide quality education to all of its students, and has therefore certified certain classes that assess specific learning objectives. SOCI 226 – Families and Society will facilitate Learning Outcome No. 6 and Learning Outcome No. 9. Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:
→ Describe the role of the family as a social institution today and in the past;
→ Recognize how diverse characteristics, such as gender, sexuality, social class, and race/ethnicity, influence the structure and function of families;
→ Understand that the functions of family include socialization, economic exchange, social norms, and the provision of social support, and thus influence our attitudes, values, and life choices and chances;
→ Describe the ways that social forces and trends impact families today and over time;
→ Recognize the inaccuracy of many commonly-held beliefs about marriage and the family in the US and present research findings as evidence to the contrary;
→ Be familiar with the empirical methods of family sociologists, including gathering and interpreting of data.
These learning objectives will be assessed through discussion boards, quizzes and an exam, and writing assignments throughout the course.

**Course Format**
This is an eight-week, online course. Because all instruction – lectures, discussions, written assignments, and quizzes and a midterm – is designed to be completed online, and with little instructor interaction, this course will be quite reading-intensive. This course will use Canvas, and therefore you must have access to a computer with a reliable internet connection. You are responsible for familiarizing yourself with Canvas, but I have worked to make sure that the information and material necessary for success in this course is accessible and easy to find.

Online courses require self-direction and high internal motivation from the start, or they may quickly become difficult. In order to ensure your success over the next eight weeks, you will need to stay on top of reading, lectures, and other assignments weekly. Make sure you familiarize yourself with these requirements and the due dates provided in Canvas and on the syllabus. Late assignments will not be accepted except for emergencies or extenuating circumstances, and you must contact me as soon as possible in order to make alternative arrangements if this is necessary. If you are not in Nebraska for the summer, please ensure that you are aware of time zone differences when submitting assignments.

**Required Textbooks & Materials**
There is one textbook required for this course:

*This text is available in several formats: hardcover textbook, loose-leaf book format, and an e-book. You should be able to find it new or used, for purchase or for rent, from the bookstore or a variety of other book sellers.

Additional required readings and other material will be posted in the relevant module on Canvas.

**Course Communication**
The main form of communication between the instructor and students will be Canvas announcements. It is important that you are familiar with Canvas and, in particular, the announcements function in order to stay up-to-date with what’s going on in class.

Individual communication between the instructor and students may take place through Canvas or using the instructor’s email. Email and Canvas message correspondence is formal, rather than conversational, so proper email etiquette should be used. The style and tone of your email should be similar to business-style communication. Your email should contain an informative subject line (e.g., include the assignment name, and course name/number), a proper greeting (Hello, Hi, etc) and title (this is optional – you are welcome to call me Jess, or Instructor Morrow, it’s up to you!). You should also use proper spelling and grammar, and sign your email with your name.

I generally respond to emails between 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM during the week, and will respond as able during the weekend. You should expect a response within 24 business hours; if I have not
responded to your email by the end of the next business day, please send a follow-up email reminding me that you contacted me.

**Course Requirements**

There are several components to this course, each designed to help you learn, understand, and apply the concepts presented in the text and lecture. All assignments must be completed on Canvas and turned in through the appropriate Canvas links, unless otherwise noted. **Emailed assignments will not be accepted.** While there is a Canvas App available for smartphones, I do not recommend using this to try to submit assignments.

All assignments are due by **11:59 PM Central Time** on the date posted. If an assignment is submitted incorrectly or is submitted late, it will be considered incomplete and be given a grade of a 0. You are responsible for ensuring that each of your assignments has been submitted correctly before the due date.

⇒ **Introduction Discussion Board**: By the third day of class, I would like you to introduce yourself to your Discussion Board Group, the people who will be reading and replying to your discussion board posts throughout the course. This post should include your name (and nickname or preferred name), your year in school and your major. You should also discuss why you are taking this class, and what you’re hoping to learn by the end of the course. You are encouraged – but not required – to respond to your peers’ posts.

⇒ **Discussion Board (Posts and Replies)**: To facilitate group discussion and interaction, you will be randomly assigned to a Discussion Board Group for the course. Discussion Board Posts and Replies are a way for you to engage with the course material. These should not be ‘reactions,’ but are a chance for you to apply and reflect on course concepts and ideas. There are guidelines available on Good Discussion Board Posts under the Introduction Module.

You must make an **initial post** of at least five sentences in response to each of the prompts provided in the Discussion Board. These prompts will connect to the module’s topics and will require you to use information from the various sources (lecture, text, and additional readings). You are welcome to pull in personal experience in your answers, **so long as you can connect them to sociological concepts from the course**.

After making an initial post, you are required to respond to at least two of your group members’ posts. These replies must contain sociological concepts as well – they must be more than ‘I agree’ or ‘good points.’ Your responses should demonstrate critical engagement with the course material as well as with the information presented by your peers’ posts.

Both your initial posts and your responses must abide by guidelines presented in the section on ‘Respectful Conduct in the Online Classroom’ below. Failure to do so will result in a loss of points for the assignment. In addition, detailed instructions and a grading rubric are available in several places on Canvas – they are on each Discussion Board prompt, and located on the main page in the Introduction Module as well. Each of your three posts will be graded independently of each other.
Ensure that you are checking and keeping track of due dates and times for each of these assignments. Canvas will only display the final due date for the response posts, not the initial post.

➡️ Media Connection Papers: Throughout the course, you will be required to submit 3 media connection papers. The goal of these papers is to get you thinking sociologically about the world around you. You will be required to select a piece of popular media – television, books, movies, songs or music videos – that demonstrates a concept from the relevant module, and explain how the concept is presented.

➡️ Quizzes: This course will have three examinations: two quizzes and one midterm examination. The first quiz will cover material from Modules 1 and 2, and the second quiz will cover material from Modules 4 and 5. Quizzes are worth 20 points each and will consist of a combination of multiple choice, true/false, and short answer questions based on all relevant material – information from the textbook, lectures, and additional readings is all fair game to be included on the quiz. Each quiz will consist of 15 MC or True/False questions at 1 point each, and 2 short answer questions at 2.5 points each.

➡️ Midterm Exam: The midterm exam will be open for 4 days and will consist of information from Modules 1, 2, and 3. There will be two parts to this exam – a multiple choice/true or false and short answer section which will be completed on Canvas, and a section of questions requiring longer answers which you will have to write and submit to Canvas later. The test will have 30 MC or True/False questions at 2 points each (for a total of 60 points), 4 short answer questions at 5 points each (for 20 points), and 2 questions requiring longer answers worth 10 points each (for an additional 20 points). These parts will sum to 100 points. ALL aspects of the midterm examination must be submitted by the due date, or that part of the examination will be graded as a 0.

***Quiz and examination questions will be randomly selected from a larger pool of questions, and may overlap between Quiz 1, the Midterm, and Quiz 2, based on which module is being tested on.***

➡️ Final Paper: Along with the shorter Media Connection papers, you will be responsible for completing a Final Paper worth 100 points. This assignment will require you to select two topics from the course and find two pieces of media representing each in contrasting ways. Once you provide a summary and analysis of each, you will discuss the ways that each piece of media represents concepts from family sociology and compare the representations to each other. More information on this assignment can be found in the Final Paper Module on the course’s Canvas page.
Grading
You will earn your final grade for this course based on your mastery of course material and concepts, which will be demonstrated by your performance on the assignments described above. These assignments will be graded according to the following chart:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>How Many</th>
<th>Points/Assignment</th>
<th>Total Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intro Discussion Board Post</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Board Initial Posts</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Board Replies</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media Connection Papers</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Paper</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>500</strong></td>
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</tbody>
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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 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%

Extra Credit
There are several opportunities for extra credit in this course. These assignments are not designed to bring your grade from an F to an A, but to give you a boost and to help supplement your learning within the course.

Media Connection Paper (10 points): You are required to submit three Media Reflection Paper assignments throughout the course, but there are four due dates for these assignments. Completing a fourth Media Connection Paper will add ten points to your final grade. These points will be added at the end of the course.

Final Paper Rough Draft (2.5 or 5 points): You are encouraged to submit some kind of draft of your final paper by the end of the second-to-last week of class (due date July 7). Submitting a full draft of your final paper will result in five points added to your final paper grade. Submitting
A detailed outline of your final paper will result in *two and a half points added to your final paper grade*. These points will be added at the end of the course.

**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](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 zero on that assignment, and will be reported to the both the Department Chair and the University Judicial Officer.

**Services for Students with Disabilities**
The University strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please let me know immediately so that we can discuss options privately. To establish reasonable accommodations, I may request that you register with Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD). If you are eligible for services and register with their office, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so they can be implemented in a timely manner. SSD contact information: 232 Canfield Admin. Bldg.; 402-472-3787

**Course Schedule**
A course schedule can be found on the following page. This schedule is also available in a standalone document on Canvas, in the Introduction module.

*I reserve the right to make any changes necessary to the schedule in order to complete the objectives for the course within the given timeframe. Such changes will be made clear in Canvas and will be announced to the class on Canvas.*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MODULE &amp; DATES</th>
<th>TOPICS</th>
<th>CHAPTERS &amp; LECTURES &amp; ADD’L READINGS</th>
<th>ASSIGNMENTS &amp; DATES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Module 1: May 20 – May 26</td>
<td>1 week</td>
<td>Course and Student Intros Intro to Sociology of Family Family Theories</td>
<td>Intro DB: Wed 5/23 M1 1st DB: Sat 5/25 M1 Replies: Sun 5/26 Media Connection 1: Sun 5/26</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Chapters 1-2 in Cherlin Lectures 1a and 1b Coontz (2005): A Brief History of Marriage</td>
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<td>Module 2: May 27 – June 6</td>
<td>1 ½ weeks</td>
<td>Gender Social Class Race/Ethnicity Sexuality - Identity</td>
<td>M2 1st DB: Sat 6/1 M2 Replies: Sun 6/2</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Chapters 6-7 in Cherlin Lectures 6b and 7 Wade (2016): Sex on Campus Isn’t What You Think Edin and Kefalas (2005): Unmarried with Children</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Chapters 11-12 in Cherlin Lectures 11, 12a, and 12b Kelly and Johnson (2008): Differentiating Among Types of IPV Coleman and Ganong (2015): Stepfamilies as They Really Are</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Module 6: July 1 – July 7</td>
<td>1 week</td>
<td>Families and Work Families and Social Policy</td>
<td>M6 1st DB: 7/6 M6 Replies: 7/7 Media Connection 4: 7/7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Module 7: July 8 – July 12</td>
<td>1 week</td>
<td>Final Project Rough Draft Draft (OPTIONAL) and Final Draft</td>
<td>Rough Draft (EC): 7/7 Final Draft: 7/12</td>
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<td>N/A</td>
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