

## **SOC 212: SOCIOLOGY OF FAMILY FALL 2016**

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### ***COURSE DESCRIPTION***

Perhaps no facet of human existence is so recognizable to us or occupies more time, effort and emotion than family. Most people spend their childhood and adolescence in families; go through the sometimes painful rituals of dating and mate selection; fall in love; become wives and husbands, mothers and fathers, and (if they survive long enough) grandmothers and grandfathers.

It is no surprise, then, that we *think* we understand all there is to know about family and its effects upon us. But we don't. In fact, we lack clear answers to the most basic questions: What is a "family"? How did it originate? How private are families? How do families aid us in "becoming" males and females? What attracts us to certain people? Why do people get married? Why do they end their marriages? Why is the "loving" environment of family the setting for so much violence and abuse? Why do most couples have children? Why do some choose not to? Why do some families self-destruct? What will family look like in the future?

In this course we will look into these questions (and others) in an attempt to understand more about family (and perhaps, if we're lucky, ourselves). Some of what we will learn will seem like "common sense;" in fact, sometimes you will swear we are talking about your own personal lives. At other times what we learn might surprise you, shock you, or make you angry.

Because we all have families (of one form or another) we all have "hands on" experience concerning what goes on in them. Therefore, we all potentially have something to teach one another. I not only encourage, but also expect everyone to contribute and participate in class discussions so as to share those experiences. Remember, I'm just as interested in what you have to say as I hope you are in what I have to say.

### ***COURSE REQUIREMENTS***

Course grades will be based on three in-class essay exams, two activity papers, and in-class participation. I use a non-competitive grade scale. This means the grade you receive will depend entirely on your mastery of the course material, not on how well others do in the class.

#### **EXAMS**

- Dates for the exams are listed below
- The exams will consist of several short definitions of key terms and essay questions based on readings and lectures
- “Study guides” will be handed out 1 week prior to the exam date. The actual definitional terms and essay questions will be chosen from the “study guide.”

### ACTIVITY PAPERS

-You will choose *two* activity paper projects (described in the accompanying detailed handout). These projects are designed to be “hands-on” explorations into some facet of family life. Some require observations of other people, places, or some social phenomenon; others require the collection of simple “data,” often in the form of interviewing people.

-Each paper will be approximately 7 pages long.

-Due dates for the activity papers are spread throughout the semester and are listed below.

### ATTENDANCE AND CLASS PARTICIPATION

-I believe that learning is an interactive process. Much of the material for this course will be covered in class and will rely heavily on our discussions. The success or failure of any class hinges, to a large extent, on the combination of the people involved. Therefore, **regular class attendance is mandatory** and active participation is expected. If you are going to miss class, it is your responsibility to let me know **in advance** and your responsibility to get the information we covered. Acceptable reasons for an excused absence include family emergency, serious illness, religious holiday, and participation in college athletic competitions and are typically documented. According to DePauw’s *Academic Handbook*, “There are no ‘allowed cuts’ or ‘free’ absences from class sessions. Faculty members may drop students from their classes or other appropriate action may be taken if absences are too frequent.” **Hence, if you have more than four absences, you may not be eligible to continue in the course whether these absences are excused or unexcused.**

### GRADING

-Points will be assigned as follows:

Exam 1	60 points
Exam 2	60 points
Exam 3	60 points
Activity Paper 1	40 points
Activity Paper 2	40 points
Class Participation	<u>20 points</u>
Total	280 points

### *DISABILITY ACCOMODATIONS*

It is the policy and practice of DePauw University to provide reasonable accommodations for students with properly documented disabilities. Written notification from Student Disability Services is required. If you are eligible to receive an accommodation and would like to request it for this course, please contact Student Disability Services. Allow one week advance notice to ensure enough time for reasonable accommodations to be made. Otherwise, it is not guaranteed that the accommodation can be provided on a timely basis. Accommodations are not retroactive. Students who have questions about Student Disability Services or who have, or think they may have, a disability (psychiatric, attentional, learning, vision, hearing, physical, medical, etc.) are invited to contact Student Disability Services for a confidential discussion in Union Building Suite 200 or by phone at 658-6267.

## **REQUIRED READINGS**

- Susan Ferguson (editor) *Shifting the center: Understanding contemporary families, 4<sup>th</sup> edition*. New York: McGraw-Hill. 2011
- Arlene Skolnick & Jerome Skolnick (editors), *Family in Transition—17<sup>th</sup> Edition*, Boston: Pearson. 2014
- M. Yalom & L. L. Carstensen (editors), *Inside the American couple*. Berkeley: University of California Press. 2002.
- Diane Vaughan, *Uncoupling*. New York: Vintage. 1990.
- In addition, several required articles are on either Moodle E-Reserve or on hardcopy reserve in the library.

## **TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF WEEKLY TOPICS AND READING ASSIGNMENTS**

[NOTE: (F) = Ferguson; (S & S) = Skolnick & Skolnick; (Y&C)= Yalom & Carstensen]

**Weeks 1 through 3:** Introduction; Definition of “family”; Cross-cultural and historical variation in family; family privacy; individual rights and family obligations

- D. Gittins, “The family in question: What is the family?” pp. 1-11 (F)
- B. Powell, C. Bolzendahl, C. Geist, & L. Carr Steelman, “Changing counts, counting change” (*Moodle E-reserve*)
- W. J. Goode, “The theoretical importance of the family.” pp. 15-26 (S&S)
- F. F. Furstenberg, “Values, policy, and the family” pp. 34-41 (F)
- I. Levin, “Living apart together: A new family form” pp. 248-261 (F)
- J. Stacey, “Gay parenthood and the end of paternity as we knew it” pp. 232-247 (S&S)
- M. Sullivan, “The emergence of lesbian-coparent families in postmodern society” pp. 20-33 (F)
  
- A. Skolnick, “Grounds for marriage: Reflections on an institution in transition” pp. 149-163 (Y&C)
- S. Coontz, “Historical perspectives on family diversity” pp. 42-58 (F)
- J.Z. Giele, “Decline of the family: Conservative, liberal, and feminist views” pp. 54-74 (S&S)
- A. Giddens, “The global revolution in family and personal life” pp. 27-33 (S&S)
  
- F.M. Berardo, “Family privacy: Issues and concepts” (*Moodle E-reserve*)

**Film: *Bridegroom*, to be shown Thursday, September 1 @ 7:00pm**

**Week 4:** Structural Context of family life: Race and class

- M. Baca Zinn, "Feminist rethinking from racial-ethnic families" pp. 11-20 (F)
- M. Baca Zinn & B. Wells, "Diversity within Latino families: new lessons for family social science" pp. 389-415 (S&S)
- R.L. Taylor, "Diversity within African American families" pp. 365-389 (S&S)
- S.A. Hill, "The politics of theorizing African American families" pp. 75-89 (F)
  
- M. Rank, "As American as apple pie" p. 710-716 (F)
- K. Edin & M. Kefalas, "Unmarried with children" pp. 468-474 (S&S)
- K. Edin, T. Nelson, & J.M. Reed, "Daddy, baby; Momma, maybe: Low-income urban fathers and the "package deal" of family life" pp. 214-232 (S&S)
- L. Rubin, "Families on the fault line" pp. 341-358 (S&S)
- A. Skolnick, "Middle-class families in the Age of Insecurity" pp. 358-364 (S&S)
- F. Furstenberg, "Diverging development: The not-so-invisible hand of social class in the United States" pp. 262-280 (S&S)

**\*\*\*Activity Paper #1 due Friday, September 16\*\*\***

**Week 5:** Gender roles and gender identities

- G. Davis, "Parents as pawns" (*Moodle E-reserve*)
- B. Risman & E. Seale, "Betwixt and be tween" (*Moodle E-reserve*)
- K. Gerson, "Falling back on Plan B: The children of the gender revolution face uncharted territory" pp. 87-101 (S&S)

**Film: *Being Me: Transgender Kids*, Friday, September 23**

**\*\*\*Activity Papers #2 and #3 due Friday, September 23\*\*\***

**Week 6:** Sexualities

- A.T. Schalet, "Raging hormones, regulated love: Adolescent sexuality and the constitution of the modern individual in the United States and the Netherlands" pp. 129-134 (S&S) (*Moodle E-reserve*)
- P. Schwartz, "Why is everyone afraid of sex?" (*Moodle E-reserve*)
- E. D. Rothblum, "'Boston marriage' among lesbians: Are we a couple if we're not having sex?" pp. 74-86 (Y&C)
- M. Regnerus & J. Uecker, "Sex and marriage in the minds of emerging adults" pp. 109-118 (S&S)

**\*\*\*NOTE: WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 28 THERE WILL BE NO CLASS DUE TO DEPAUW'S ANNUAL "DAY OF INCLUSION"\*\*\***

**\*\*\*EXAM 1: FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 30\*\*\***

**Weeks 7 and 8:** Love, Attraction, and Marriage

- M. King Whyte, "Choosing mates the American way" pp. 125-134 (F)
- M. Pasupathi, "Arranged marriages: What's love go to do with it?" pp. 211-235 (Y&C)
- L. Hamilton & E. A. Armstrong, "Gendered sexuality in young adulthood: Double binds and flawed options" pp. 135-150 (F)
- R.C. Savin-Williams, "Dating and romantic relationships among gay, lesbian, and bisexual youths" pp. 150-162 (F)

- A.J. Cherlin, "The deinstitutionalization of marriage" pp. 174-186 (F)
- M. Heath, "State of our unions: Marriage promotion and the contested power of heterosexuality" pp. 187-204 (F)
- N. Gertsel & N. Sarkisian, "Marriage: The good, the bad, and the greedy" pp. 204-212 (F)
- J.A. Seltzer, "Families formed outside of marriage" pp.233-248 (F)

- M. Felstiner, "When one of us is ill: Scenes from a partnership" pp. 125-135 (Y&C)

**Films: *Are You Ready for Marriage?* Friday, October 7**

- \*\*\**Activity Paper #4, Friday, October 7*\*\*\*
- \*\*\**Activity Papers #5 and #6, Friday, October 14*\*\*\*

**NOTE: Week 9 (October 17 through 21) is Fall Break – No classes all week!!!**

**Week 10:** Family and work

- P. Stone, "The rhetoric and reality of opting out" pp. 316-325 (S&S)
- J.C. Williams, "One sick child away from being fired" pp. 325-340 (S&S)
- E. Nakano Glenn, "Creating a caring society" pp. 693-709 (F)
- V. J. Tichenor, "Gendered bargain: Why wives cannot trade their money for housework" pp. 666-678 (F)
- S.N. Davis & B. Owen, "Life in a dual-earner couple before, during, and after the Great Recession" (*Moodle E-reserve*)

- \*\*\**Activity Paper #7 due Friday, October 28*\*\*\*

**Week 11:** Parenthood

- A. Blackstone & A. Greenleaf, "Childfree families" (*Moodle E-reserve*)
- P. Cowan & C.P. Cowan, "New families: Modern couples as new pioneers" pp. 193-213 (S&S)
- P. Hill Collins, "Shifting the center: Race, class, and feminist theorizing about motherhood" pp. 275-291 (F)
- S. Hays, "The mommy wars: Ambivalence, ideological work, and the cultural contradictions of motherhood" pp. 35-54 (S&S)
- S. Coltrane, "Fathering: Paradoxes, contradictions, and dilemmas" pp. 319-333 (F)
- J Hamer, "What it means to be daddy: Fatherhood for black men living away from their children" pp. 334-348 (F)

- \*\*\***EXAM 2: FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 4**\*\*\*

**Week 12:** Childhood, Adolescence, and Adulthood

- S. Mintz, "Beyond sentimentality: American childhood as a social and cultural construct" pp. 249-262 (S&S)
- A. J. Pugh, "Consumption as care and belonging: Economies of dignity in children's daily lives" pp. 447-457 (F)
- K.M. Flower Kim, "Out of sorts: Adoption and (un)desirable children" pp. 400-412 (F)
- R.A. Settersten & B. Ray, "The long and twisting path to adulthood" pp. 280-301 (S&S)

**Week 13:** The Dark Side of Family Life: Domestic Violence

- D. Kurz, "Old problems and new directions in the study of violence against women" (*Moodle E-reserve*)
- K. Crenshaw, "Mapping the margins: Intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against women of color" (*Moodle E-reserve*)
- C. Renzetti, "Toward a better understanding of lesbian battering" pp. 595-607 (F)
- O. Barnett, C.L. Miller-Perrin & R.D. Perrin, "Abuse of elders" pp. 607-625 (F)

**Film: *Defending Our Lives*, Friday, November 18**

**Weeks 14 & 15:** Divorce and Remarriage

- D. Vaughan, *Uncoupling*, chapters 1-11 (pp. 11-195)
- M. Adams & S. Coltrane, "Framing divorce reform: Media, morality, and the politics of family" pp. 499-513 (F)
- M.A. Mason, "The modern American stepfamily: Problems and possibilities" pp. 169-187 (S&S)
- W. Marsiglio, "Overlooked aspects of stepfathering" pp. 556-571 (F)

**NOTE: Week 14 contains Thanksgiving Break. That means there will be no class Wednesday, November 23 and Friday, November 25. Sad, huh?**

**\*\*\*Activity Paper #8 due Wednesday, November 30\*\*\***

**Week 16:** Future Families

**Film: *Peege*, Wednesday, December 7**

**\*\*\*Activity Paper #9 due Friday, December 9\*\*\***

**\*\*\*EXAM 3: THURSDAY, DECEMBER 15 @ 9:30am\*\*\***