



East China Normal University International Summer Session

SOC 31 Sociology of the Family

Term: July 5th – August 8th, 2018

Instructor: Dr. Sampson Lee Blair

Home Institution: The State University of New York

Office hours: Mondays and Tuesdays, 12:40-2:00

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Teaching Assistant: TBD

Course Description

This course focuses on the social institution of the family. Students will examine the structures, behaviors, and relationship dynamics of families from around the world. Topics include dating and mate selection, marital dynamics, fertility and sexuality, parenting, divorce and remarriage, and gender issues within families.

Course Overview

The purpose of this course is to introduce the student to the sociology of marriage and the family. Its primary content will be an in-depth exploration of the nature and composition of contemporary American families, yet it will also present historical and subcultural variations of families and family life. Among other topics, the course will include: historical development of the family, subcultural and cross-cultural variations in family structure, gender socialization, mate selection, love and courtship, alternative family forms, family and family roles across the life cycle, and crises and stressors which affect families (e.g., divorce and remarriage, spouse and child abuse). This course is intended to provide the student not only with information concerning contemporary families, but to also illustrate the universal and far-reaching effects of the family, one of the fundamental societal institutions, upon our lives.

Course Goals:

A student who satisfactorily completes this course should:

1. Understand the key ideas and theories used in family sociology
2. Comprehend how race, class, and gender shape contemporary families
3. Demonstrate the ability to critically interpret family research
4. Understand basic family structures
5. Understand relationship dynamics within families

Required Text



Benokraitis, Nijole V. 2015. Marriages and Families: Changes, Choices, and Constraints (8th edition). Prentice Hall: Upper Saddle River, New Jersey. (ISBN 13 – 9780205918195)

Course Hours

The course has 25 class sessions in total. Each class session is 110 minutes in length, for a total of 2750 minutes of in-class time. The course meets from Monday to Friday from July 5 to August 8. ECNU awards 4 credits for this course. Different universities may count course credits differently. Consult officials at your own home institution.

Attendance

Summer school is very intense and to be successful, students need to attend every class. Occasionally, due to illness or other unavoidable circumstance, a student may need to miss a class. ECNU policy requires a medical certificate to be excused. Any absence may impact on the student's grade. Moreover, ECNU policy is that a student who has more than 3 absences will fail the course. Arriving late or leaving early will count as a partial absence.

Grading Policy

ECNU awards grades of A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, D, and F. Most colleges and universities do not award transfer credit for grades of D or F.

In this course, grading will be based on the following:

- 30% Midterm exam (each)
- 30% Final exam
- 10% Classroom engagement (attendance, attention, participation in discussions)

General expectations:

Students are expected to:

- Attend all classes and be responsible for all material covered in class and otherwise assigned. Any unexcused absence may impact a student's grade. Moreover, ECNU policy is that a student who has more than 3 unexcused absence will fail the course
- Complete the day's required reading and assignments before class
- Review the previous day's notes before class; make notes about questions you have about the previous class or the day's reading
- Refrain from texting, phoning or engaging in computer activities unrelated to class during class ()
- Participate in class discussions



Course Schedules

The planned schedule sketched out below may be modified to suit the interests or abilities of the enrolled students or to take advantage of special opportunities or events that may arise during the term.

WEEK ONE (July 5 – July 1):

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| Thurs: The Sociological Perspective | Read Chapter 1 |
| Fri: Sociological Perspective/Types of Families | Read Chapter 1 |
| Mon: Types of Families | Read Chapters 1 and 2 |
| Tues: Theoretical Orientations | Read Chapter 2 |
| Wed: Theoretical Orientations/History of Families | Read Chapter 3 |

WEEK TWO (July 12 – July 18):

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| Thurs: History of Families | Read Chapters 3 |
| Fri: Video | |
| Mon: First Midterm Examination | |
| Tues: Mate Selection | Read Chapters 8 and 9 |
| Wed: Mate Selection/Gender Socialization | Read Chapter 5 |

WEEK THREE (July 19 – July 25):

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| Thurs: Gender Socialization | Read Chapter 5 |
| Fri: Video | |
| Mon: Marital Dynamics | Read Chapter 10 |
| Tues: Marital Dynamics/Fertility | Read Chapters 10 and 11 |
| Thurs: Fertility | Read Chapter 11 |

WEEK FOUR (July 26 – August 1):

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| Thurs: Second Midterm Examination | |
| Fri: Parenting | Read Chapter 12 |
| Mon: Parenting/Work and Family | Read Chapters 12 and 13 |
| Tues: Work and Family | Read Chapter 13 |
| Wed: Video | |

WEEK FIVE (August 2 – August 8):

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| Thurs: Divorce and Remarriage | Read Chapter 15 |
| Fri: Divorce and Remarriage/Violence | Read Chapters 15 and 14 |
| Mon: Family Violence | Read Chapter 14 |
| Tues: Aging Families | Read Chapter 16 |
| Wed: Final Examination | |



Academic Honesty

Students are expected to maintain high standards of academic honesty. Specifically, unless otherwise directed by the professor, students may not consult other students, books, notes, electronic devices or any other source, on examinations. Failure to abide by this may result in a zero on the examination, or even failure in the course.