

Course Syllabus

Course Information

<i>Course Number/Section</i>	3343 / 501
<i>Course Title</i>	Sociology of the Family
<i>Term</i>	Fall 2006
<i>Days & Times</i>	Tuesdays 7-9:45

Professor Contact Information

<i>Professor</i>	Dr. Deanna Meyler
<i>Office Phone</i>	(972)883-2935
<i>Email Address</i>	dr_meyler@yahoo.com
<i>Office Location</i>	GR3.516
<i>Office Hours</i>	Tuesdays 11-12, 6-7, and Thursdays 5-6, or by appointment

Course Description

This course will introduce you to the study of marriage and family from a sociological perspective. We will use various theoretical perspectives to provide new insights into the "taken for granted" world of family life. One of the major goals of the course is to help you analyze family in terms of social structure, using empirical evidence and critical thinking, so that you develop an overall perspective that places family life within a larger institutional framework. We will first focus on current changes in the family, how we study family, and provide some historical perspective for families. Later we will examine gender, love, sexuality, dating, various configurations of intimate relationships, parenting, race/ethnicity, and various challenges families face today such as: work, violence, divorce, stepfamilies, and caregiving.

Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes

On completing this course, students will be able to:

1. identify the major theoretical contributions to sociology of the family
2. apply these theories and concepts to new situations (i.e., current events, personal life experiences)
3. understand how family is shaped by institutions.

Required Textbooks and Materials

Required Texts

Benokraitis, Nijole V. 2005. *Marriages and Families: Changes, Choices, and Constraints*. (Fifth Edition). Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall.

Benokraitis, Nijole V. (Editor) 2000. *Feuds about Families: Conservative, Liberal, and Feminist Perspectives*. Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall.

Assignments & Academic Calendar

Topics, Reading Assignments, Due Dates, Exam Dates

Week 1 – August 22
 Readings: Textbook Chapters 1&2

Week 2 – August 29
 Readings: Textbook Chapter 3, Reader Chapter 3
 Assignment Due: Written Summary 1

Week 3 – September 5
 Readings: Textbook Chapter 4, Reader Chapter 13
 Assignment Due: Written Summary 2

Week 4 – September 12
 Readings: Textbook Chapter 5, Reader Chapter 5
 Assignment Due: Written Summary 3

Week 5 – September 19
 Exam 1
 Readings: Textbook Chapter 7

Week 6 – September 26
 Readings: Textbook Chapter 8 & 9, Reader Chapter 6
 Assignment Due: Written Summary 4

Week 7 – October 3
 Readings: Textbook Chapter 10, Reader Chapter 8
 Assignment Due: Written Summary 5

Week 8 – October 10
 Readings: Textbook Chapter 11, Reader Chapter 12
 Assignment Due: Written Summary 6

Week 9 – October 17
 Readings: Textbook Chapter 12, Reader Chapters 9 & 10
 Assignment Due: Written Summary 7

Week 10 – October 24
 Exam 2
 Readings: Textbook Chapter 13

Week 11 – October 31
 Readings: Textbook Chapter 14, Reader Chapter 15
 Assignment Due: Written Summary 8

Week 12 – November 7
 Readings: Textbook Chapter 15, Reader Chapter 16
 Assignment Due: Written Summary 9

Week 13 – November 14
 Readings: Textbook Chapter 16, Reader Chapter 17
 Assignment Due: Written Summary 10

Week 14 – November 21
 Readings: Chapters 17 & 18, Reader Chapter 4
 Assignment Due: Written Summary 11

November 28: Final Exam

Things You Must Do For Your Papers:

1. Include your name, the class, the date, and the question text at the top of the page.
2. Make sure you always cite direct quotes and information you are using from your sources within the text of your paper. Otherwise, you are committing plagiarism. All written work is subject to plagiarism tests.
3. The paper must be 12 point font in Times New Roman with 1 inch margins and double-spaced. If your printer is low on ink you **MUST** replace the ink cartridge. If it is difficult for me to read your paper, you will lose points.

4. You MUST check your paper for grammar, punctuation, and spelling errors. I recommend that you have someone else proofread your paper.
5. Each paper should be 1-2 pages in length given the above parameters. They must directly address the questions for the week and are due at the beginning of class. Late papers will not be accepted.
6. The major point is to demonstrate familiarity with THESE readings. Opinions without supporting evidence will be given low grades.
7. If you are the discussion leader, submit your additional questions with your paper.

Criteria for Leading Discussions:

Preparation: know the material and bring additional questions for discussion, focused on the issues with logical and clear arguments.

Constructive response to other class members; allow others to talk.

Absence of unsupported personal opinion.

Written Summaries

What to Do:

Write a response to the corresponding questions for the readings. You may structure it as you wish, but one method that may prove especially useful is to synthesize as many of the assigned readings into your answer. Regardless of your approach, you need to address all of the readings for the week. Show me that you understand the readings. Refer to the syllabus for logistical requirements.

Questions:

#1 (Ch. 3: The Family in Historical Perspective)

Are families stronger or weaker than they once were? Is the family rising to the challenge or crumbling in defeat? How should we respond to this change in terms of social policy?

#2 (Ch. 4: Racial/Ethnic Diversity)

Which is more productive: focusing on similarities or differences?

#3 (Ch. 5: Gender Roles and Socialization)

What is the optimal role structure for men and women? In enacting what it means to be a man or woman, do we have more constraints or choices? Explain.

#4 (Ch. 8 & 9: Dating and Cohabiting)

Assuming that love and marriage are on the decline, what has contributed to this decline and is it really all that bad?

#5 (Ch. 10: Marriage)

What are the costs and benefits of marriage? Does marriage really matter?

#6 (Ch. 11: Choosing Parenthood)

Should people plan childbearing? What issues should or should not be considered before having children? Should we be concerned with the rise in single parent families?

#7 (Ch. 12: Raising Children)

What constitutes misbehavior from a child? How much is too much when disciplining a child?

#8 (Ch. 14: Family Violence)

Is violence symmetrical and is this distinction important?

#9 (Ch. 16: Divorce)

What are the causes and consequences of divorce? What kind of policy decisions, if any, should be put in place to address divorce?

#10 (Ch. 17: Remarriage & Stepfamilies)

How important is it for children to grow up with biological parents? Since this issue deals

with how we define family, discuss how remarriage impacts our notion of family.

#11 (Ch. 17 &18: Aging and Family)

How do multigenerational families help or hinder “traditional” families?

Grading Policy

Requirements for this course include three exams, 10 writing summaries, and 2 discussion leadership questions and answers. Assignments are designed to offer students multiple ways to excel in the course and can consist of, but are not limited to, quizzes, participation in discussions and class assignments, and film and newspaper critiques. There are 100 points possible in this class. The grading will be as follows:

3 Exams (20% each)	60%
10 Writing Summaries	20%
Discussion Leader (10% each)	20%
Total	100%

Grading Scale:

A	= 93-100%	= 4.0	C	= 73-76%	= 2.0
A-	= 90-92%	= 3.67	C-	= 70-72%	= 1.67
B+	= 87-89%	= 3.33	D+	= 67-69%	= 1.33
B	= 83-86%	= 3.0	D	= 63-66%	= 1.0
B-	= 80-82%	= 2.67	D-	= 60-62%	= 0.67
C+	= 77-79%	= 2.33	F	= 59% or less	= 0.0

Grading for written summaries will be different. You are graded on the best 10. You will receive a $\sqrt{+}$ (excellent), $\sqrt{}$ (average), $\sqrt{-}$ (poor) for your work. I will assess your points for the written summaries based on the overall accumulation of these scores. For example, earning more than 2 negative marks will lower your grade to a B. If you do not earn any negative marks, you will receive at least a B+.

Course Policies

Make-up exams

Requests for make-ups after the exam has been given will most certainly be refused. Make up exams will only be given if there is a legitimate conflict or emergency with appropriate documentation, and will only be given within a week of the original exam. Make up exams will receive a late penalty and will also be essay only and much more difficult than the original exam, regardless of the excuse.

Late Work

Any assigned work we do in class cannot be made up. Assignments are due at the beginning of class; late assignments (turned in after class begins) will not be accepted.

Class Attendance

Attendance and participation are imperative to your success in this course. Information on the exams will include material from lectures, class discussions, films, and class activities. Your attendance and participation not only benefit you, but also create a classroom atmosphere that is beneficial to everyone.

Classroom Citizenship

Sociology may challenge the way you see the world and you are to respect classmate views and ideas. Disrespect for classmates or the instructor is not acceptable. If there is an issue that you need to explore and are not comfortable doing so in the classroom, please utilize my office hours.

Course Activities

The syllabus outlines the set of readings and chapters we will cover each day. Students are expected to do the reading before class and bring written answers to the discussion questions to class. At least half the class will be spent discussing the questions that accompany the reading assignment. Several people will be assigned to lead the discussion each day. Under the leadership of the instructor, these individuals will discuss the topic for approximately 15 minutes after which the rest of her/his group will join the discussion. Each class member be a discussion leader twice throughout the course. During the other half of class, the instructor will present material from the textbook that should help synthesize the material.

Student Conduct & Discipline

The University of Texas System and The University of Texas at Dallas have rules and regulations for the orderly and efficient conduct of their business. It is the responsibility of each student and each student organization to be knowledgeable about the rules and regulations which govern student conduct and activities. General information on student conduct and discipline is contained in the UTD publication, *A to Z Guide*, which is provided to all registered students each academic year.

The University of Texas at Dallas administers student discipline within the procedures of recognized and established due process. Procedures are defined and described in the *Rules and Regulations, Board of Regents, The University of Texas System, Part 1, Chapter VI, Section 3*, and in Title V, Rules on Student Services and Activities of the university's *Handbook of Operating Procedures*. Copies of these rules and regulations are available to students in the Office of the Dean of Students, where staff members are available to assist students in interpreting the rules and regulations (SU 1.602, 972/883-6391).

A student at the university neither loses the rights nor escapes the responsibilities of citizenship. He or she is expected to obey federal, state, and local laws as well as the Regents' Rules, university regulations, and administrative rules. Students are subject to discipline for violating the standards of conduct whether such conduct takes place on or off campus, or whether civil or criminal penalties are also imposed for such conduct.

Academic Integrity

The faculty expects from its students a high level of responsibility and academic honesty. Because the value of an academic degree depends upon the absolute integrity of the work done by the student for that degree, it is imperative that a student demonstrate a high standard of individual honor in his or her scholastic work.

Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, statements, acts or omissions related to applications for enrollment or the award of a degree, and/or the submission as one's own work or material that is not one's own. As a general rule, scholastic dishonesty involves one of the following acts: cheating, plagiarism, collusion and/or falsifying academic records. Students suspected of academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary proceedings.

Plagiarism, especially from the web, from portions of papers for other classes, and from any other source is unacceptable and will be dealt with under the university's policy on plagiarism (see general catalog for details). This course will use the resources of turnitin.com, which searches the web for possible plagiarism and is over 90% effective.

Email Use

The University of Texas at Dallas recognizes the value and efficiency of communication between faculty/staff and students through electronic mail. At the same time, email raises some issues concerning security and the identity of each individual in an email exchange. The university encourages all official student email correspondence be sent only to a student's U.T. Dallas email address and that faculty and staff consider email from students official only if it originates from a UTD student account. This allows the university to maintain a high degree of confidence in the identity of all individual corresponding and the security of the transmitted information. UTD furnishes each student with a free email account that is to be used in all communication with university personnel. The Department of Information Resources at U.T. Dallas provides a method for students to have their U.T. Dallas mail forwarded to other accounts.

Withdrawal from Class

The administration of this institution has set deadlines for withdrawal of any college-level courses. These dates and times are published in that semester's course catalog. Administration procedures must be followed. It is the student's responsibility to handle withdrawal requirements from any class. In other words, I cannot drop or withdraw any student. You must do the proper paperwork to ensure that you will not receive a final grade of "F" in a course if you choose not to attend the class once you are enrolled.

Student Grievance Procedures

Procedures for student grievances are found in Title V, Rules on Student Services and Activities, of the university's *Handbook of Operating Procedures*.

In attempting to resolve any student grievance regarding grades, evaluations, or other fulfillments of academic responsibility, it is the obligation of the student first to make a serious effort to resolve the matter with the instructor, supervisor, administrator, or committee with whom the grievance originates (hereafter called "the respondent"). Individual faculty members retain primary responsibility for assigning grades and evaluations. If the matter cannot be resolved at that level, the grievance must be submitted in writing to the respondent with a copy of the respondent's School Dean. If the matter is not resolved by the written response provided by the respondent, the student may submit a written appeal to the School Dean. If the grievance is not resolved by the School Dean's decision, the student may make a written appeal to the Dean of Graduate or Undergraduate Education, and the dean will appoint and convene an Academic Appeals Panel. The decision of the Academic Appeals Panel is final. The results of the academic appeals process will be distributed to all involved parties.

Copies of these rules and regulations are available to students in the Office of the Dean of Students, where staff members are available to assist students in interpreting the rules and regulations.

Incomplete Grade Policy

As per university policy, incomplete grades will be granted only for work unavoidably missed at the semester's end and only if 70% of the course work has been completed. An incomplete grade must be resolved within eight (8) weeks from the first day of the subsequent long semester. If the required work to complete the course and to remove the incomplete grade is not submitted by the specified deadline, the incomplete grade is changed automatically to a grade of F.

Disability Services

The goal of Disability Services is to provide students with disabilities educational opportunities equal to those of their non-disabled peers. Disability Services is located in room 1.610 in the

Student Union. Office hours are Monday and Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.; Tuesday and Wednesday, 8:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.; and Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

The contact information for the Office of Disability Services is:

The University of Texas at Dallas, SU 22

PO Box 830688

Richardson, Texas 75083-0688

(972) 883-2098 (voice or TTY)

Essentially, the law requires that colleges and universities make those reasonable adjustments necessary to eliminate discrimination on the basis of disability. For example, it may be necessary to remove classroom prohibitions against tape recorders or animals (in the case of dog guides) for students who are blind. Occasionally an assignment requirement may be substituted (for example, a research paper versus an oral presentation for a student who is hearing impaired). Classes enrolled students with mobility impairments may have to be rescheduled in accessible facilities. The college or university may need to provide special services such as registration, note-taking, or mobility assistance.

It is the student's responsibility to notify his or her professors of the need for such an accommodation. Disability Services provides students with letters to present to faculty members to verify that the student has a disability and needs accommodations. Individuals requiring special accommodation should contact the professor after class or during office hours.

Religious Holy Days

The University of Texas at Dallas will excuse a student from class or other required activities for the travel to and observance of a religious holy day for a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property tax under Section 11.20, Tax Code, Texas Code Annotated.

The student is encouraged to notify the instructor or activity sponsor as soon as possible regarding the absence, preferably in advance of the assignment. The student, so excused, will be allowed to take the exam or complete the assignment within a reasonable time after the absence: a period equal to the length of the absence, up to a maximum of one week. A student who notifies the instructor and completes any missed exam or assignment may not be penalized for the absence. A student who fails to complete the exam or assignment within the prescribed period may receive a failing grade for that exam or assignment.

If a student or an instructor disagrees about the nature of the absence [i.e., for the purpose of observing a religious holy day] or if there is similar disagreement about whether the student has been given a reasonable time to complete any missed assignments or examinations, either the student or the instructor may request a ruling from the chief executive officer of the institution, or his or her designee. The chief executive officer or designee must take into account the legislative intent of TEC 51.911(b), and the student and instructor will abide by the decision of the chief executive officer or designee.

Off-Campus Instruction and Course Activities

Off-campus, out-of-state, and foreign instruction and activities are subject to state law and University policies and procedures regarding travel and risk-related activities. Information regarding these rules and regulations may be found at the website address given below. Additional information is available from the office of the school dean. (http://www.utdallas.edu/Business_Affairs/Travel_Risk_Activities.htm)

These descriptions and timelines are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.

