

CUYAMACA COLLEGE
COURSE OUTLINE OF RECORD

Sociology 125 – Marriage, Family, and Alternative Lifestyles

3 hours lecture, 3 units

Catalog Description

An introduction to the sociological analysis of families, marriages and intimate relationships. Family life and intimate relationships in contemporary American society are examined from the perspectives of different ethnic and racial groups with a focus on the intersectionality of race, class, gender and sexuality. Emphasis is placed on the analysis of the family's relationship to economic structures, political institutions and belief systems in different socio-cultural and historical contexts. Topics include: history of the family, family diversity and inequality, socialization, sexuality, child and intimate partner violence and abuse, courtship, interracial friendships and romantic relationships, singlehood, marriage, communication patterns, parenting, adoption, divorce, remarriage, step-families, widowhood, aging, and the future of the family.

Prerequisite

None

Course Content

- 1) General introduction to the study of marriage and the family
 - a. Basic sociological concepts which are essential for the study of marriage and family systems
 - b. Sociological theories of family and intimate relationships.
 - c. Scientific social research methods for family studies.
- 2) Cultural variations of family life.
- 3) Family and intimacy in historical perspective.
- 4) Wealth, poverty and families.
- 5) Gender, intimacy and family.
- 6) Race and ethnicity in family life
- 7) Social institutions and the life course.
- 8) Sexuality and sexual orientation.
- 9) Singlehood, dating, coupling, alternatives to monogamy such as polygamy and legal marriage.
- 10) Work and family
- 11) Communication patterns in different intimate relationships
- 12) Intimate partner violence and abuse.
- 13) Parenthood
- 14) Childhood, child rearing and child abuse
- 15) Separation, divorce and remarriage
- 16) Aging and intimacy
- 17) Families, policy and social change.

Course Objectives

At the conclusion of this course, the student should be able to:

- 1) Demonstrate an understanding of major sociological theoretical perspectives in the analysis of families and intimate relationships.
- 2) Identify and explain the principles of scientific social research methodology.
- 3) Appraise the range of family organizations and cultural variability in human societies.
- 4) Explain how family life and intimate relationships are shaped by economic structures, social stratification, political systems and globalization.

- 5) Explain how gender, race, ethnicity and social class intersect and shape family and intimate relationships.
- 6) Examine the range of intimate relationships across the life course.
- 7) Analyze communication patterns in families, marriages and other intimate relationships
- 8) Appraise the variability of social and legal standards for marriage and separation/dissolution.
- 9) Analyze various child-rearing practices.
- 10) Identify and examine relevant problems and issues related to family life in contemporary U.S.
- 11) Appraise the future of the family and social change.

Method of Evaluation

A grading system will be established by the instructor and implemented uniformly. Grades will be based on demonstrated proficiency in subject matter determined by multiple measurements for evaluation, one of which must be essay exams, skills demonstration or, where appropriate, the symbol system. At least one measurement for evaluation must be a written assignment.

- 1) Formative or summative quizzes and exams
- 2) Group or individual projects, presentations, or research papers that require students to solve practical real-world relationship issues using classroom and textbook information.
- 3) Interactive group activities in which students analyze, discuss and draw conclusions about marriage and family issues and concerns.
- 4) Field-based exercises to report an experience utilizing research methods in the study of relationship and family studies.
- 5) Written assignments (short answers or essays)
- 6) Students are expected to write a minimum of 1,250 words as part of the writing portion in the course.

Special Materials Required of Student

None

Minimum Instructional Facilities

Smart classroom

Method of Instruction

- 1) Lecture
- 2) Small and large group discussions
- 3) Group activities
- 4) Multimedia presentations

Out-of-Class Assignments

- 1) **Reading:** assignments course material; other course related multimedia.
- 2) **Writing:** short writing assignments; field-based exercises.
- 3) **Other:** N/A. Field-based exercises

Texts and References

- 1) Required (representative examples):
 - a. Lamanna, Mary Ann, A. Riedman, S.D. Stewart. *Marriages, Families, and Relationships: Making Choices in a Diverse Society*. 14th edition. Cengage, 2021.
 - b. Chen, Annie. *The Attachment Theory Workbook: Powerful Tools to Promote Understanding, Increase Stability and Build Lasting Relationships*. Emeryville, CA: Althea Press. 2019.
 - c. Cohen, Philip N. *The Family: Diversity, Inequality and Social Change*, 4th edition. New York: W.W. Norton and Company Inc. 2024.
- 2) Supplemental (Recommended):
 - a. Coontz, Stephanie. *The Social Origins of Private Life: A History of American Families 1600-1900*. London, UK Verso. 1998.

- b. Coontz, Stephanie. *The Way We Never Were: American Families and the Nostalgia Trap*. New York, NY: Basic Books. 1992.
- c. Klinenberg, Eric. *Going Solo: The Extraordinary Rise and Surprising Appeal of Living Alone*. London, England. Penguin Books Ltd. 2012.
- d. Wade, Lisa. *American Hookup: The New Culture of Sex on Campus*. New York, NY. W.W. Norton and Company, Inc. 2017.
- e. Kao, Grace, Kara Joyner and Kelly Stamper Balistreri. *The Company We Keep: Interracial Friendships and Romantic Relationships from Adolescence to Adulthood*. New York, NY. Russel Sage Foundation. 2019.
- f. Tatum, Beverly Daniel. *"Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?" and Other Conversations about Race*. New York: BasicBooks, 1997.
- g. Hardy, Janet W. and Dossie Easton. *The Ethical Slut*, 3rd edition. New York, NY. Ten Speed Press, 2017.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- 1) Compare and contrast cross-cultural family organizations and sexual behaviors.
- 2) Explain the influence of social class, gender, race, and ethnicity in family and sexual behavior in modern and pre-modern societies.
- 3) Analyze social change and globalization's impact on emerging family patterns in the 21st century in a variety of selected societies.