INTRODUCTION

This course focuses on the interaction between marriage, family and society by considering the historical and social influences on marriage and family life and by examining how the family unit affects the social world. Readings draw on theory, history, and ethnographic materials. More specifically, this course offers students the opportunity to engage in critical sociological analyses of “marriage and family” in U.S. society. We will analyze dominant conceptions of “marriage and family” and explore the extent to which actual marriages and families in our society live up to the dominant model. Primary attention will be given to the contradictions between our romanticized conceptions of marriage and family and our lived experiences of marriage and family life. We will explore how wider social forces—including the state, the media, the workforce, race, class, and the sex/gender system—influence both our cultural assumptions about the marriage and family and our lived realities. A central aim of this course is to help students become more aware of how their lives are shaped by social forces and to gain an appreciation of their ability to engage and interact with the world in a constructive manner.

TEXTBOOK

- Addition mandatory readings will be posted on course website via Desire2Learn (D2L)

CATALOG DESCRIPTION

An introduction to the structure, processes, problems, and adjustments of contemporary marriage and family life. The course includes historical development, cross-cultural variations, and analysis of forces of change.

COURSE PREREQUISITES

It is recommended but not required that SOCI 1101 be taken prior to SOCI 2293.
Course Learning Outcomes:

- Course Outcome 1: Demonstrate an understanding of how marriage and family is changing from a historical and sociological perspective.
- Course Outcome 2: Know how gender, race & ethnicity, class, and sexuality can shape the experience of marriage and family life.
- Course Outcome 3: Develop an understanding of the processes involved in courtship, dating, cohabitation, marriage, and divorce.
- Course Outcome 4: Know the various stages of family planning, pregnancy, parenting, and aging.

Program Learning Outcomes:

SOCI 2293 addresses the following outcomes for the sociology major:

- Graduates of the program will be able to apply the basic theories and concepts of sociology. Develop a sociological approach to marriage and family through readings activities and class discussions.
- Graduates of the program will be able to examine the impact of race, ethnicity, class, gender, and sexual orientation within social institutions.
- Learn how to sociologically analyze your personal experiences, your society, and the world at large.
- Develop college level critical thinking, problem solving, and written communication skills.

Computer Requirement

You are required to have ready access throughout the semester to a notebook computer that meets faculty-approved hardware and software requirements for your academic program. For further information on CSU's Official Notebook Computer Policy, please go to http://itpchoice.clayton.edu/policy.htm.

Computer Skill Prerequisites:

- Able to use the Windows or Mac operating system
- Able to use Microsoft Word
- Able to send and receive e-mail using your Clayton State email account
- Able to attach and retrieve attached files via email
- Able to use a Web browser

In-class Use of Student Notebook Computers:

- Student notebook computers will not be used in the classroom in this course for any purpose
- Therefore, all computers and other portable electronic devices are to be stowed prior to the beginning of each class
- Failure to abide by this requirement will result in a loss of course participation points; repeat offenses (more than 2 violations of this policy) will result in an automatic letter-grade deduction.
- There will be no warnings or reminders beyond this one.
- Outside of this classroom, computers will routinely be required to access course materials and may be used to communicate with your instructor provided proper protocol is followed (see below).

Email Policy & Protocol:

- I am happy to answer thoughtful email questions regarding clarification of reading materials, concepts and ideas that crossed your mind during preparation for class, or career considerations.
- Do not email with questions you can ask in person (either during office hours or before/after class) or with questions that you would not ask me in person. Only email me with questions or concerns that must be addressed prior my next office hours or our next class meeting.
- Emails should not inquire about grade requests (see me in my office or determine on your own), reading and homework assignments (if you missed it in class, get it from a peer), “are we going”
questions (...have a quiz today, ...need to know this for the test, ...etc.), and emails from non-CSU accounts).

- Emails should have an appropriate greeting. This is a professional environment and you are expected to communicate in a professional manner that may be different from your peers.

**CLASS REQUIREMENTS**

**Attendance & Participation: (40 total points)**

**Attendance:** (20 points). Regular attendance is vital to success in this class with points given for attendance. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of class daily via a seating chart.

**Participation Sharing:** (20 points). You earn these points in the following ways: Participating in interactive class activities, doing in class practice exercises, and by being respectful to your peers and to the instructor. I expect everyone to enhance the intellectual discussion of the class by sharing one news article (newspaper, magazine, or internet) that speaks to sociology. Summarize the article and then write two questions to ask your fellow classmates. Please write or type this on a piece of paper at the beginning of each week (and bring it to every Tuesday lecture). “I read this news article…this is about…this is related to gender because…why do you guys/girls think interracial marriage is controversial?”

**Exploriments:** (2 @ 10 points). There will be two exploriments offered this semester. An exploriment is a chance for you as a budding sociologist to experience firsthand the constraints of society by breaking a social norm and recording what you learn about society from this.

1. **Norm Breaking Exploriment (10 points):** Break a social norm and then provide a 1-page discussion of your experience. Un-mirror, Un-phone, social distance, implementing new family norms or behaviors, etc. are all fair game. Provide analysis and discussion to your experiment. What did you do? How did others react to your behavior? What did you learn and what mattered? Feel free to create a social norm.

2. **Mapping Census Data For Your Town (10 points):** What socioeconomic characteristics are distributed within your town? See handout.

   Or

   **Family Inventory (10 points):** Provide an inventory for how your family socialized you in terms of gender, marriage, race and ethnicity, class (money, finance, or work values), education, relationships, and religion. You may choose other pertinent social arenas if you wish. Provide at least 6 short answer responses corresponding to your areas of interest (2 pages in length at least) illuminating the values promoted within your family.

**Mini-Think Responses:** (4 @ 10 points each). I will assign you various sociological articles with accompanying questions that require your thoughtful and critical response. You may choose the five articles you are interested in. In most cases, the questions are posed at the beginning or end of each article. Your ability to critically analyze the articles and provide thoughtful detailed responses will be assessed. Please turn this in online.

**Exams:** (Each is worth 50 points). There will be 1 midterm, and 1 final each worth the same amount. They will consist of multiple choice questions that cover the text, lecture, videos and articles. Quiz questions will be given at the beginning of lecture as an interactive study guide preparation.
Individual Paper Assignment (25 points):

- **Family History Project.** You will sketch a history of your family. I am interested in the intersection between biography and history and self and society. The purpose of this project is self-understanding and greater understanding of the commonality and differences of social experience in the United States. See handout

or

- **Gender Socialization Research.** The purpose is to understand how children learn about gender. See handout.

Group Presentation Project (25 points):

**Team Case Study of a Community Organization Research (targeting the family).** Research a local domestic violence shelter, drug abuse, father involvement program, or local rehabilitation program, among others. Please complete a 15 minute Powerpoint and provide a polished presentation (including discussion) of your assigned topic to the class. See handout.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Attendance @ 1 point per class period</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Participation @ 1 point per class period</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>“Exploriment” Exercises @ 10 points each (2)</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>Mini-Think Article Responses @ 10 points each (4)</td>
<td>40</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm I, and Final exam @ 50 points each</td>
<td>100</td>
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<td>Individual Paper @ 25 points</td>
<td>25</td>
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<td>Group Research Presentation @ 25 points</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL POINTS</strong></td>
<td><strong>250</strong></td>
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Final Grades will be assigned as follows:
- A: 225 – 250 points
- B: 200 – 224 points
- C: 175 – 199 points
- D: 150 – 174 points
- F: < 150 points
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Textbook Chapter</th>
<th>Discussion</th>
<th>Articles or Assignments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Aug/19-21</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>Sociological Perspective</td>
<td>Research and Theory “Eating your Friends” by Henslin</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Sep/2-4</td>
<td>2. Relationships Marriage and the Family</td>
<td>The Family in History &amp; American Stories</td>
<td>“Family in Transition” by Arlene S. Skolnick and Jerome H. Skolnick</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Sep/9-11</td>
<td>4. Gender Convergence and Role Equity</td>
<td>Gender Socialization</td>
<td><strong>Mini-Think # 1 Due (Thurs)</strong> “Night to His Day: The Social Construction of Gender” by Judith Lorber “Controlling Images and Black Women’s Oppression” by Patricia Hill Collins “My Secret Life as a Black Man” by Anthony Walton</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Sep/16-18</td>
<td>5. Communications in Intimate Relationships</td>
<td>Transition to Marriage</td>
<td><strong>Exploriment # 2 Due (Thurs)</strong> “You Just Don’t Understand: Women and Men in Conversation” by Deborah Tannen.</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Sep/30 &amp; Oct/2</td>
<td>7. Marriage, Intimacy, Expectations</td>
<td>Marriage and Cohabitation</td>
<td><strong>Midterm Exam I on October 2 (Chapters 2,4,5,6,7)</strong></td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Oct/7-9</td>
<td>8. Human Sexuality</td>
<td>Sexual Behavior</td>
<td><strong>Mini-Think #2 Due (Thurs)</strong> “Sex in America: How Many Partners Do We Have?” by Robert T Michael, John H. Gagnon, Edward O. Laumann, And Gina Kolata</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Fall Break no class Tuesday Oct 14- Oct 16 (class in session)</td>
<td>TBA / Guest Speaker</td>
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<td><strong>Work on your Individual Paper and Group Projects</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Oct/21-23</td>
<td>10. The Challenge of Parenthood</td>
<td>Parenting Practices</td>
<td><strong>Mini-Think #3 Due (Thurs)</strong> “Parents’ Socialization of Children in Global Perspective” by D. Terri Heath “Father School as Gender Boot Camp” by Allen Kim</td>
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<td>Week</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Textbook Chapter</td>
<td>Discussion</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Nov/4-6 (Nov 10 is last day to withdraw)</td>
<td>13. The Dual-Earner Family</td>
<td>Gender Roles and Work and Family</td>
<td>Individual Paper Assignment Due (Thurs)</td>
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<td>“The Mommy Myth” by Susan J. Douglas and Meredith W. Michaels</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>Nov/18-20</td>
<td>Family Violence and Abuse</td>
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<td>Mini-Think #4 Due (Thurs)</td>
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<td>“Domestic Violence: A Cross-Cultural View” by Elaine Leeder</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>Nov/25-27 (no Thursday class, CSU on break 26-29 Thanksgiving Break)</td>
<td>Student Presentation Future of the Family</td>
<td>Student Presentation</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Dec/2-4 (Last Day of Lecture)</td>
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<td>Midterm III (8,10, 13,12, 14, 16)</td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Dec/9 (Final Exam)</td>
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**Course Policies:**

**General Policy**
Students must abide by policies in the [Clayton State University Student Handbook](#), and the [Basic Undergraduate Student Responsibilities](#).

**University Attendance Policy**
Students are expected to attend and participate in every class meeting. Instructors establish specific policies relating to absences in their courses and communicate these policies to the students through the course syllabi. Individual instructors, based upon the nature of the course, determine what effect excused and unexcused absences have in determining grades and upon students’ ability to remain enrolled in their courses. The university reserves the right to determine that excessive absences, whether justified or not, are sufficient cause for institutional withdrawals or failing grades.

**Course Attendance Policy**
Attendance is expected for all class periods. Attendance is expected for all class periods. Any absence should be cleared ahead of time or must be accompanied by a written excuse from a doctor or other competent authority. 5 points will be automatically deducted from your class participation for any unexcused absences.

**Missed Work**

- No work will be accepted after the due date, except when accompanied by a written excuse by a doctor or competent authority. However, the lowest quiz and discussion grade for each student will be dropped at the end of the semester. In the event of an extended absence, the missed assignments will
not count in calculating the course grade. This means that other graded work will be responsible for a greater weight in determining the course final grade.

- Problems happen regularly with technology and are not sufficient cause for extended deadlines for missed assignments. All students are encouraged to complete online assignments at least 48 hours in advance of the due date.
- Make-up examinations will be given only if they are taken before graded examinations are returned to students (next class period). Students who have a written excuse by a doctor or competent authority may make up the exam without a penalty. Students without an excused absence must take the exam before the next class period and will have a reduction of 20 percentage points from their exam grade.

**Academic Dishonesty**

Any type of activity that is considered dishonest by reasonable standards may constitute academic misconduct. The most common forms of academic misconduct are cheating and plagiarism. All instances of academic dishonesty will result in a grade of zero for the work involved. All instances of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Office of Student Life/Judicial Affairs. Judicial procedures are described beginning on page 14 of the Student Handbook (Procedures for Adjudicating Alleged Academic Conduct Infractions)

**Disruption of the Learning Environment**

Behavior which disrupts the teaching–learning process during class activities will not be tolerated. While a variety of behaviors can be disruptive in a classroom setting, more serious examples include belligerent, abusive, profane, and/or threatening behavior. A student who fails to respond to reasonable faculty direction regarding classroom behavior and/or behavior while participating in classroom activities may be dismissed from class. A student who is dismissed is entitled to due process and will be afforded such rights as soon as possible following dismissal. If found in violation, a student may be administratively withdrawn and may receive a grade of WF.

A more detailed description of examples of disruptive behavior and appeal procedures is provided at:

http://www.clayton.edu/Portals/5/DisruptiveClassroomBehavior.pdf

**Modification of Course Syllabus:**

The instructor reserves the option to modify the course syllabus, including topics covered, due dates of assignments, calendar of events or other items. Students will be given notice of changes and any change will be announced by email and the SWAN portal, unless it is impossible for prior notification due to a situation beyond the instructors’ control.

**Operation Study**

At Clayton State University, we expect and support high motivation and academic achievement. Look for Operation Study activities and programs this semester that are designed to enhance your academic success such as study sessions, study breaks, workshops, and opportunities to earn Study Bucks (for use in the University Bookstore) and other items.