

**Sociology of the Family SOC 2310
William Paterson University**

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Course Description:

This course focuses on current social changes affecting American families, with particular emphasis on the intersections of families with other social institutions and social inequality. We will first explore common assumptions about the “traditional family,” comparing this image with a brief overview of historical facts about American family life over the past two centuries. We will then examine how macro forces and systems of social inequality shape family life. Then, we will analyze four current major transformations in American family life: the changing relationship between work and family life; new trends in dating, intimacy, and marriage; new patterns of parenting; and the increasing diversity of families. In our discussions of all of these topics, we will explore the social and political implications of these changes for men, women, and children, and for society.

Course Objectives: This course will:

1. Introduce students to basic concepts, theories, and research methods used in sociology to study the family
2. Analyze the impact of broader social, cultural, economic, and political changes on marriage, parenting, and the family
3. Enhance understanding of how the diversity of family life is shaped by gender roles and expectations, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status and sexuality
4. Raise awareness of current family issues and challenges.

Required Texts:

- Baca Zinn, Eitzen, and Wells. *Diversity in Families*. Ninth Edition. 10th Edition. Pearson Press. 2015.
- Other assigned news articles and blog posts are available online.

Schoology.com: Instead of Blackboard, we are using Schoology for this class. You can use the code 5GQQG-V2XJD to register for Schoology and enroll in the course.

A quick guide to Schoology:

- o **Homepage:** I will use the course homepage to post reminders and updates.
- o **Materials:** In the “Materials” menu, you can find links to course **assignments**, **resources**, and our **Discussion Board**.
- o **Discussion Board:** The Discussion Board is organized by topics. Please post your assigned postings, and free posts, in the related topic board.
- o **Calendar:** On the right hand side, there is a calendar of due dates with links to **assignments** and **readings**.

Course Policies:

- As this is a short, online course, **no late postings or assignments will be accepted.** This is non-negotiable. If you fall even a day behind in this course, your grade will suffer.
- **Grammar and spelling count!** Be sure to carefully edit each assignment and posting to the online discussion. Spelling and grammar errors will significantly reduce your grade.
- **Paper Requirements:**
 - Only Word documents will be accepted (.doc or .docx format).
 - Assignments must be double-spaced and use 12 point standard font.
- **Citing your work:** You are required to follow proper citation procedures for all assignments and online posting. If something is not your own original idea, it needs a citation. See the online Course Resources for more information on proper citation. **Plagiarism and academic dishonesty will not be tolerated.**

Grades: Your final grade will be made up of the following:

- 20%: 10 Free Choice Posts
- 30%: 5 Assigned Posts
- 30%: 3 Open-Book Exams
- 20%: Final Analytic Paper

Assignments:

- **Free Choice Posts:** Over the duration of the course, you are required to post **10 times** to the discussion board. You may spread out your posts however you would like.
 - ❓ **What counts as a post?**
 - A question, informed by the class material that you would like to pose to the class.
 - An answer, informed by the class material, to another student's question.
 - A link to a news article, blog post, image, video etc. that is related to that class material, and a description of how it is related.
 - ❓ **What does not count as a post?**
 - Anything that is too brief ("I agree" or "good question" etc.). Your posts should be 50-100 words.
 - Anything that is not explicitly tied to course material.
- **Assigned Posts:** During the course there are 5 assigned posts that you must complete and post to the discussion board. Assigned post details are listed in the course schedule.
- **Exams:** During the course you will take 3 open-book exams. These will be posted at 8am on the day of the exam, and must be submitted on Schoology by 12 Midnight the same day. You will have 2 hours to complete each exam.
 - **Exam 1:** Sunday, May 27

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- **Exam 2:** Wednesday, June 4
- **Exam 3:** Monday, June 10
- **Analysis Paper:** There is one 4-5 page analysis papers due. The assignment is posted online.
 - **Tuesday, June 11:** *Work/Life Choices* paper due

Schedule:

	Reading	Assignment
<i>Introductions</i> Tuesday 5/22	Introduce yourself online!	Register for Schoology with code: 5GQQG-V2XJD
<i>What is Family?</i> Wednesday 5/23	Chapter 1 “Images, Ideals, and Myths”	Assigned Post 1: <i>What is a Family?</i>
<i>Family History</i> Thursday 5/24	Chapter 2 “Preindustrial Families and the Emergence of a Modern Family Form”	
<i>Historical Family Diversity</i> Friday 5/25	Chapter 3 “The Historical Making of Family Diversity”	
<i>Macro Forces</i> Saturday 5/26	Chapter 4: “Families and the New Economic Realities”	
Sunday 5/27	Exam will be available on Schoology at 8am in the morning, and must be completed online by 12 Midnight.	Exam 1
<i>Family Inequality</i> Monday 5/28	Chapter 5: “Families and Demography Trends”	
<i>Family Diversity</i> Tuesday 5/29	Chapter 6: “Class, Race, and Gender”	

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	Reading	Assignment
<i>Household Labor</i> Wednesday 5/30	Covert, Bryce. "Why It Matters That Women Do Most of the Housework" <i>The Nation</i> . April 30, 2014. [link online] Dockterman, Eliana, "There's a Gender Pay Gap in Kids' Allowances and Parents Are To Blame" <i>Time Magazine</i> . April 24, 2014 [link online]	Assigned Post 2: <i>Dividing Household Chores</i>
<i>Work & Family Life</i> Saturday 5/31	Chapter 7: "Meshing the Worlds of Work and Family"	
<i>Dating & Intimacy</i> Sunday 6/1	Chapter 8: "The Social Construction of Intimacy"	Assigned Post 3: <i>Whatever Happened to Dating?</i>
<i>Marriage</i> Monday 6/2	Chapter 9: "Contemporary Marriages"	
<i>Raising Children</i> Tuesday 6/3	Chapter 10: "Parents and Children" Zalis, Shelley. "Men Should Take Parental Leave: Here's Why" <i>Forbes</i> , May 3, 2018. [link online]	
Wednesday 6/4	Exam will be available on Schoology at 8am in the morning, and must be completed online by 12 Midnight.	Exam 2
<i>Children & Consumer Culture</i> Thursday 6/5	Sweet, Elizabeth. "Toys Are More Divided by Gender Now Than They Were 50 Years Ago" <i>The Atlantic</i> . December 9, 2014. [link online] Watch: "Consuming Kids" [link online]	Assigned Post 4: <i>Childhood and Consumerism</i>
<i>Family Violence</i> Friday 6/6	Chapter 11: "Violence in Families"	

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	Reading	Assignment
<i>Divorce & Remarriage</i> Saturday 6/7	Chapter 12: "Divorce and Remarriage" Singal, Jessical. "Why People Think the Divorce Rate Is Soaring Even Though It's Going Down" <i>New York Magazine</i> . December 27, 2014. [link online]	
<i>Changing Families</i> Sunday 6/8	Chapter 13: "Emergent Families in the Global Era"	
<i>Family Policy</i> Sunday 6/9	Chapter 14: "Family Policy for the Twenty-First Century"	Assigned Post 5: Play the online simulation www.PlaySpent.org
Monday 6/10	Exam will be available on Schoology at 8am in the morning, and must be completed online by 12 Midnight.	Exam 3
Tuesday 6/11	Analysis Paper: <i>Work/Family Choices</i>	