

SOC 2830 – Family and Society
Fall 2017, Section 001, CRN: 93922

Professor Michael D. Gillespie, Ph.D.
Blair Hall 1165, M/W/F: 1:00P–1:50p

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Following the course title, this class is about ***families and society***. Families are a significant social institution both historically and in modern social systems, and constantly scrutinized by researchers, politicians, and the general public without an understanding of how social forces outside of the family constrain, enable, and define their existence.

This course is designed to consider the family as a social institution in the United States, with a focus on how other institutions affect the family, and how families affect the broader social system.

This course is ***not*** about “dating and mating” or interpersonal experiences within families often covered in psychology or social work classes. Family structures and the behavior of family members in general, are shaped largely by social institutions rather than biology, psychology, or even culture. The collective behavior of a family may reinforce or challenge social norms, but consequently, reflect the social forces that have influenced their conditions of existence.

We will study the family and the social system in the United States, including where they overlap, and where they are in conflict. We will examine popular ideals, images, and myths associated with the family in the United States and seek to explode the myth of the stable and harmonious family of the past, misconceptions of family roles, the falsities of a monolithic family form, and the pressure to develop undifferentiated experiences.

The traditional or ‘normal’ family is anchored in a male-dominated, white, middle-class ideal where male-breadwinners and female homemakers are dominant. By challenging and transcending this unrealistic concept of the family, the dimensions of social class, gender, and race/ethnicity will allow us to systematically understand the family’s varied connections and interactions with society’s institutions.



In the end, we will see that there is no consensus on the family, but a diverse set of experiences, orientations, and processes.

EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY LEARNING GOALS AND COURSE OBJECTIVES

Students who fully engage in the course by attending class, completing written requirements, and giving their best, good faith effort to comprehend the material will gain the following:

Critical Thinking:

1. How is the family involved in social reproduction in a *diverse, unequal society*? (CT1)
2. What does the family do to ensure that the United States social system functions effectively, even if in constant flux? (CT1)
3. How do families acquire and maintain the products of society, and use these to meet the necessities of existence in society? (CT 5)

In addition, students will meet the following course and university learning goals:

4. Think sociologically about the family (CT 2; W & CR 6)
5. Analyze how the family has changed over time. (QR 3; W & CR 6)
6. Critically examine the intersections that the family has with other elements of the social structure. (RC 1, 4; W & CR 6)
7. Appreciate the diversity of families in modern U.S. society. (RC 1, 4)

TEXTBOOK AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

REQUIRED TEXT:

Cohen, Philip N. 2014. *The Family: Diversity, Inequality and Social Change.* New York: W.W. Norton and Co.

The *required text* by Cohen will serve as the ‘backbone’ to class, and is available at Textbook Rental.

Throughout the semester, we will draw on material from the textbook, but we will also read numerous selections from other sources. These **applied** readings will be announced in class and made available on D2L throughout the semester. **To participate fully in lecture and class discussions, as well as complete course assignments, you are expected to complete all applied reading assignments.**

Think of the textbook as your “user guide” to the course and the applied readings as specific applications in the *sociology of the family*.

Because this course will utilize current events as well as history, applied reading assignments will be given **one week** in advance. You are responsible for keeping up-to-date with the reading schedule and for completing all reading assignments. Lecture cannot possibly cover all the material from the reading assignments, but all of this material is considered (and expected) “fair game” for exams and all written assignments.

Preparation and Engagement:

You are expected to attend every class, having read and prepared for a discussion, in-class exercises, and/or guest speaker. You must come willing and capable of participating. *To be capable of participating you must have read the material and you must have developed your own interest in the issues covered in the assignment.*

Access and use of D2L:

No materials will be distributed in class. Supplemental materials, assignment guides, course announcements, and grade feedback will be posted prior to each class session. You are responsible for obtaining course information through D2L.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Grade Requirements: 225 Total Points

Below is a list of the course assignments with total point values. Each item listed is required.

Reflective Analytic Essays: 80 total points (8 essays, 10 points each)

Each Monday an essay will be posted on D2L in the week's content folder. Each of these assignments, worth 10 points apiece, are designed to have you integrate course content with your own personal experiences, reflecting how the two intersect. Each essay is to be **no more than 1 double-spaced page**; points will be based on brevity and the concise, efficient integration of course concepts and personal experiences.

They will be due the following Monday at the beginning of class (1p); this means you must *print* your essay and be on-time to class to turn it in properly.

There will be 13 total assignments, you must complete 8 of your choice by the end of the semester. It is up to you to keep track of your progress. **Do not wait until the last minute to complete these assignments.**

You can do more than 8 assignments, but the first 8 that you submitted will count toward your final grade. You cannot replace low grades with more essays nor can you re-write and resubmit these essays.

Midterm Exam: 50 points

Multiple Choice / Short-Answer exam
Wednesday October 11, 2017 in class

Final Exam: 75 points

Multiple Choice / Short-Answer exam
Tuesday December 12, 2017 – 12:30p to 2:30p

Reading Quizzes 20 total points (5 quizzes, 4 points each):

Reading quizzes will focus on a particular concept from that week's reading assignment or class discussion. They are unannounced and you must be in class to complete them. Reading quizzes are short answer essay questions.

COURSE GRADING

Based on the requirements, there are 225 points to be earned in this course. Final letter grades are based on the following scale:

A:	203-225 (90% or greater)
B:	180-202 (80% - 89.9%)
C:	158-179 (70%-79.9%)
D:	135-157 (60%-69.9%)
F:	<135 (<59.9%)

At any moment in the semester, you can gauge your progress in the course by taking the total amount of points you have earned divided by the total amount of points possible for the assignments you have completed to that point. I will also attempt to keep your grades up to date on D2L.

Grading FAQ:

Question: Do you grade on a “curve”?

Answer: No. I grade on points; a grading curve is simply grade inflation.

Question: Can I earn extra credit?

Answer: Any opportunities for extra credit will be afforded to all students in the course and at the discretion of the instructor. No one can earn individual assignments.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

Course Ground Rules:

Sociology is one of the few subjects that allows us to explore ourselves as part of something bigger, how something beyond our immediate lives has the ability to impact who we are, and also how who we are impacts other individuals and groups. Sociology is dynamic and exciting.

Surviving this class, first and foremost is through your own energy, engagement, inquisitiveness, and ability to be open-minded. An environment conducive to open dialogue is the goal. The classroom is a space for learning, not just from lecture but also from your fellow students.

There are three ground-rules under which you and I will be approaching this course:

1. If you always agree with me, then there is only one of us doing the thinking – and that is dangerous!
2. You are expected to be active in creating your own knowledge.
3. Do not be afraid to ask questions in or outside of class.

Class Attendance:

You will sign-in each class-period. While attendance is not a part of the grade requirements for this course, if you have 5 or fewer absences from lecture, you will be eligible for Prof. G's rounding rule. The rounding rule means that if you are within 1.5 percentage points of the next grade level you will receive the next highest grade (i.e. you have a 78.5% after the final exam, and hence a C, you will earn a B. In essence, your attendance can only help your grade by being present to learn the course material and if you are within the rounding interval!

What is "Class Participation"?

Class participation is class engagement. Engagement in this course is exercised through your continued and productive contribution: reading assignments are completed, assignments are finished and submitted on time, and you come to class ready to be engaged.

Engagement in the course is critical to your own success and the success of the group.

If you are going to be absent from a class session and have a legitimate reason for missing class (emergency, illness, death, etc.), please contact me by email or telephone prior to the start of class.

It is your responsibility to be accountable for your attendance and engagement in the class. In-class assignments cannot be made-up; unless you can provide a legitimate, documented purpose for missing class.

You are expected to attend every class: While class attendance is NOT part of your grade, the content of the course, as well as the quizzes and exams, is a product of what happens in the classroom. The textbook is a road map, but your participation and attendance are what make the course most interesting and informative. Being overly absent is detrimental to your learning experience and understanding of sociology.

General Classroom Conduct Policy:

In all of my classes, I strive to provide a positive and productive learning environment for students. It is important that we all act in a respectful manner toward each other and do not disturb the class.

I ask your cooperation in observing the following rules:

- Arrive on time.
- Do not come and go during the class period. This is disrespectful and disruptive for me and your fellow students. If you must go to the restroom, do so quietly, causing as little disruption as possible.
- Observe the electronics policy at all times (see below).
- Do not carry on side conversations with your neighbors unless you will be prepared to share with the rest of your colleagues.

THE Electronics Policy:

If you bring your cell phone to class, please show respect for me and the other members of the class by either turning it off or setting it so that it does not make any noise. It is unacceptable to make or receive calls, or to text message while in the classroom. You will be asked to leave if you use a cell phone in class; this includes text messaging.

Should you be a professional "on call" (i.e. an EMT or police officer) or an individual with particular circumstances where you need to be in contact, please set your phone to vibrate during class, and quietly leave the classroom to return any calls received.

I do not allow use of personal computers, tablets, or smartphones in class. If you do bring such a device to lecture, you will be required to put it away or to leave the classroom. If you must use a computer for academic purposes, you must bring appropriate documentation from the office of student services.

Help with course material:

Office hours are provided for students to seek guidance with course content. Office hours are provided for the sole purpose of helping students and should be utilized as needed. I am more than willing to go the extra mile but only if you are, too.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Academic Integrity:

ALL STUDENTS ARE EXPECTED TO COMPLETE THEIR OWN INDEPENDENT WORK. Students are expected to maintain principles of academic integrity and conduct as defined in EIU's Code of Conduct: <http://www.eiu.edu/judicial/studentconductcode.php>

Violations will be reported to the Office of Student Standards. These policies include cheating, fabrication, falsification and forgery, multiple submissions, plagiarism, complicity to such acts, computer misuse, and classroom disruptions. Any breach of academic integrity will result in a failing grade.

You are responsible for your work, the quality of your work, and the validity of your work. Any violation of academic integrity is serious and, if founded, will result in a zero for the assignment. *Ignorance is not an excuse and will not prevent a failing grade.*

Students with disabilities:

If you are a student with a documented disability in need of accommodations to fully participate in this class, please contact the Office of Student Disability Services (OSDS). All accommodations must be approved through OSDS. Please stop by Ninth Street Hall, Room 2006, or call 217-581-6583 to make an appointment.

The Student Success Center:

Students who are having difficulty achieving their academic goals are encouraged to contact the Student Success Center (www.eiu.edu/~success) for assistance with time management, test taking, note taking, avoiding procrastination, setting goals, and other skills to support academic achievement. The Student Success Center provides individualized consultations. To make an appointment, call 217-581-6696, or go to 9th Street Hall, Room 1302.

Booth Library:

Located in the center of campus, Booth Library is the best place to do research, find expert help, or study in a calm, distraction-free environment. In addition to the many print resources, Booth provides access to high quality e-books, journals and scholarship not freely available on the Web. Stop by the Reference Desk or go to <http://library.eiu.edu> to explore library resources and receive expert help with your research from the Booth Library reference librarians. Call 581-6072, or visit <http://booth.eiu.edu/ask> for more assistance.

Writing Center:

I encourage you to use EIU's Writing Center located at 3110 Coleman Hall. This free service provides one-to-one conferences with writing center consultants who can help you with brainstorming, organizing, developing support, documenting your papers, and working with sentence-level concerns. The writing center is open to help any student from any major at any stage of his or her writing process, and its system of one-to-one conferences demonstrates value and respect for individual writers, all of whom can benefit from feedback about their works in progress.

To schedule an appointment, you can drop by the center (3110 Coleman Hall) or you can call 581-5929. The writing center is open Monday through Thursday, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., and 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. On Friday hours of operation are 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Sociology 2830 - Family and Society
Fall 2017: Weekly Basic Themes and Required Textbook Reading Assignments

Week of:	Theme	Reading Assignment (Cohen Text)	Other Information
Aug. 21 – Aug. 25	Introduction and the Sociology of the Family	Chapter 1	
Aug. 28 – Sept 1	Family History	Cont. Chapter 1; Chapter 2	
Sept. 4 – Sept. 8	Sociology and History, cont.	Applied Reading on D2L	LABOR DAY, Monday Sept. 4
Sept. 11 – Sept. 15	Race, Ethnicity, Immigration	Chapter 3	
Sept. 18 – Sept. 22	Social Class	Chapter 4	
Sept. 25 – Sept. 29	Gender and Sexuality	Chapter 5 & 6	
Oct. 2 – Oct. 6	Love and Relationships	Chapter 7	
Oct. 9 – Oct 13	MIDTERM WEEK		No Class Friday October 13
Oct. 16 – Oct. 20	Living Together	Chapter 8	
Oct. 23 – Oct. 27	Families and Children	Chapter 9	
Oct. 30 – Nov. 3	Blending Families	Chapter 10	
Nov. 6 – Nov. 10	Work and the Economy	Chapter 11	
Nov. 13 – Nov. 17	The Family Table	Applied Readings on D2L	
Nov. 20 – Nov. 24	THANKSGIVING	BREAK!	
Nov. 27 – Dec. 1	Family Violence	Chapter 12	
Dec. 4 – Dec. 8	Toward the Future	Chapter 13	
Dec. 11 – Dec.15	FINAL EXAM	DEC. 12	12:30p-2:30p

DISCLAIMER

The course content and this syllabus are subject to change at any time to allow for a flexible and open learning environment.