

University of Nebraska-Lincoln
Department of Sociology
Family Seminar Soc. 904
Wednesday 2:00-4:35

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Office Hrs: M: 9:00-10:20; W 10:00-11:20 or appt.

Course Overview:

This seminar will focus on research pertaining to the study of family sociology. We will discuss the latest research in family sociology as well as cover family theories, family violence, parenthood and socialization, divorce, single parent families, intimate relationships, intergenerational relations and the life course. In addition to being a discussant for the weekly readings, you will receive professional development training including being a discussant for a student paper, responding to their review of your paper, writing a research/critical review paper, and honing your presentation skills. Finally, to alleviate some of the anxiety associated with comps, you will take a practice in-house comp exam to gain experience with the process.

Required Readings:

Required readings for this class will consist of articles and a book of family theories listed in the schedule of assignments for each week. A copy of each article is available in the department of sociology. You will, of course, also need to read additional sources that you identify for your class paper.

Course Requirements:

The course will be conducted as a seminar. This means thorough preparation and attendance at each class meeting. A participation grade will be assigned to each student based on demonstration of completion of readings, contributions to the class discussion, and overall attendance. Each student will be expected to share leadership of the seminar by being prepared to present and discuss one or two articles per week. You will need to type up a summary of the article(s) and distribute copies to the class. Articles will be assigned in class for next class session. This will count for 30% of your course grade. Average work for a graduate student is considered “B” work. Average participation means regular attendance, consistent preparation and readiness to present articles, and regular class discussion. An above average grade will be assessed on quality of your presentations. Below average grades will reflect lack of preparedness, or failure to present an assigned article.

It is expected that each student will prepare a critical literature review (including literature review, theory, hypotheses, etc.) or research paper, which he/she will present toward the end of the semester. The class paper (either format) should be 15-20 pages. Please do not go over this limit! The paper must be based significantly on readings and research materials that go beyond the course reading list. First, you will submit a 1-2 page prospectus that outlines the focus of the paper, identifies some key references and, if applicable, describes the data to be used in analyses. The prospectus is **due October 5th**. The complete paper will be worth 40% of your grade. Each student will serve as a discussant for one of the papers. The discussant will provide both a written (1-2 pages) and oral review of a paper on the day that paper is presented. (A copy of the written portion will be given to both the student and instructor). The discussant must receive your paper at least one week prior to your presentation (i.e., **November 23rd**). The role of discussant is worth 10% of your grade. You will also need to write a letter to me that explains how you addressed the discussants’ comments when you turn in your revised paper. Both of these tasks are important exercises in professional development and this is good training for when you submit your papers for publication to professional journals.

Another portion of your grade (10%) will involve an oral presentation (about 15-20 minutes) of the paper to the class. After the presentation, the student will then revise the paper based on the input of the discussant and the class discussion and submit **a final hard copy of the paper due December 7th during class time. No late papers, please.** Papers submitted after this date and time will be penalized (i.e., the drop of a letter grade). NO Recycled Papers!!

The final portion of your grade (10%) will include a practice in-house comprehensive exam in family sociology (a second area can be substituted for those not “comping” in the family). Details of this exam will be discussed in class and you will be directly involved in making up your own exam. This exam will be completed during class time and of course, not be as extensive as “the real thing.” The idea of this assignment is to introduce you to the exam process and to hopefully make your first in-house exam experience less stressful.

Each of the course requirements will make up the following proportions of the final grade:

Overall participation score	30%
In-house comp exam	10%
Discussant role	10%
Paper	40%
Paper Presentation	10%

Final Grade: Your grade will be calculated based on a percentage, not the actual numbers.

Disability concerns: If you need an accommodation for a disability for this class, please have the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities contact me as soon as possible.

Read the university graduate bulletin regarding your rights and responsibilities as a UNL student.

Schedule of Class Sessions and Reading Assignments

Aug 24 Introduction to Family Sociology – Origins of the Family

Readings

Cherlin, A. J. (2010). Demographic trends in the US: A review of research in the 2000s. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 72, 403-419.

Coontz, S. (2000). Historical perspectives on family studies. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 62, 283-297.

Gough, K. (1971). The origin of the family. From *Journal of Marriage and Family*, pp. 760-770.

Aug 31 Family Theories

Readings

Booth, A., Carver, K., & Granger, D. (2000). Biosocial perspectives on the family. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 62, 1018-1034.

Chapters 1-5 White, J. M., & Klein, D. M. (2008). *Family theories. 3rd Edition*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Sept 7 Family Theories Continued**Readings**

Chapters 6-10 White, J. M., & Klein, D. M. (2008). *Family theories. 3rd Edition*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Sept 14 Mate Selection and Relationship Formation**Readings**

Sassler, S. (2010). Partnering across the life course: Sex, relationships, and mate selection. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 72*, 557-575.

Carmalt, J. H., Cawley, J., Joyner, K., & Sobal, J. (2008). Body weight and matching with a physically attractive romantic partner. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 70*, 1287-1296.

Li, N. P., Bailey, J. M., Kenrick, D. T., & Linsenmeier, J. A. W. (2002). The necessities and luxuries of mate preferences: Testing the tradeoffs. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 82*, 947-955.

Schoen, R. & Cheng, Y. A. (2006). Partner choice and the differential retreat from marriage. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 68*, 1-10.

Sweeney, M. M. & Cancian, M. (2004). The changing importance of white women's economic prospects for assertive mating. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 66*, 1015-1028.

Sept 21 Family Diversity**Readings**

Biblarz, T. J., & Savci, E. (2010). Lesbian, gay, and bisexual, and transgender families. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 72*, 480-497.

Bratter, J. L., & King, R. B. (2008). But will it last?: Marital instability among interracial and same-race couples. *Family Relations, 57*, 16-171.

Brumbaugh, S. M., Sanches, L. A., Nock, S. L., & Wright, J. D. (2008). Attitudes toward gay marriages in states undergoing marriage law transformation. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 70*, 345-359.

Burton, L. M., Bonilla-Silva, E., Ray, V., Buckelew, R., & Hordge Freeman, E. (2010). Critical race theories, colorism, and the decade's research on families of color. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 72*, 440-459.

Sept 28 Parenthood and Socialization**Readings**

Baxter, J., Hewitt, B., Haynes, M. (2008). Life course transitions and housework: Marriage, parenthood, and time on housework. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 70*, 259-272.

Goldberg, A. E., Downing, J. B., & Sauck, C. (2008). Perceptions of children's parental preferences in lesbian two-mother households. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 70*, 419-434.

Longmore, M. A., Eng, A. L., Giordano, P. C., & Manning, W. D. (2009). Parenting and adolescents' sexual initiation. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 71*, 969-982.

Poortman, A., & Van der Lippe, T. (2009). Attitudes toward housework and child care and the gendered division of labor. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 71*, 526-541.

Smock, P. J., & Greenland, F. R. (2010). Diversity in pathways to parenthood: Patterns, implications, and emerging research directions. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 72*, 576-593.

Oct 5 Marital Satisfaction

Readings

Amato, P. R., Johnson, D. R., Booth, A., & Rogers, S. J. (2003). Continuity and change in marital quality between 1980 and 2000. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 65*, 1-22.

Bryant, C. M., Taylor, R. J., Lincoln, K. D., Chatters, L. M., & Jackson, J. S. (2008). Marital satisfaction among African Americans and Black Caribbeans: Findings from the national survey of American life. *Family Relations, 57*, 239-253.

Kamp Dush, C. M., Taylor, M. G., & Kroeger, R. A. (2008). Marital happiness and psychological well-being across the life course. *Family Relations, 57*, 211-226.

Tach, L., & Halpern-Meehin, S. (2009). How does premarital cohabitation affect trajectories of marital quality? *Journal of Marriage and Family, 71*, 298-317.

Waller, M. R. & McLanahan, S. S. (2005). "His" and "her" marriage expectations: Determinants and consequences. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 67*, 53-67.

Oct 12 In-house Comp Exam

Oct 19 Violence within Families

Readings

Anderson, K. L. (2010). Conflict, power, and violence in families. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 72*, 726-742.

Brown, S. L., & Bulanda, J. R. (2008). Relationship violence in young adulthood: A comparison of daters, cohabitators, and marrieds. *Social Science Research, 37*, 73-87.

Hoffman, K. L., Kiecolt, K. J., & Edwards, J. N. (2005). Physical violence between siblings: A theoretical and empirical analysis. *Journal of Family Issues, 26*, 1103-1130.

Sorenson, S. B., & Thomas, K. A. (2009). Views of intimate partner violence in same- and opposite-sex relationships. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 71*, 337-352.

Wiersma, J. D., Cleveland, H. H., Herrera, V., & Fischer, J. L. (2010). Intimate partner violence in young adult dating, cohabiting, and married drinking partnerships. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 72, 360-374.

Oct 26 Divorce and Single Parent Families

Readings

Amato, P. R. (2010). Research on divorce: Continuing trends and new developments. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 72, 650-666.

Teachman, J. D., & Tedrow, L. (2008). Divorce, race, and military service: More than equal pay and equal opportunity. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 70, 1030-1044.

Usdansky, M. L. (2009). A weak embrace: Popular and scholarly depictions of single-parent families, 1900-1998. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 71, 209-225.

Responses:

- Cherlin, A. J. (2009). The origins of the ambivalent acceptance of divorce. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 71, 226-229.
- Thornton, A. (2009). Framework for interpreting long-term trends in values and beliefs concerning single-parent families. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 71, 230-234.
- LaRossa, R. (2009). Single-parent family discourse in popular magazines and social science journals. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 71, 235-239.
- Usdansky, M. L. (2009). Ambivalent acceptance of single-parent families: A response to comments. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 71, 240-246.

Nov 2 Intergenerational Relationships and the Life Course

Readings

Bucz, F., van Wel, F., Knijin, T., & Hagendoorn, L. (2008). Intergenerational contact and the life course status of young adult children. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 70, 144-156.

Carr, D., & Springer, K. W. (2010). Advances in families and health research in the 21st century. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 72, 743-761.

Gibson, P. A. (2005). Intergenerational parenting from the perspective of African American grandmothers. *Family Relations*, 54, 280-297.

Umberson, D., Pudrovska, T., & Reczek, C. (2010). Parenthood, childlessness, and well-being: A life course perspective. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 72, 612-629.

Nov 9 Future of Marriage and Families

Readings

D'Onofrio B. M., & Lahey, B. (2010). Biosocial influences of the family: A decade review. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 72, 762-782.

Fincham, F. D., & Beach, S. R. (2010). Marriage in the new millennium: A decade in review. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 72, 630-649.

Sweeney, M. M. (2010). Remarriage and stepfamilies: Strategic sites for family scholarship in the 21st century. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 72, 667-684.

Nov 16 American Society of Criminology Meetings – No Class!!!

Nov 23 Thanksgiving Break – No Class!!!

Papers to Discussants this Week for Nov. 30th Presentations!

Nov 30 Paper Presentations and Discussants

Dec 7 Social Policy

Reading

Bogenschneider, K., & Corbett, T. J. (2010). Family polity: Becoming a field of inquiry and subfield of social policy. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 72, 783-803.

Paper Presentations and Discussants (if time needed)

Papers Due During Class Time

Pot Luck

Dec 14 No Final Exam – Papers will be handed back some time this week