

Family Theory and Research
Sociology 449/849, Spring 2009
M, W, F 10:30-11:20 OLDF Rm 307

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Office Hours: M & W: 11:30-12:30 and by appointment

Note: You are required to use Black Board for this course to view assignments, grades, announcements, discussion board, etc.

Objectives

Through weekly lectures, readings, and discussion, you will become familiar with sociological research and theory concerning the family. We will cover numerous topics this semester such as partner selection, patterns of family formation, and family violence. You will enhance critical thinking skills through class discussions and writing assignments. A paper, project, and/or annotated bibliography will be due during the semester. *There will be open discussion of research findings pertaining to human sexuality in this course. If you find such discussions objectionable, please enroll in another course. No alternative assignments will be given.*

Required Books:

➤ Undergraduates (UG) and graduate students:

Ambert, Anne-Marie. (2001). *Families in the New Millennium*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

*Additional articles will be assigned (see below) and will be available on E-Reserve.

❖ Graduate students only: (G)

White, J. M. and Klein, D. M. (2008). *Family theories*. 3rd Ed. Sage Publications.

*Additional articles will be assigned and will be available on E-Reserve.

• Additional Readings

- Article 1 – Gough – The Origin of the Family. (G)
- Article 2 – Lichter et al. - Race and the Retreat from Marriage: A Shortage of Marriageable Men? (G & UG)
- Article 3 – Christopher & Sprecher - Sexuality in Marriage, Dating, and Other Relationships. (G)
- Article 4 - Patterson – Family Relationships of Lesbians and Gay Men. (G & UG)
- Article 5 – West & Zimmerman – Doing Gender. (G)
- Article 6 – Amato - The Consequences of Divorce for Adults and Children. (G)
- Article 7 – Finkelhor et al. – The Victimization of Children and Youth: A Comprehensive National Study (G & UG)
- Article 8 – Andrews et al. - Adolescent Modeling of Parent Substance Use (G)
- Article 9 – Simons et al. – Identifying the Psychological Factors that Mediate the Association Between Parenting Practices and Delinquency (G & UG)

Course Requirements for Undergraduate Students:

Weekly reaction/thought responses	25%
Participation/attendance	10%
Discussant role	10%
Mid term exam	25%
Annotated bibliography & presentation	30%

❖ Undergraduate Course Requirements Described:

Weekly Reaction/Thought Responses: A grade will be assigned to each student based on demonstration of completion of readings. You will be expected to hand in a 1-page response/reaction (please do not go over this 1 page limit) every week for readings due that week. Use must use Times Roman 12 pitch font with 1 inch margins on all sides and double space. Your response should also include one question, which can be used for your discussant role and/or as a way to generate discussion within the small groups. Your response to the readings must be typed and handed in prior to the end of the class period on which it is due. Late summaries will automatically lose points. **You must turn in a hard copy (i.e., no emailed summaries).**

Participation/Attendance: It is expected that students will have regular class attendance. In addition to attending each class, you are encouraged to participate in both the large group and small group setting. Having done the readings and having done your summary will make participation easy and enjoyable. Please note that missing more than three classes will result in a 5% reduction in this portion of your grade. If you do not participate in class discussion, you will lose an additional 5%.

Discussant: Each student will be expected to share leadership of the class by serving as a discussant for a *minimum of three to four class periods*. This will require you to come to class prepared to summarize the readings as well as ask your classmates questions that will generate discussion. Below average grades will reflect lack of preparedness, or failure to present an assigned reading. The class period for which you will be a discussant will be assigned in advance. If you miss class, contact the instructor as soon as possible to see if you are a discussant for the following class period. If you fail to contact the instructor and you are assigned as a discussant and do not show up, you will receive a zero for your discussant role.

Mid Term Exam: An in-class exam will be given in mid-March that covers lectures, weekly readings as well as any additional articles that may have been assigned up to that point. The exam will be short answer and essay.

Proposal & Annotated Bibliography: You will be expected to first develop a research question (related to one of the topics covered in class) and then assemble an annotated bibliography that directly addresses your research question. Details for the assignment will be posted on Black Board. However, you must submit a brief proposal for approval (1/2 page) indicating your research question and two possible journal articles that you will use. Your proposal is due **March 4th**. This brief proposal must be typed. Late proposals will result in a 10% drop each day it is late. Please be sure to hand them in on time. Your annotated bibliography is due **April 29th**.

Research Presentation: Each student will have an opportunity to share with the class their findings from their annotated bibliographies. This will be a brief presentation (~10 minutes) that summarizes the present state of the literature in the area that you have chosen.

Course Requirements for Graduate Students:

Weekly reaction/thought responses	15%
Book review	10%
Two Classroom Lectures	15%
Participation/class discussant	10%
Paper & presentation	40%
Discussant role for grad paper	10%

❖ Graduate Course Requirements Described:

Weekly Reaction/Thought Responses: You will be expected to hand in a 1-2 page summary (please do not go over this 2 page limit) every week for readings due that week. You must use Times Roman 12 pitch font with 1 inch margins on all sides and double space. Your summary should also include two questions, which can be used for your “leadership” role and as a way to generate discussion within the small groups. Your summary must be typed and handed in prior to the end of the class period on which it is due. Late summaries will automatically lose points. **You must turn in a hard copy (i.e., no emailed summaries).**

Book Review: You will be expected to write a 7-9 page review of two of the theories from the White and Klein book. Your review should highlight the main points and propositions of each theory as well as detail how each theory can be used to explain a specific issue related to the family (e.g., mate selection and family violence). You will be assigned two theories by the instructor. Further details for this assignment will be posted on Black Board. Your book review of the theories is due **March 30th**.

Classroom Lectures: All graduate students will be expected to develop and present to the class two lectures throughout the semester. You will turn your lecture in the week prior to your presentation for my approval. I will work to assign topics based on individual interest but cannot guarantee this due to the number of grad students enrolled, interest overlap, and so forth. Therefore, you may be lecturing on a topic you are unfamiliar with. As such, you need to start preparing well in advance of the day in which you give your lecture. Grad students will meet with the instructor for exact dates and topic assignments. Details will also be posted on Black Board.

Participation/Discussant: You are expected to attend all classes and participate in discussion. Additionally, as a graduate student, it is expected that each of you will serve as a “leader” for the small groups on a weekly basis.

Term Paper: You will be expected to write a research paper this term related to one of the topics discussed in class. You must submit a one-page proposal for approval and suggestions, which details your research question and at least three key references. This one page typed proposal is due no later than **February 11th**. Details for the term paper will be available soon, posted on Black Board. Your final term paper is due **April 29th**.

Presentation: You will have an opportunity to present your findings from your research paper to the class. You will be allowed approximately 15 minutes to do this task. Remember that at national conferences, you are given a time limit and must stay within that limit; the same is true for your presentation in this class.

Discussant Role: You will be given a graduate paper to read one week prior to the presentation. Your job is to give the author feedback. You want to highlight both the strengths and weaknesses (if applicable) of the paper. Details for this role will be posted on Black Board.

Grading System

A+	98%-100%	B+	88%-89%	C+	78%-79%	D+	66%-69%
A	94%-97%	B	84%-87%	C	74%-77%	D	61%-65%
A-	90%-93%	B-	80%-83%	C-	70%-73%	F	<61%

SCHEDULE OF CLASS SESSIONS AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

The following is a general outline for our progression through the material. Actual dates and chapter/page assignments may change based on how rapidly we progress, the addition of guest speakers, etc.

DATE	TOPIC	READINGS/ASSIGNMENT
January 12	Review syllabus and course expectations	
14	No Class	Topics for AB's & Papers
16	Introduction to Family Sociology	Define the family
19	Martin Luther King Day – No Class!	Grad: W & K – Ch. 1-5
21*	Theory and Research	Ambert Ch. 1
23	Historical Perspectives on the Family	Ambert Ch. 2 <u>Article 1- G</u>
26	Family Diversity and Adaptation	Ambert Ch. 3
28*	<u>Library Rep</u> – David Tyler	Grad: W & K – Ch. 6-10
30	<u>Individual Meetings with Dr. Tyler</u>	Grad only

February 2	Partner Selection	Ambert Ch. 4
4*	Guest Speaker: Lisa Melander	
6	Partner Selection Continued	<u>Article 2 – G & UG</u> <u>Article 3 – G</u>
9	Patterns of Family Formation	Ambert Ch. 5
11*	Continued	<u>Article 4 – G & UG</u> Grad Proposals Due Feb. 11
13	<u>Individual Meetings with Dr. Tyler</u>	Undergrads only
16	Neighborhoods and Family	Ambert Ch. 7
18*	Continued	
20	<u>Individual Meetings with Dr. Tyler</u>	Undergrad only
23	Spousal and Partner Relationships	Ambert Ch. 10
25*	Continued	<u>Article 5 – G</u>
27	<u>Individual Meetings with Dr. Tyler</u>	Undergrad only
March 2	Divorce and Remarriage	Ambert Ch. 13
4*	Continued	Undergrad Proposals Due Mar. 4
6	Family Violence	<u>Article 6 – G</u> Ambert Ch. 14
9	Guest Speaker: Friendship Home	
11*	Family Violence Continued	<u>Article 7 – G & UG</u>
13	**MIDTERM EXAM**	Undergrad only
16-20	No Classes – Spring Break!	
23	Family Dynamics	Ambert Ch. 15
25*	Emotional Problems	<u>Article 8 – G</u>
27	Behavioral Problems	<u>Article 9 – G & UG</u>
30*	Continued	Grad Book Reviews Due Mar. 30
April 1-3	No Class- Midwest Soc. Meetings	Grad: work on papers Undergrad: work on AB's
6	Family Futures	Ambert Ch. 16
8*	Continued	
10	Course Wrap Up	
13-17	<u>Individual Meetings with Dr. Tyler</u>	Undergrad & Grad
20-27	Presentations	Undergrad & Grad
29	Last class (if needed for presentations)	Grad & Undergrad Papers Due Apr. 29
May 4-8	Exam Week	Pick up final papers in 711 Oldfather Hall May 6 th – May 8 th .

Note: * denotes that your assignment is due that day.

♦The following schedule is subject to change. Changes will be announced in class or posted on Black

Board. Not knowing about syllabus changes due to class absence **is not** a legitimate excuse for failures to complete course requirements.

- ♦ Staying in the class once the syllabus has been discussed implies consent to conditions set out here.

Course Policies and Ethics: You are encouraged to learn and apply yourself in a way that promotes respect for yourself and others. **Ground rules will be discussed the first day of class.** Students are also expected to conduct themselves with scholarly integrity. Any type of scholastic dishonesty is prohibited.

- ♦ Please turn off cell phones and/or beepers before entering class. Tape recorders are not allowed unless you have permission from the instructor.
- ♦ If you are going to be late for a class or have to leave early, please inform the instructor ahead of time. Do not make a habit of coming to class late or leaving early. This is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

UNL academic calendar is on line at: http://www.unl.edu/regrec/calendar/calendar_main.shtml