Sociology of Family: SOCI 3340.001

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Course Description:
This course provides a sociological overview of the family in the United States. We examine the American family as it was and as it is. In doing so, we also uncover and address the American Family Mythologies that pervade our thoughts.

This course can be quite challenging—family is considered one of the most private, sacred, and important social institutions in our society. We all have had contact with at least one family; and, over our lifetime, many of us will be involved with several families. You will be asked to read and think critically about what you think you know and what you will be learning.

Over the summer, the U.S. Supreme Court declared the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) unconstitutional. During the 2012 national elections, provisions addressing either same sex or heterosexual marriages were on four state ballots. In each state, the electorate voted in such a way that reflected support for same-sex unions. These elections as well as the less recent events in several other states have compelled Americans to think about how we define marriage and family. To some, the traditional family is under attack. To others, homosexuals seeking public recognition of their relationships demonstrate how strong the institutions of marriage and family remain.

Regardless of what position one holds, the social fact that remains is that families are in transition. Among the many changes taking place, families are re-negotiating gender roles, experiencing changes in courtship, marriage, and dissolution patterns, as well as facing new challenges with parenting. To better understand the numerous changes occurring and why those changes are taking place, we will examine recent and classic works from a variety of social scientists.

Course Objectives:
• To introduce students to essential concepts, theories, and research used in sociology to analyze the family
• To examine the socio-historical development of family as a social institution, including the changing roles of women, men, and children
• To enhance students’ understanding of the complexity of family life and how family experience is shaped by race, social class, gender, and sexual orientation.

Student Learning Outcomes:
The student will be able to
• recall essential concepts, theories, and research used to analyze the family
• describe the socio-historical development of the family as a social institution
• examine the complexity of family life
• discuss how race, class, gender and sexual orientation affect family experiences.
Course Requirements:

Text:

Exam I (15%) Exam II (30%) Exam III (30%)
Exam I covers Part I. Exam II covers Part II. Exam III covers Part III and IV. For Exam I, You will answer one essay question where you must incorporate information from each of the four readings. Exams II and III will be structured differently than Exam I. Exams II and III will be structured the same way. Exams II and III are comprised of two parts—each weighted equally. The first part of the exam is comprised of six readings selected at random. You will be asked a specific question related to each reading. You will have to answer five of the six questions. The response for each question will require a short answer (roughly a paragraph or two in length). The second part of the exam is an essay question that will ask you to apply what you’ve learned from the readings to a prompt.

Daily Quizzes (25%)
There will be two questions on the daily quiz. You will be expected to answer one of them. If you answer both, I will only grade the first response. There will be a total of 16 quizzes. This portion of your grade will be calculated using twelve out of the sixteen possible quizzes. Because I will only be using twelve of the sixteen quizzes for this portion of your grade, there are no make up quizzes. If you must miss a day, you can drop that quiz grade.

Summary of Assessment

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tool</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Weight for Final Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exam I</td>
<td>September 23</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exam II</td>
<td>October 28</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exam III</td>
<td>Day of the final</td>
<td>30%</td>
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Final Grade Scale:
A: 89.5-100%; B: 79.5-89.4%; C: 69.5-79.4%; D: 59.5-69.4%; F: 59.4% or lower

Recommendation
I recommend that you take notes on the readings and that you make sure that you can answer the following questions once you’ve completed the readings:
- What were the author’s/authors’ main ideas, arguments or positions?
- What evidence did he/she/they use to develop those?
- What was his/her/their methodology?

Course Policies:
Class Discussions:
You are expected to come to class having read and thought about the material presented in the assigned readings. I will be randomly calling on individuals to begin class discussions for each article. Come to class prepared.
Exam Policies:

*Note card:* You will be permitted to bring with you on exam day a single 3x5” note card on which you can HANDWRITE notes regarding each of the readings. You may use the front and back of the note card and write as small or large as you wish. The note card must be 3x5”. I will cut note cards that do not fit the dimension of a standard note card. If you are in need of a note card, I will have note cards with me the class meeting prior to the exam. These note cards must be presented prior to receiving your exam. Failure to comply with the parameters can result in your forfeiting the privilege to use a note card. Note cards must be turned in at the same time you turn in your exam.

*Materials Needed on the Day of the Exam:* Your notecard and a writing utensil

*Missed Exams:* You should make every attempt to be present on exam dates. I do understand that emergencies do occur. In such circumstances, I will need notification. Make up exams are considerably more challenging than scheduled exams; I will determine the format of the make up exams. You WILL NOT be permitted to use a notecard, and you will have to answer ALL questions on the exam.

Grading:

Grades WILL NOT be curved. Graded exams will be returned one week from the day of the exam.

Your work will be given a letter grade: A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-... etc. Those grades with a plus following the letter grade will be assigned values ending in 8—for example: 98 (A+), 88 (B+), 78 (C+), etc. Those letter grades without a sign following a letter grade will be assigned values ending in 5—for example: 95, 85, 75, etc. Those letter grades with a negative sign following a letter grade will be assigned values ending in 2—for example: 92, 82, 72, etc. Occasionally, I will award two letter grades for one response, such as an A/A-, in those circumstances the average of the values associated with the two letter grades will be computed when assigning an actual value for the response.

Absences:

Attendance is expected but will not be taken. You are an adult responsible for your own time and your own actions. Material will be presented and discussed in class, and that material often appears on exams. It is in your interest to attend. It has been demonstrated repeatedly that regular attendance is positively correlated with grades.

Contacting the Professor:

Should you need to contact me, the best way to do so is via email. I check that multiple times, daily. When you do contact me, treat your email as a formal document. Use proper salutations, grammar and punctuation.

Electronic Devices:

LAPTOPS are not permitted in my class; however, electronic recording devices are. Should you wish to record the lectures/discussions, you are more than welcome to do so. All cell phones, ipods, mp3 players, and the like should be turned off prior to class beginning.
Cheating Policy:
Any form of cheating will not be tolerated. Should you be caught cheating, your name will be submitted to the Department Chair, as well as to the Vice President of Student Affairs. If you are caught cheating, you will get a zero on the exam/assignment and will not be allowed to retake the exam/assignment or resubmit the reaction paper. Please see the Student Code of Conduct for the disciplinary procedures pertaining to academic dishonesty.

Notice to Students with Disabilities:
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act in making reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. If you suspect that you may have a disability (physical impairment, learning disability, psychiatric disability, etc.), please contact the Services for Students with Disabilities Office, located in Driftwood 101, at 825-5816. If you need disability accommodations in this class, please see me as soon as possible.

Academic Advising:
The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. The Academic Advisor will set up a degree plan, which must be signed by the student, a faculty mentor, and the department chair. The College's Academic Advising Center is located in Driftwood 203E, and can be reached at 825-3466.

Grade Appeal Process:
As stated in University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, and University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Web site at http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Office of Student Affairs.

Email
You have your very own Islander e-mail account. I will be using this account should any correspondence be necessary. All university notifications will be using your Islander account to contact you. To access your Islander email, first go to S.A.I.L. for your new student ID number. Next, go to http://newuser.tamucc.edu for your new email account. For more information call 825.5618.
Calendar

TBA