

**SOCIOLOGY OF THE FAMILY**  
**Sociology 332: Fall 2009**

INSTRUCTOR: June Ellestad  
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OFFICE HOURS: Mon. and Wed. 3:10 – 4:00 and by appointment (Might change—schedule is still not set)

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*It is worth noting that the word family originally meant a band of slaves. Even after the word came to apply to people affiliated by blood and marriage, for many centuries the notion of family referred to authority relations rather than love ones. The sentimentalization of family life and female nurturing was historically and functionally linked to the emergence of competitive individualism and formal egalitarianism for men.*

Stephanie Coontz, The Way We Never Were, pp. 43-44

**COURSE GOALS:**

I want this course to expose you to a wide variety of family literature. Additionally, I would like the readings, our discussions, and the tests to:

1. Cause you to question your own and our societal assumptions about the family. For example, I want this course to provide you with opportunities to compare ideal families and real families.
2. Provide you with opportunities to learn about empirical methods used to investigate the family.
3. Increase your understanding of sociology by analyzing the institution of the family, investigating the types of questions sociology asks about the family, and looking at the major theoretical frameworks drawn upon in the interpretation of empirical findings.
4. Provide you with information and opportunities to critically analyze the institutions of the family, marriage, work and the family, and childhood in American society.
5. Allow you to explore the relationship between individual experiences within the family, the experience of families and macro social processes and institutions such as industrialization, the marketplace, and the state, (i.e., I want this course to give you the resources to look at what C. W. Mills called “public issues”).

In general I want this course to provide you with the opportunity **to learn about families using the sociological perspective**. The following statement about learning seems especially relevant to this course because we all begin the sociological study of families with a large body of knowledge.

*That is what learning is. You suddenly understand something you've understood all your life, but in a new way.*  
Doris Lessing

**Warning:** This is NOT a “How to” class. We will **not** be discussing “How to save this marriage?” or “How to have a happy marriage?” The class is the sociological investigation of family as a social institution.

**REQUIRED READING:**

Baca Zinn, Maxine, D. Stanley Eitzen, and Barbara Wells. 2008. *Diversity in Families*, 8<sup>th</sup> edition. New York: Addison Wesley Longman.

Ferguson, Susan J. 2007. *Shifting the Center: Understanding Contemporary Families*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition. Boston: McGraw Hill.

Additional articles as assigned in the Mansfield Library Electronic Reserve. The course password-- June.

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<sup>1</sup>My email office hours are Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 11:00 – 12:00.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS.

*PREPARED FOR CLASS (i.e. do the reading).* I have planned this class to include a few lectures, videos, and in class exercises. However, much of the in class time will be devoted to CLASS DISCUSSIONS. For class discussions to be productive and for them to facilitate the learning process everyone must have completed the reading. Therefore, **the first requirement for this class is that everyone reads the assignments BEFORE class.**

<u>Requirements</u>	<u>% of grade</u>
Panel Presentations/Original Research	25%
Pop Quizzes	15%
Tests	60%
	100%

Grades will be based on the 90% & above an A; 80% to 89% a B; 70% to 79% a C; 60 to 69% a D, and anything below a 60% an F scale.

**Extra Credit:** Earn 100% on a pop quiz by participating in Ms Halverson's research project. Details of the project will be presented in class.

PARTICIPATION & ATTENDANCE. This is a discussion course, thus all of us must be active participants, both as learners and as teachers. Please note that active participation **requires** attendance **AND** advance preparation. **Excellent participation** will increase the final grade by 5%, dismal attendance and participation will decrease the final grade by 5%. Dismal attendance and participation includes "texting" and use of other electronic devices.

## PANEL/GROUP PRESENTATIONS or PRESENTATION OF ORIGINAL RESEARCH THAT LOOKS AT CULTURAL ARTIFACTS.

The class will be divided into groups for the presentations. Each panel group will select a family issue, do a library research on the issue, construct an annotated bibliography (**50% of grade**), and present the issue and the groups' social policy recommendations. [Note the plural] The group should not expect to reach consensus. Rather the group should address the issue fully and present an in-depth, sociological analysis of the issue and a defensible social policy agenda.

Each group will have ½ of a class period. You will be expected to organize your presentations such that you do not go over the time limit.

Some possible topics include: teen pregnancy, law enforcement and family violence, adoptions, rural families, relationship between school and family, health care, latch-key kids, foster families, day care, housing, neighborhood planning/design/zoning; reproductive issues, grandparents raising grandchildren

Original Research Option: If you are interested in cultural artifacts such as the media, novels, music or ads this is your chances to do your own original research on that topic. If you want this option you must decide soon because the project has many steps. The last of these steps is to write a paper and present your findings to the class. If you do an individual research project the presentation should be about 5 minutes.

## POP QUIZZES

There will be many pop quizzes during the semester. Your lowest quiz score will be dropped. **NO makeup quizzes will be given.**

## TESTS

The exams will consist of "objective" and "subjective" questions. Please note the exam dates. Please see me **this week** if you have conflicts because of university approved absences. **No** makeup exams will be allowed if you have not made arrangements **in advance**. Of course if you are *very ill* arrangements will be made. You might want to note that make up exams will NOT be the same as the exams given in class. Also it is possible that makeup exams will be oral.

## MISCELLANEOUS IMPORTANT INFORMATION.

**CHEATING: *Please do not.*** The penalty for cheating in this class is an F. If you do cheat and I catch you, you and I will find it a very unpleasant experience. I have caught cheaters before so I know how unpleasant it is. Please take my word for it and do not cheat. Note: Plagiarism is cheating.

All students must practice academic honesty “Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or disciplinary sanction by the University.” All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The code is available for review online at <http://ordway.umt.edu/SA/documents/fromWeb/StudentConductCode1.pdf>.

**ACADEMIC ETIQUETTE:** Academic etiquette includes, but is not limited to, arriving on time, not leaving or packing up to leave until class is over, treating all class members with respect, and not carrying on private conversations with the people sitting near you. Even whispering is distracting to others, including the instructor. If you must be late or leave early please let me know ahead of time and sit near the door so you disturb as few people as possible.

It is also distracting when students carry on private conversations on a cell phone, use their headphones, read the paper, or *text message*. Cell phones, palm pilots, and music listening devices (iPods, etc.) must be left in your bags **NOT ON THE TABLE AND NOT IN YOUR LAP** in front of you. To date I have been unable to deter students’ texting. Thus I decided to adopt a rigid and punitive policy. The following policy is based on Dr. Carmen Lugo Lugo’s (WSU) syllabi.

Cellular Phones and other Communication/Electronic Devices: Turn your cell phones and communication devices off before coming to class (that includes laptop computers—even if your computer lacks an internet connection, blackberries and any other electronic device utilized to communicate with the world outside our classroom). Of course, iPods and other gadgets used for entertainment are also prohibited. The world can survive without getting a hold of you 50 minutes. And you will also survive without knowing what’s going on outside the classroom for a few minutes. Trust me, it will be ok. If, for a reason you forget to neutralize your communication device, and it does go off during class please turn it off immediately. Note: If I catch you “texting” during class, you will be required to stand up and share with your classmates why you were texting and who you were texting. You will also earn the 5% reduction for dismal participation and attendance (see explanation above).

## COURSE OUTLINE

The schedule is *TENTATIVE and SUBJECT TO CHANGE*. If there are any changes they will be announced in class. It is your responsibility to be in class to hear about the changes.

Mansfield Library Electronic Reserve if “on reserve” is noted.

Date	Topic	Reading
Week 1 Sept. 1 – Sept. 4	Monday: Problems with the everyday understanding of families. Wed. & Fri. Sociological Perspective	Syllabus Chapter 1 Gittens pgs 7 – 17 in Ferguson Lichter and Qian pgs. 42-58 in Ferguson
Week 2 Sept. 9 – Sept. 11	Families—What <i>were</i> families like? No Class Monday	Chapters 2 & 3
Week 3 Sept. 14 – Sept. 18	Monday: Aponte- What is the specific argument? The general argument? Wednesday: Proactive? Reactive? Both? (consideration of the structural transformation of the economy) Friday: catch up – questions regarding Test # 1	Chapter 4 Think about structure and agency. Aponte – “Hispanic Families in Poverty.” Reserve (Read for Monday) Rubin. “Families on the Fault Line.” – Reserve

Week 4 Sept. 21 – Sept. 25	<b>TEST #1 Sept. 21<sup>st</sup></b> Class, Gender and Families	Chapter 5: pgs 143- 162 & 180 – 182 Lareau pgs. 336-366 in Ferguson
Week 5 Sept. 28 – Oct. 2	Class and families  Race and families	Monday: Kurz pgs 754 – 769 in Ferguson Parrenas pgs. 404-416 in Ferguson Wed. & Friday: Chapter 5: pgs. 162 – 180 and pgs. 400 -405 Hill pgs 80 – 99 in Ferguson
Week 6 Oct. 5 – Oct. 9	Work & Family  I will announce what readings we will discuss this week.	Chapter 6 and pgs. 342-346 in textbook Gerson and Jacobs pgs. 667-372 in Ferguson Hochschild pgs. 683 – 697 in Ferguson. Carrington pgs 709- 725 in Ferguson Clawson and Gerstel pgs. 726 -734 Hays pg 746 – 753 in Ferguson Coltrane- On reserve
Week 7 Oct. 12 – Oct. 16	Work & Family  <b>TEST # 2, Friday, Oct. 23<sup>rd</sup></b>	Chapter 6 and pgs. 342-346 in textbook Gerson and Jacobs pgs. 667-372 in Ferguson Hochschild pgs. 683 – 697 in Ferguson. Carrington pgs 709- 725 in Ferguson Clawson and Gerstel pgs. 726 -734 Hays pg 746 – 753 in Ferguson Coltrane- On reserve
Week 8 Oct. 19 – Oct. 23	Sex, Love and No Longer in Love Mon. & Wed. Soc. Construction of Intimacy Friday: Marriage, cohabitating, and partnerships.	Mon. & Wed. Chapter 7 Whyte pgs. 139 – 148 in Ferguson Savin-Williams pg. 163- 176 in Ferguson. Friday: Cherlin pgs. 183 -201 in Ferguson Stiers pgs. 251- 264 in Ferguson
Week 9 Oct. 26 – Oct. 30 Oct. 29 <sup>th</sup> – Day of Dialogue	Sex, Love, and No Longer in Love – Continued  Day of Dialogue – extra credit	Monday: Chapter 8 Wed. and Fri. Chapter 11 Cherlin and Furstenburg—On reserve Arendell pgs. 534-550 in Ferguson
Week 10 Nov. 2 – Nov. 6	Parents and Children	Chapter 9 Hill Collins pgs. 371- 388 in Ferguson Coltrane pgs 416-430 in Ferguson. Hamer pgs. 431-446 in Ferguson
Week 11 Nov. 9 & Nov. 13 No class on Wed.	Parents & Children	Mintz “Beyond Sentimentality: American childhood as a social and Cultural Construct” on reserve Bengson et al. “How Families Still Matter” on Reserve Arnett “A Longer Road to Adulthood.” On Reserve
Week 12 Nov. 16 – Nov. 20	Family Violence <b>Test #3, Friday, Nov. 20<sup>th</sup></b>	Chapter 9 Renzetti pgs. 635-646 in Ferguson. Yollö pgs. 611-622 in Ferguson.
Week 13 Nov. 23	Monday: Catch Up Day Thanksgiving Week	
Week 14 Nov. 30- Dec. 4	Panel Discussion/Presentations of Research	
Week 15 Dec. 7 – 11	Panel Discussion/Presentations of Research	
<b>Finals Week</b>	Good test taking in your other classes.	