

SOCIOLOGY OF THE FAMILY

MIDDLESEX COMMUNITY COLLEGE

SUMMER 2014

Prof. Rebecca M. Loew, PhD *RLoew@mxcc.edu*

SOC 210/CRN 2049 860.343.5813 Office: Snow Hall Room 508

COURSE DESCRIPTION: An examination of the evolution of contemporary relationships such as dating, cohabitation and marriage. The implications of changes in relationships and their effect on the individual, family and society will be analyzed.

SCOPE OF THE COURSE:

This course will introduce the student to sociological analyses of the family as an intimate, resilient, and dynamic social institution. Students will examine the influences of various social forces on the family, including race and ethnicity, legislation, technology, medicine, and other engines of social change. The course will explore empirical findings and theoretical perspectives pertaining to such aspects of the family as courtship, roles, marriage, and family interaction.

The course will facilitate the development of students' critical thinking skills by situating the modern family in its historical context, examining differences and similarities between the role of family in various cultural and ethnic groups, assessing the impact of changes in the family on children and adults, and by reflecting upon the future of the family and the debate over the *ideal type* of family structure.

COURSE OBJECTIVES & LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Upon completion of the course, the student will be able to:

Understand and use sociological theory in studying intra- and inter-family roles and relationships.

Recognize some of the key historical changes, and their precipitators, which have had significant consequences for the family.

Identify diverse family forms and family interaction in the U.S.

Assess the reification of "family values," and the importance of constructive values in resilient families.

Identify problems and frame research questions relating to families and their experiences.

Appreciate the process of theory-building and theoretical frameworks used by the social sciences by employing the three major theoretical frameworks in sociology, structural functionalism, conflict theory, and symbolic interactionism, to gain insight into and to engage in critical thinking about the family.

To understand differences among and commonalities across families and their experience and transitions in roles and responsibilities of family members as they face various life events (e.g. college graduation, marriage, parenthood, retirement, catastrophic illness).

Understand how changes in the economy, legislation and technology may affect the family.

Identify and explain gender division of labor in different cultures.

Analyze family problems of violence and abuse.

Explore the future of the family.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Regular and conscientious participation in class Discussions must be completed by their assigned dates.

One paper, a "Family Memoir," 5- 7 pages.

Note: *This is a relatively short, intense course and there is little time to get behind with assignments. Therefore, late work will NOT be accepted unless there is an exceptional and significant set of circumstances and the student receives permission from the Instructor.*

REQUIRED TEXT: Cherlin, A.J. *Public & Private Families: An Introduction*. McGraw-Hill Publishing. 2013. ISBN #: 0078026679

PARTICIPATION POLICY: You are required to log on and perform tasks and assignments online per the course outline in the syllabus. For weekly discussion, **the initial message responding to the questions is due midnight, Saturday of the week. The responses to at least two other students are due midnight, Sunday of the week.** All other assignments are due according to the course outline. Credit will not be given for late submissions.

CLASS CANCELLATION POLICY: Not applicable

METHODS OF EVALUATION:

Competence/Assessment

Competence will be demonstrated in each chapter:

Discussion Board participation and Final Memoir paper.

Course Requirements and Evaluation Methods

Weekly discussions (5 discussion assignments; 20 points each) 100 points

Final Paper 50 points

TOTAL 150 points

Weekly Discussions

Every week, you will be asked by the instructor to answer questions relating to assigned chapters on the week discussion board.

You also need to respond to at least TWO messages other students posted. A weekly discussion assignment is worth 20 points. The initial message responding to the instructor's questions is due midnight, *Saturday*, of each week. The response to at least two classmates is due midnight, *Sunday*, of each week. You will be graded on how completely you answer the assigned discussion questions and by the quality of your response to other students' postings. ***Refer to the grading rubric for a specific explication of how points are assigned to discussion responses.*** Your use of critical thinking skills, conducting the research you conduct on the discussion board questions, and your application of the readings will be assessed. You will have one week to conduct research and post. The discussion board is available Monday 12:01 am to the following Sunday Midnight EST. *No late postings will be accepted.*

Grading System: The policies detailed in the college catalogue will be followed by the instructor.

ADA Accommodations Statement: "Students with physical or learning disabilities who may require accommodations are encouraged to contact the Counseling Office. After disclosing the nature of the disability, students are urged to discuss their needs with individual instructors. This should be done at the beginning of each semester. Instructors, in conjunction with appropriate college officials, will provide assistance and/or accommodations only to those students who have completed this process."

Academic Honesty Statement: "At Middlesex Community College we expect the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic dishonesty is prohibited in accordance with the Board of Trustees' Proscribed Conduct Policy in Section 5.2.1 of the Board of Trustees' Policy Manual. This policy prohibits cheating on examinations,

unauthorized collaboration on assignments, unauthorized access to examinations or course materials, plagiarism, and other proscribed activities. Plagiarism is defined as the use of another's idea(s) or phrase(s) and representing that/those idea(s) as your own, either intentionally or unintentionally." (*Board of Trustees' Policy 5.2.1*)

Religious Accommodation Statement: If your religious obligations conflict with the course calendar requirements, and if you wish to request an accommodation, you must make your request in writing prior to the date of the assessment or activity you will miss and preferably at the beginning of the semester. When requesting a make-up quiz, test, exam, assignment, or activity, state the reason for your request and the date(s) on which your religious obligation(s) will conflict with the course calendar requirements. Also, if your religious obligation/holiday is unfamiliar to your instructor, you may be asked to provide a calendar which shows the published date(s) of your religious observance(s) or holiday(s).

Inclement Weather Statement: In the event of inclement weather either before the start of a day when classes are in session or during the *school day*, you may check for information on delayed openings, college closings, class cancellations, etc by listening to the radio and television stations listed below. Additionally, a message will be posted on the MxCC website at www.mxcc.commnet.edu and an announcement made on the college's main phone number, (860) 343-5800. (*When calling the main phone number, be sure to choose option 1 from the menu for school closings.*) If classes are already in session, everyone on campus will be notified of any changes. Decisions to cancel classes or close the college early will be made as soon as practicable.

Radio Stations Television Stations

WMRD 1150 am WFSB - 3

WDRC 102.9 fm and 1360 am WTNH - 8

WMMW 1470 am WVIT - 30

WRCH 100.5 fm

WTIC 1080 am, 96.5 fm

WZMX 93.7 fm

WELI 960 am, WKCI 101 fm

SOCIOLOGY of the FAMILY

COURSE OUTLINE

Week 1, May 27:

Part One: Introduction

Chapter 1: Public and Private Families

Chapter 2: The History of the Family

Week 2, June 2:

Part Two: Gender, Class, Race, and Ethnicity

Chapter 3: Gender and Families

Chapter 4: Social Class and Families

Chapter 5: Race, Ethnicities and Families

Week 3, June 9:

Part Three: Sexuality, Partnership, and Marriage

Chapter 6: Sexuality and Love

Chapter 7: Cohabitation and Marriage

Chapter 8: Work and Families

Week 4, June 16:

Part Four: Links Across the Generations

Chapter 9: Children and Parents

Chapter 10: The Elderly and Their Families

Week 5, June 23

Part Five: Power, Conflict, and Disruption

Chapter 11: Domestic Violence

Chapter 12: Divorce

Chapter 13: Remarriage and Stepfamilies

Paper Due June 25 by midnight.