Sociology 111AC                Sociology of the Family

UC Berkeley, Fall 2014
Tu/Th. 12:30- 2 pm, 160 Kroeber

Instructor: Joanna Reed, Ph.D.
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Office hours: Tuesdays, 9:30-11:30 am and by appointment. Sign up sheet outside my office door at 479 Barrows

Course Description:
This course will explore contemporary family life with a focus on the United States. It will introduce you to how sociologists study families and consider topics that seem (and are!) personal and emotional—ideals about love, marriage, gender, parenthood, sex and sexuality—from a scientific perspective. We will consider both the “public” and “private” dimensions of families over the course of the semester: the public family as a setting for socially important tasks such as raising children and caring for family members and the private family as the place where we hope to find love, intimacy and meaningful personal relationships. We begin the course by considering the history of family organization and diversity in the U.S., focusing on the period from the 19th Century to today. The rest of the course is devoted to exploring aspects of contemporary family experiences, with attention to socially patterned variations by race and class. We cover topics such as family structure and politics; relationships between intimate partners; contemporary parenthood and relationships between parents and children; market work and family life and the influence of the marketplace and globalization on families. Central themes of the course will be diversity and change, as we consider the many ways families have changed over the last 60 years (in particular) in the U.S., and the diversity of past and present family experiences.

Evaluation:
- **Paper 1**—20% of grade; **due Sept. 30** in class
- **In-class midterm exam**: 25% of grade; **Oct. 30**
- **Paper 2**—30% grade (paper + related assignments); paper due **Dec. 2nd**
  - Interview and Interview summary—(5% of total course grade); complete anytime during semester, must be posted online by Nov. 5th for credit
  - Qualitative Data Analysis Exercise (required participation); in class Nov. 6th.
- **Take Home Final exam**: 25% of grade; **due Dec. 17**
Exams: The midterm will be an in-class exam consisting of short answer questions. The final will be a take-home essay exam. It will concentrate on material after the midterm, but may ask you to incorporate material from earlier in the semester.

Papers: You will write two papers during the semester, both about 7-10 pages in length. In the first paper, you will use your own family as a case study as you analyze trends in how families have changed over time. In the second paper, you will do your own qualitative analysis, drawing on interview data that you and other students will gather during the semester. The second paper assignment has two parts—doing an interview and writing up an interview summary, and then the paper itself. First, you will interview another student about their thoughts and plans for marriage, work and family (interview questions will be provided), write up a summary of the interview and post it on Bspace. Later in the semester, we will complete an exercise in class that will familiarize you with the qualitative analysis techniques you will be expected to use in your paper. Finally, you will write a paper based on your analysis of your own and other students’ interview summaries, drawing on relevant readings from class, in particular The Unfinished Revolution. Detailed instructions for each paper are posted on Bspace—be sure to read these now so you know what is expected.

Course Policies:
Grading: There will be graduate student reader(s) for this course who will be responsible for most of the grading. The process for grading is as follows: I develop a rubric for the exams and papers and discuss it with the readers. We then grade several papers/exams together to make sure the grading is consistent. We will try to return exams and papers to you within two weeks. Readers may decide to hold regular office hours, or will meet with students by appointment. If you have a problem with a grade, you should first discuss it with the reader who assigned the grade. If that does not resolve the problem, then I will discuss it with the reader and meet with you. Please know that if we agree to re-evaluate your work, it will be under closer scrutiny and your grade could possibly go down as a result. If you ask us to consider raising your score, be prepared to make a specific argument as to why you think you deserve more points, making sure to reference the rubric for the assignment in question. We will use the gradebook function on Bspace to post grades, but you should always check and make sure the grade on the hard-copy of your assignment matches the one online.

Students are responsible for all material covered in lecture, including announcements. You will be expected to integrate materials from lecture and readings on exams and papers. Do not enroll in this class if you are unable to attend the lectures regularly.

If you need accommodations for a disability or have a conflict due to the observance of religious holidays, please email or speak with me early in the semester to discuss appropriate arrangements.
Exams and assignments must be taken and turned in on time. If you have a personal emergency, contact me at the earliest opportunity to discuss alternative arrangements. Late assignments will be penalized one third of a grade for each day they are late (including weekends). The final exam must be taken at the scheduled time.

Academic honesty is expected of all students. While I encourage students to discuss the readings and study together, everyone must do their own work. Suspected violations relating to this course will be reported to the appropriate administrative department and dealt with according to university policies. Be aware of plagiarism. Word for word use of even a single sentence from another author, publication or website without citation is plagiarism and is considered unethical. Plagiarism will result in a failing grade on the paper or exam with no opportunity to rewrite. If you have questions about how to properly cite materials, or how to paraphrase appropriately, ask during office hours, or consult the writing guide "Writing for Sociology", available on the Soc. department website.

Email: Email should not be used for questions about class materials—these questions should be asked in class or during office hours. I don’t check email more than once per day, and cannot always respond right away, so talk to me before or after class, or during office hours if you have an important issue.

Office Hours: I urge students to talk with me sometime during the semester, just to say “hi” and especially if you are having trouble with the course. I can’t help you if you don’t communicate with me! There is a sign up sheet outside my office door for regular office hour appointments. You are free to drop by, but I’ll give priority to people who have appointments. If you have another class or work during my scheduled office hours, we can schedule another time to meet.

Laptops, etc.: You are welcome to take notes on your laptop if you sit in the first five rows.

Circulation of Course Materials: DO NOT reproduce course materials or post them on-line or anywhere else. This includes the syllabus, lecture slides, notes, review sheets and exams. As a student in the course, you will have access to everything you need on Bspace.

Course Materials:
Books: All books can be purchased in the bookstore or via online sources. They are also on 2 hour reserve at Moffitt Library.


**Reader:**
Purchase at the Copy Central on Bancroft St. A copy will also be on reserve at Moffitt library.
Online: Some readings (noted on syllabus) will be posted on Bspace, and most of these can also be accessed directly from the library website.

**Course Schedule:**

**Aug. 28: Introduction to the course**

**Week 1, Sept. 2, 4: Contemporary U.S. families under the sociological lens**


**Week 2, Sept. 9, 11: Historical origins of U.S. family diversity**


**Week 3, Sept. 16, 18: Historical origins of U.S. family diversity**


**Week 4, Sept. 23, 25: Family Forms: Contemporary Partnering and Unpartnering**


Week 5, Sept. 30, Oct. 2: Family Forms: Contemporary Partnering and Unpartnering

Paper 1 due Sept. 30th in class

Readings: Gerson, K. (2010) *The Unfinished Revolution*. Ch. 6,7

Week 6, Oct. 7, 9: Social Class and Families: Challenges for Low-Income Families

Introduction- Ch. 6

Week 7, Oct. 14, 16: Social Class and Families: Challenges for Low-Income Families


Week 8, Oct. 21, 23: Families and Public Policy


Week 9, Oct. 28, 30: Social Class and Families: Middle Class Practices and Parenting

Midterm exam in class Oct. 30


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**Week 10, Nov. 4, 6: Lifestyle, Culture and Family Diversity**

**Nov. 5th (midnight) last day to post interview summary for credit**

**Nov. 6th Qualitative Data Analysis in class—required attendance**

**Readings:**


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**Week 11, Nov. 13 (no class Nov. 11, holiday): Work and Families: Motherhood and Careers**

**Readings:**


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**Week 12, Nov. 18, 20: Work and Families: Impacts on children**

**Readings:** *The NICHD Study Of Early Child Care and Youth Development: Findings for Children up to Age 4 ½ Years* (2006). U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Institutes of Health, National Institute of Child Health and Human Development

[https://www.nichd.nih.gov/publications/pubs/documents/seccyd_06.pdf](https://www.nichd.nih.gov/publications/pubs/documents/seccyd_06.pdf) (online and bspace)
Hochschild, A. *The Time Bind*. Ch. 5-7

**Week 13, Nov. 25 (no class Nov. 27, holiday): Work and Families: Transnational Families**


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**Week 14, Dec. 2, 4: Families in the Future**

**Paper 2 due Dec. 2nd**


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**Week 15: RRR week, extra office hours TBA**

**Take Home Final Exam: Posted on Bspace on Dec. 14 (noon), due on Dec. 17th (by 3 pm). Instructions for handing in the exam will be included on the essay prompts.**