

Sociology 111AC

Sociology of the Family

UC Berkeley, Fall 2021
MWF 11-12, Hearst Annex A1

Instructor: Joanna Reed, Ph.D.
479 Social Sciences Building (SSB)
joannareed@berkeley.edu

Office hours: In-person appointments: Wednesdays, 9:30-10:30 in 454 SSB (not my regular office!)

In-person drop-in: after class on Mondays outside in grass area next to our classroom, until 12:30ish

Remote appointments: Tuesdays, 10-11 (Zoom link is on sign-up sheet and bCourses main page)

Sign up here for both in-person and remote appointments:

<https://www.wejoinin.com/sheets/pedfc>

Course Description: This course explores 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 from a scientific perspective. We will explore both the “public” and “private” sides of family and how they are deeply interconnected. On the public side, we will examine expectations around what families are expected to accomplish for society, and how they are meeting them in the context of deep and persistent economic and social inequality in the U.S. The private side refers to examining the family as the place where we hope (and are expected) to find love, intimacy, and meaningful personal relationships and how our private decisions are manifested in large-scale social trends. We begin the course by considering the meaning of “diversity” in the family context and how U.S. families have changed since the mid-20th C. A key aspect of this part of the course is examining relationships between changing social and economic trends and patterns of family organization and relationships. Then we move on to exploring contemporary family experiences, with attention to socially patterned variations by social class, race and gender. We cover topics such as family structure and its consequences for children and society; families and social policy; relationships between intimate partners; contemporary parenthood and relationships between parents and children; and families and the marketplace.

Goals for the course:

By the end of the semester you will be able to:

- Think of the family as a social institution and describe how families collectively influence other areas of social life.

- Understand family diversity and change from a sociological perspective.
- Learn how family trends have shifted over time and how they are related to other social changes.
- Understand the challenges facing U.S. families today and how these are socially patterned.
- Have some experience doing qualitative research.

What to expect this semester

I am glad to be back to teaching in-person, and I hope you are happy to be back on campus. That said, I understand that there is some uncertainty about how things will proceed this year, and we are all being asked—yet again—to be flexible and ready to adapt to changing circumstances. I ask for your flexibility and understanding as we move forward, and I will extend the same to you.

- **Public health guidelines:** We will be following all campus guidelines regarding public health and masking. Masks are required in indoor spaces for everyone, vaccinated or not. *If you are feeling sick, or experiencing symptoms,* please err on the side of caution and don't come to class. You can stay caught up by viewing the course capture recordings. Likewise, if I am feeling sick, I will most likely move class to zoom for that day.
- **Course capture:** I have signed our class up for course capture. This means that there will be recordings (audio recording + slides) available of each class meeting on our class bCourses site. These will be posted as soon as they are available.
- **Check your email before class!** Just in case there is a last-minute change of plans. I will be using the bCourses announcement feature to communicate with you.
- **Office hours:** We will start the semester with a mix of in-person and remote office hours. Please bear in mind that I may shift these around depending on how things go.
- **Please reach out to me if you have problems or concerns!**

Navigating the course and finding the information you need

- **Syllabus:** You are reading this right now. This is the full plan and overview for the course. Information about course policies is also included here. If you would like the course schedule in a more digestible weekly format, check the "Pages" in bCourses. *Please read through the full syllabus.*
- **bCourses:** This is the name of UCB's online course management platform. There is a bCourses site for our class. If you are enrolled, you should

automatically have access to it. You can find all assignment prompts, schedule information, and course readings here. You will also use bCourses to turn in your work and view your grades and comments. *Be sure to check the weekly pages regularly, which will have the most up to date information for each week!*

- **Readings:** All readings will be available to you through bCourses. You can find the complete collection in “Files”> “Readings”. Most students find it easiest to go to the bCourses page for the week and access the readings there. (For example: go to “Pages”> “Week 1”.)

We are reading three books this semester, in addition to various book chapters and journal articles. All books are available through the UCB library website as e-books (this is the free option). If you prefer a hard copy, they can be easily purchased via online sources.

1. Gerson, Kathleen. (2010) *The Unfinished Revolution: How a New Generation is Reshaping Family, Work and Gender in America*. New York: Oxford University Press

2. Edin, Kathryn & Maria Kefalas. (2005) *Promises I Can Keep: Why Poor Women Put Motherhood Before Marriage*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press

3. Mason, Mary Ann & Eve Mason Eckman. (2007) *Mothers on the Fast Track: How a New Generation Can Balance Family and Careers*. New York: Oxford University Press

Bound hard copies of course readings: These can be purchased at the Copy Central Store at 2411 Telegraph Ave. Please note that the three books listed above are NOT included in the volume that is for sale. This year, Copy Central is also offering rentals of digital readers. I am told that these have several helpful features, such as highlighting, bookmarking, read aloud and more.

- **Reading schedule:** For any given week, please read in the order listed on the syllabus. Readings are assigned for the week, rather than by the day, to allow for more flexibility in the class. That said, we will generally consider them sequentially. In general, try to complete the first reading before Monday’s class, and everything before Friday.

Evaluation:

Take-home exam 1: 20% of grade

Take-home exam 2: 20% of grade

Qualitative analysis project: Young Adults' Family Plans: 30% of grade

-**Interview and write-up:** 5% of grade

-**Qualitative Analysis Findings Report:** 5% of grade

-**Paper:** 20% of grade

Take-home Exam 3 (final exam): 20% of grade

Response and Reflection papers: 10% of grade

Exams: All exams will be take-home essay exams. Essay prompts will be posted one week before the exams are due. Instructions for formatting and length will be on the exam prompts. Exams will be graded according to a traditional letter grade scale (i.e. "A", "B", "C", etc.)

Qualitative Analysis Project: Young Adults' Family Plans

For this project, you will become a sociologist. You will collect and analyze interview data that you and other students will gather during the second part of the semester and write up your findings in a research paper. The project consists of three assignments that you will turn in for credit. First, there is an interview and write-up, next is a report on the results of your analysis, and then finally the paper itself. The paper will be graded according to a traditional letter grade scale but the interview/write-up and analysis report will be "contract based" (i.e., you will get full credit if you follow instructions and make a good effort). *Detailed instructions for this project are posted on bCourses.*

Response and Reflection Papers: There will be four short reflection papers due during the semester. The purpose of these papers is to create a space for students to reflect on their personal reactions and responses to the course material. These papers will be contract based, in terms of evaluation (i.e., you will get full credit if you follow instructions and make a good effort). If you miss one of these assignments during the semester, you can make it up during RRR week.

Grading Policies:

Due dates and Grace Period: All assignments will have a due date, as usual. However, in the spirit of offering more flexibility to everyone, there will be a grace period that will extend for 24 hours after the deadline. An assignment turned in after the due date, but before the end of the grace period will not be considered late. The grace period extends to all students—you do not need to ask for permission or notify me if you plan to turn in work during the grace period.

Late Assignments Policy: If you have a personal emergency or are ill, contact me at the *earliest opportunity* to discuss alternative arrangements. Unexcused late assignments will be penalized one third of a letter grade for each day they are late after the grace period of 24 hours expires. At times, I may request documentation of an illness, emergency, or other situation.

Academic Accommodations: Ask for accommodations if you are a DSP student (according to your LOA). You can assume that the DSP office will send me a copy of your letter. If you have an accommodation for take-home assignments though, it is your responsibility to contact me to make arrangements. Please bear in mind that accommodations for extra time on in-class exams do not apply to take-home assignments. You are always welcome to reach out to me to discuss accommodations. Accommodations are also available for the observance of religious holidays, or due to conflicts related to student athletics. Please reach out to me if you have another issue not “officially” covered and we can talk about it. Here is a link to more information from UCB about academic accommodations and resources: <https://evcp.berkeley.edu/programs-resources/academic-accommodations-hub>

Re-grade policy: Please first talk with the person who graded your assignment for more feedback. Readers have the authority to change grades if they believe it is warranted. If you believe a mistake was made on your assignment, and want me to review it, write a short statement explaining why you think your assignment deserves a different grade, making sure to reference the assignment rubric. This statement should be about the substance of your work, rather than effort. I will then re-grade your paper and determine the final grade for the assignment. All re-grade requests must be made within a week of when an assignment is handed back. Per University policy, no re-grades are possible for final exams.

Incomplete Grades: Incompletes are an option of last resort for students experiencing true medical or other emergencies that make it impossible for them to complete their coursework on time. To be considered for an incomplete grade, students need to speak with me about it DURING the semester, have completed at least half of the coursework, and provide documentation of the reason for the request.

Academic honesty is expected of all students. It is extremely important that everyone submits their own original work, produced specifically for this course, in order to receive credit. Suspected violations relating to this course will be reported to the office of student conduct and dealt with according to university policies. *Be aware of plagiarism.* Word for word use of even a single sentence from any author, publication or website without proper citation is plagiarism and is unethical and unacceptable. So is very closely following the structure and wording of another

author's work. In addition, please be aware that you may not turn in any portion of *your own* previous work submitted for credit in another course without substantial revision. Plagiarism will result in a failing grade on the paper or exam in question with no opportunity to rewrite, as will any other kind of academic dishonesty. If you have questions about how to properly cite materials, or how to paraphrase appropriately, please ask! The student writing center is a good resource for questions about this.

Turnitin: All of your assignments will be checked for plagiarism by Turnitin. Please be aware that this program keeps a database of work previously turned in for this class by other students, as well as any of your own work that you turned in for credit in a previous class.

Office Hours: Please bear in mind that I may shift the balance of in-person/remote times as we see what will work best for everyone.

In-person appointments: Wednesdays, 9:30-10:30 in 454 Barrows (not my regular office!)

In-person drop-in: after class on Mondays outside in grass area next to our classroom, until 12:30ish

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<https://www.wejoinin.com/sheets/pedfc>

If you are having trouble with the class, or are experiencing personal problems that are hindering your ability to do well in it, please come to office hours! I can't help you if I don't know what is going on! Please also come to office hours for whatever reason—dropping by to say “hi” is a good reason. So are questions about the class topics and readings and your interests in them, or to share a personal experience. Remember also that if I know you, I will be able to write you a much better letter of recommendation if you find yourself in need of one in the future.

Email: This is generally a good way to get in touch with me, but I may not be able to respond right away. Do not expect a response on weekends or outside of regular working hours.

Your Health and Well-Being: Last but not least, being a college student can be full of excitement and possibilities, but at times may feel overwhelming or be difficult in other ways. Some degree of this is to be expected, but if you are experiencing a lot of distress, anxiety or have a pre-existing mental health issue, there are resources on campus to help. You are not alone; many others share your difficulties. Even if you don't think you need them, I encourage you to look at these websites now, so you know what is available. There is much more than counseling appointments: there are web tutorials and videos, support groups and mindfulness classes, for example. Counseling center staff have told me these groups and classes

can be a great preventative resource, and are a great way to get the semester off to a good start. Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS), (510) 642-9494, <https://uhs.berkeley.edu/counseling>. More general resources on mental health, services are at <https://uhs.berkeley.edu/health-topics/mental-health>.

Course Schedule*:

Week 1, Aug. 25, 27: Introduction to the course: thinking about families sociologically

Readings: Cohen, P. (2014) "Family Diversity is The New Normal for America's Children". Council on Contemporary Families, briefing paper

(Start on Cooper & Pugh from Week 2)

Week 2, Aug. 30, Sept. 1, 3: Changes in U.S. families over time: an overview

Readings: Cooper, M. & Pugh, A. (2020) "Families Across the Income Spectrum: A Decade in Review". *Journal of Marriage and Family* 82: 272-299

Coontz, S. (2000) "Historical Perspectives on American Families." *Journal of Marriage and Family*, Vol. 62, no 2

Cherlin, A. (2014) *Labor's Love Lost*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation. Ch. 1

Recommended: Coontz, S. (1999). *Marriage, A History*. New York: Penguin. Ch. 14, 15

Week 3, Sept. 8, 10: Sociological explanations for diversity in family practices

Response/Reflection #1 due Sept. 10

Readings: Takaki, R. (2008) *A Different Mirror: A History of Multicultural America*. New York: Back Bay Books. Ch. 1, 14-16

Jackson, D. (2001). "This Hole in Our Hearts: The Urban-Raised Generation and the Legacy of Silence." Pp. 189-206 in eds. Lobo, S & Peters, K. *American Indians and the Urban Experience*. Walnut Creek, CA: Altamira Press

Week 4, Sept. 13, 15, 17: Transitions of the later 20th C.: Have things changed much in 40 years?

Readings: Hochschild, A. (1989) *The Second Shift*. New York: Avon Books. Ch. 4, 6, 8, 9

Raley, K. & Sweeney, M. (2020) "Divorce, Repartnering and Stepfamilies: A Decade in Review". *Journal of Marriage and Family* 82:81-99

Recommended: Manning, W. (2020) "Young Adulthood in an Era of Uncertainty: A Case for Cohabitation". *Demography* 57:799-819

Week 5, Sept. 20, 22, 24: Contemporary Family Forms: What young adults want

Exam #1 Sept. 24 (no lecture, complete exam)

Readings: Tillman, K., Brewster, K. & Valle Holway, G. (2019) "Sexual and Romantic Relationships in Young Adulthood." *Annual Review of Sociology* 45:133-53

Gerson, K. (2010) *The Unfinished Revolution*. Oxford Univ. Press. (Start and read at least through Part 1)

Week 6, Sept. 27, 29, Oct. 1: Contemporary Family Forms: More diversity and choice

Readings: Gerson, K. (2010) *The Unfinished Revolution*. Oxford Univ. Press. (Finish)

Reczek, C. (2020) "Sexual and Gender-Minority Families: A 2010 to 2020 Decade in Review". *Journal of Marriage and Family* 82: 300-325

Week 7, Oct. 4, 6, 8: Families, the state and social policy: overview

Response/Reflection #2 due Oct. 8

Readings: Berger, L. & Carlson, M. (2020). "Family Policy and Complex Contemporary Families: A Decade in Review and Implications for the Next Decade of Research and Policy Practice". *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 82 (Feb. 2020): 478-507

Week 8: Oct. 11, 13, 15: Families, the state and social policy: examples

Readings: Dreby, J. (2015) *Everyday Illegal: When Policies Undermine Immigrant Families*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. Ch. 3 & 4 (R)

Abrego, L. & Hernandez, E. (2020). "#FamiliesBelongTogether: Central American Family Separations From the 1980s to 2019". *Critical Dialogos in Latina/o Studies*, forthcoming

Week 9, Oct. 18, 20, 22: Parenthood: mostly moms

Exam #2 due on Oct. 22 (no lecture, complete exam)

Readings: Guzzo, K. & Hayford, S. (2020). "Pathways to Parenthood in Social and Family Contexts, Decade in Review—2020". *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 82: 117-144

Edin, K. & Kefalas, M. (2005). *Promises I Can Keep: Why Poor Women Put Motherhood Before Marriage*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. (Read as much as you can)

Week 10, Oct. 25, 27, 29: Contemporary Motherhood

Response/Reflection #3 Due between Oct. 29- Nov. 1

Readings: Edin, K. & Kefalas, M. (2005). *Promises I Can Keep: Why Poor Women Put Motherhood Before Marriage*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. (Finish)

Hays, S. (1996) *The Cultural Contradictions of Motherhood*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press. Ch. 5

Nomaguchi, K. & Milkie, M. (2020) Parenthood and Well-Being: A Decade in Review. *Journal of Marriage and Family* 82: 198-223 (read this week or next)

Recommended: Elliott & Reid. (2016). "The Superstrong Black Mother". *Contexts*, Vol. 15, 1

Week 11, Nov. 1, 3, 5: Contemporary Fatherhood

Interview Write-Up due Nov. 5

Petts, Shafer & Essig (2018) "Does Adherence to Masculine Norms Shape Fathering Behavior?" *Journal of Marriage and Family* (March 22, 2018)

Lee, J. & Lee, S. (2016) "Caring Is Masculine: Stay-at-Home Fathers and Masculine Identity". *Psychology of Men and Masculinity* (Oct. 6, 2016)

Week 12, Nov. 8, 10, 12: Parents and children: family relationships and dynamics

Qualitative Data Analysis Workshop in class on Nov. 8

Readings: Lareau, A. & Weininger, E. (2008) "Class and the Transition to Adulthood" in *Social Class: How Does it Work?* Pp. 118-151 in eds. Lareau, A. & Conley, D. New York: Russell Sage Foundation

Lee, J. & Zhou, M. (2014) "The Success Frame and Achievement Paradox: The Costs and Consequences for Asian Americans". *Race and Social Problems*

VanCampen, K.S. & Russell, S. T. (2010) "Cultural Differences in Parenting Practices: What Asian American Families Can Teach Us". Frances McClelland Institute for Children, *Youth and Families ResearchLink*, Vol.2, No. 1. Tuscon, AZ: The University of Arizona

Zhou, M. (2011). "Conflict, Coping and Reconciliation: Intergenerational Relations in Chinese Immigrant Families". In Eds. Skolnick, A. & Skolnick, J., *Family in Transition*, pp. 472-84. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon

Week 13, Nov. 15, 17, 19: Work, family and the marketplace: family and careers

Qualitative Analysis Findings Report due Nov. 17

Readings: Mason, M. & Eckman, E. (2007). *Mothers on the Fast Track: How a New Generation Can Balance Family and Careers*. New York: Oxford University Press

Week 14: Thanksgiving holiday week (Nov. 22, 24, 26): Work, family and the marketplace: family and careers

Qualitative Analysis Paper due Nov. 24

No new material or lecture. Use the week to catch up.

Week 15, Nov. 29, Dec. 1, 3: Work, family and the marketplace: childcare

Response/Reflection #4 due Dec. 3

Readings: Pettit, B. & Hook, J. (2009) *Gendered Tradeoffs: Family, Social Policy and Economic Inequality in Twenty-One Countries*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation. Ch.1 "Gender Inequality in the Labor Market in Comparative Perspective"

Bradley, R. & Vandell, D. (2007) "Child Care and the Well-Being of Children".
Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine, 161(7):669-676

Recommended: Macdonald, C. (2011) *Shadow Mothers*. Berkeley, CA:
University of California Press. Ch. 3, 5, and 6

"RRR" week: Dec. 6-10

Exam 3: (Final Exam) is due on Dec. 14th, 5 pm. Questions will be available at
least one week prior to the due date.

***Course schedule is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.**