

## Sociology 111AC

## Sociology of the Family

UC Berkeley, Fall 2019  
MWF 1 PM-2 PM, 100 GPB

**Instructor:** Joanna Reed, Ph.D.  
[joannareed@berkeley.edu](mailto:joannareed@berkeley.edu)

**Office hours:** Wednesdays 10-12 (sign-up) and Fridays 11-12 (drop-in), and by appointment at 479 Barrows Hall.

Sign up: <https://www.wejoinin.com/sheets/dkikz>

**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—family relationships, marriage and romantic partnerships, gender ideologies and relations, parenthood, sex—from a scientific perspective. We will consider both the “public” and “private” dimensions of families over the course of the semester: the family as an institution tasked with accomplishing the socially necessary work of raising children and caring for others; as a target of public policy; and as the place where we hope to find love, intimacy and meaningful personal relationships. We begin the course by considering the meaning of “diversity” in the family context, how U.S. families have changed since the mid-20<sup>th</sup> C. and the relationships between changing family organization, gender relations and ideologies, and economic trends. 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 market work and the marketplace. Central themes of the course are continuity and change in families, along with the relationship of family diversity and structural forces in American society. This course satisfies the American Cultures requirement.

### Course Materials and Reading Schedule:

**Books:** All books can be purchased in the bookstore or via online sources. They are available as electronic resources through Oski-Cat on the UCB library website.

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

**Reader:** The reader is available for purchase at the Copy Central Store at 2411 Telegraph Ave. All selections from the reader are also on bCourses

**Journal Articles and other sources:** These are marked with a (bC) on the syllabus, and are posted only on bCourses (i.e. not in the reader).

**Reading Schedule:** For any given week, please read in the order readings are listed on the syllabus. They are listed for the week (rather than the day) to allow for more flexibility in lecture, but we will generally consider them sequentially. I will provide more guidance on what to read and when, and when readings should be paired together. In general, for any given week, read at least the first reading listed before Monday's class, and complete all the reading for that week before Friday's class.

## **Evaluation:**

**Paper 1: Your Family, in Sociological Perspective Paper:** 20% of grade

**Take-home Midterm:** 20% of grade

**Paper 2: Cal Students' Family Plans Qualitative Analysis Paper,** 30% of grade.

-**Interview and write-up** (5%):

-**Paper:** 25% of grade

**Take-home Final Exam:** 20% of grade

**Quizzes and Participation:** 10% of grade

**Papers:** You will write two papers during the semester, both about 7-9 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 it up, and then the paper itself. *Detailed instructions for each paper are posted on bCourses—be sure to read these now so you know what is expected.*

**Exams:** All exams will be take-home essay exams. Essay prompts for both the midterm and the final will be posted one week before the exams are due. Instructions for formatting and length will be on the exam prompts.

**Quizzes and Participation:** You will get credit for taking quizzes on bCourses that are announced in class. You will have 24 hours to complete a quiz once it is announced. The quizzes are meant to help you with reading comprehension and to encourage attendance in lecture; your answers do not need to be correct for you to get credit. In addition to the quizzes, we will likely have a few activities in class that will count for this part of the grade. You can also expect a short assignment in lieu of lecture on the Monday of Thanksgiving week. You cannot make up missed quizzes, but everyone will be able to miss one quiz/activity without a penalty, and I will give you some make up opportunities at the end of the semester.

## **Grading Policies:**

**Exams and assignments must be turned in on time.** 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 (including weekends). Extension requests made on due dates will not be considered unless there is documentation of an illness or other emergency.

**Re-grade policy:** Please first talk with the person who graded your assignment for more feedback on your work. 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. Please be aware that if I re-evaluate your work, it is possible that your grade could go down, so consider these requests carefully. 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.

**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.

**Academic honesty is expected of all students.** It is extremely important that everyone submits their own work. 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, ask during office hours, and consult Ch. 6 of the writing guide "Writing for Sociology", available on the Soc. department website.

**Students are responsible for all material covered in lecture, including announcements, as well as keeping up with readings as listed on the syllabus.** 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 (or do not plan) to attend lectures regularly. If you miss class, it is your responsibility to find out from the lecture slides or a friend what you missed--please do not ask me if you missed anything!

### **Office Hours:**

I will have sign-up office hours on Wednesdays from 10-12. Sign up here: <https://www.wejoinin.com/sheets/dkikz>

I will have drop-in office hours on Fridays from 11-12—no appointment necessary.

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 early in the semester. I can't help you if you don't communicate with me! My office is shared, so if you need to speak with me confidentially, please try to let me know ahead of time so I can try to ensure privacy.

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. I do not answer emails when the answer is easily found on the course syllabus (i.e., "when are your office hours?").

## **Other:**

**Accommodations:** If you require **accommodations** for a disability, university athletics, 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.

**Technology:** Please consider reducing the use of technology when it comes to reading and taking notes. **If you want to use a laptop or tablet to take notes, please sit in the back of the classroom** to reduce distractions to other students. **Put your phone away during class**, and please do not text, check email or social media, shop, make travel plans, etc. during class. I will be enforcing a “no phones out” policy this semester. If you do not plan on participating and giving class your full attention, please do not come to class.

**Lecture Slides:** Lecture slides will be available on bCourses after class. Media clips and other resources discussed or used in lecture may not be on the posted slides. Please keep in mind that the slides are an outline for what is covered in class, not a substitute for your own note taking.

**Student Learning Center:** This is the primary academic support resource for Berkeley students, located in the Cesar Chavez Student Center on Lower Sproul Plaza. Visit the website or in person early in the semester to find what will be helpful to you. <https://slc.berkeley.edu/>

**Your Health and Well-Being:** 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. 28, 30: Introduction to the course: Thinking about families sociologically—the “family dinner”**

Readings: Course syllabus!

Cohen, P. (2014) “Family Diversity is The New Normal For America’s Children”. Council on Contemporary Families, briefing paper (bC)

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

Delistraty, C. (2014) “The Importance of Eating Together”. *The Atlantic*, July 18, 2014, <https://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2014/07/the-importance-of-eating-together/374256/>

Feinstein, E. (2012) “The Importance of Family Dinners, VIII”. National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University (bC)

### **Week 2, Sept. 4, 6: Changes in U.S. families over time: the mid-20<sup>th</sup> C.**

Readings:

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

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

### **Week 3, Sept. 9, 11, 13: Influences on U.S. family diversity in the 20<sup>th</sup> C.**

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

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

### **Week 4, Sept. 16, 18, 20: Transitions of the later 20<sup>th</sup> C.**

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

McLanahan, S. & Sandefur, G. (1994) *Growing Up With a Single Parent: What Hurts, What Helps*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. Ch. 1

Bachrach, C., Hindin, M. & Thompson, E. (2000) "The Changing Shape of Ties That Bind: An Overview and Synthesis." Pp. 3-16 in *The Ties That Bind: Perspectives on Marriage and Cohabitation*. New York: Aldine de Gruyter

**Week 5, Sept. 23, 25, 27: Contemporary Family Forms**

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

Recommended: Pew Research Center (2010) *The Decline of Marriage and the Rise of New Families*, Pew Research Center Social and Demographic Trends Report. Executive Summary and Overview (bC)

**Week 6, Sept. 30, Oct. 2, 4: Contemporary Family Forms**

**Paper 1: Your Family, In Sociological Perspective Paper due Oct. 2<sup>nd</sup>, 5 pm.**

Readings: Ochs, E., Shohet, M., Campos, B., & Beck, M. (2010) "Coming Together at Dinner". Pp. 57-70 In Eds. Christensen, K., & Schneider, B. *Workplace Flexibility: Realigning 20<sup>th</sup> Century Jobs For a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Workforce*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press (bC)

Moore, M. & Stombolis-Ruhstorfer, M. (2013) "LGBT Sexuality and Families at the Start of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century". *Annual Review of Sociology*, 39, pp. 491-507 (bC)

**Week 7, Oct. 7, 9, 11: Contemporary family instability and the social class divide**

Readings: Carlson, M. & England, P. (2011). "Social Class and Family Patterns in the United States". In eds. Carlson, M. & England, P. *Social Class and Changing Families in an Unequal America*, pp. 1-9. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press

Edin, K. & Kefalas, M. (2005). *Promises I Can Keep: Why Poor Women Put Motherhood Before Marriage*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. Introduction- Ch. 4

**Week 8, Oct. 14, 16, 18: Family instability, the state and social policy**

Readings: Edin, K. & Kefalas, M. (2005). *Promises I Can Keep: Why Poor Women Put Motherhood Before Marriage*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. Ch. 5,6 and Conclusion

Cohen, P. (2016) "Welfare Reform Attitudes and Single Mothers' Employment After 20 Years". *Welfare Reform at 20. How's That Working For You?* Online Symposium, Council on Contemporary Families, Aug. 22, 2016.

<https://contemporaryfamilies.org/tanf-attitudes-at-20/>

Randles, J. (2016) "The Frontlines of Welfare Reform: Why Marriage and Responsible Fatherhood Programs Succeed or Fail". *Welfare Reform at 20. How's That Working For You?* Online Symposium, Council on Contemporary Families, Aug. 22, 2016.

<https://contemporaryfamilies.org/welfare-reform-frontlines/>

### **Week 9, Oct. 21, 23, 25: Contemporary parenthood**

#### **Take-home Midterm due Oct. 21<sup>st</sup>, 5 pm. No lecture on the 21<sup>st</sup>.**

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

Villalobos, A. (2014). *Motherload: Making It All Better in Insecure Times*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. Ch. 1

Schmitz, R. (2016) "Constructing Men as Fathers: A Content Analysis of Formulations of Fatherhood in Parenting Magazines". *Journal of Men's Studies*, Vol. 24, no. 1, pp. 3-23 (bC)

### **Week 10, Oct. 28, 30, Nov. 1: Work, families and the marketplace: family and careers**

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 11, Nov. 4, 6, 8: Work, families and the marketplace: family and careers**

**Cal Students" Family Plans interview write-up due on Nov. 4<sup>th</sup> before midnight. Turn in as an assignment AND post as a discussion for full credit.**

**The Qualitative Data Analysis Exercise that will help you write your paper will be in class on Nov. 6<sup>th</sup>, don't miss it!**

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"



Bianchi, S., Robinson, J. & Milkie, M. (2006). *Changing Rhythms of American Family Life*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, Ch. 10

**Week 12, Nov. 13, 15: Work, families and the marketplace: childcare**

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

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

Recommended: *The NICHD Study of Early Child Care and Youth Development*, US Department of Health and Human Services (bC)

**Week 13, Nov. 18, 20, 22: Parents and children: family relationships and dynamics**

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

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 (bC)

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 14, Nov. 25 (Thanksgiving Break): Parents and children: family relationships and dynamics**

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

\*We will not have lecture on Nov. 25<sup>th</sup>. We will have an alternative assignment that will count towards your participation grade based on the above reading.

**Week 15, Dec. 2, 4, 6: Parents and children: family relationships and dynamics**

**Paper 2: Cal Students' Family Plans Paper Due Dec. 2<sup>nd</sup> by 5 pm.**

Readings: Meadow, T. (2018) *Trans Kids: Being Gendered in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. Chapters 1 and 2. Ch. 4 is recommended (bC)

**“RRR” week: Dec. 9-13**

**Final Exam: Take Home Final is due on Dec. 18<sup>th</sup>, 5 pm.** Questions will be available one week prior to the due date.

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