



SOCI 415A 003: Theories of Family and Kinship

2017 Winter Session (3 Credits)

Mondays 2:00-5:00 pm

Frederic Lasserre 107

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Office Hours: Mon 12:00-13:30 pm and by appointment

Course Description:

This course will introduce you to theoretical perspectives on family and kinship, as well as the state of the art in family scholarship across disciplines. Students are expected to describe, understand, and contrast major family theories and identify their similarities and differences. Students are also expected to develop their critical thinking skills by breaking down theories, linking ideas to other theories and ultimately, to contemporary family life.

This course involves intensive reading, writing, and class participation. Students read theoretical and empirical work from a variety of disciplines, write four short in-class essays, and work throughout the term to craft a final paper on a topic of their choice. Students engage with the material and collaborate with each other through group presentation and peer-review workshops.

The professor reserves the right to make changes to this syllabus as needed to address the educational needs of the class.

Course Evaluation:

It is your own responsibility to remember the class schedules and due dates. ***Late assignments will not be accepted, and there will be no make-up quizzes or workshops.*** If severe and verifiable circumstances prevent you from turning in work due that day, email me before class to let me know (unless prevented from doing so by an emergency) and we will discuss alternative arrangements by email. Always make a copy of your work (either a hard or electronic copy) before you turn it in.

- I. 10%: Class participation. You are expected to read assigned materials ***before*** attending class, and be prepared to discuss issues in a thoughtful and respectful way. All of us work out our ideas and learn from alternative perspectives through discussion. Participation expectations include making a substantive oral contribution during class lecture or large-class discussion (e.g., answering questions posed by the instructor, bringing up related and relevant information, linking classroom discussions to assigned readings).

While I will monitor and record your contributions, you will keep a log of your own participation. The log's purpose for you is to demonstrate an accurate record of the quality and quantity of participation, and to reflect on your classroom participation. This log is due ***at the beginning of the class on November 27, 2017.***

Participation Log

Participation during lecture. This type of participation refers to making comments heard by the entire class. Log 5 specific examples and ensure that they are from 5 different class times.

| Date | What did you contribute to large class discussion? Report what you shared specifically and your perception of how your contribution aided the flow of the lecture or discussion, and the comment's relevance to the lecture or large class discussion. |
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Self-assessment. Log a self-assessment of your performance as a participant in the class, focusing on your strengths and how you can improve. Reflect on participation expectations outlined in the syllabus, and the quality and quantity of your participation in class. Each self-assessment should be at least five sentences in length.

| Date | Reflection |
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- II. 15%: A 15-minute presentation on supplementary readings. Groups of students will work together and present supplementary readings. Students will summarize the main points of the paper, tie the paper to the theories covered in class, and offer critiques or commentary on the paper. While the grade relies on collaborative efforts, students need to demonstrate that every group member has contributed to the presentation. Groups are randomly formed in the first class.
- III. 20%: Four short essay question quizzes on the material. These quizzes will be given during *either the first or the last* 15 minutes of class and are each worth 5% of your grade (5*4 = 20%). The goal of the quizzes is to help you practice writing quickly and succinctly, and to evaluate your grasp of the material. Students who have done the readings and participated in class should not have a problem with the quizzes. Please make sure your handwriting is as clear as possible. If I cannot read your answers, I will have a very hard time evaluating the quality of your answers.
- IV. 55%: A final essay on a topic of your choice (1800-2400 words, 6-8 double-spaced pages, using Times New Roman, 12-point font size, and 1 inch margins). This essay must refer to at least one theory from the course and use the theory (theories) to analyze a social issue relating to family and kinship. You can think of this essay as the “Theoretical Framework” section of the empirical papers that we read in class.
- a) 10%: Peer reviews. Providing feedback and gracefully taking criticism are important skills. Three participatory peer-review writing workshops (worth 2%, 2%, and 6% of your grades, respectively) will be conducted throughout the term. Guidelines for peer reviews will be distributed later in class. No make-up workshop will be arranged. ***If you are absent from the peer-review sessions, you will not get these points.***
- b) 15%: Drafts. Drafts of each stage of the final essay will be graded, contributing to 2%, 2%, 2%, 2%, and 7% of your grade, respectively. The completion of these drafts relies strongly on participation in the peer-review writing workshops.
- c) 30%: The final essay. After multiple revisions, you are expected to turn in a polished final essay. The essay will evaluate: 1) your familiarity with and comprehension of the course material; 2) your capacity to make a critical, cogent, and interesting argument incorporating that material; and 3) evidence of your own original, creative assessment of the literature and application of the theories to understanding contemporary family life. This essay (along with feedback forms) is due ***in the ANSO dropbox by 4 pm on December 4, 2017.*** No late essays will be accepted.

Extra Credit:

Opportunities for earning extra points will be available during the term. In order to be eligible for the extra credit, students must be present in class to complete short quizzes. These unannounced quizzes will be given at random. There will be no make-ups for extra point quizzes.

Course Texts:

Texts will be made available on **Connect** (connect.ubc.ca) or through the UBC library.

Week 3 18 Sept Marriage as an Institution

✓ **1st short essay question quiz**

- Cherlin, A. J. (2004). The deinstitutionalization of American marriage. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 66(4), 848-861.
- Finkel, E. J., Hui, C. M., Carswell, K. L., & Larson, G. M. (2014). The suffocation of marriage: Climbing Mount Maslow without enough oxygen. *Psychological Inquiry*, 25(1), 1-41.

Week 4 25 Sept Family Change

- Blossfeld H., & Buchholz, S. (2009). Increasing resource inequality among families in modern societies: The mechanisms of growing educational homogamy, changes in the division of work in the family and the decline of the male breadwinner model. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, 40(4), 603-616.
- Thornton, A. (2001). The developmental paradigm, reading history sideways, and family change. *Demography*, 38(4), 449-465.
- ❖ Group presentation#1: Allendorf, K., & Thornton, A. (2015). Caste and choice: The influence of developmental idealism on marriage behavior. *American Journal of Sociology*, 121(1), 243-287.

Week 5 2 Oct Gender Revolution

✓ **2nd short essay question quiz**

- England, P. (2010). The gender revolution: uneven and stalled. *Gender & Society*, 24(2), 149-166.
- Goldscheider, F., Bernhardt, E., & Lappegård, T. (2015). The gender revolution: A framework for understanding changing family and demographic behavior. *Population and Development Review*, 41(2), 207-239.
- ❖ Group presentation#2: Guppy, N., & Luongo, N. (2015). The Rise and Stall of Canada's Gender-Equity Revolution. *Canadian Review of Sociology/Revue canadienne de sociologie*, 52(3), 241-265.
- ❖ Group presentation#3: Schwartz, C. R., & Han, H. (2014). The reversal of the gender gap in education and trends in marital dissolution. *American Sociological Review*, 79(4), 605-629.

Week 6 9 Oct No class (Thanksgiving Day)

Week 7 16 Oct Demographic Change

✓ **1st draft of introduction due**

✓ **1st “speed dating” peer-review writing workshop**

- Lee, R. (2003). The demographic transition: three centuries of fundamental change. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 17(4), 167-190.
- Zaidi, B., & Morgan, S. P. (2017). The Second Demographic Transition: A Review and Appraisal. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 43, 473-492.
- ❖ Group presentation#4: McLanahan, S. (2004). Diverging destinies: How children are faring under the second demographic transition. *Demography*, 41(4), 607-627.

Week 8 23 Oct Mate Selection

✓ **Workshop notes due & revised draft of introduction due**

- Oppenheimer, V. K. (1988). A theory of marriage timing. *American Journal of Sociology*, 94(3), 563-591.
- Oppenheimer, V. K. (1997). Women’s employment and the gain to marriage: The specialization and trading model. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 23, 431-453.
- ❖ Group presentation#5: Sweeney, M. M., & Cancian, M. (2004). The changing importance of white women’s economic prospects for assortative mating. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 66(4), 1015-1028.

Week 9 30 Oct Assortative Mating

✓ **3rd short essay question quiz**

- Merton, R. K. (1941). Intermarriage and the social structure: Fact and theory. *Psychiatry*, 4(3), 361-374.
- Schwartz, C. R. (2013). Trends and variation in assortative mating: Causes and consequences. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 39, 451-470.
- ❖ Group presentation#6: Kreager, D. A., Cavanagh, S. E., Yen, J., & Yu, M. (2014). “Where have all the good men gone?” Gendered interactions in online dating. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 76(2), 387-410.
- ❖ Group presentation#7: Lichter, D. T., McLaughlin, D. K., Kephart, G., & Landry, D. J. (1992). Race and the retreat from marriage: A shortage of marriageable men? *American Sociological Review*, 57(6), 781-799.

Week 10 6 Nov Bargaining and Power in Relationships

✓ **1st draft of theoretical frameworks due**

✓ **2nd “speed dating” peer-review writing workshop**

- Komter, A. (1989). Hidden power in marriage. *Gender & Society*, 3(2), 187-216.
- Sabatelli, R. M., & Shehan, C. L. (1993). Exchange and resource theories. In P. G. Boss, W. J. Doherty, R. LaRossa, W. R. Schumm, & S. K. Steinmetz (Eds.), *Sourcebook of family theories and methods: A contextual approach* (pp. 385-411). New York, NY: Plenum Press.
- ❖ Group presentation#8: Sayer, L. C., England, P., Allison, P. D., & Kangas, N. (2011). She left, he left: How employment and satisfaction affect women’s and men’s decisions to leave marriages. *American Journal of Sociology*, 116(6), 1982-2018.
- ❖ Group presentation#9: Kornrich, S., Brines, J., & Leupp, K. (2013). Egalitarianism, housework, and sexual frequency in marriage. *American Sociological Review*, 78(1), 26-50.

Week 11 13 Nov No class (Remembrance Day)

Week 12 20 Nov The Life Course

✓ **4th short essay question quiz**

✓ **Workshop notes due & revised draft of theoretical frameworks due**

- Arnett, J. J. (2000). Emerging adulthood: A theory of development from the late teens through the twenties. *American psychologist*, 55(5), 469-480.
- Elder Jr, G. H., Johnson, M. K., & Crosnoe, R. (2003). The emergence and development of life course theory. In Jeylan T. Mortimer & Michael J. Shanahan (Eds.), *Handbook of the life course* (pp. 3-19). New York, NY: Plenum Publishers.
- ❖ Group presentation#10: Becker, P. E., & Moen, P. (1999). Scaling back: Dual-earner couples’ work-family strategies. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 61(4), 995-1007.

Week 13 27 Nov Peer-Review Writing Workshop

✓ **Participation log due**

✓ **Full draft of final essay due**

✓ **Peer-review writing workshop (bring three hard copies of your full draft, a context paragraph, and direct questions)**