

SOCIOLOGY 0201: SOCIOLOGY OF THE FAMILY ON-LINE

Tamara L. Smith

Class meeting: Online

Office & Telephone # Parenzo 105, 413-572- 8267

Office Hours: TBA

Instructor Availability: Feel free to email me at tsmith@wsc.ma.edu (I will respond to all emails within 48 hours)

Text

Shifting the Center: Understanding Contemporary Families. Susan Furguson. 2007. McGraw-Hill Publishers.

Course Description:

This course will provide an overview of contemporary families which goes beyond the traditional nuclear family that is most often referenced in society. Our working definition of “family” will include a multitude of family arrangements, including step-families, cohabitating couples, gay and lesbian families, single adults, parents and children, grandparents and extended families. The family will be viewed through a sociological lens, and special attention will be given to issues such as historical changes in families, the role of work in the family, marriage and the family, ethnic and racial family variations, divorce, remarriage and blended families, families and violence, and the role of extended families in our society today.

Course Objectives:

- v Understand how gender shapes family life
- v Understand the historical context of the American family
- v Understand the theoretical foundations which sociologists use to study families
- v Realize the cultural, economic, and political factors which shape the structures of families
- v Have a broadened understanding of the diverse family structures in American society
- v Be able to take the sociological skills learned here to evaluate families today

- v Develop an awareness of the ways in which their own families fit into American society

Course Information:

This is a 3 credit hour course.

SOCIOLOGY 101 is a prerequisite for this course.

This course is offered totally on-line and is self paced each week, but each module must be completed by the end of the week which it was assigned.

This course is asynchronous which means that there are no specific times you must be on-line.

Technical Requirements:

Students need a computer with DSL or Cable internet connection. Students need a web-browser (e.g. Explorer, Safari, etc.), a word processing program (MS Word, Apple Pages, etc.), and Quicktime (a free download from Apple for PCs and Macs). Students need basic web-browser skills and word processing skills. Students will be required to watch YouTube videos and other Quicktime movies.

NOTE: It is the student's responsibility to make initial contact with the instructor either via e-mail or phone. Student must have a valid working email address on file with the instructor.

Course Requirements:

The course is divided into 14 modules. For each module there is a reading assignment, a power-point presentation, videos to watch, and brief reaction activities/discussions to complete.

Evaluation:

Participation (including brief reaction activities/discussions): = **10 points**

*This includes engaging in discussions, actively providing insights and responses to questions, and logging in on a regular basis. This could have a substantial impact on your final grade in the course. Also, please note that simply reading, but not contributing to class discussion, is not adequate for a full participation grade.

In addition to participating in discussions, you may also demonstrate interaction with the material by:

- posting newspaper or magazine articles related to readings and class discussion with a brief sociological commentary on them.
- analyzing films or videos through concepts, theories, perspectives we study in class (1 typed double-spaced page)
- attending talks or presentations on or off campus and sociologically analyzing them, critiquing them or showing how they support perspectives discussed in class (1 typed double-spaced page)
- Coming up with your own idea of how to meet this requirement, and discussing it with me

Weekly Online Assessments= **20 points**

Homework Assignments (3)= **30 points**

Midterm Exam: =**20 points**

*This exam will be an take-home exam comprised of multiple choice and short-essay questions derived from both the lectures and the readings.

Final Exam: =**20 points**

*This exam will be a take-home essay exam. You are neither encouraged nor permitted to work

jointly on this exam. The exam will cover the broad topics discussed throughout the course. More information will be given throughout the session.

The grading scheme in this class is as follows:

94+	=A	77-79	=C+
91-93	=A-	74-76	=C
88-90	=B+	70-73	=C-
84-87	=B	60-69	=D
80-83	=B-	<60	=F