Sociology of the Family
SOC/WGSS 364 (CRNs 43943 and 43948): Writing Intensive
Lehigh University
Fall 2017
10:45-12:00 T/Th (Credits: 4)

Professor: Danielle Lindemann
Email: djl315@lehigh.edu
Office: 223 Williams Hall
Office Hours: By Appointment

Please note: This course is offered for four credits only. Due to a technical glitch, Banner initially allowed students to enroll in this class for either 3 or 4 credits. If you are enrolled for 3 credits, you must change your number of credits to 4.

Course Description:

So you think you’re an expert on the family? You probably are, in a way! Almost all of us are members of families, and we all have our own personal observations and perspectives. In this class, we broaden those gazes, looking at these intimate institutions through a sociological lens.

We begin the semester by analyzing historical transformations in the structure, functions, and lived realities of “the family,” while also highlighting ways in which families have remained the same over time. We then turn to various topics related to the family, including dating rituals, premarital and extramarital sex, social constructions of childhood, parenting, family violence, and the connections between gender, paid work, and family roles. Throughout the course, but particularly in the last few weeks, we examine the diverse family forms and practices that exist at various intersections of race, class, and sexuality. While our readings focus on families in a U.S. context, I invite and encourage students to draw upon other geographic and cultural contexts in their essays and in our class discussions.

Note: This upper-level undergraduate class fulfills Lehigh’s “writing intensive” course requirement. Classes will be primarily student-centered (not lecture-based), with major emphases on essay-writing, peer review, and revision.

Course Objectives:

By the end of the semester, students should be able to... [continued on the next page]
…identify major historical transformations in the shape of “the family.”
…understand current debates surrounding the institution of the family.
…think critically about various narratives (and myths) related to families.
…locate their own families within a broader sociological framework.
…understand the diverse family forms and practices that exist at various intersections of race, class, and sexuality.
…craft essays that draw upon scholarly sources to make cogent arguments.

and

…effectively incorporate peer and instructor feedback to strengthen their writing.

Grading Scale and Policies:
(See the “Calculating Your Grade” sheet on Coursesite for additional information.)

Note: Each writing assignment should be submitted via Coursesite as a Word or PDF document only—otherwise, I will not be able to open your document and it will be marked late. You are responsible for making sure your paper has been submitted. Do not assume your paper has been submitted unless you receive electronic confirmation.

- **Short Essay #1: 15% of final grade**
  Each student will write a 5-6 page paper, due to Coursesite before the start of class on Tuesday, September 12th. Each student should also bring 2 printed copies of the paper to class that day for peer review. (See the “Writing Assignments” sheet on Coursesite for additional information about paper topics and grading criteria.)

- **Short Essay #1 REVISION: 10% of final grade**
  Revisions are due to Coursesite before the start of class on Thursday, September 21st. Each revision will be graded based on how well the student has revised the paper in response to instructor feedback. The student’s grade on the revision may be lower or higher than the original paper grade, depending on the quality of the revision.

- **Short Essay #2: 15% of final grade**
  Each student will write a second 5-6 page paper, due to Coursesite before the start of class on Thursday, October 5th. Each student should also bring 2 printed copies of the paper to class that day for peer review.

- **Short Essay #2 REVISION: 10% of final grade**
  Your revised essay is due to Coursesite before the start of class on Thursday, October 26th.

- **Final Research Paper: 30% of final grade**
  Each student will write a 10-11 page paper, due to Coursesite before the start of our last class (Thursday, December 7th). The first page of this paper is due to Coursesite before the start of class on Thursday, November 9th. Students should also bring 5 printed copies of their first pages for their peers to review that day in class. Though I will provide feedback on the final paper “first page,” it will not be graded. However, if you do not turn it in and participate in the peer review exercise, I will deduct a half grade from your final research paper.

[continued on next page…]
- **In-class presentation: 10% of final grade**
  Each student will “catalyze” one class session, briefly summarizing the day’s reading(s) and providing discussion questions for the class. Each student should provide me with a hard copy of his presentation notes at the beginning of class on the day he is presenting. I will give a sample presentation on 8/31.

- **Class participation: 10% of final grade**
  Your grade for this item will reflect your active, engaged participation in our seminar. In order to receive a high grade for participation, you must not only attend class consistently but demonstrate that you are prepared (having done the readings) and speak regularly during our discussions.

**Grading Scale:**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>93%-100%</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>90%-92%</td>
<td>A-</td>
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<tr>
<td>87%-89%</td>
<td>B+</td>
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<tr>
<td>83%-86%</td>
<td>B</td>
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<tr>
<td>80%-82%</td>
<td>B-</td>
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<td>77%-79%</td>
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<td>63%-66%</td>
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<td>60%-62%</td>
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<td>0%-59%</td>
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**Late Papers:**

Regarding both drafts and paper revisions, students will lose ½ a grade for each day these assignments are late. **Written assignments that are turned in more than three days after the deadline will not be accepted.**

**Policy on Laptops/Cell Phones:**

Students are not permitted to use laptops except at times specified by the instructor. If you have a special circumstance that requires you to use a computer, please see the policy on accommodations below.

Cell phone use is never permitted.

**Lehigh Writing Intensive (“W.I.”) Course Requirements:**

From: [https://cas.cas2.lehigh.edu/content/writing-intensive-guidelines](https://cas.cas2.lehigh.edu/content/writing-intensive-guidelines)

A writing-intensive (WI) course should:
• require at least 30 pages of writing (counting drafts and revisions)
• require at least 5 writing assignments (drafts and revisions may count as separate assignments)
• provide the instructor’s response to one assignment by the third week of classes; this assignment should provide an early assessment of skills the student should address in subsequent assignments
• stress revision and provide ample opportunities for students to develop skill in revising their own work; in most cases, one assignment should consist of a revision of a previous assignment

The instructor will indicate whether the student has passed the writing-intensive requirement for the course. Because course-content and writing assignments may be assessed separately, it is possible to pass the course but fail the writing-intensive requirement and vice versa.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:

If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting accommodations, please contact both your instructor and the Office of Academic Support Services, Williams Hall, Suite 301 (610-758-4152) as early as possible in the semester. You must have documentation from the Academic Support Services office before accommodations can be granted.

The Principles of Our Equitable Community:

Lehigh University endorses The Principles of Our Equitable Community [http://www.lehigh.edu/~inprv/initiatives/PrinciplesEquity_Sheet_v2_032212.pdf]. We expect each member of this class to acknowledge and practice these Principles. Respect for each other and for differing viewpoints is a vital component of the learning environment inside and outside the classroom.

Student Senate Statement on Academic Integrity:

“We, the Lehigh University Student Senate, as the standing representative body of all undergraduates, reaffirm the duty and obligation of students to meet and uphold the highest principles and values of personal, moral and ethical conduct. As partners in our educational community, both students and faculty share the responsibility for promoting and helping to ensure an environment of academic integrity. As such, each student is expected to complete all academic course work in accordance to the standards set forth by the faculty and in compliance with the University's Code of Conduct.”

Required Readings:

All required readings, in addition to other course-related documents (e.g. assignment descriptions, syllabus, etc.), are available on Coursesite (http://coursesite.lehigh.edu/).
Schedule of Assignments:

Part I: American Families in Historical Perspective

WEEK 1:
Tuesday, August 29th: Introduction & Course Administration
→ There are no readings assigned for this class session.
→ There will be no student presentation in this class session.

Thursday, August 31st: What’s Happened to the Family?: Change and Decline Arguments
Read for this class:
→ There will be no student presentation in this class session. I will lead this class session to provide you with a template for subsequent student presentations.
→ Today in class, students will sign up for presentation dates.

WEEK 2:
Tuesday, September 5th: Changing Families: Trends and Perspectives
Read for this class:

Thursday, September 7th: Changing Families: Myths and Realities
Read for this class:

WEEK 3:
Tuesday, September 12th: PEER REVIEW SESSION
→ Essay #1 due (submitted to Coursesite) before the start of class today
→ Students should bring 2 printed copies of their papers to class for their peers to review.
→ There are no readings assigned for this class session.
→ There will be no student presentation in this class session.
Thursday, September 14th: Time Warp to the 1950’s
Read for this class:
→ Essay #1 graded and returned with feedback

**Part II: Marriage and the Family through a Sociological Lens**

WEEK 4:
Tuesday, September 19th: Some Sociological Perspectives on the Family
Read for this class:

Thursday, September 21st: Marriage as a “Social Institution”
Read for this class:
→ Essay #1 REVISION due (submitted to Coursesite) before the start of class today.

**Part III: Topics in the Sociology of the Family**

WEEK 5:
Tuesday, September 26th: Dating, Sex, and Family Formation
Read for this class:

Thursday, September 28th: Sex: Marital, Extramarital, Premarital
Read for this class:
→ Essay #1 REVISION graded and returned with feedback
WEEK 6:
Tuesday, October 3rd: Children and Childhood
Read for this class:

Thursday, October 5th – PAPER DUE/ PEER REVIEW SESSION
→ *Essay #2 due (submitted to Coursesite) before the start of class today.*
→ *Students should bring 2 printed copies of their papers to class for their peers to review.*
→ *There are no readings assigned for this class session.*
→ *There will be no student presentation in this class session.*

WEEK 7:
Tuesday, October 10th: Social Constructions and Contradictions of “Motherhood”
Read for this class:

Thursday, October 12th: Class, Race, and Parenting
Read for this class:
→ *Essay #2 graded and returned with feedback*

WEEK 8:
Tuesday, October 17th – NO CLASS – PACING BREAK

Thursday, October 19th: Family Violence
Read for this class:

WEEK 9:
Tuesday, October 24th: Gender, Work, and Family Roles
Read for this class:
Thursday, October 26th: Stay-at-Home Dads
Read for this class:
- Doucet, A. (2004). “It’s almost like I have a job, but I don’t get paid”: Fathers at home reconfiguring work, care, and masculinity. Fathering 2, 3, 277-303.
→ Essay #2 REVISION due (submitted to Coursesite) before the start of class today.

Part IV: Different Types of Families

WEEK 10:
Tuesday, October 31st (spooky!): Divorce & Stepfamilies (1): Putting Divorce in Perspective
Read for this class:

Thursday, November 2nd: Divorce & Stepfamilies (2): Managing Stepfamily Relationships
Read for this class:
→ Essay #2 REVISION graded and returned with feedback

WEEK 11:
Tuesday, November 7th: Low-Income Families
Read for this class:

Thursday, November 9th – PAGE DUE/ PEER REVIEW SESSION
→ First page of final paper due (submitted to Coursesite) before the start of class today.
→ Students should bring 5 printed copies of their first page to class for their peers to review.
→ There are no readings assigned for this class session.
→ There will be no student presentation in this class session.

WEEK 12:
Tuesday, November 14th: Race in Families (1): The Black Middle Class
Read for this class:
→ First page of final paper returned with feedback
Thursday, November 16th: Race in Families (2): Understanding “Tiger Moms”
Read for this class:

WEEK 13:
Tuesday, November 21st:
  • Screening of *The Kids Are All Right* (2010), directed by Lisa Cholodenko
→ There are no readings assigned for this class session.
→ There will be no student presentation in this class session.

Thursday, November 23rd – NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING

WEEK 14:
Tuesday, November 28th: LGBT Families Today
Read for this class:
→ We will begin this class with small-group discussions of The Kids Are All Right.
→ There will be no student presentation in this class session.

Thursday, November 30th: LGBT Families in Historical Perspective
Read for this class:
  • NOTE: Chapt 5 “Families We Choose” is included in the PDF as optional reading.

WEEK 15:
Tuesday, December 5th: What Is the Future of the Family?
Read for this class:

Thursday, December 7th – COURSE WRAP-UP & EVALUATIONS
→ *Final research paper due* (submitted to Coursesite) before the start of class today.
→ There are no readings assigned for this class session.
→ There will be no student presentation in this class session.
→ HAVE A GREAT WINTER BREAK! ☺