



MERCER
COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

COURSE OUTLINE

Course Number	Course Title	Credits
SOC 201	Marriage and the Family	3
Hours: Lecture 3	Co- or Pre-requisite SOC101 with a minimum grade of C Or SOC107 with a minimum grade of C	Implementation Semester & Year Spring 2023

Catalog description: Analyzes and evaluates the family as an institution that reflects cultural values, norms and ideals. Topics include gendering, pre-marital sex norms, mate selection, family roles, child rearing, and family structures.

General Education Category:
Goal 5: Social Science
Goal 8: Diversity and Global Perspective

Course coordinator:
Edward Avery-Natale (Coordinator). X3339. averye@mccc.edu
Daniel Schermond. X3345. schermod@mccc.edu

Required texts & Other materials:

Secombe, Karen. *Families and their Social Worlds*. 4th edition (or other current edition). Pearson Publishing. ISBN-13: 9780137536832

Course Student Learning Outcomes (SLO):

Upon successful completion of this course the student will be able to:

1. Describe the family as a social institution within a cross-cultural perspective. (Supports ILG 5, 8, 11)
2. Understand the relationship between the family and other social institutions in the U.S. (Supports ILG 5, 11)
3. Describe the historical origins of the modern family in Europe and America. (Supports ILG 5)
4. Demonstrate the relationship between research theories and the scientific process as it relates to marital and family phenomena. (Supports ILG 1, 5, 10, 11)
5. Differentiate between social class determinants and consequences as they relate to the diversity of families in the U.S. (Supports ILG 5, 9, 11)
6. Understand relationship formation processes and nonmarital relationships within a cross-cultural perspective. (Supports ILG 5, 8, 11)
7. Evaluate changes in families throughout the life course within a cross-cultural perspective. (Supports ILG 5, 8, 11)

Course-specific Institutional Learning Goals (ILG):

Institutional Learning Goal 1. Written and Oral Communication in English. Students will communicate effectively in both speech and writing.

Institutional Learning Goal 5. Social Science. Students will use social science theories and concepts to analyze human behavior and social and political institutions and to act as responsible citizens.

Institutional Learning Goal 8. Diversity and Global Perspective: Students will understand the importance of a global perspective and culturally diverse peoples

Institutional Learning Goal 9. Ethical Reasoning and Action. Students will understand ethical frameworks, issues, and situations.

Institutional Learning Goal 10. Information Literacy: Students will recognize when information is needed and have the knowledge and skills to locate, evaluate, and effectively use information for college level work.

Institutional Learning Goal 11. Critical Thinking: Students will use critical thinking skills understand, analyze, or apply information or solve problems.

Units of study in detail – Unit Student Learning Outcomes:

Unit I [Understanding Marriages and Families across Time and Place] [Supports Course SLO 1, 3]

Learning Objectives

The student will be able to...

- Define the family as a social institution and understand that descriptions of families are social constructions.
- To use ideal type constructions (e.g., patriarchal/matriarchal, arranged marriage/free choice marriage, rural/urban, and individual/familial) associated with marriage and the family to examine variations in marriage, family, and kinship systems around the world and across historical time periods.
- Differentiate characteristics of marriage, family, and kinship systems in a global context

Unit II [The Family and other Social Institutions in the U.S.] [Supports Course SLO 1, 2]

Learning Objectives

The student will be able to...

- Recognize the family as a social institution that operates within the context of other social institutions.
- Understand the relationship between contemporary U.S. families and the mass media, religion, politics, the economy, and the educational system.

Unit III [The Historical Origins of the Modern Family in Europe and America] [Supports Course SLO 1, 3, 6]

Learning Objectives

The student will be able to...

- Understand how the movement from an agricultural mode of production to an industrial mode of production influenced new patterns of family life.
- Evaluate how the rise and decline of feudalism and the emergence of capitalism influenced new patterns of family life.
- Hypothesize how the emergence of a rational mode of production (action based on a logical means-ends relationship) influenced new patterns of family life.

- Access the shift in our perceptions of the family from the feudal period to views of family in modern capitalistic economies.

Unit IV [Research Theories and the Scientific Process] [Supports Course SLO 1, 2, 4]

Learning Objectives

The student will be able to...

- Understand a sociological approach to the family in general.
- Explain how families are organized, how families as a social system are sustained, and modified.
- Determine how family relationships are formed and changed.
- Diagram how families are interdependent on other social systems
- Understand that sociological research on marriage and families aims to produce knowledge for three distinct purposes: descriptive, explanatory, and evaluative.
- Infer the relationship between research and theory in the scientific process.
- Comprehend basic research methods and research designs used in marriage and family studies.
- Apply the macro level theories used to study marital and family phenomena (structural -functional analysis, & conflict theory)
- Apply the micro level theories used to study marital and family phenomena (symbolic interactionism, & social exchange theory).
- Justify why sociologists sometimes use a unified theory to study marital and family phenomena.

Unit V [Social Class Determinants and Consequences in the U.S.] [Supports Course SLO 1, 5]

Learning Objectives

The student will be able to...

- Describe social class within the social stratification system of the U.S.
- Critique the U.S. social class system as a system of inequality.
- Use traditional ideas of social stratification and formulate new hypotheses of social class based on inequalities associated with wealth, income, age, gender, race, power, and prestige.
- Evaluate the consequences social class has on the family.
- Access the consequences of vertical social mobility.
- Differentiate the influence of social class on African American families, Hispanic American families, Asian American families, and Native American families.

Unit VI [Relationship Formation Processes and Nonmarital relationships in a cross-cultural perspective] [Supports Course SLO 1, 6]

Learning Objectives

The student will be able to...

- Describe the social construction of love, as well as, individualistic and cultural factors in partner selection.
- Evaluate interactional processes (i.e., role theory, and exchange theory) in partner selection.
- Access patterns and outcomes of cohabitation.
- Understand the non-marital relationship status of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered couples, and any other subgroups recognized by the human rights campaign and contemporary social issues surrounded the status of marriage for members of these subgroups in the U.S.

Unit VII [Changes in Families throughout the Life Course within a cross-cultural perspective] [Supports Course SLO 1, 7]

Learning Objectives

The student will be able to...

- Describe the transition into marriage and the division of labor in marriage.
- Understand power in conjugal and intimate relationships
- Diagram the issue of marital quality over the life course
- Evaluate factors related to marital sexual activity and changes in marital sexual activity
- Critique incidence of and attitudes toward extramarital sex
- Access factors related to same-sex relationships within the context of changes within the institution of the family.

Unit VIII [Family Crisis within a Cross-Cultural perspective] [Supports Course SLO 1, 2]

Learning Objectives

The student will be able to...

- Explain how stress impacts the family in general.
- Evaluate causes of family violence and intimate partner abuse
- Formulate hypotheses of intimate partner abuse and family violence as social constructs.
- Outline patterns of abuse within the family (i.e., child abuse, parent abuse, elder abuse, etc...).
- Critique mutual abuse and violence in couples.
- Chart patterns of divorce and remarriage in a global context.

Evaluation of student learning:

Reading Assignments:

- The textbook and additional readings as necessary.

Exams and Quizzes:

- At least two (2) one hour exams
- Final Exam

Written Assignments: (to assess specific knowledge, communication skills, and critical thinking skills). Students are expected to exhibit the ability to formulate their own thesis based on solid evidence that has been thoroughly evaluated. Students are expected to demonstrate information literacy skills and to use scholarly, peer reviewed journals as references for their written assignments. Written assignments should utilize a recognized citation format.

- At least three (3) written assignments
- At least one assignment will require the use of the online databases through MCCC.
- At least one assignment will require students to pick a topic of interest related to marriage and the family and describe it within the context of any of the sociological theories discussed in the course.