

SYLLABUS
SOCL 3433-201
Spring 2024
T/TH 9:30am-10:50am
Martin Hall 108

Professor: Amy Clark, ABD

OFFICE: O'Donohoe 131

Mon. 10:00am-10:30am; 12pm-2pm

Tues. 11:00 am-12:00pm

Wed. 10:00am-10:30am; 12pm-1pm

The best way to meet with me face-to-face is on campus during my office hours, which are listed above. If you have a limited time window, then please make an appointment with me during my office hours; that way I am able to dedicate specific time to addressing your needs and concerns. Otherwise, you may have to wait if I am in an appointment with another student. If you need to schedule a Zoom appointment, then please give me as much advanced notice as possible, and we can set up a time. You can also reach me via email or by the D2L message inbox; I answer emails Monday through Friday within 48 hours *excluding weekends*. However, electronic communication is time stamped, and I will honor the date and time that you contact me.

EMAIL: amy.clark@msutexas.edu

There is no required textbook for this course. All readings and required materials will be provided in D2L.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- Compare family theories and concepts
- Articulate the social, historical, political, and economic factors that influence the evolution of the family
- Conduct research related to the family
- Explore changing family roles and family structures

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Sociology is the scientific study of society, social institutions, and social relationships. We all have experience living in society and interacting with other people. Sociology, however, is an unfamiliar way of looking at the familiar. The goal of this course is to embark on a comparative and historical examination of marriage and the family within the U.S. context. This course will emphasize changing family roles and family structures, as well as consider alternatives to the nuclear family and traditional marriage. We will explore both old and new definitions of family.

ASSESSMENTS AND GRADING:

Exams: Worth 100 points each; 300 total

Exams will be submitted in D2L. They will be made available at 8am CST on the day they are due, and they will close at 11:59pm CST. Each exam will be 50 questions, which includes true/false, multiple choice, and short answer questions. Students will have 50 minutes and one attempt to complete each exam. The Lockdown

browser will not be used. Questions will be randomly drawn from a test pool. **No late tests will be accepted** without extensive documentation for a verifiable excused absence.

- Exam 1: Covers materials and readings located in D2L from weeks 2-4.
- Exam 2: Covers readings and materials located in D2L for weeks 6-8.
- Exam 3: Covers readings and materials located in D2L for weeks 10-13.

Policy on Missed Exams & Technical Difficulties

- Please refer to the policy on excused absences for more information. Students can only make up an exam with verifiable documentation an excused absence.
- If students experience technical difficulties during an exam, then a screenshot/picture **must be taken** verifying the specific technical difficulties as well as verifying how far the student made it through the exam questions-including the time elapsed.
 - If students experience a technical issue in D2L, students should reach out through the D2L help feature to “[report a problem](#).”
 - I reserve the right to require students to make up a **different version** of the remaining test if they experience technical difficulties. This is the fairest to all of the other students.
 - Students should use the most secure internet connection available and allot enough time to complete the exam in one sitting.

Special Notes on Accommodations:

- Based on accommodations and testing needs, students can arrange to take a test on campus with an approved proctor **on the date in which the test is due**. For example, *a student can also use a scantron and a blue composition notebook*, which are available for purchase in the [MSU Texas Bookstore](#). Exam materials must be **collected by the proctor on the same day as the test is due in D2L**.
- If students are allotted extra time based on a reasonable accommodation, then they should *also plan ahead and communicate with me* in order to complete the exam with a proctor on the *same day in which it is due in D2L*.

Test grades will not be curved or dropped

Test grades will not be curved, and no test grades will be dropped. However, students are encouraged to complete the extra credit opportunity in the event that one of their test grades was much lower than they expected. See the description of the extra credit under Grading.

Policy on Academic Dishonesty

- Exams are open book/open notes, but students are NOT allowed to use the internet (on computers, cell phones, iPads, etc.) to search for answers to exam questions. Also, students are NOT allowed to use ChatGPT or any other unauthorized AI to prepare for their tests. Students are NOT allowed to take the tests together or consult ANY other students or any other people about answers to test questions. As students prepare for exams, they should ask ME questions if they need help.

Attendance: Worth 100 points

Points for attendance are awarded over the course of the semester by the instructor for the following reasons: Participating in discussions, answering in-class prompts, a civil and respectful attitude, and *physical presence in class*. **For each unexcused absence, students LOSE 10 points per class from their attendance points; missing MORE THAN 10 classes for an unexcused reason will result in a ZERO for attendance points without exception. If students miss class for an excused reason such as an athletic event, they should seek out the instructor for a relevant make up activity for attendance points for the specific days that they were absent.**

Attendance policy

Lack of attendance should not become a pattern. Otherwise, a student will be warned via texts through Banner and emails through D2L. A pattern, for example, is three unexcused absences in a row (consecutive). Students who miss more than 10 classes for an unexcused reason **will forfeit their attendance points and are at risk of being dropped** by the instructor and will be **warned accordingly**.

Interviews: Worth 100 points each; 300 total

Students will be required to conduct three interviews, which are 5 questions each. Students should modify/develop interview questions, locate at least three different participants, conduct data collection and record interviews. Interviews should be transcribed and coded for themes. Emergent themes should be analyzed utilizing resources presented in class as well as peer reviewed literature. Students are required to turn in a deidentified, coded transcript for each interview as well as a 3 to 4-page analysis of each interview by the respective due date. The analysis should be cited in APA 7th edition format, and a reference list should be included. A detailed description and rubric for each interview will be provided in D2L.

Power Point Presentation: Worth 100 points

After conducting three interviews, students should organize a PowerPoint presentation highlighting the main themes that emerged from their data as well as an overview of their analysis. The presentation should be a minimum of 10 slides and a maximum of 12. The presentation should take between 15 to 20 minutes. A detailed description and rubric for the presentation will be provided in D2L.

Homework: Worth 50 points each; 200 total

Homework 1-4. For each respective assignment, students will be asked to identify, list, describe, and explain theories, concepts, and ideas discussed in the Knox (2024) chapter outlines and PowerPoints covered in class. They will also be asked to address key concepts and questions related to the weekly readings. Homework one covers readings from weeks 1-4; homework 2 covers readings from weeks 6-8; and homework 3 covers readings from weeks 10-12. Homework 4 will consist of a one-page article summary of a quantitative, peer reviewed article (student's choice) and a one-page summary of a qualitative article (student's choice). The articles should be relevant to the subject matter of the course, and students will be asked to informally share their article summaries with the rest of the class. Homework may be hand written, but it should be uploaded to D2L as a Jpeg or Png file.

Graded Assessments	POINTS	Weighted Percentage of Final Grade by Category
Exams 1-3 (50 questions/100points each)	300	30%
Homework (4@50 points each)	200	20%
Interviews (3@100 points each)	300	30%
Power Point Presentation	100	10%
Attendance (Participating in discussions; answering in-class prompts; civil and respectful attitude; physical presence in class)	100	10%

Graded Assessments	POINTS	Weighted Percentage of Final Grade by Category
Total Number of Points Available in the Course	1000	100%

Extra Credit

- There are two extra credit opportunities. One is a discussion board, worth 20 points. The other is the course evaluation, which is worth 5 points.

Late work:

- Homework, interviews, and PowerPoints will be accepted late for a penalty. **No late work** will be accepted for exams or attendance (unexcused absences). Thus, **exams close at 11:59pm CST on their due date without exception.**
- Homework, interviews, and PowerPoints may be accepted UP TO 72 HOURS LATE in D2L with an unexcused absence according to the policy listed below. Therefore, students MUST PAY ATTENTION to the difference between **the due date and the last date that an assessment is available**. If students have any questions about this, then please ask me as soon as possible. *Submitting an assignment minutes late in D2L is still late and will be penalized at the rates listed below without an approved excuse.*
 - **Unexcused homework, interviews, and PowerPoints may be submitted in D2L up to 72 hours late, but they will be penalized at the following rates:**
 - **< or equal to 24 hours late, 25 % reduction in the total point value of the assignment.** The deduction will be manually calculated by the instructor and applied in D2L once the assignment has been graded. The number of points deducted will depend on the point value of the assignment.
 - **> 24 hours late but < or equal to 48 hours late, will receive a 50 % reduction in the total point value of the assignment.**
 - **>48 hours late but < or equal to 72 hours late, 75% reduction in the total point value of the assignment.** The deduction will be manually calculated by the instructor and applied in D2L once the assignment has been graded. The number of points deducted will depend on the point value of the assignment.
 - **>72 hours late WILL NOT be accepted and will be marked as a ZERO in D2L.**

COURSE POINT TOTALS AND CORRESPONDING GRADING SCALE

Grades will be determined by the following scale:

Table 2: Total points for final grade.

Grade	Points
A	900 or higher
B	800 to 899
C	700 to 799
D	600 to 699
F	Less than 600

Course Policies

Student Handbook

Refer to: Student Handbook-2021-22

Academic Misconduct Policy & Procedures

- Academic Dishonesty: Cheating, collusion, and plagiarism (the act of using source material of other persons, either published or unpublished, without following the accepted techniques of crediting, or the submission for credit of work not the individuals to whom credit is given). Additional guidelines on procedures in these matters may be found in the Office of Student Conduct. *In this class, any use of ChatGPT or other unauthorized AI is considered cheating and academic dishonesty.*

The Americans With Disabilities Act

- The Americans with Disabilities Act is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact Office of Disability Accommodation. The telephone number is 397-4618.

Expectations about classroom etiquette and netiquette

- Coming to class is an essential part of a student's learning experience in this course. Students are expected to promptly attend class and actively participate. Students should engage in civil dialogue with others and keep a positive attitude and a growth mindset. Students should be willing to listen to others and not engage in any form of hostile communication or excessively disruptive behavior (see policies on course etiquette and netiquette).
- Respect, empathy, kindness, and compassion for others will be a cornerstone in this course. Sociologists discuss things that are inherently controversial. Some of our class discussions may be energized at times, and it may become apparent that not everyone agrees. Regardless, we are all part of a larger community at MSU Texas, and I expect that each of you will do your very best to respect one another. We are all here to learn and listen and grow. Please know that if you feel triggered, there are campus support services available.
- When interacting with me and each other, please keep MSU Texas' core value of respect in mind at all times. As a class, we will design a course contract, which is a document that contains "rules of the road" for how we will treat each other in this class. Signing the contract will be a requirement before continuing in the class. Rude, abusive behavior will not be tolerated either in person or online. Disruptive behavior will be referred to Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities. Online communications should display principles of netiquette and be civil in tone.

Use of cell phones and laptops in class

- There may be times where bringing your phones and laptops are appropriate based on instructor direction. Otherwise, please refrain from using your phone or laptops during class, and keep them put away during lecture. In the event that you are experiencing a family or personal crisis, then please sit close to the door; you may go into the hall and check your messages or make a phone call if it is **absolutely an emergency**. Otherwise, please be mindful that unauthorized use of technology can be distracting. Class lectures **cannot be recorded** unless you have an accommodation from disability services. *I must have the appropriate documentation from the DSS office as soon as possible.*

Excessive absences

- If you stop coming to class without communicating with me, you can be dropped. If something serious has happened, which prevents you from coming to class, then please *reach out to me as soon as is reasonably possible*. In this class, **more than 10 unexcused absences are considered excessive**. MSU Texas is student-oriented, and I am student focused. So, I will do everything I can to help you be successful this semester, but I don't know what you don't tell me. Per MSU Texas' policy, students will be issued one verbal and one written warning prior to being dropped from the class. Please don't just stop coming to class without notifying me of your specific situation. I understand that life happens, and I want to do everything possible to help you stay on track and have a positive experience in my class.

Extenuating Circumstances, Emergencies, Illness, and Academic Activities:

Emergencies and other extenuating circumstances happen. The following count as emergencies and/or extenuating circumstances and should be evidenced by appropriate documentation:

- Written evidence of attending a mandatory university-sponsored activity (band, athletics, etc.)-documentation must come from college dean, Athletic Director, and/or Provost
- Official documentation of mandatory military service (i.e., deployment, etc.)
- Religious observance or Holy Day(s)
- Medical appointments related to pregnancy, pregnancy related complications, delivering early, or being restricted from activity for a certain amount of time due to pregnancy
- An acute or chronic illness, which prevents you from coming to campus or coming to class on time
- A written note from a medical clinic
- A written note from the MSU Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities
- A written note from a physician for a family member/loved one's illness
- You experience issues related to Title IX including but not limited to assault, stalking, or domestic violence
- Official documentation of required jury or court appearance
- Death of a family member/loved one/close relative
- Documentation of a motor vehicle accident, domestic disturbance, theft of your property, etc., which prevented you from coming to class
- Unexpected homelessness, food insecurity, job displacement, or a loss of otherwise reliable transportation-*please let me know about this as soon as possible*
- If you suddenly became an unexpected caregiver of someone critically ill
- If you are a law enforcement, corrections officer, or first responder and are faced with a verifiable/documented work emergency, which prevented you from coming to class (i.e. a transport, accident, fire, or major trauma etc.)

Though the aforementioned list is thorough, if you have absences related to other extreme/extenuating circumstances beyond your control that are not listed above, then please let me know as soon as possible. I want you to be successful in this class, and I will make EVERY EFFORT to help you do so. **Please communicate with me as soon as something has gone wrong and before you begin missing several classes.** MSU Texas has a team of dedicated people ready to help you stay in school, and my desire is to support your continued education. The MSU Texas Student Handbook has additional information on certain types of absences and what you should do next. Some of these are listed below.

Emergencies (MSU Texas Student Handbook, pp. 61-62):

Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities - For personal emergencies such as hospitalization or family emergency, or a prolonged absence, a student should notify the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities.

Illness (MSU Texas Student Handbook, pp. 61-62):

Vinson Health Center - When a student's illness warrants verification, the student may seek medical treatment through the Vinson Health Center, after which the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities and/or faculty members will be notified by the Vinson Health Center.

Academically Related Activities (MSU Texas Student Handbook, pp. 61-62):

MSU Texas Student Handbook policy states: "Academically-related activities (class field trips, attendance at conferences, etc.) which result in absences require the cooperation of individual faculty members. Even though such activities are educational in nature, they do not qualify as university-sponsored activities. Faculty members who organize such activities should assist their students in contacting and informing relevant faculty of the planned activity. Excused absences for such activities may be given at the discretion of the faculty member whose class is missed."

COURSE CALENDAR AND SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND REQUIRED ACTIVITIES

All assignments, with the exception of in-class participation activities which occur throughout the week, are due in **the D2L course shell on Thursday at 11:59pm CST**. Please check the Academic Calendar for a schedule of holidays. There is **NO** final exam in this class.

WEEK NUMBER	ITEMS TO READ/VIEW/DISCUSS	ITEMS DUE/ SUBMISSION FORMAT
Week 1: January 16-21	In the D2L course shell, students should read/view the following <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Syllabus, course calendar, course policies, and course etiquette/netiquette- • Knox (2023) Chapter 1 Outline & PPT • <i>The Modern American Family</i> (YouTube video) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-class participation activities; introduction
Week 2: January 22-28	In the D2L course shell, students should read/view the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mills – The Sociological Imagination • Coontz – The Evolution of American Families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin to locate interview participants for interviews 1-3
Week 3: January 29-Feb 4	In the D2L course shell, students should read/view the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualitative Research and Interview Techniques 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-class participation activities as assigned • Class demonstrations on transcriptions and coding • Begin to conduct interviews and transcribe data

Week 4: Feb 5-Feb 11	<p>In the D2L course shell, students should read/view the following</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knox Chapter 6 (Outline & PPT) • Hondagneu-Sotelo & Avila – I’m Here but I’m There: Transnational Motherhood • Coontz – The Myth of Black Family Collapse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-class participation activities as assigned • Homework #1 due February 8
Week 5: Feb 12-18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview Progress Report • Exam 1 Review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exam 1 due February 15
Week 6: February 19-25	<p>In the D2L course shell, students should read/view the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knox Chapter 7 (Outline & PPT) • Powell – Who Gets to Count as Family? • Stacey & Biblarz – How Does Sexual Orientation of the Parent Matter? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-class participation activities as assigned • Continue to conduct interviews, transcribe data, locate additional participants for remaining interviews, and code data
Week 7: February 26-March 3	<p>In the D2L course shell, students should read/view the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knox Chapter 11 (Outline & PPT) • NY Times: The Relentlessness of Modern Parenting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-class participation activities as assigned • Continue to conduct interviews, transcribe data, locate additional participants for remaining interviews, and code data • Interview #1 (transcript, coding, and analysis) due February 29
Week 8: March 4-March 10	<p>In the D2L course shell, students should read/view the following</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knox Chapter 12 (Outline & PPT) • Chesley – Stay at Home Fathers and Breadwinning Mothers: Gender, Couple Dynamics, and Social Change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-class participation activities as assigned • Continue to conduct interviews, transcribe data, locate additional participants for remaining interviews, and code data • Homework #2 Due March 7 • Exam #2 Due March 7
Week 9: March 11-March 17 SPRING BREAK	N/A	N/A

Week 10: March 18-March 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quantitative Research Techniques & Review of Family Data Sets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-class participation activities as assigned Continue to conduct interviews, transcribe data, locate additional participants for remaining interviews, code data; analyze data Interview #2 Due March 21st
Week 11: March 25-31 No class March 28 due to holiday break	In the D2L course shell, students should read/view the following <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knox Chapter 14 (Outline & PPT) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-class participation activities as assigned Continue to conduct interviews, transcribe data, locate additional participants for remaining interviews, and code data
Week 12: April 1-April 7	In the D2L course shell, students should read/view the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knox Chapter 15 (Outline & PPT) Amato – Research on Divorce: Continuing Trends and New Developments Sweeney – Remarriage & Stepfamilies: Strategic Sites for Family Scholarship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-class participation activities as assigned Continue to conduct interviews, transcribe data, locate additional participants for remaining interviews, and code data Interview #3 due April 4th
Week 13: April 8-April 14	In the D2L course shell, students should read/view the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knox Chapter 16 (Outline & PPT) 	Homework #3 due April 11th
Week 14: April 15-April 21 *No class April 18	Exam Review	Exam #3 Due April 18
Week 15: April 22-28	Begin Power Point Presentations	Power Point Presentations
Week 16: April 29-May 5	In the D2L course shell, students should read/view the following: Power Point Presentations & Share Qualitative & Quantitative Articles	Power Point Presentations Due by May 2nd Homework #4 Due by May 2nd
Week 17: May 6-May 12	No Final Exam	

Optional Readings: (Not Required)

Cherlin – The American Way of Marriage
 Cohen – Millennial Divorce Drops
 Cohen – Millennial Divorce Rate Drops Explain
 Edin, Kefalas, & Reed – What Marriage Means for Poor Unmarried Parents
 Elliott & Aseltine – Raising Teenagers in Hostile Environments: How Race, Class, and Gender Matter for Mothers’ Protective Carework
 Gerson – Moral Dilemmas, Moral Strategies, and the Transformation of Gender: Lessons from Two Generations of Work and Family Change
 Gerstel & Sarkisian – Marriage: The Good, the Bad, and the Greedy
 Hays – Flat Broke with Children: Pyramids of Inequality
 Hays – The Cultural Contradictions of Motherhood: Why Can’t a Mother Be More Like a Businessman?
 Heath – One Marriage Under God: The Campaign to Promote Marriage in America
 Lareau – Concerted Cultivation and the Accomplishment of Natural Growth
 NY Times: Jump-Start the Struggle for Gender Equality
 Sassler & Miller – Waiting to Be Asked: Gender, Power, and Relationship Progression Among Cohabiting Couples
 Shows & Gerstel – Fathering, Class, and Gender: A Comparison of Physicians and Emergency Medical Technicians
 Smock, Manning, & Porter – How Money Shapes Decisions to Marry Among Cohabitators
 The Atlantic: Why all Americans Believe They Are Middle Class
 Whitehead – The Nuptial Deal: Same-Sex Marriage and Neo-Liberal Governance