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## **SOC 512 01W: Marriage and Family**

COURSE SYLLABUS:SPRING 2024  
1/29/2024 to 5/10/2024

### **INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION**

Instructor: Dr. Nicole Farris, Professor  
Office Location: Ferguson Room 218  
Office Hours: T/Th 10-11 on campus; Wednesday 9-12 online; and by appointment  
Office Fax: 903-886-5330  
University Email Address: Nicole.Farris@tamuc.edu  
Preferred Form of Communication: Email  
Communication Response Time: 24-48 Hours, Monday through Friday, 8am to 5pm

### **COURSE INFORMATION**

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings

- 1) **Hochschild, Arlie. 2012. The Second Shift. Penguin Books. x**
- 2) **Cherlin, Andrew. 2010. The Marriage Go Round. Vintage Publishers. x**
- 3) **Kaufman, Gayle. 2013. Superdads. NYU Press. x**
- 4) **Desmond, Matthew. 2016. Evicted. Crown Publishers. x**
- 5) **Newbeck, Phyl. 2008. Virginia Hasn't Always Been for Lovers. Southern Illinois University Press. x**
- 6) **Selected articles and chapters available on the course website and other electronic journal sites.**

**Software Required: Access to course website- you need to have an active email username and password. I will post your grades to the course website, as well as your powerpoints, assignments, and supplemental articles that I see fit to include in lecture.**

*The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.*

## Course Description

Hours: 3

Sociological Perspectives on Marriage and the Family. Three semester hours. A critical sociological analysis of the origin, structure, and functioning of the institutions of marriage and family in human society. Four theoretical perspectives in sociology (namely: functionalism, conflict theory, exchange theory and symbolic interactionism) will be employed for discussing and evaluating various problems and issues in marriage and family, particularly in the contemporary American society.

This is a graduate level introduction to the interdisciplinary study of families, with a particular focus on sociological contributions to the area. We will read and engage with research on families of many different types and stages. We will also consider how family related issues intersect with socioeconomic status, gender, race, age, and sexual orientation. Many substantive areas of sociology and social science that relate to families will be included in the readings. While we will draw some comparisons to other places and times, the main focus of the course is on the contemporary United States context. Readings will include theoretical, empirical, and policy-oriented research. This class focuses on multiple levels of analysis, from individuals to interpersonal interactions to nations. You will spend a substantial amount of time developing your own specific research interests in this field.

**Student Learning Outcomes** (Should be measurable; observable; use action verbs)

**The purpose of the course will be to gain an advanced, graduate level understanding of Sociology of Marriage and the Family. By the end of this course students should be able to demonstrate knowledge in:**

1. Theory and Content: Students will be able to sufficiently synthesize theoretical knowledge in marriage and the family. Addressed via: Exams/ Assignments
2. Critical thinking about Society and Social Processes: Students will be able to think critically about complex marriage/family related concepts/knowledge. Students should look beyond the surface of issues to discover the “why” and “how” of social order and structure and consider the underlying social mechanisms that may be creating a situation, identify evidence that may adjudicate between alternate explanations for phenomena and develop proposed policies or action plans in light of theory and data. Addressed via: Assignments
3. Communication: Students will be able to communicate, express, and discuss complex marriage/family related concepts sufficiently. Students will write papers and make presentations that build arguments and assess evidence in a clear and effective manner. Addressed via: Exams/discussions/assignments
4. Sociocultural and International Awareness: Students will show sufficient understanding of responsible citizenship, political issues, and gender relations. Assessed via: Discussions/Assignments

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# COURSE REQUIREMENTS

## Minimal Technical Skills Needed

**Using the Learning Management System, Powerpoint, Microsoft Word, and Internet.**

## Instructional Methods

Main Course Meetings: This course is entirely online. We will not meet in person for this course.

## Student Responsibilities or Tips for Success in the Course

**.Do the reading ahead of time:** You are responsible for completing all the readings before the class for which they are assigned.

**Prepare to write:** This course is writing intensive. It will consist of weekly discussions, reading responses, and work through the semester to craft a literature review on a topic of your choice. The instructor and peers will give written comments on drafts.

**Be respectful:** In this course, you are expected to engage in critical thinking. This means that you will be able to understand many sides to an issue, even if you disagree with the arguments presented. You should be able to analyze the course material actively and set aside your personal beliefs and values in order to understand issues from a scientific perspective.

## A Note on AI/ChatGPT Use

Texas A&M University-Commerce acknowledges that there are legitimate uses of Artificial Intelligence, ChatBots, or other software that has the capacity to generate text, or suggest replacements for text beyond individual words, as determined by the instructor of the course.

Any use of such software must be documented. Any undocumented use of such software constitutes an instance of academic dishonesty (plagiarism).

**Individual instructors may disallow entirely the use of such software for individual assignments or for the entire course. Students should be aware of such requirements and follow their instructors' guidelines. If no instructions are provided the student should assume that the use of such software is disallowed.**

In any case, students are fully responsible for the content of any assignment they submit, regardless of whether they used an AI, in any way. This specifically includes cases in which the AI plagiarized another text or misrepresented sources.

*The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.*

13.99.99.R0.03 Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty

13.99.99.R0.10 Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty

***For this course, the use of AI is NOT allowed. The use of AI will result in a grade of 0 for the assignment for the first offense. The second offense will result in a grade of F for the course and submission to the academic dishonesty committee.***

## GRADING

Final grades in this course will be based on the following scale:

Final grades in this course will be based on the following scale of 300 total points:

A = 270-300 points

B = 240-269 points

C = 210-239 points

D = 180-209 points

F = 179 or less points

Your final grade will be based on the following:

Reading responses: You will write 5 reading response memos. These memos should be about one single spaced page long and should reflect your critical thinking about one or more of the readings assigned for that week. Beyond making it implicitly clear that you have understood the readings you choose to discuss, you should bring in your own opinions or analysis. Good strategies include connecting to other readings from the course, making links to current events or sociological phenomena, taking issue with a point that you disagreed with or found to be unclear, or expanding on a point you found to be interesting. Either an informal, blog-style tone or a more formal tone is fine, but your writing should be proofread and clear. When you choose your reading responses, they will need to be turned in on Sunday by 11:59pm. **The use of AI/ChatGPT is prohibited.**

Literature Review Paper: This course focuses on theories of the family and cannot hope to cover the diversity of family life in the United States and other countries. You will choose a topic of interest to you and review four papers on this subject from major journals in sociology of demography. You will summarize the articles and critically evaluate their arguments and evidence, tying the findings to your research questions and suggesting directions for future research. The final paper is worth 50 points and should be 8-10 pages long. **The use of AI/ChatGPT is prohibited.**

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Work toward the final literature review paper will be conducted in stages, with comments from the instructor as you go. Thus, writing style will be part of your grade as there will be plenty of opportunities for feedback and revision. Early in the semester you will turn in a draft research question for comment from peers and the instructor. Next, you will turn in 6-8 possible articles to include in your review. Following this, you will write summaries of four of the articles you deem most appropriate for the review, an introduction to your review, and then the body of your paper. Details of these assignments will be discussed over the course of the term and guidelines will be distributed. Late components of your literature review will not be accepted.

- a) Drafts. Drafts of each stage of the literature review paper will be graded throughout the term.

### **Assessments**

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>SLO Addressed</b>	<b>Points</b>
Reading Responses (5@20 points)	1;2;3	100
Literature Review Paper	1;2;3;4	50
Drafts	1;2;3	50
Weekly Discussions (10@10 points)	1;2;3	100
<b>Total Points</b>		<b>300</b>

## **TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS**

### **LMS**

All course sections offered by Texas A&M University-Commerce have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements

LMS Requirements:

<https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

[https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser\\_support.htm](https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm)

YouSeeU Virtual Classroom Requirements:

<https://support.youseeu.com/hc/en-us/articles/115007031107-Basic-System-Requirements>

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## **ACCESS AND NAVIGATION**

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or [helpdesk@tamuc.edu](mailto:helpdesk@tamuc.edu).

**Note:** Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a TAMUC campus open computer lab, etc.

## **COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT**

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your Instructor.

### **Technical Support**

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here:

<https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>

### **Interaction with Instructor Statement**

I only respond to communication via email. I will try to respond to email within 24 to 48 hours, between normal business hours of 8am to 5pm. Please be sure that when you email me, you use a proper greeting (Dr. Farris, Professor Farris, Instructor Farris), an email body, and an appropriate closing. You should never send an email with just an attachment and no email body. Be sure you have an appropriate and informative subject line and include the name and section of the course you are enrolled in.

## **COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES**

### **Course Specific Procedures/Policies**

#### **Syllabus Change Policy**

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

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## **University Specific Procedures**

### **Student Conduct**

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the [Student Guidebook](#).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/Admissions/oneStopShop/undergraduateAdmissions/studentGuidebook.aspx>

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum:

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/netiquette>

### **TAMUC Attendance**

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the [Attendance](#) webpage and [Procedure 13.99.99.R0.01](#).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/academic/13.99.99.R0.01.pdf>

### **Academic Integrity**

Students at Texas A&M University-Commerce are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

[Undergraduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/documents/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyForm.pdf>

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/academics/graduateschool/faculty/GraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyFormold.pdf>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

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## **Students with Disabilities-- ADA Statement**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) 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 have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

### **Office of Student Disability Resources and Services**

Texas A&M University-Commerce

Velma K. Waters Library Rm 162

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: [studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu](mailto:studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu)

Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/>

## **Nondiscrimination Notice**

Texas A&M University-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

## **Campus Concealed Carry Statement**

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in Texas A&M University-Commerce buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer.

Web url:

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M-Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

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The Counseling Center at A&M-Commerce, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit [www.tamuc.edu/counsel](http://www.tamuc.edu/counsel)

## Department or Accrediting Agency Required Content

### COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

#### Week 1

#### **1/29 Introduction; Marriage and Families Over Time; Constructions of Family**

*What is a family?*

*How do current U.S. Families differ from our stereotyped preconceptions?*

*How do social structures affect contemporary families?*

Read: Lecture 1

Gerstel Article

Dodson Article

Collier Article

Cherlin Article

Skim Charts and Graphs on America's Family and Living Arrangements

2017. Accessed at: <https://www.census.gov/data/tables/2017/demo/families/cps-2017.html>

Assignments: Due 2/4 by 11:59pm

Discussion 1

Reading Response 1 (Week 1 Readings)

#### Week 2

#### **2/5 Describing and Explaining Marriage and Families; Historical perspectives on families and family change**

*What have families looked like in different times and places, and how has that shaped our cultural ideals?*

*What historical trends have changed U.S. families in recent decades?*

*Is marriage a more beneficial family form than other types of families?*

*The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.*

Read: Lecture 2  
Musick Article  
England Article

Assignments: Due 2/11 by 11:59pm  
Discussion 2

**Week 3**  
**2/12                    Understanding Gender; Gender and Families**

*How does gender shape family dynamics and the relationship between families and society?*  
*What cultural frames influence our perceptions of families?*  
*How do unconscious stereotypes and conscious biases play out in family interactions?*

Read: Lecture 3  
Begin Hochschild

Assignments: Due 2/18 by 11:59pm  
Discussion 3  
Reading Response 2 (Week 2 and 3 Readings)

**Week 4**  
**2/19                    Sexuality and Young Adulthood**

*Why is sexuality important for studying families and society?*  
*How does young people's sexuality fit into the dynamics and interactions of families of origin?*  
*How can sexuality be a driver of inequality in people's lives?*

Read:  
Elliot Article  
Hochschild

Assignments: Due 2/25 by 11:59pm  
Turn in one paragraph paper proposal

**Week 5**  
**2/26                    Families and Paid and Unpaid Labor**

*How do families and the paid labor market influence each other?*

*The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.*

*How are structural changes affecting the relationship between families and work?  
Why is gender so fundamental for understanding disparities in both paid and unpaid labor?*

Read: Finish Hochschild Book  
Bianchi Article  
Correll Article  
Begin Cherlin

Assignments: Due 3/3 by 11:59pm  
Discussion 4  
Reading Response 3 (Hochschild)

## **Week 6**

**3/4 Intimate Relationships and Marriage; Uncoupling and Remarriage**

*How have historical changes in marriage shaped family formations?  
What happens when people form families in ways that are outside the norm?  
How does instability shape family processes and the outcomes of family members?*

Read: Finish Cherlin Book  
Begin Kaufman  
American Sociological Association's Amicus Brief on Same Sex Marriage Found Here:

[http://www.asanet.org/sites/default/files/savvy/documents/ASA/pdfs/ASA\\_March\\_2015\\_Supreme\\_Court\\_Marriage\\_Equality\\_Amicus\\_Brief.pdf](http://www.asanet.org/sites/default/files/savvy/documents/ASA/pdfs/ASA_March_2015_Supreme_Court_Marriage_Equality_Amicus_Brief.pdf)

Assignments: Due 3/10 by 11:59pm  
6-8 Articles for Literature Review Paper

## **Week 7**

**3/11 Fathers**

*Why have fathers received much less research attention than mothers?  
How do fathers matter for their children?  
How do our understandings of fatherhood intersect with other social characteristics like race, class, gender and age?*

*The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.*

Read: Finish Kaufman Book  
Shows Article  
Begin Newbeck

Assignments: Due 3/17 by 11:59pm  
Discussion 5  
Reading Response 3 (Kaufman or Cherlin)

## **Week 8**

### **318 Class, race and intersectionality**

*How can we best include intersectionality when studying families?  
Are some methods better than others for achieving this goal?  
Is it possible to look at the effects of a single characteristic like gender or race without considering intersectionality?*

Read: Finish Newbeck Book  
Sayer Article

Assignments: Due 3/24 by 11:59pm  
Four Article Summaries

## **Week 9**

### **3/25 Families and the State; family policies**

*How do governments and policies affect families?  
Can governments effectively change family demographics through policy interventions?  
How can policies better account for the agency and preferences of families to improve their effectiveness?*

Read: Heuveline Article  
Glick Article  
Begin Desmond

Assignments: Due 3/31 by 11:59pm  
Discussion 6  
Reading Response 4 (Newbeck)

## **Week 10**

### **4/1 Social Class Variations**

*How does social class play out in the everyday lives of families?  
How do families work to reproduce social advantage?*

Read: Finish Desmond Book

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Assignments: Due 4/7 by 11:59pm  
Discussion 7

## **Week 11**

### **4/8 Measurement Issues; research ethics**

*Do we know what we're actually measuring when social scientists study different aspects of families?*

*How can we best disentangle selection from causation when studying families?*

*What are our ethical responsibilities as family researchers?*

Read: Brown Article

Regnerus Article

Amato Short Response

Eggebeen Response

Osborne Short Response

Regnerus Short Response

Short articles from the Chronicle of Higher Education related to the "Regnerus affair"

Found Here:

<https://www.chronicle.com/blogs/percolator/university-of-texas-finds-no-scientific-misconduct-by-gay-parenting-study-author/30594>

<https://www.chronicle.com/blogs/innovations/the-regnerus-affair-at-ut-austin/33509>

<https://www.chronicle.com/blogs/percolator/controversial-gay-parenting-study-is-severely-flawed-journals-audit-finds/30255>

Assignments: Due 4/14 by 11:59pm  
Discussion 8  
Reading Response 5 (Ethics Readings or Desmond)

## **Week 12**

### **4/15 Families, Society and the future**

*How does intergenerational transmission happen in families?*

*Given the trends occurring today, what will U.S. families look like in 20, 50, or 100 years?*

*What should policymakers' goals be in supporting families?*

Read: Thornberry Article

Augustine Article

Assignments: Due 4/21 by 11:59pm

*The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.*

## Introduction to Literature Review Paper

### **Week 13**

**4/22**

Read: None

Assignments: Due 4/28 by 11:59pm  
Discussion 9

### **Week 14**

**4/29 Work on Final Paper**

Read: None

Assignments: Due 5/5 by 11:59pm  
Discussion 10

### **Week 15**

**5/6 Work on Final Paper**

Read: None

Assignments: Due 12/10 by 11:59pm  
Final Literature Review Paper

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