

**SOC 3410: SOCIOLOGY OF THE FAMILY**  
**Summer 2017**  
**Online Course**

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***Instructor:*** Natalie Ingraham, PhD, MPH

***Office:*** MI 4025

***Office Hours:*** Tuesday 12p-1p, Thursday by appointment (available by video chat during appointment times)

***Email:*** natalie.ingraham@csueastbay.edu (this is the best way to reach me)

**Course Description:**

Families are universally important social institutions, past and present. Although the majority of families around the world have certain things in common—relating people biologically and socially, organizing care and residence, the specifics of how these things are accomplished may vary substantially across time and space. We are all experts of sorts on the family: We have lived in families, observed family dynamics, and compared our own family experiences with those of others. This course will provide an opportunity to look at something familiar (the family) in a new way. We will focus on the family as a social institution—a set of structured social arrangements for meeting certain human needs—and we will examine the larger social forces that shape those structures. We will use a comparative approach to families, emphasizing their diversity both across time and space and within present-day U.S. society, paying particular attention to how social inequality shapes family experiences. We consider both the “public” and “private” dimensions of families over the course of the semester; families as settings for socially important tasks such as raising children and caring for family members, and a focus for public policy and as the place where we experience much of our private lives. By the end of the semester, you should be able to place your own personal experience of families in a larger social, cultural, and historical context.

**Student Learning Outcomes:**

1. Understand the causes of social inequities in family experiences. You will learn how systems of privilege organized around gender, race, class, and sexual orientation structure family life.
2. Think critically about how family shapes social life at both individual and structural levels.
3. Effectively communicate what you have learned about the sociology of family in both written and oral form.
4. Read and evaluate scholarly research on the family.
5. Use your sociological education outside of the classroom and into your everyday life.

**Links to Program Learning Outcomes and Institutional Learning Outcomes:**

- SLO – Knowledge Integration and Synthesis – 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
- SLO – Professional Demeanor and Ethical Behavior – 4, 5
- ILO – Thinking and Reasoning – 2, 4
- ILO – Diversity – 1, 2, 3, 4
- ILO – Sustainability – 4, 5

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

### ***Two Required Texts:***

1. Risman, Barbara J. & Rutter, Virginia. 2015. *Families as They Really Are*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. New York: W.W. Norton & Company. **(Be sure to get the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, not the 1<sup>st</sup>!)**
2. Gamson, Joshua. 2015. *Modern Families: Stories of Extraordinary Journeys to Kinship*. NYU Press. ISBN 9781479869732.

### **Class Norms**

Because the assignments in this class will require us all to confront issues that can affect us in very personal ways, it is important create and maintain a safe environment where our discussions can remain open. Therefore, I propose the following class norms:

1. Use “I” language. We all are a part of several collectives, but when you speak, please speak from your experience.
2. Respect everyone’s experiences.
3. Be mindful of the space you take up. Know when to speak up and know when to take a step (or more) back. Your voice needs to be heard, but no more than anyone else’s voice.
4. Be gracious. All people make mistakes, so be sure to be as gracious to the person making the mistake as you would have that person be to you.
5. Take responsibility for all of your learning and unlearning. We can not be blamed for the misinformation we have learned, but we will be held responsible for repeating misinformation after we have learned otherwise.
6. Ask questions, but be open to the responses. You may be uncomfortable, but you should feel safe enough to ask. Our society makes room for ignorance, but we must be able to hear a/the truth.
7. Maintain confidentiality at others’ requests.

**Students with Disabilities:** I am committed to providing assistance to help you be successful in this course. Reasonable accommodations are available for students with a documented disability. If you have a disability and may need accommodations to fully participate in this class, please visit Accessibility Services. All accommodations **MUST** be approved through Disability Services 510-885-3868 (Hayward Campus) or email us at [as@csueastbay.edu](mailto:as@csueastbay.edu). You can also request more information here: [https://csueastbay-accommodate.symplicity.com/public\\_accommodation/](https://csueastbay-accommodate.symplicity.com/public_accommodation/)

**Email Etiquette:** The best way to contact me is through email: [natalie.ingraham@csueastbay.edu](mailto:natalie.ingraham@csueastbay.edu) ***Make sure to write “Sociology 3410” in the subject line.*** Please do not email me to let me know that you will be absent, unless, of course there is some sort of emergency or illness. Email questions should be short and to the point. If you miss class, please contact a classmate for notes rather than e-mailing me directly.

**Academic Dishonesty includes, but is not limited to:**

- cheating, which includes possessing unauthorized sources of information during examinations, copying the work of others, permitting others to copy your work, submitting work done by others, completing assignments for others, altering work after grading and subsequently submitting it for re-grading, submitting the same work for two or more classes without the permission of all instructors involved, or retaining materials that you have been instructed to return to your instructor;
- plagiarism, which includes taking the words, ideas, or substance of another and either copying or paraphrasing the work without giving credit to the source through appropriate use of footnotes, quotation marks, or reference citations;

Any plagiarized assignments or cheating will result in zero points (an “F”). You can read the full university policy [here](#).

**Late Assignment Policy:**

Generally, I do accept late assignments non-weekly assignments. Assignments lose 1 point per day they are late. Weekly assignments such as critical reviews and BB discussion posts are not accepted late without prior permission or documented medical/family emergencies.

**Extra Credit:**

Each quarter, I offer extra credit for students who attend a campus or community event related to the course topics. Students write a summary of the event and how it relates to course content and e-mail this summary to me for up to 5 extra credit points. Extra credit points are also offered for optional critical review(s) and a discussion board post at the end of the quarter for students who need to make up missing assignments – these assignments cannot be completed to go over the maximum amount of points for each assignment.

**Communications:**

- I will be available at Hayward and online on Tuesdays from 12 pm to 1:00 pm. A weekly open discussion board will be open for your questions.
- Please do not submit assignments to this discussion board (it will not count).
- Generally, I work hard to return emails within 24 hours; the exception is over the weekend, when the response time will be longer. Note: this is an example of self-care; it is important for us all to have some time when we disconnect from our electronic lives.
- Communications on discussion board will not be anonymous.

**Coming to Class Online:**

- Students will come to class via the course Blackboard site. Each week will have a list for readings, activities, and sometimes graded assignments/assessments.
- Lectures from the in-person Soc 3410 class from Spring 2017 will be posted online. These should be viewed after completing the reading “assigned” on those days.
- Students will be awarded points for participation by completing group discussion posts (see details below), which will be earned by fulfilling the participation task for that week.
- Our course week runs Monday-Sunday. The END of each week will be considered 11:59p on Sunday; thus students must post their comments/questions and critical reviews prior to that time to get credit for the week.

- Individual, larger assignments have their own specific due dates listed on the course schedule at the end of the syllabus.

### **Some Online Rules:**

- Respect for one another is expected
- Appropriate language is required
- I reserve the right to intervene in classroom behavior, just as I would in the classroom to maintain an appropriate, supportive learning environment with academic decorum

### **Assignments (200 points):**

Assignment due dates are also listed in the course outline below. **No electronic/email assignment submissions will be accepted without prior permission – Blackboard should be used to submit all assignments.** Assignments must be a Word document or PDF (.pages or other file formats are not accepted).

You have two types of assignments in this course: weekly and “big” assignments. Weekly assignments include one critical review per week and discussion board posts. See details below for all assignments.

### **Weekly Assignments**

#### **1. Weekly Reading Critical Reviews (45 points, 9 @ 5 pts each)**

Sociology is a reading- and writing-heavy discipline. In order to help you develop your critical reading and writing abilities, **you choose one assigned reading per week to review for a total of 9 critical reviews over the quarter.** Critical reading reviews are important because they teach you how to take reading notes for this class, which provide me with an opportunity to answer any questions you have about the assigned readings. In your critical reading reviews you will: practice citing, define words that you do not know, identify and define sociological concepts, summarize the core argument/thesis of your readings, and discuss the strengths/weaknesses of the text.

Students will complete one critical review per week in weeks 2-10 based on the readings assigned in the course schedule. **You may not hand in more than one review each week. Reviews are due by Sunday at midnight the week the assigned reading is covered.**

Each review should use the critical review template. Reviews should be 1-2 pages, typed, in 12-point font, proofread for spelling/grammatical errors, and have at the top of the first page a title, your name, the date, course information (Soc 3410), and name of the assignment (i.e., Critical Review 1, etc.). **An outline for the critical reviews will be posted to BB.** Use Microsoft Word or PDF when uploading your essay to Blackboard.

#### **2. Weekly Discussion Board Participation (80 points, 8 weeks @ 10 points each):**

You will be assigned to a discussion group of 5-7 people. Part of this assignment will be to participate in discussions with your group members based on prompts and/or your responses to class discussion from lecture capture that week. Outstanding contributions to group discussions will be given extra credit. Each week you will be graded based on total discussion board posts for

that week – this will include your personal response to the weekly prompt AND your comments on your group member’s posts. **See rubric on BB for points given each week.** Please try to post your response to the prompts by Wed or Thurs each week to give your group members time to respond.

*Rules for discussion board posts:*

1. Each person must substantially contribute to answering the prompt. Each should fill in by answering parts others have not focused on yet. In the end your group should have a comprehensive answer that each member has contributed to.
2. Your combined answers from the thread should be a minimum of 350 words.
3. Be sure to follow the principle of “filling in” or “advancing the discussion”. Filling in means that your post should cover things and raise ideas that others have not sufficiently covered yet.

**"Big"ger Assignments (Due dates listed on the course schedule at the end of the syllabus)**

3. Intro to the Library (25 points)

ASA Style Worksheet (10 points) + Building Research Skills Essay (15 points)

You will complete an ASA style worksheet homework to practice using ASA style correctly, as this is important in writing academically and citing sources properly to avoid plagiarizing. **The ASA worksheet is due 6/30 by midnight via BB (Word doc or PDF).**

After reviewing the lecture on accessing and properly citing research resources in sociology, you choose from a list of articles provided related to families posted on BB. You will use the CSU EB library website/databases to locate your journal article. Use the rubric in Assignment Links & Rubrics for specific questions to answer. **Submit your essay on BB by 12p on 7/5 by midnight.**

4. Family Essay Series: What is Family? (50 points)

Essay 1 (3-4 pages, 20 points, due the Friday of Week 4 (7/14) by midnight) This essay is a reflection essay about your own family. The purpose of this exercise is to get you to think about the various definitions you’ve learned so far in the class within context of your family and community. Specific instructions will be given in class and on BB.

Essay 2 (4-5 pages, 30 points, due the Wednesday of Finals Week by midnight) This second essay requires you to interview a member of your family and ask the same questions from the 1<sup>st</sup> essay. What are their answers? How are they different from yours? What might account for these differences? How are your answers similar? Different? What ideas or concepts that we’ve discussed thus far are illustrated by your examples? How do your answers reflect or refute what Coontz (R&R Ch. 5) calls the “largely mythical ‘traditional’ family”? Specific instructions will be posted on BB.

Final grades will be assigned as follows:

	Score	Grade
	0	F
120-124 D-	120	D-

125-132 D	125	D
133-138 D+	133	D+
139-144 C-	139	C-
145-152 C	145	C
153-158 C+	153	C+
159-164 B-	159	B-
165-172 B	165	B
173-178 B+	173	B+
179-184 A-	179	A-
185-192 A	185	A
193-200 A+	193	A+

## Course Schedule (tentative)

R&R = Risman, Barbara J. & Rutter, Virginia. 2015. Families as They Really Are. 2nd ed. New York: W.W. Norton & Company.

	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Readings</i>	<i>Assignments Due</i>
Week 1 6/19-6/25	Introduction to Class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review syllabus</li> </ul>	
	How Do We Know What We Know About Families?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>R&amp;R Ch. 1-4 &amp; CCF Brief</li> </ul>	
Week 2 6/26-7/2	How we got here: History of the Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>R&amp;R Ch. 5&amp;6 &amp; Gamson Intro</li> </ul>	ASA Worksheet (6/30)
	History of the Family – Who Gets to Be a Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>R&amp;R Ch. 7&amp;8 &amp; Gamson Ch. 2</li> </ul>	
	Online Activity – Kids Today		
Week 3 7/3-7/9	Diversity of Families – Law & Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>R&amp;R Ch. 10 &amp; Gamson Ch. 4</li> </ul>	Building Research Skills Essay (7/5)
	Online Activity – Families in Law vs. Practice		
Week 4 7/10-7/16	Diversity of Families – Interracial Marriage & Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>R&amp;R pgs. 182-195 &amp; Ch. 9 &amp; 16</li> <li>Gamson Ch. 6</li> </ul>	
	Diversity of Families – LGBT Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>R&amp;R Ch. 13 &amp; Ch. 15</li> <li>Gamson Ch. 3</li> </ul>	
	Online Activity – Wedding Announcements		
Week 5 7/17-7/23	Marriage & Divorce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>R&amp;R Ch 21</li> </ul>	
	Marriage & Divorce cont.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>R&amp;R Ch. 22 &amp; CCF Brief on Single Mothers</li> </ul>	
	Online Activity – Another Look		
Week 6 7/24-7/30	Generational Dance: Parents & Children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>R&amp;R Ch. 24</li> </ul>	
	Generational Dance cont.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CCF Brief on Later Motherhood</li> </ul>	
	Online Activity – Family Policies Around the World		
Week 7 7/31-8/6	Emerging Families: Adoption, IVF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>R&amp;R Ch. 26</li> </ul>	
	Emerging Families cont.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gamson Ch. 5</li> </ul>	
	Online Activity – Helping a Friend		
Week 8	Families Across Divides	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>R&amp;R Ch. 29</li> </ul>	

8/7-8/13	Families Across Divides	• R&R Ch. 33	
	Online Activity – DREAM Act		
Week 9 8/14-8/20	Unfinished Gender Revolution	• R&R Ch. 35	
	Gender - Masculinities	• R&R Ch. 36 (required) • R&R Ch. 37 (option for extra CR points if needed)	
	Online Activity – Plan B		
Week 10 8/21-8/27	Wrapping Up	• Gamson Conclusion chapter (final CR options)	
	Wrapping Up	• R&R Ch. 38 (final CR options; can be used for extra CR points if needed)	
	Optional online Friday activity (if you need the points)		
Finals Week 8/28-9/1	Finals Week		Family Essay Due at midnight 8/31