

**UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN COLORADO  
OFFICE OF EXTENDED STUDIES  
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**Spring 2010  
tentative syllabus**

**SOC 120-945: Introduction to Family Studies (3 credits)  
February 1 – May 7, 2010**

**Instructor:** Dr. Mel Moore

**Office:** Candelaria Hall 2048

**Office Hours:** Mon. 2-3pm; Thurs. 12:30 - 2:30pm, and by appointment

\*\*Read this syllabus carefully because what you need to know to get started in this course is explained here and you are responsible for this information. Be clear about what is expected of you-- and when! This semester I will be on-campus as well so if you are too, feel free to stop by my office to visit.

**Course Description**

This course surveys central topics and related research in the sociology of family and examines families as an evolving social institution. Topics include historical and cultural variations in families, mate selection, cohabitation, marriage, parenting, divorce, remarriage, and step-parenting.

**Course Goals and Content**

Course goals include an understanding of the current research and theoretical foundations of basic family structures, practices, and policies, along with the stimulation of your sociological imagination with respect to family.

This course has the following learning outcomes:

- \* understand the framework and philosophical assumptions of the discipline.
- \* understand the methods and research skills used by the discipline.
- \* understand the principles and theories of the discipline.
- \* demonstrate familiarity with current problems.

**Required Text and Materials**

Marriages and Families by Mary Ann Lamanna and Agnes Riedmann (2009, 10th edition, Wadsworth) is the only required textbook. You also are responsible for the lecture material for each unit (located under Course Materials on the Blackboard course website), the contents of discussion boards, and any other material included in this course, such as podcasts and online videos. Readings should be completed by the week listed in order to keep up with the course. In addition, you may be interested in chapter outlines, practice quizzes, videos and other materials presented on the website associated with your textbook (<http://academic.cengage.com/sociology/lamanna>). This textbook link also is available on Blackboard under External Links. If you have questions or

concerns about any course materials, you are encouraged to contact me throughout the course.

You may have some required content available to you only via podcasts in iTunes, at websites that show videos or films for free, or in Quicktime files on Blackboard. . . I say that because you have to be comfortable finding and viewing that content with the computer equipment available to you. Course content comes in a variety of forms because the text alone cannot convey the power and relevance of the most meaningful ideas and frankly, it makes the course more interesting. Without the energy of face-to-face meetings, online courses can feel like something you are doing out there alone. . . and that should not happen in this course.

### **Evaluation**

Grades will be based on three equally weighted exams (75% of final grade) and assignments (25% of final grade). More specifically, the maximum number of points possible for each evaluative component is as follows:

Exam 1	= 100 pts
Exam 2	= 100 pts
Exam 3	= 100 pts
Introduction to class	= 10 pts
3 essays and 3 responses for Unit 1	= 30 pts
3 essays and 3 responses for Unit 2	= 30 pts
3 essays and 3 responses for Unit 3	= 30 pts
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Total possible points	= 400

Your grade for the course is calculated based on the percentage of the total possible points that you obtain-- A = 90% - 100%; B = 80% - 89%; C = 70% - 79%; D = 60% - 69%; F = 59% or less. I do not use the +/- grades. Detailed descriptions of exams and assignments are discussed below.

**Exams:** Exams may include short answer, true-false, multiple-choice, and essay questions. Note that all course material, including readings, lectures, and class-wide discussions may appear on exams. Exams will be available online on the date of the exam from 7am to 7pm only. You will have just one opportunity that day to take the exam so please find a secure (preferably wired) online connection. Once you start the exam, you must finish and submit it within the designated time limit. If you exceed the time limit for the exam, it will not count. A typical exam is 33 multiple choice questions to be completed in 30 minutes. This is plenty of time for almost everyone, but if time pressure is an issue for you, this course might not be a good fit for you. When you are taking the exam, you will not be able to go back to questions you have already answered. So for each exam date, decide in advance on free time that day in which you will be at a secure internet connection in a quiet place so that you can focus on your exam. Also, note that these are closed book/note exams. You need to work alone and without any materials—just as if you were taking the exam in a classroom. To do otherwise is cheating and means you won't learn much. . . Also, know that if you begin the exam and your internet

connection fails for any reason, you will need to take the make-up exam at the end of the course. So please, use a very reliable connection!! In addition, during exams, do not click other buttons, try to go back to questions, or do other things like check your e-mail as these kinds of things may result in getting booted from the exam. On the other hand, if your connection fails, don't worry! You can take the make-up at the end of the course. The vast majority of people complete exams without any problems.

**Assignments:** In order to facilitate getting to know each other and having substantial discussions, your first assignment is to post an introduction of YOU, and then you have short essays and responses due for each unit as described below. You must put your posts under the appropriate Unit thread for them to count!! Points associated with assignments are as follows.

Introduction	= 10 pts
3 essays and 3 responses for Unit 1	= 30 pts
3 essays and 3 responses for Unit 2	= 30 pts
<u>3 essays and 3 responses for Unit 3</u>	<u>= 30 pts</u>
Total	= 100 pts

Introduction: Your first assignment is to introduce yourself to your group. Offer at least one rich paragraph about who you are at this point in your life and what you think about family. This getting-to-know-each-other process facilitates substantial discussion on the interesting topics to come. Feel free to reply to the introductions if you have questions or comments for the person.

Essays and Responses: For each unit, you need to offer at least 3 substantial (1 or more paragraphs EACH) essays about EACH unit's materials (9 minimum ESSAYS for the course for full credit), and at least 3 substantial (1 or more paragraphs EACH) responses to the essays of others for EACH unit's materials (9 minimum RESPONSES for the course for full credit). Only one post of either form per day counts so for full credit, you need to post on at least SIX DIFFERENT days in EACH unit (at least 18 different days during the course). Your essays may be your thoughtful examples from your own observations or life that connect to principles described in that unit or a critique of unit ideas or supporting information (referenced if applicable). . . The idea is to play with the course content in significant ways and share that analysis with your group for their consideration. Responses in a unit are your reaction, additional analysis, critique. . . to the essays or responses of your course-mates. In all cases, your posts should be prepared in advance so that they are well-written and efficiently presented. Posts with multiple spelling errors or typos won't receive any credit. More is not better, and please do not simply summarize course readings or lectures. Add to what we know/think. If your post is empty— you have simply repeated ideas or congratulated the author of the previous post— you will receive NO credit for that post. You are welcome to do those kinds of posts but make sure you also have 3 substantial essays and 3 substantial responses on different dates each unit before that unit's exam date. Note that I determine whether or not your posts are substantial and worth full credit. To assure yourself of full credit, do much MORE than the minimum required of you! Finally, please ask questions or make

comments to ME in the thread designed for that purpose so that everyone will have clear access to and the benefit of those questions and answers.

Assignment deadline dates are strict. Really, do them far in advance of the last possible date to post for credit for that unit as no late assignments will be accepted. REALLY!! They defeat the purpose of being involved with the discussion, and do not help you or your course-mates process the material. No one wants to discuss Unit 1 ideas on exam day or during Unit 2. . . Additionally, post your assignments early to avoid technical, health, or other possible delays. If you do not understand this, ask questions. I expect almost all of you will get full assignment credit for each unit. These online assignments are intended to get you thinking and to make the ideas your own.

In the discussion board forum asking for it, you may post comments or questions about course content or course mechanics, and I will respond to them there. So I will interact with you on this discussion board, and I will try to stay out of the unit discussion boards. Oh, I might not be able to help myself, but mostly, these discussion assignments are about you interacting with each other. Finally, all assignment posts are required course content and may be included on exams. So be sure to keep up with your course-mates are thinking and writing.

### **Final comments**

Please— 1. Read this syllabus carefully and note all assignment and exam dates— they come quite quickly. Do not fall behind! 2. Because the course is online, you have to be able to work hard—ON YOUR OWN. Do not just read chapters. . . study and learn them so that you can talk about specific issues, findings, and concepts. You should be able to teach the ideas to someone else. In other words, a casual understanding of the basic topics is NOT enough to be successful in this course. That is because I do not want you to forget these important ideas the moment you complete an exam-- so the exams are more challenging than some expect. They require that you really know your stuff to do well. 3. Note that NO extra credit is offered. You must do the course as it is designed. 4. If you do not understand something, please ASK!!!

### **Course Outline**

#### **UNIT 1**

Week 1: Introduction to Family Chap 1+ lecture

Week 2: Exploring Families Chap 2

Week 3: Families in Social Context Chap 3

**2/10: Introduction due**

**2/16: Last day for Unit 1 assignment posts for credit**

**2/17: Exam 1 (offered 7am to 7pm only)**

#### **UNIT 2**

Week 6: Marriage Chap 7+ lecture

Week 7: Non-marital Arrangements Chap 8

Week 8: Raising Children Chap 11

**4/5: Last day for Unit 2 assignment posts for credit**

#### **4/6: Exam 2 (offered 7am to 7pm only)**

#### **UNIT 3**

Week 10: Communication Chap 13+ lecture

Week 11: Divorce Chap 16

Week 12: Remarriage/Step-families Chap 17

**5/3: Last day for Unit 1 assignment posts for credit**

**5/4: Exam 3 and any make-ups (offered 7am to 7pm only)**

\*If you have questions or concerns, feel free to contact me as often as you like. Posting to the discussion board forum soliciting your questions and comments is the most reliable method of communication with me and allows all to be involved in what you are thinking about course mechanics and content. For very private matters, use my e-mail. Note that it is best to use your UNC e-mail account as others (such as hotmail) go to my junk mail filter. Thanks.

#### **Library Services for Distance Education and Off-Campus Students: Obtaining Materials from UNC Libraries**

Off-campus students residing within 50 miles of the UNC campus are required to come to the library and borrow materials in person. Students residing more than 50 miles from campus may request that materials be delivered to them. All requests must include complete citations. We will supply materials from the UNC Libraries, as well as materials from other libraries obtained via Interlibrary Loan. Articles will be delivered via email. Books will be mailed first class. Delivery time by U.S. postal service is approximately 1 week. It is the responsibility of the student to return books by the date due. UNC does not pay return postage on books. For information on document delivery, call (970) 351-1446.

Requests for materials may be made through the following methods:

Online: <http://www.unco.edu/library/forms/distancerequest.htm>

By email: [library.ocp@unco.edu](mailto:library.ocp@unco.edu)

By fax: (970) 351-2540

#### **Students with Disabilities**

Any student requesting disability accommodation for this class must inform the instructor giving appropriate notice. Students are encouraged to contact Disability Support Services at (970) 351-2289 to certify documentation of disability and to ensure appropriate accommodations are implemented in a timely manner.

#### **Honor Code**

All members of the University of Northern Colorado community are entrusted with the responsibility to uphold and promote five fundamental values: *Honesty, Trust, Respect, Fairness, and Responsibility*. These core elements foster an atmosphere, inside and outside of the classroom, which serves as a foundation and guides the UNC community's academic, professional, and personal growth. Endorsement of these core elements by students, faculty, staff, administration, and trustees strengthens the integrity and value of our academic climate.

#### **UNC's Policies**

UNC's policies and recommendations for academic misconduct will be followed. For additional information, please see the Dean of Student's website, Student Handbook link

<http://www.unco.edu/dos/handbook/index.html>

**Notice**

The Office of Extended Studies reserves the right to cancel or reschedule courses based upon enrollment. Enrolled students will be contacted with information of any change.

**Course Withdrawal Information**

In accordance with University and Colorado Department of Higher Education policy, if you drop this class after the course starts you will be assessed a drop fee. The drop fee is pro-rated up to the half-way point in the class. You are legally responsible for payment of full tuition once 50% of this course has been concluded. In order to be eligible to receive any refund of tuition, you must contact the Office of Extended Studies (1-800-232-1749) to formally withdraw from your class. Your refund, if applicable, will be based on the date of contact with our office.

Withdrawals received via telephone during non-business hours will be processed and dated on the next working day. Failure to notify us will result in UNC tuition being owed even though you do not attend or complete the coursework.

**Student Satisfaction Evaluation:** Participants will be asked to evaluate the class, please participate in this process.