

SOC 204 Spring 2004

Professor Maxine Atkinson

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Course Justification:

The study of the contemporary family provides the student an opportunity to acquire an understanding of the roles and functions of society's most basic institution. The latter include the primacy of the contemporary family in the areas of procreation, socialization, status conferral, and emotional gratification and maintenance. The course also provides an opportunity to acquire an understanding of the relationship between the family and other social institutions. The study of the family has broad appeal and can be undertaken by students of widely-varying backgrounds.

Proposed Revisions:

The proposed revision is the creation of new learning outcomes and means of assessing those outcomes to meet the new GER requirements as set forth by the CUE.

Enrollment For Past Five Years:

Spring 1999	459
Summer 1 1999	59
Summer 2 1999	50
Fall 1999	493
Spring 2000	456
Summer 1 2000	49
Summer 2 2000	70
Fall 2000	555
Spring 2001	443
Summer 1 2001	58
Summer 2 2001	69
Fall 2001	511
Spring 2002	503
Summer 1 2002	67
Summer 2 2002	84
Fall 2002	512
Spring 2003	562
Summer 1 2003	83
Summer 2 2003	96
Fall 2003	409

Resources Statement:

N/A

Consultation with other Departments:

N/A

Welcome! This is an introductory course in sociology, which serves as a prerequisite for higher-level sociology courses. I am excited about this course and look forward to learning with you. This is a special section of Soc 204 specifically designed for the First Year Inquiry (FYI) program. This course also meets general education requirements in the social sciences.

Objectives for the General Education Requirements in the Social Sciences

All courses which meet general education requirements in the social sciences will provide instruction and guidance that help students to:

1. understand at least one of the following: human behavior, mental processes, organizational processes, or institutional processes; and
2. understand how social scientific methods may be applied to the study of human behavior, mental processes, organizational processes, or institutional processes; and
3. use theories or concepts of the social sciences to understand real-world problems including the underlying origins of such problems

The course objectives for this class are to:

1. Introduce students to sociological perspectives.
2. Improve students' ability to think critically.
3. Help students understand social behavior.
4. Introduce students to sociological methods.
5. Introduce students to the application of sociological concepts to family behavior.

Course learning outcomes:

Students will

1. Demonstrate critical thinking skills.
2. Develop a sociological perspective.
4. Construct testable hypotheses.
5. Evaluate hypotheses using both quantitative and qualitative data.
6. Use simple statistics to analyze social data.
7. Develop skills in using evidence.
8. Analyze the effects of race, class, and gender on family behavior.

Evaluation Instruments for Assessing Course Learning Outcomes

One of my course assignments requires being able to meet seven of the eight learning outcomes listed above (all except 4). Students access a data set constructed from

census data generate bivariate and multivariate tables and interpret the data they produce. Specifically, students first look at the relationship between race and family structure using a simple percentage table. Second, students look at the same relationship for families who earn more than \$50,000 annually and those who earn less than \$15,000 annually. They are asked to evaluate the hypothesis that race predicts family type under two income conditions. They must also use literature from the course as a basis for interpreting the data they generate.

#### Required Texts

- (1) *Worlds of Pain* by Lillian Rubin
- (2) *Nickel and Dimed* by Barbara Ehrenreich

#### Optional Texts

- (3) *Sociological Spirit* by Earl Babbie (readings also on Electronic Reserve)
- (4) *The Sociologically Examined Life* by Michael Schwalbe  
(readings also on Electronic Reserve)

#### Articles on Electronic Reserve

- Babbie, Earl. Chapters 1, 7
- Coltrane, Scott. “The Social Construction of Gender and Families” and “Where Do We Go From Here?”
- Coontz, Stephanie. “The American Family”
- Hochschild with Machung. “The Second Shift: Working Parents and the Revolution at Home.”
- Mills, C. Wright “The Promise”
- Rubin, Lillian “Families on the Fault Line” Parts 1 and 2
- Schwalbe, Michael. Chapters 1, 2, 11, 12
- Taylor, Ronald L. “Diversity Within African American Families.”

Please purchase your texts at the beginning of the semester. The bookstore sends them back after a few weeks. You should also make your copies of electronic reserve materials about a week before the reading is required.

#### COURSE REQUIREMENTS

*Attendance:* Many important skills that you will develop and practice in this course require class attendance. We will be using active learning techniques including regular small group discussions and other collaborative learning techniques. If you miss a class, the material covered is your responsibility. The assigned reading must be done before class. Attendance will be taken. There are three usual excused absences: those due to 1) illness, 2) death in the family, and, 3) official university business. Do not assume that any other reason for an absence will be excused. Excused absences must be documented. You are allowed two un-excused absences. Your final grade will be lowered by 5 points for each class missed thereafter. Any quizzes or work done during an absence that is not excused will be assigned a zero. Work missed during an excused absence will be forgiven.

*Daily Work:* There will be five types of work counted as daily work: a check to see that you have taken notes on the reading, work completed in class either individually or in groups, short essays written in class, quizzes, or written assignments that are to be handed in at the beginning of class. Some of these assignments will be graded on a random basis. You may use your notes for all daily assignments as well as exams. It behooves you to take good notes as you read and to keep your notebook well organized. Please buy a three ring binder for the class so that you can hand in assignments and replace them after I have evaluated them. Longer or more difficult assignments will count as multiple daily grades.

*Class Participation:* Your contributions to the class are important and will be evaluated. If your class participation is of higher quality than the grades you earn on exams, you could earn up to 3 additional points on your final average. On the other hand, if your class participation is not of the same quality as your exam grades, you could lose up to 3 points on your final average. I will provide a grading rubric. In general, you must be prepared for class every meeting time. The quality of your participation is as important

as the quantity.

If you miss graded daily work, your grade will be zero unless you have an excused absence. If you have an excused absence, the zero will be dropped and you will not make up the work. If you are late to class, you will not receive extra time to finish class work. We cannot have an entire class waiting for someone. You may not hand in your homework or take a quiz and then leave class. To be counted as present, you must be in class for the entire time. If you have not completed your homework on a day homework is graded, your grade will be zero unless you have an excused absence. No one else may hand in your homework for you.

#### Exams:

You will have three exams. Your final exam will be comprehensive. Open note exams are likely. Make sure that your notes are well organized, complete, and up-to-date. Any exam may have an essay portion to be completed outside of class and must be handed in on the date due. If you miss an exam, written documentation for an excused absence must be provided. If the absence is excused, the exam may be made up at a time mutually agreeable to the student and the professor.

#### Grading System:

- (1) Your daily work counts for 20% of your grade.
- (2) Class Participation can raise or lower your final grade by as much as 3 points.
- (3) The first exam counts 20% of your grade.
- (4) The second exam counts 25% of your grade.
- (5) Your final exam will count 35% of your final grade.

The grading scale is as follows:

97-100 = A+	87-89 = B+	77-79 = C+	67-69 = D+
93-96 = A	84-86 = B	73-76 = C	63-66 = D
90-92 = A-	80-82 = B-	70-72 = C-	60-62 = D-
	59 and below = F		

### CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT

Harassment based on sex, race, or sexual orientation is against university policy and may be against the law. You deserve respect, and your instructors and peers are legally and morally bound to show you that respect. If harassment occurs, you may contact me anonymously or in person. You may also contact Dr. Patty McCall, if you wish to discuss a complaint.

### ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

NCSU's Code of Student Conduct includes an honor pledge: "I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid on this test or assignment." Any time an assignment is handed in with your name on it, it is assumed that you are abiding by the honor pledge.

## STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities should speak with the professor to arrange needed accommodations.