

SOCIOLOGY 4AA3
Special Topics in the Sociology of the Family

Fall, 2019

Day and Time of Classes: Mondays 7:00-10:00pm

Class Location: KTH B105

Instructor: Dr. Julie Gouweloos

Ext: n/a

Office Hours: (by appointment)

Email Address: gouwelj@mcmaster.ca

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Families can tell us a great deal about social inequality. In this course, we will explore how racism, colonialism, heterosexism, gender, and classism shape contemporary family life. The course content and our class discussions will be guided by feminist questions about the role that gender (and its intersections) play in informing traditional and changing family structures, motherhood, fatherhood, parenting, and childhood socialization. Students will have the opportunity to examine empirical and theoretical work on these topics. This course has a moderate amount of weekly reading; therefore, it is expected that all students will come to class each week fully prepared to engage in thoughtful and informed discussion.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

1. Demonstrate an ability to identify and evaluate different theoretical and conceptual frameworks that sociologists and other scholars use to understand the complex relationship between social inequality and diverse family forms
2. Enhance effective written and verbal communication skills through academic writing and in-class discussion
3. Articulate an understanding of how sexuality, gender, race, and class intersect to shape family experiences
4. Demonstrate the ability to think critically, and apply this skill to course material, class discussions, and written assignments
5. Please note, this course addresses numerous University Undergraduate Degree Level Expectations (for specific expectations see “Learning Objectives” section found at <http://www.sociology.mcmaster.ca/undergraduate-program/course%20outlines>)

REQUIRED TEXTS:

1. Readings are available via download through the McMaster Library and/or our course Avenue to Learn site.

EVALUATION:

Class Participation: 15%

In-class Test 1 (October 21, 2019): 20%

In-class Test 2 (November 25, 2019): 25%

Presentation (December 2, 2019): 5%

Final Paper (December 2, 2019): 35%

Class Participation (15%):

Class participation is a vital component of this course. Therefore, it is expected that all students will be active participants. *This means attending all classes, being prepared to engage classmates in thoughtful and informed discussion, and completing all in-class assignments.* Participation will be based largely on the *quality* of your contribution to the class and your reflection submissions. It is also imperative that the class function as a “safe space”; therefore, guidelines around appropriate language and behaviour will be established collectively at the outset of the course. Please note that we will be discussing important and

sensitive topics such as sexism, racism, classism, and heterosexism; however, at no point is it appropriate to engage in sexist, racist, classist, ableist, ageist, or LGBTQ-phobic behaviour.

In-class Test 1 (20%):

The first test will take place on (**October 21, 2019**) and will be written during class time. Students are responsible for all material covered up to the test date in the assigned readings as well as material discussed in class. Students will be provided with more information on the format prior to the test.

In-class Test 2 (25%):

The second test will take place on (**November 25, 2019**) and will be written during class time. Students are responsible for all material covered up to the test date in the assigned readings as well as material discussed in class. Students will be provided with more information on the format prior to the test.

Presentation (5%):

Students are required to present the major insights and contributions derived from their research paper in class (**December 2, 2019**). More details will be provided in class.

Final Paper (35%):

Each student will complete a research paper wherein they will delve deeper into an issue related to family inequality. *This will require students to conduct additional research in addition to the course readings.* Final papers are due (**December 2, 2019**). Students will be provided with more information in class.

MARKING AND ASSIGNMENTS:

NOTE: Assignments must be submitted both in hardcopy in class and to Avenue to Learn. When submitting your assignments to Avenue to Learn, you must ensure that your last name is identified in the file name, e.g. "Gouweloos-Final Paper.pdf". All pages should be numbered and have 1" margins on all sides. All text should be double-spaced in Times New Roman 12-point font and follow ASA formatting (details can be found in the ASA style guide). Failure to adhere to these guidelines will be reflected in the mark for the assignment.

Review of Marks

I will mark all assignments fairly and accurately; however, should you disagree with a mark you receive, you may have an opportunity to have your assignment mark reviewed. *Please note that when a mark is reviewed, the new mark may be lower than the original. Should you choose to request a mark review you must complete the following:*

1. Write a 1-page memo (on paper, not email) describing in detail the nature of the perceived marking error.
2. Submit this memo, with the original marked assignment to me. You may submit requests for review no sooner than one week and no later than three weeks after assignments/exams are handed back to the class.

Late Assignments and Absences

All excuses for missed work due to illness, injury and family emergency must be vetted through the office of the Associate Dean of Social Science. Please follow the procedure as outlined on the Faculty of Social Sciences website. We are committed to making appropriate accommodations for students' observance of religious holidays. Please contact me as early in the term as possible to make individual arrangements. We are also committed to working with students with disabilities to make individualized accommodations according to your specific needs. All such arrangements must be made through Student Accessibility Services. *For late assignments without approved excuses, you must make arrangements directly with*

me to hand in the assignment. Assignments will be marked down 3% if turned in late on the day it is due, and an additional 5% for each day it is late after that, including weekend days and holidays.

In this course, we will be using a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal plagiarism. To see the Turnitin.com Policy, please go to www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:

Academic dishonesty consists of misrepresentation by deception or by other fraudulent means and can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various kinds of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, specifically Appendix 3, located at <http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/AcademicIntegrity.pdf>

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained.
2. Improper collaboration in group work.
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

In this course we will be using a software package designed to reveal plagiarism. Students will be required to submit their work electronically and in hard copy so that it can be checked for academic dishonesty.

DEPARTMENTAL/UNIVERSITY POLICIES:

Do NOT email assignments. Please see your instructor for the most appropriate way to submit assignments. The Sociology staff do NOT date-stamp assignments, nor do they monitor the submission or return of papers.

The McMaster Student Absence Form (<http://www.mcmaster.ca/msaf/>) is a self-reporting tool for Undergraduate Students to report absences that last up to 3 days and provides the ability to request accommodation for any missed academic work. Please note, this tool cannot be used during any final examination period.

You may submit a maximum of 1 Academic Work Missed request per term. It is **your** responsibility to follow up with your instructor immediately regarding the nature of the accommodation.

If you are absent more than 3 days, exceed 1 request per term, or are absent for a reason other than medical, you **must** visit your Associate Dean's Office (Faculty Office). You may be required to provide supporting documentation.

This form should be filled out when you are about to return to class after your absence.

Students should check the web, and the Undergraduate Bulletin board outside the Sociology office (KTH-627) for notices pertaining to Sociology classes or departmental business (eg. class scheduling information, location of mailboxes and offices, tutorial information, etc.).

Computer use in the classroom is intended to facilitate learning in that particular lecture or tutorial. At the discretion of the instructor, students using a computer for any other purpose may be required to turn the computer off for the remainder of the lecture or tutorial.

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check his/her McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

It is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student's own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

Religious, Indigenous and Spiritual Observances (RISO)

The University recognizes that, on occasion, the timing of a student's religious, Indigenous, or spiritual observances and that of their academic obligations may conflict. In such cases, the University will provide reasonable academic accommodation for students that is consistent with the Ontario Human Rights Code. Please review the [RISO information for students in the Faculty of Social Sciences](#) about how to request accommodation.

COURSE SCHEDULE:

Sep. 9 – Introduction to the Course

No readings assigned

Sep. 16 – Approaches to Families and Inequality

Cohen, Philip N. and Danielle MacCartney. 2004. "Inequality and the Family." Pp. 181-192 in *The Blackwell Companion to the Sociology of Families*, edited by J. Scott, J. Treas, and M. Richards. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing. (Posted on Avenue)

Budig, Michelle. 2004. "Feminism and the Family." Pp. 416-434 in *The Blackwell Companion to the Sociology of Families*, edited by J. Scott, J. Treas, and M. Richards. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing. (Posted on Avenue)

Sep. 23 – Interrogating the Nuclear Family

Phillips, Richard. 2009. "Settler Colonialism and the Nuclear Family." *The Canadian Geographer / Le Géographe Canadien* 53(2):239–53.

Heath, Melanie. 2009. "State of Our Unions: Marriage Promotion and the Contested Power of Heterosexuality." *Gender & Society* 23(1):27–48.

Sep. 30 – 'Queering' the Nuclear Family

Neary, Aoife. 2016. "Civil Partnership and Marriage: LGBT-Q Political Pragmatism and the Normalization Imperative." *Sexualities* 19(7):757–79.

Green, Adam Isaiah. 2010. "QUEER UNIONS: Same-Sex Spouses Marrying Tradition and Innovation." *Canadian Journal of Sociology* 35(3):399–436.

Oct. 7 – Poly* Families

Sheff, Elisabeth. 2005. "Polyamorous Women, Sexual Subjectivity and Power." *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 34(3):251–83.

Heath, Melanie. 2019. "Espousing Patriarchy: Conciliatory Masculinity and Homosocial Femininity in Religiously Conservative Families." *Gender & Society* 089124321985798.

Oct. 14 – Mid-term Break

Oct. 21 – In-Class Test 1

Oct. 28 – Adoption & Inequality

Bendo, Daniella, Taryn Hepburn, Dale C. Spencer, and Raven Sinclair. 2019. "Advertising 'Happy' Children: The Settler Family, Happiness and the Indigenous Child Removal System." *Children & Society* 33(5):399–413.

Berkowitz, Dana. 2011. "'It Was the Cadillac of Adoption Agencies': Intersections of Social Class, Race, and Sexuality in Gay Men's Adoption Narratives." *Journal of GLBT Family Studies* 7(1–2):109–31.

Nov. 4 – Motherhood

Taylor, Tiffany. 2011. "Re-Examining Cultural Contradictions: Mothering Ideology and the Intersections of Class, Gender, and Race: Re-Examining Cultural Contradictions of Motherhood." *Sociology Compass* 5(10):898–907.

Elliott, Sinikka, Rachel Powell, and Joslyn Brenton. 2015. "Being a Good Mom: Low-Income, Black Single Mothers Negotiate Intensive Mothering." *Journal of Family Issues* 36(3):351–70.

Nov. 11 – Fatherhood

Doucet, Andrea. 2016. "Is the Stay-At-Home Dad (SAHD) a Feminist Concept? A Genealogical, Relational, and Feminist Critique." *Sex Roles* 75(1–2):4–14.

Johnson, Maria S. and Alford A. Young. 2016. "Diversity and Meaning in the Study of Black Fatherhood." *Du Bois Review; Cambridge* 13(1):5–23.

Nov. 18 – Parenting and Socialization

Malone Gonzalez, Shannon. 2019. "Making It Home: An Intersectional Analysis of the Police Talk." *Gender & Society* 33(3):363–86.

Ward, Jane. 2013. "Get your Gender Binary Off my Childhood!" Pp. 43-51 in *Chasing Rainbows: Exploring Gender Fluid Parenting Practices*, edited by M. Friedman and F. J. Green. Bradford, ON: Demeter Press. (Posted on Avenue)

Pyne, Jake. 2013. "Complicating the Truth of Gender: Gender Literacy and the Possible Worlds of Trans Parenting." Pp. 127-144 in *Chasing Rainbows: Exploring Gender Fluid Parenting Practices*, edited by M. Friedman and F. J. Green. Bradford, ON: Demeter Press. (Posted on Avenue)

Nov. 25 – In-Class Test 2

Dec. 2 – Presentations and Wrap up