
Syllabus
SOC6017H: Sociology of Families I
Winter 2024

Instructor: Professor Rania Salem

Time & Location: Thursdays, 10 am - 12 pm, Room 17146

Office Hours: By appointment

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Course Description & Objectives:

This graduate seminar will expose students to themes and debates in the literature related to the sociology of families. In our first session, we will evaluate the main theoretical perspectives found in the literature. We will spend the next ten sessions surveying broad trends in the literature dealing with a number of discrete substantive topics. Readings will focus on research conducted on contemporary high-income societies, and will span the fields of sociology and demography. Students will have the opportunity to read more deeply on a substantive area of interest in the course of writing a final paper, which they will present to their peers in the final session of the semester.

Requirements & Evaluation:

Participation: This course is organized as a seminar. While I will provide a brief overview of each session's topic, class sessions will consist primarily of student presentations and discussions focused on the readings. Students' class participation will be evaluated on the basis of the quantity and quality of their contributions to class discussion, their ability to actively listen and engage with other members of the class, and the level of understanding of the readings reflected in their contributions. (10%)

Critical Reviews: Over the course of the semester, each student will prepare a total of three critical reviews. These consist of short critical essays concerning the current week's readings, and should be no more than 2-3 double-spaced pages in length. Critical review guidelines will be handed out separately. We will work out the schedule for each student's reviews during the first class meeting. Students should submit their reviews on Quercus by no later than 5 pm on the day preceding the class session dealing with the readings they have been assigned to cover. (30%)

Presenting and Leading Discussions: Over the course of the semester, each student will lead 2 discussions on the assigned readings. Starting from week 2, the student will follow my overview by

presenting a critical assessment of the assigned readings (of no more than 10 minutes) and leading a discussion on those readings (for approximately 30 minutes). We will work out the schedule for each student's presentations during the first class meeting. Please note that, depending on class enrollment, you may be working with another student on a given week's presentation. Discussion leaders should submit a list of at least 5 discussion questions on Quercus by no later than 5 pm on the day preceding the class session dealing with the readings they have been assigned to cover. (20%)

Final Research Paper or Proposal: The course's core requirement is the preparation of an original research paper or research proposal (of no more than 15-20 double-spaced pages). The paper should define a research question, review the existing literature, and either: a) analyze appropriate data and present the findings and their implications, or b) propose a detailed justification and strategy for conducting an original empirical research project. Students are encouraged to use this project to develop a conference paper, dissertation prospectus, or journal article. More detailed guidelines will be provided separately. A 3-4 page proposal is due on Quercus before week 6 on February 15th. Penultimate drafts of the final paper will be presented in a 12-15 minute oral presentation (5%) during the final session of the semester, when students will have the opportunity to receive feedback from their peers. The final paper will be due on Quercus on a date following week 12 that is to be announced (35%).

Course Policies:

Academic Integrity: By enrolling in this course, you agree to abide by the university's rules regarding academic conduct, as outlined in the Calendar. You are expected to be familiar with the *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* (<http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/osai/The-rules/code/the-code-of-behaviour-on-academic-matters>) and *Code of Student Conduct* (<http://www.vicprovoststudents.utoronto.ca/publicationsandpolicies/codeofstudentconduct.htm>) which spell out your rights, your duties and provide all the details on grading regulations and academic offences at the University of Toronto.

Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to the University's plagiarism detection tool for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the tool's reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of this tool are described on the Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation web site (<https://uoft.me/pdt-faq>).

Use of Artificial Intelligence Tools: Students may use artificial intelligence (AI) tools to gather information from across sources and assimilate it for understanding. This may be useful for critical reviews and for the final research paper. Students using AI to help understand course material must

submit, as an appendix with their assignments, any text produced by an AI tool, and the prompts used to generate the text. Students may not use AI tools to draft text for their assignments.

Keep in mind that AI tools often fabricate seemingly credible information. The best defense against this is having a solid understanding of the course material to correct AI misinformation. Students are ultimately accountable for the work they submit.

Accessibility: It is the University of Toronto's goal to create a community that is inclusive of all persons and treats all members of the community in an equitable manner. In creating such a community, the University aims to foster a climate of understanding and mutual respect for the dignity and worth of all persons. Please see the University of Toronto Governing Council “Statement of Commitment Regarding Persons with Disabilities” at <http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Assets/Governing+Council+Digital+Assets/Policies/PDF/ppnov012004.pdf>.

Equity and Diversity: The University of Toronto is committed to equity and respect for diversity. All members of the learning environment in this course should strive to create an atmosphere of mutual respect. As a course instructor, I will neither condone nor tolerate behaviour that undermines the dignity or self-esteem of any individual in this course and wish to be alerted to any attempt to create an intimidating or hostile environment. It is our collective responsibility to create a space that is inclusive and welcomes discussion. Discrimination, harassment and hate speech will not be tolerated. Additional information and reports on Equity and Diversity at the University of Toronto is available at <http://equity.hrandequity.utoronto.ca>.

Readings:

You can access the course readings through the course’s Quercus site. Please click on “Library Reading List” in the menu to the left.

Week 1: January 11th

A Selection of Theoretical Approaches to Studying Families

Collins, Patricia Hill. 1998. “It’s All In the Family: Intersections of Gender, Race, and Nation.” *Hypatia* 13(3):62–82. (20)

England, Paula, and Budig, Michelle J. 1998. “Gary Becker on the Family: His Genius, Impact, and Blind Spots.” Pp. 95-111 in *Required Reading: Sociology’s Most Influential Books*, edited by Dan Clawson. Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press. (16)

Thorne, Barrie. 1982. "Feminist Rethinking of the Family: An Overview." Pp. 1-24 in *Rethinking the Family: Some Feminist Questions*, edited by Barrie Thorne with Marilyn Yalom. New York: Longman. (23)

Zaidi, Batool and Morgan, Philip. 2017. "The Second Demographic Transition Theory: A Review and Appraisal." *Annual Review of Sociology* 43:473-492. (19)

Week 2: January 18th

Marriage

Cherlin, Andrew J. 2020. "Degrees of Change: An Assessment of the Deinstitutionalization of Marriage Thesis." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 82(1): 62-80. (28)

Edin, Kathryn and Maria Kefalas. 2005. "What Marriage Means." Pp. 104-138 in *Promises I Can Keep: Why Poor Women Put Motherhood Before Marriage*. Berkeley: University of California Press. (34)

Fox, Bonnie with Jessica Yiu. 2009. "As Times Change: A Review of Trends in Family Life." Pp. 180-195 in *Family Patterns, Gender Relations (3rd edition)*, edited by Bonnie Fox. Don Mills: Oxford University Press. (read up to the section on divorce - 15)

Lyon, Katherine. A., and Helene Frohard-Dourlent. 2015. "'Let's Talk about the Institution': Same-Sex Common-Law Partners Negotiating Marriage Equality and Relationship Legitimacy." *Canadian Review of Sociology* 52(4): 402-428. (26)

Week 3: January 25th

Cohabitation

Huang, Penelope, Pamela Smock, Wendy Manning and Cara Bergstrom-Lynch. 2011. "He Says, She Says: Gender and Cohabitation." *Journal of Family Issues* 32(7): 876-905. (19)

Ishizuka, Patrick. 2018. "The Economic Foundations of Cohabiting Couples' Union Transitions." *Demography* 55: 535-557 (22)

Kalmijn, Mathijs. 2011. "The Influence of Men's Income and Employment on Marriage and Cohabitation: Testing Oppenheimer's Theory in Europe" *European Journal of Population* 27: 269-293. (24)

Wright, Laura. 2019. "Union Transitions and Fertility Within First Premarital Cohabitations in Canada: Diverging Patterns by Education?" *Demography* 56:151-167. (16)

Week 4: February 1st

Divorce

Kalmijn, Matthijs and Anne-Rigt Poortman. 2006. "His or Her Divorce? The Gendered Nature of Divorce and its Determinants." *European Sociological Review* 22(2): 201-214. (13)

Ketcham, Eric and Neil G. Bennett. 2019. "Comparative Couple Stability: Same-Sex and Male-Female Unions in the United States." *Socius* 5: 1-15. (14)

Margolis, Rachel, and Youjin Choi. 2020. "The Growing and Shifting Divorced Population in Canada." *Canadian Studies in Population* 47(1-2): 43-72. (29)

Reissman, Catherine K. 2014. "Mourning Different Dreams: Gender and the Companionate Marriage." Pp. 450-467 in *Family Patterns, Gender Relations (4th edition)*, edited by Bonnie Fox. Don Mills: Oxford University Press. (17)

Week 5: February 8th

Dating and Courtship

Hamilton, Laura and Elizabeth Armstrong. 2009. "Gendered Sexuality in Young Adulthood: Double Binds and Flawed Options." *Gender & Society* 23(5): 589-616. (27)

Lamont, Ellen. 2014. "Negotiating Courtship: Reconciling Egalitarian Ideals with Traditional Gender Norms." *Gender & Society* 28(2): 189-211. (22)

Lamont, Ellen. 2017. "'We can write the scripts ourselves': Queer challenges to heteronormative courtship practices." *Gender & Society* 31(5): 624-646. (22)

Lin, Ken-Hou, and Jennifer Lundquist. 2013. "Mate Selection in Cyberspace: The Intersection of Race, Gender, and Education." *American Journal of Sociology* 119(1): 183-215. (32)

Week 6: February 15th

Family Structure and Child Outcomes

Cavanagh, Shannon E., and Fomby, Paula. 2019. "Family instability in the lives of American children." *Annual Review of Sociology* 45(1): 493-513. (20)

Lareau, Annette. 2002. "Invisible Inequality: Social Class and Childrearing in Black Families and White Families." *American Sociological Review* 67: 747-776. (29)

Potter, Daniel, and Potter, Emma C. 2017. "Psychosocial well-being in children of same-sex parents: A longitudinal analysis of familial transitions." *Journal of Family Issues*, 38(16), 2303-2328. (25)

Elias, Brenda et al. 2012. "Trauma and suicide behaviour histories among a Canadian indigenous population: an empirical exploration of the potential role of Canada's residential school system." *Social Science & Medicine* 74(10): 1560–1569. (9)

Week 7: February 29th

Fatherhood and Motherhood

Ball, Jessica. 2009. "Fathering in the Shadows: Indigenous Fathers and Canada's Colonial Legacies." *Annals of the American Academy for Political and Social Science* 624(1): 29-48. (19)

Doucet, Andrea. 2004. "'It's Almost Like I Have a Job, but I Don't Get Paid': Fathers at Home Reconfiguring Work, Care, and Masculinity" *Fathering* 2 (3): 277-303. (26)

Dow, Dawn Marie, 2019. "Creating Racial Safety and Comfort: Class-, Race-, and Gender-Based Parenting Concerns." Pp. 23-54 in *Mothering While Black: Boundaries and Burdens of Middle-class Parenthood..* Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. (31)

Hondagneu-Sotelo, Pierrette and Ernestine Avila. 1997. "I'm Here, but I'm There: The Meanings of Latina Transnational Motherhood." *Gender & Society* 11(5): 548 – 571. (23)

Week 8: March 7th

Carework

Laslett, Barbara and Johanna Brenner. 1989. "Gender and Social Reproduction: Historical Perspectives." *Annual Review of Sociology* 15: 381-404. (23)

Fox, Bonnie. 2001. "The Formative Years: How Parenthood Creates Gender." *The Canadian Review of Sociology* 38(4): 373–390. (17)

Moore, Mignon R. 2008. "Gendered power relations among women: A study of household decision making in Black, lesbian stepfamilies." *American Sociological Review* 73(2): 335-356. (21)

Negraia, Daniela Veronica, Jennifer March Augustine, and Kate Chambers Prickett. 2018. "Gender Disparities in Parenting Time Across Activities, Child Ages, and Educational Groups." *Journal of Family Issues* 39(11): 3006–3028. (22)

Week 9: March 14th

Housework and the Gender Division of Labor

Arat-Koc, Sedef. 2014. "The Politics of Family and Immigration in the Subordination of Domestic Workers in Canada." Pp. 316-341 in *Family Patterns, Gender Relations (4th edition)*, edited by Bonnie Fox. Don Mills: Oxford University Press. (25)

Bianchi, Suzanne, Liana Sayer, Melissa Milkie and John Robinson. 2012. "Housework: Who Did, Does or Will Do It, and How Much Does It Matter?" *Social Forces* 91(1): 55-63. (8)

Daminger, Allison. 2020. "De-gendered processes, gendered outcomes: How egalitarian couples make sense of non-egalitarian household practices." *American Sociological Review* 85(5): 806-829. (23)

Hochschild, Arlie. 1989. "The Economy of Gratitude." Pp. 95-111 in *The Sociology of Emotions: Original Essays and Research Papers*, edited by Thomas Hood. Greenwich: JAI Press. (16)

Week 10: March 21st

Beyond the Nuclear Family

Ferrer, Ilyan, Shari Brotman, and Amanda Grenier. 2017. "The Experiences of Reciprocity among Filipino Older Adults in Canada: Intergenerational, Transnational, and Community Considerations." *Journal of Gerontological Social Work* 60(4): 313–27. (14)

Jaeger, Mads Meier. 2012. "The Extended Family and Children's Educational Success." *American Sociological Review* 77(6): 903–22. (19)

Sarkisian, Natalia, and Naomi Gerstel. 2004. "Kin Support among Blacks and Whites: Race and Family Organization." *American Sociological Review* 69(6): 812-37. (25)

Stack, Carol B. and Linda M. Burton. 1993. "Kinscripts." *Journal of Comparative Family Studies* 4(2): 157–70. (13)

Week 11: March 28th

Intimate Partner and Family Violence

Cherlin, Andrew, Linda Burton, Tera Hurt, and Diane Purvin. 2004. "The Influence of Physical and Sexual Abuse on Marriage and Cohabitation." *American Sociological Review* 69: 768-789. (21)

Michaelsen, Sonia et al. 2022. "Service provider perspectives on how COVID-19 and pandemic restrictions have affected intimate partner and sexual violence survivors in Canada: a qualitative study." *BMC Women's Health* 22(1) 1-13. (12)

Miller, Jody and Norman White. 2003. "Gender and Relationship Violence: A Contextual Examination." *Criminology* 41: 1212-1248. (36)

Petit, Marie-Pier, et al. 2021. "Prevalence, Co-Occurrence, and Recurrence of Teen Dating Violence Across Dimensions of Sexual Orientation: A Longitudinal Study Using a Representative Sample of Adolescents." *Psychology of Violence* 11(2): 175–87. (13)

Week 12: April 4th

Student Final Paper Workshop