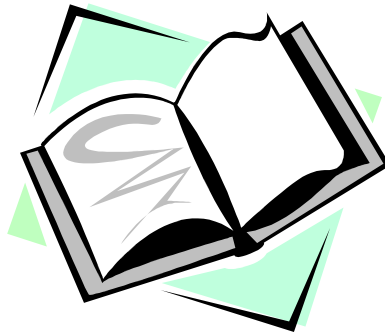


# **Marriage and the Family Soc 205**



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**SOC 205 – Marriage and the Family  
Burlington County College  
Donna Vandergrift, Asst. Professor**

**Summer 2010**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course is a comparative study of the institutions of marriage and the family in various societies with special emphasis on the sociological study of courtship, marriage, and family development and organization in the contemporary American family.

Having completed this course, you will hopefully gain a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of marriage and family patterns. Specifically, you should be able to: 1) understand the relationship between the nature of a society's culture and its prevailing marriage and family patterns, and 2) use the information presented to better understand your own personal family and marriage experiences.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

**TEXT BOOK**

Benokraitis, N. V. (2008). Marriage and families: Changes, choices, and constraints. (6<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Pearson Education, Upper Saddle River, NJ.

You are responsible for reading each article before it is covered in class so you are prepared to discuss it and to participate in in-class projects.

**EVALUATION**

There will be two (2) Exams in this course. Questions will come from lecture, your textbook, and other materials given by the instructor. Tests will consist of multiple-choice questions and other objective questions. Make-ups will be granted IN EXTREME EMERGENCIES or if advanced notice is given. A written explanation from student is required before consideration for make-up will be given. **Do not ask to take a make-up without having the written explanation**

There will be two (2) papers due according to the schedule below. These papers are reaction papers and will deal with content from text or from other materials provided by the instructor. Ten percent of the grade will be deducted for every class session the paper is late.

## **CLASS CONTRIBUTION**

**Everyone is expected to participate, do the work, and interact in class discussion.** What this really means is: Have you contributed to the learning of the class? Contribution means more than just attending class and voicing any stray thought that comes to you. It means being thoughtful and analytical, whether discussing the assignment material or bringing your own experiences into a discussion. In other words, instead of saying: "The book is wrong. My family didn't have a gendered division of labor," thoughtful analysis asks why you think this was so for your family. What conditions (structural, relationship, or communication) made your family different from the norm? In other words, you are welcome and encouraged to express your opinion, but your opinion must include reasons to support your point.

## **HONOR POLICY**

No violation of the honor code, classroom agreement, or plagiarism policy will be tolerated. See College Handbook and materials provided in this packet (p. 7).

## **GRADING**

Your grade will consist of points earned from Unit Tests and Assignments. Final grades will be given on the following scale: A=90-100%, B+ =87-89%, B=80-86%, C+ = 77-79%, C=70-76%, D=60-69%, F=59% & below. Grades of "W", "X", or "I" will only be given in accordance with college policies as described in the college handbook. In order to receive an "X" or an "I" grade, student work must be satisfactory.

## **ATTENDANCE**

Everyone is expected to attend ALL classes. Please contact Instructor by email or voice mail as soon as you are aware that you will miss class. Excessive unexcused absences are not acceptable. You are responsible of all material covered during your absence. *Find someone now who can give you missed notes and assignments*

## **CONTACTING THE INSTRUCTOR**

Office Location -	Acad. 314, Pemberton Campus
Phone # -	(609) 894-9311 or (856) 222-9311 x1251
Email -	dvanderg@bcc.edu
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## **Honor Policy**

The purpose of this agreement is to ensure that students and instructors can engage in learning, teaching, and understanding in an appropriate educational atmosphere. Please carefully read the following student and instructor responsibilities and keep this information with your class materials.

### **Student Expectations/Responsibilities:**

- Attend all classes, be on time, and remain in class (If you must be absent, it is your responsibility to notify instructor and contact classmates for notes and assignments).
- Do not disrupt class activities (i.e. no cell phones, online games) unless unavoidable circumstances arise.
- Treat classmates and instructor with respect and civility.
- Submit assignments and take tests on time.
- Read appropriate chapters prior to class lecture/discussion.
- Communicate with instructor about concerns or problems in a timely fashion.
- Be aware that acts of cheating, lying, and/or plagiarizing will not be tolerated.
- Adhere to BCC's Code of Conduct and Civility Code as stated in Student Code.

### **Instructor Expectations/Responsibilities:**

- Treat students with respect and civility.
- Be prepared for all class presentations.
- Conduct class with enthusiasm.
- Provide a learning environment that is diverse and enriching.
- Grade assignments and tests objectively.
- Return assignments in a timely fashion.
- Be available to assist students in their effort to succeed in this course.

### **Plagiarism**

Plagiarism includes copying or paraphrasing another's words, ideas, or facts without crediting the source; submitting a paper written by someone else, either in whole or in part, as one's own work; or submitting work previously submitted for another course or instructor. **Plagiarism on any assignment will result in failure for that assignment** and may result in further disciplinary action, including but not limited to failure for the course. Please refer to the Student Handbook for additional information regarding plagiarism and College regulations.

## TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topics</u>	<u>Readings</u>	<u>Assignments</u>
5/17	The Family, Research & Theory	Chapters 1, 2	
5/19	History, Race	Chapters 3, 4	
5/24	Gender, Love	Chapters 5, 6	
5/26	Sexuality, Dating	Chapters 7, 8	<b>Reaction Paper 1</b>
6/2	Relationship Options, Marriage	Chapters 9, 10	
6/7	Parenthood	Chapters 11, 12	<b>Test 1</b>
6/9	Work, Conflict	Chapters 13, 14	
6/14	Divorce, Remarriage, Stepfamilies	Chapters 15, 16	<b>Reaction Paper 2</b>
6/16	Later Families, Future of Families	Chapters 17, 18	
6/21			<b>Test2</b>

### Written Assignments

All written assignments must:

- Be typed in normal sized font (12 pt. Times is good)
- Have normal sized margins (1 inch is appropriate)
- Be two to four pages long
- Be stapled (**I will not accept if it is not stapled**)
- Have a title page with students name, course number and section, date, and instructor's name
- Have an introduction and a conclusion
- Use proper grammar and spelling.
- **Included content from notes or the textbooks to support your ideas which are properly cited.**

The reaction papers are meant to help you summarize your understanding of and reactions to the assigned readings in relation to the topics, concepts, and perspectives we have covered or are currently covering.

Make a point with your papers...have an opinion and support it with information from the readings.

Please begin your reaction paper with an introduction that identifies what you will be discussing. Do not say "This paper will be about..." Instead, try to write in a way that when you read it, you catch the attention of your audience.

Following this, move on to your "reaction". Obviously, there are many ways to react: you might say how the text confirms or contradicts other things you've read or experienced; say how convincing or unconvincing it is, and why; discuss how another author or theorists or someone from another discipline might view this reading; or identify why you think the reading is helpful, etc. One thing you should avoid saying is "I liked/disliked this reading..." Have fun with this and feel free to be creative with these papers within the broad guidelines discussed above.

The second thing is to remember that these are academic papers. As such, you need to try to relate the issue(s) you are discussing to the theoretical perspectives and concepts of this course. Such attempts are necessary for receiving full credit on a paper.

### **Reaction Paper #1: Family**

**Identify a television show that portrays a family. Consider how this show portrays families. Then address the following questions.**

1. Describe this family using one of the family theories discussed in the book or in class. Try to explain to the reader the effectiveness/usefulness of the theory as you relate it to the family.
2. **Focus Questions:** These questions are not to be answered directly, but are designed to help focus your thoughts as you read. This paper is YOUR reaction to the reading, so it is your choice what you write. But you need to develop an informed opinion.
  - How do television images contribute to myths about the family?
  - How do definitions of family influence individuals, family and/or society?
  - How do changes in society and history affect family?

### **Reaction Paper #2: Dating, Marriage, Cohabitation, and Partnership**

**Focus Questions:** These questions are not to be answered directly, but are designed to help focus your thoughts as you read. This paper is YOUR reaction to the reading, so it is your choice what you write. But you need to develop an informed opinion.

The purpose of dating and courtship has been a process to help in the selection of a marriage partner. For many, the purpose of cohabitation is the same.

- U.S. dating patterns have been criticized by sociologists. Some suggest that people do not genuinely try to get to know one another but rather strive to be "most popular."
- Research over the past fifteen years shows that marriages preceded by cohabiting are more likely to end in separation or divorce than marriages in which the couple did not live together previously.
- Approximately 50% of marriages ending in divorce.

With these criticisms and statistics, do we need to change the selection process for a potential spouse? Focus on the theories and concepts in the chapters on dating, relationships and marriage, and past and current practices (arranged marriages, online

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dating services, etc.) to develop your ideas about what might work in our society today and that might help people make good choices. Use material from the text to support your ideas.

**Grading** Each reaction paper will be graded on a scale of 25 points

23-25 points (“A”)

- your piece accurately captured some of the main points of the readings
- you shared your reactions to what you read.
- your reaction illustrates insight and understanding of the theories and concepts involved in the materials and shows that you thought carefully about what you were going to write
- good writing skills in terms of clarity, grammar, and punctuation
- proper citations

20-22 points (“B”)

- your piece accurately captured at least one of the main points of the readings
- you shared your reactions to what you read
- your reaction illustrates that you thought about the reading (and what it meant)
- you made an attempt to connect it to theoretical issues and concepts
- adequate writing skills in terms of clarity, grammar, and punctuation
- some citations

18-19 points (“C”)

- your piece did not quite capture one of the main points of the reading accurately
- you did not understand the reading and/or think carefully about your reaction(s) to it and/or attempt to link it to theoretical issues and concepts
- may indicate serious writing problems in terms of clarity, grammar, and/or punctuation
- improper citations

Receiving 0 - 17 (“D”-“F”)

- blatant inaccuracies regarding what you read and/or
- your writing problems impede my ability to understand what you wrote and/or
- no citations