SYG 2430 MARRIAGES AND FAMILIES
2013 FALL Section 3178 & 11B6

Department of Sociology and Criminology & Law | University of Florida | 3219 Turlington Hall
Gainesville FL 32611

Instructor: Chen Xie
Instructor Email: cxie@ufl.edu
Instructor Cellphone: 352-328-2366 Text Preferred
Office Location: Turlington 3357
Online Session Time: 7:30pm-9:00pm through WizIQ
Virtual Office Hours: Thursdays 5:00pm-7:00pm on Sakai Chat Room and email
In Person Office Hours: Thursdays 11:00am-1:00pm

CONTACT:

There are five ways to contact me: (1) email, (2) text message (3) phone call, (4) virtual office hours, (5) In person (Gainesville, Florida). The best way to contact me is via email. I (cxie@ufl.edu). When you send an email include the Course Number in the title of your email (i.e. SYG2430). (2) Text messages are acceptable but please be mindful that I may NOT be able to answer them immediately. I will do my best to address your questions within a 24 hour period during weekdays and a 48 hour period during weekends and holidays. (3) Please limit phone calls for emergency use as I may not be available to talk in-depth when you call. If possible please send me an email or text to set up a phone appointment beforehand. (4) I will hold one 2 hour block virtual office hours on e-learning (Sakai) weekly (the day and time will be determined by the class needs as assessed by a poll and updated by the beginning of the second week of the class). (5) We can meet In Person, on campus (Gainesville FL), however, I require that you contact me to setup an appointment at least 72 hours in advance.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is an overview of many major topics about the family in sociology. It is an introductory course therefore; we will focus on the breadth instead the depth of topics discussed. We will begin the course with a focus on couple relationships – heterosexual and homosexual—at various stages of their development. Simultaneously, we will explore the ways in which people search for intimate partners, including historical and cross-cultural variations in this process. As a result, we will examine the qualities that are most highly desired in partners today and how they vary by gender, age, race, religion, and social class that typically occur in partner selection.
We will also look in detail at the idea of commitment among committed couples married and those who do not marry (either because they choose not to or because they are legally unable to do so) and examine the ways in which this is demonstrated and interpreted in intimate relationships. We will also consider the role of sexual involvement in the development of intimacy and commitment. We give some attention to couples’ decisions to become parents and discuss the challenges paid employment poses for parents. 2 Another major emphasis of the course will be on the dynamics of intimate relationships. Starting from the assumption that there will be conflict of some type in all relationships, we will attempt to understand the primary reasons for the conflict, looking at the impact of external pressures (e.g., jobs or employers, economics, influences of friends and families). We will examine ways to effectively resolve conflict through constructive communication. We will see the ways in which factors such as gender, age, race, social class, and nationality may cause differences in communication styles that can lead to the misunderstandings between partners. We will also look at factors that are associated with the emergence of violence and abuse in intimate relationships, paying attention to gender differences in the use of violence. We will review findings of recent research which show that intimate violence, while committed by women as well as men, is more likely to have severe consequences for women. In our examination of couples in middle and later life, we will look at the impact of employment and retirement. We will consider the ending of couple relationships through divorce and widowhood. The course will end with a consideration of life after divorce – as couples remarry (or form new partnerships) and become, in many cases, stepfamilies.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**
This course is designed with the goal that you will achieve the following objectives by end of this semester:

1. Be able to put the family values debate into perspective by understanding the causes and consequences of the changes in family forms and functions that have been occurring over the past several decades.
2. Become better “consumers” of social science research;
3. Become familiar with basic concepts and theories used in social sciences, particularly sociology and psychology, but also history, economics, law, and political science;
4. Improve your critical thinking skills through consideration and debate about controversial issues associated with contemporary family life;
5. Gain valuable information that you can use in developing and maintaining your own intimate relationships.

**REQUIRED TEXTS:**
Please Note: There are many textbooks with this title. Be sure you get the one written by Schwartz and Scott AND be sure to get the most recent version of their book.

**COURSE FORMAT:**
This course will be “delivered” entirely on-line. Thus, it requires you to be very self-directed and proactive in checking the web-site daily to make sure you are familiar with course expectations and are fully aware of when assignments are due.
Almost everything you need is located in the tabs to your left in Sakai. Please familiarize yourself with: COURSE MATERIALS; ASSIGNMENTS; TESTS AND QUIZZES; DISCUSSIONS (ask questions); POLLS (I will occasionally ask your opinion throughout the course and I will utilize the Polls link to do so); CHAT ROOM (Virtual office hours) AND GRADEBOOK 2. To get started you should go to the COURSE MATERIALS tab to left in Sakai 3(e-learning). The COURSE MATERIALS link has all your lectures, videos, power points and Study questions (these questions should be used as a guideline to help you reflect and study for the exam). Please see the descriptions below for additional instructions on the other links.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING:
Though this is an online course, you expected to complete all of your assignments, quizzes and tests by yourself without help from anyone, you are allowed to use your notes and your book.

(1) Reading Quizzes (150 points)
There will be three reading quizzes throughout the semester. Each quiz will typically include material from three to four chapters from the text. The quizzes are composed of 20 multiple choice questions worth 2.5 points each. You can earn a maximum of 150 points for the three quizzes. You cannot make up these quizzes. Quizzes will be “open” (i.e., accessible) by Monday of the week in which it is due and will remain open all week. Additionally, once you start a quiz, you have only 30 minutes to complete it. You will have only one opportunity to complete a quiz, you cannot stop and resume later. Quizzes must be completed by 11:59 PM on Fridays of the week the material is assigned. If you wait until Friday afternoon to take the quizzes, be sure to give yourself enough time to deal with technical difficulties, should they arise (UF help desk closes at 5pm on Fridays). I would advise you to begin the quizzes no later than 3:00 on Friday afternoons as they must be finished by the date and time listed in the course schedule. Of course, you can take them at any time before the official deadline.

(2)Assignments (450 points)
There are 3 assignments scheduled throughout the semester. Each assignment is worth 150 points (15 percent of your final grade). The first assignment is a wedding/engagement & honeymoon plan. The second assignment is interviewing an interracial couple and writing up a short report and reflection on the interview. The third assignment is to write a short essay based on an assigned documentary, the documentary will be shown in class (online session). The detailed requirements and grading scales of each assignment will be posted on Sakai, and you will have at least 2 weeks to finish it.

(3) Exams (300points)
There are two exams in this course, a Midterm (Exam 1, worth 150pts or 15 percent) and a Final exam (Exam 2, also worth 150 points or 15 percent). The Final Exam is NOT cumulative BUT you may be asked to recall previous topics and concepts discussed throughout the semester. Each exam will address topics from the readings, the lecture and associated videos (all materials in the associated modules). Exam 1 will cover all materials covered in week 1 through week 7 (chapter 1 through chapter 7, and all materials in Modules 1 through 7) and Exam 2 will address all materials covered in week 8 through week 14 (chapter 8 through chapter 14 and all materials in Modules 8 through 14). Each exam will be open for 1 hour and 15 minutes; once you begin the exam you cannot pause and continue it later, you must finish in one sitting.
(4) Attendance (100 points)
We will meet online in virtual classroom through WizIQ once a week. There will be 13 online meeting/lecture in total through the semester. I highly encourage and recommend all of you to attend all online meetings and lectures and I have scheduled all online meetings in the evenings to compromise your work/internship/travel schedule. However, I also understand there might be potential schedule conflicts caused by your work or travel plans. So you are required to attend at least 10 WizIQ meetings/lectures to get full points of your attendance. Each attendance worth 10 points and you will get **100 points** in total for your attendance. *I understand that most of you choose this online class due to your work, internship and travel plans throughout the semester. You can also fulfill the attendance requirement by watching the recording of the weekly online sessions and write a paragraph to summarize the session as proof that you watched the session. If the online session time conflict with your work schedule, you can always watch the recording after the sessions. The recording will be available on WizIQ too, and I will send out access links right after each session.*

(5) Extra Credit (20 points)
There are two opportunities for extra credit: (i) the Course Contract and (ii) the personal introduction.

(i) You are asked to complete the COURSE CONTRACT to ensure that you understand your responsibilities as a student in this web course. The COURSE CONTRACT may be found under the test and quizzes link, called COURSE CONTRACT. Students who complete the contract by the due date will receive 10 points (1 percent) extra credit.

(ii) You are also asked to post an Introduction of Yourself (Personal Introduction). Please see the full description for information about what should be included. Students who post all information requested by the due date will receive 10 points (1 percent) extra credit. The personal introduction may be found under the Discussions tab.

**COMPUTATION OF FINAL COURSE GRADES:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Numeric Grade</th>
<th>Grade Interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>93-100%</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>930+</td>
<td>A= Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90-92.99%</td>
<td>A-</td>
<td>900-929.9</td>
<td>A-/B+= Very Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87-89.99%</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>870-899.9</td>
<td>B= Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83-86.99%</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>830-869.99</td>
<td>B-/C+= Above Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80-82.99%</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>800-829.9</td>
<td>C= Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77-79.99%</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>770-799.9</td>
<td>D= Needs Improvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73-76.99%</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>730-769.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-72.99%</td>
<td>C-</td>
<td>700-729.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-69.99%</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>600-699.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-59%</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>≤590</td>
<td>E= Poor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
POLICY ON LATE ASSIGNMENTS:
Because of the fast-paced nature of Summer A classes, no assignments will be accepted after the due dates unless written documentation is provided to the Instructor within 24 hours of the missed assignment. Documentation must come from a medical or legal authority. You must provide the same quality of documentation that is expected by the UF petitions committee. Late work that involves technical difficulties with E-learning MUST be accompanied by a ticket number from the Help Desk. If you have a problem accessing materials or submitting assignments, contact the Help Desk immediately before contacting your instructor. If your ticket number indicates that you waited until the last minute to submit an assignment, it is not likely to be accepted. Please keep in mind that online courses require an enormous amount of self-direction and independent work. Thus, it is essential that you keep up with all assignments each week. Early work is always accepted!!!

ACADEMIC HONESTY:
By enrolling in this course, you are indicating your consent to the University of Florida Honor Code:

We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” Violation of the Honor Code will not be tolerated and can result in immediate Failure and additional disciplinary action. If you do not know what behaviors are considered a violation, it is your responsibility to find out. Visit the following website for more information:

http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/honorcode.php

STUDENTS WITH DOCUMENTED DISABILITIES:
Students who require course-related accommodations must first register with the Disability Resource Center in the Dean of Students Office (http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/). The Disability Resource Center will provide documentation for you to submit to your instructors. Please deliver this documentation to the Sociology Department office (3219 Turlington) no later than the end of the first week of class. For more information, contact the Disability Resource Center (which is located at 001 Reid Hall, south side, ground floor) by phone at 392-8565. Please let the Instructor know if is there is anything else we can do to make your experiences in the course more effective for you.

“How to” Appendix...

Where do I go for help?
1. Check the Course Handbook on the e-learning web-site.
2. Check the on-line Course Questions discussion board for an answer to your question.
3. If your question is NOT about grades or a private matter, post your question to the Course Questions discussion board. This is the fastest way to get an answer to your question. Be sure to give it a meaningful heading! Do not post personal grade questions on the Course Questions discussion board.
4. Questions of a private nature should be e-mailed to the course instructor (see below on how to e-mail within E-learning).
5. In all cases, please allow 24 hours for a response. Questions posted over the weekend may not receive a response until Monday.

**How do you know when to contact the UF Help Desk?**
In the event that you have technical difficulties with E-learning, please contact the UF helpdesk at helpdesk@ufl.edu, or (352) 392-4357 (and select option 2). If your technical difficulties will cause you to miss a due date, you MUST report the problem to E-learning. Include the ticket number that you are given by the Help Desk in an e-mail to the Instructor to explain the late assignment/quiz/discussion post.

Types of questions/problems that should be directed to the Help Desk:
1. I can't log into E-learning
2. I have clicked on the "submit" button for my quiz and nothing is happening
3. I can't upload an assignment (be sure that you have reviewed the tutorial on how to do this BEFORE you contact the Help Desk)
4. E-learning has given me an error message and I can't submit my assignment.

**How do I know when to post the question to the Course Question Discussion Board?**
Questions that deal with the course itself should be submitted to the Course Question Discussion Board. These should be things that other students in the class might be having trouble with.
1. I don't see my quiz
2. The link to a video is not working
3. One of the quiz questions did not display properly

**How do I know when to e-mail my Instructor?**
Questions that pertain to you only or that are of a private nature should be e-mailed to the instructor. Do not post questions about your grades on the Course Questions discussion board.
1. I think there is an error in my grade for the oral assignment in module 3 (be sure to explain exactly why you think there is an error and provide documentation)
2. I have a family emergency and will not be able to complete my work in time for the due dates next week. (In such a case, be sure to contact the Dean of Students as well.)
3. I am behind in the course and I would like to know how I may catch up (in such a case, your instructor may ask you to come in for a meeting, or in the case of a distance student, talk on the telephone).