

HOPE COLLEGE

SYLLABUS
SOCIOLOGY OF THE FAMILY - SOC/SW 233

Dr. James C. Piers

Fall 2005

Ext 7553

Office hours: Appointments may be made through our office secretary

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will use a social scientific perspective to introduce you to the study of the family. We will examine contemporary theory and research findings on family life as they relate to trends in family form, issues, problems, and functioning in American society, as well as family organization in different ethnic, cultural, and historic settings.

This course will: examine several theoretical approaches to viewing family, examine the family as a social system, examine: issues in the American family, diverse family forms, the social-class variations in the U.S. family and ethnically diverse families in the U.S. Prerequisite: SOC 101 and SWK 232.

READINGS

Eshleman, J. Ross, The Family: An Introduction. Boston: Allen and Bacon, Inc., 2003.

Assigned readings will also be made throughout the semester.

It is critical that you read the required materials as we progress in this course. Lectures will make reference to reading materials and we will utilize these materials in discussion. If you have not done the reading, you will lose some of the value of the lectures and will be less able to participate in class activities and discussions.

METHOD

Lecture, guest speakers, small group discussion, and occasional films will be part of the teaching method.

OBJECTIVES FOR THE COURSE

1. Apply critical thinking skills within the context of this family course. (Outcome measure: tests)

2. Develop and foster an understanding of and respect for the positive value of diversity. (Outcome measures: Discussion, tests)
3. Develop and apply knowledge of social variables intrinsic in family systems that affect individual development and behavior, and use theoretical frameworks to understand the interactions among individuals and between individuals and the family social system. (Outcome measures: tests)
4. Analyze the impact of social policies on families and their members. (Outcome measure: test 4)
5. Evaluate research studies on relevant aspects of family functioning with the intent of applying the findings to social work practice courses, and to evaluate practice interventions. (Outcome measure: tests)

LIBERAL ARTS FOUNDATION

In this course, you will be expected to utilize the theoretical knowledge you have gleaned from several of your core and cognate courses. Biology and the social sciences will help you understand various client systems. Several courses will help you to understand diversity. Natural and social science research methodology will help you evaluate intervention effectiveness. Your liberal arts study of religion and philosophy will help you understand the values, ethics and ethical dilemmas encountered in generalist practice. Your written, verbal and critical thinking skills, honed by all the Hope College courses, will aid you in analyzing and facilitating solutions and interventive strategies in the cases to be presented during the semester.

HUMAN DIVERSITY

Your studies of foreign languages, the arts, sociology, political science, psychology, and history offer insights into diverse populations, their cultural beginnings, how needs of diverse groups are or are not met, and how diverse individuals and groups may behave and function.

POPULATIONS AT RISK

Students will gain an understanding of populations at risk through course discussions and readings. These interactions between family systems and at-risk populations will be considered throughout the course.

VALUES AND ETHICS AND THE CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVE

It is specifically in the practice of social work where your professional and personal values and ethics and Christian perspectives are integrated and converge or battle one another and cause personal strife. You will have opportunity to clarify your personal values; and examine some Christian perspective as they relate to specific situations and cases to be discussed in class, readings and cases.

COURSE OUTLINE AND READING

<u>DATE</u>	<u>TOPIC</u>	<u>READINGS</u>
Oct. 18 & 20	Issues and Family Change and Organization The family as a social institution Issues in the U.S. family Characteristics of the U.S. family Significant changes in the U.S. family Theories of family change	Ch. 1 & 2
25	Diverse Family Forms Polygynous and polyandrous families Affiliated families and family networks Singlehood Single parent families Homosexual families The family and work employed wives and mothers employed husbands and fathers housewives and househusbands dual-job and dual-career marriages unemployment and its effect on the family The family and religion, education and the economy Some Christian perspectives on the family	Ch. 3
27	The African-American Family Social transitions in the U. S. Africa to the U.S. slavery to emancipation rural and southern to urban and northern negative to positive social status negative to positive self-image African-American family patterns matricentric female headed middle-class two-parent	Ch. 5

	patriarchal affluent	
Nov. 1	<u>TEST 1</u>	
8	Hispanic-American family Social status characteristics Mexican-American Cuban Puerto Rican	Ch. 6
10 & 15	Social-class variation in U.S. Families Determination and consequences of social class Social categories Social mobility	Ch. 7
17	Socialization of Children Preconditions for socialization Gender identity and sex-role socialization Video: <i>Boys and Girls are Different</i>	Ch. 13
22	The Family and Social Policy Meaning and use of family policy Use of research to establish family policy Issues surrounding family policy Conservative and liberal perspectives on family policy	Ch. 17
29	Meanings of money	
Dec. 1	Spousal Conflict and resolution	
Dec 6 & 8	Factors associated with positive marital outcomes	
12	<u>TEST 2</u>	<u>4:30</u>
14	<u>TEST 2</u>	<u>8:00</u>

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