

**Dominican College**  
**Sociology of the Family S0224V**

Spring 2021

**Course Syllabus**

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**Course Description:**

As a course in GEC IIIb, The Sociology of Family focuses explicitly on present day values issues. The goal is to engage the student in a process that requires some distancing from preconceptions, prejudices, and pre-formed opinions. It requires the development of a reflective stance on one's received culture and its beliefs. It expects the student ultimately to take a position on the issue which is informed and well thought-out as well as cognizant and respectful of others opinions on the issue. An in-depth analysis of the values associated with the American family from a sociological perspective. There will be particular emphasis on the themes of intimacy, diversity and strength, as they pertain to the family system. Family values, norms and customs will be studied, as well as the impact of cultural variations and major social issues that confront the family.

**Course Objectives:**

- a. To be able to conduct an analysis of the family from a sociological perspective and to use this perspective in examining gender socialization, ethnic identity, cultural values, sexual behavior, conflict resolution, divorce, etc.
- b. To understand the structure, functions and history of the family.
- c. To give attention to facts, trends and concepts for analysis when studying the family
- d. To be aware of the common myths and misconceptions about the nature of marriage and family.
- e. To reflect on, interpret and understand one's own family experience.
- f. To understand the impact of social change on the family over time.
- g. To utilize a sociological perspective as part of one's continuing intellectual
- h. To study American family patterns descriptively, historically, and anthropologically against the cultural backdrop of other societies.
- i. To examine alternatives to the traditional, nuclear family.
- j. To appreciate the important elements of love and compatibility in human relationships.
- k. To reflect on one's own family history.

**Required Text:**

Olson, D.H. & DeFrain, J. (2014). Marriages and Families: Intimacy, Diversity and Strengths. (8<sup>th</sup> ed. Or 9<sup>th</sup> ed.) Boston: McGraw Hill.

\* Additional readings may be distributed to supplement course content.

**Methodology:**

Assigned Readings

Films and videos

Written assignment

Class discussion (via BlackBoard) of current trends articles

**Course Requirements:**

1. Timely completion of all Discussion Question
2. Timely completion of all Term Paper Assignments
3. Completion of Midterm and Final examinations.
4. Reflective, thoughtful and meaningful class participation.
5. Demonstrated respect for peers and differences of opinion.
6. Preparation for class by reading assigned course material prior to class meetings.
7. APA format is to be used for all writing assignments
8. All students are expected to demonstrate college level skills in both oral and written
9. communication.
10. This will be considered in the grading of all assignments and in the evaluation of the quality of class participation.
11. The Instructor will be available to confer with students, either by email or in person, at students' requests.
12. All emails must be from the college email system.

**Assignments and Assessment****Assignments****(1) Discussion questions – Worth 60 points**

(a) There will be up to thirty discussion questions throughout the course. Each week I will post either one or two. **(The discussion questions can be worth between 2 and 4 points. For each question, half the points are given for responding to the original discussion question and the second half of the points are given for responding to another student's response).**

**(2) Term Paper #1 – “Genogram Project” – Worth 10 points**

(a) Due Date: **Sunday, March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021 (Midnight)**

**(3) Mid Term Exam – Worth 10 points**(a) Start Date: **Monday, March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021**(b) Due Date: **March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2021 (Midnight)****(4) Term Paper #2 - “Family” – Worth 10 points**(a) Due Date: **Sunday, April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2021 (Midnight)****(5) Final Exam – Worth 10 points**(a) Start Date: **Monday, May 10, 2021**(b) Due Date: **Friday, May 14, 2021 - (Midnight)**Term Paper #1 - Genogram Project (10 Points) - Due**Date: Sunday, March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021 (Midnight)**

In order to develop a relationship (healthy) with someone it is imperative to know oneself. What better way than to develop a genogram, or family tree of their family. Students will discover and research their own family tree. Information about this project will be explained in class. Students will create a genogram (family tree) and use symbols to describe the relationships within the family. Explain in a written paper the relationships, symbols etc. used in the genogram. Incorporate the following questions:

\*What did you learn about your family that you didn't know before?

\*Based on the genogram, what types of family patterns have become apparent?

\*How do these affect you or your relationship(s)?

**Feel free to use the following link to assist you with the Genogram Project**

<https://genopro.com/genogram/symbols>

**or**

<https://www.edrawmax.com/genogram/genogram-maker/>

**Term Paper #2 - Family Paper: (10 Points) - Due Date: Sunday, April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2021 (Midnight)**

The written assignment is a course requirement and an integral part of your coursework; it is worth 10% of your grade.

Select a topic for **your paper** on any aspect of Family, such as:

Gay/Lesbian Family Life, Interracial Family Life, Mixed Religion Family Life, Single/Divorced Family Life, Cultural Specific Family Group.

These topics are suggestions you may have a different topic in mind. You are welcome to discuss your topic with me prior to doing your research. Using our library resources locate articles on your topic and submit a typed summary that includes how your topic relates to culture and diversity in our society.

Your term paper should specifically include an application of two values framework to the topic (i.e., how do people from each framework view the issue) and an assessment of the issue from your perspective. After researching the topic and looking at it from the perspective of the two value frameworks, what is your conclusion?

Your paper should also show your knowledge of the classroom material. General rule of thumb, you will need several articles to have a successful paper.

### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:**

The College Student Handbook contains a Statement on Academic Integrity. It states, "Our standard of integrity precludes any form of knowing and willful misrepresentation of one's work or performance in fulfilling course requirements or any other requisites for certificates and degrees."

It specifically lists seven practices that are breaches of academic integrity: Plagiarism, turning in copied or purchased materials, improperly obtaining examination material, giving or receiving information during an examination, using unauthorized information during an examination, signing another's name, and misrepresenting reasons why assignments are not completed on time. Enrollment in the course is considered as an agreement to abide by the policy of academic integrity. Adherence to the policy is expected and breaches will be dealt with in an appropriate manner, which will include an "F" grade for the assignment in question, and may include failure for the course. **DON'T DO IT!**

Policies and Procedures: Students in this course are expected to abide by all policies and procedures stated in the *Student Handbook* [<https://www.dc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/2018-19-Student-Undergrad-Handbook.pdf>].

You are also encouraged to make use of the many resources that the College provides to enhance their learning experience.

Give particular attention to the following parts of the *Handbook*:

- a. Academic Success Center (ASC)*
- b. Special Services*
- c. Title IX/NYS Education Law 129B*

**Proposed Scope & Sequence: (may be subject to change)**

Week 1	Chap. 1	Perspectives on Intimate Relationships
Week 2	Chap. 2	Cultural Diversity
Week3	Chap. 3	Understanding Marriage & Family Dynamics
Week 4	Chap. 4	Communication & Intimacy
Week 5	Chap. 5	Conflict & Conflict Resolution
Week 6	Chap. 6	Sexual Intimacy
Week 7	Chap. 7	Gender Roles & Power in the
Week 8	Chap. 8	Managing Economic Resources
Week 9	Chap. 9	Friendship, Intimacy and Singlehood
Week 10	Chap. 10	Dating, Mate Selection and Living Together
Week 11	Chap. 11	Marriage: Building a Strong Foundation
Week 12	Chap. 12	Parenthood: Joys and Challenges
Week 13	Chap. 13	Midlife and Older Couples
Week 14	Chap. 14	Stress, Abuse & Family Problems
Week 15	Chap. 15	Divorce, Single-Parent Families & Stepfamilies
Week 16	Chap. 16	Strengthening Marriages and Families Worldwide