

SOCIOLOGY 10, CLOSE RELATIONSHIPS AND FAMILY LIFE

**Santa Rose Junior College
Spring 2021
Sections 4960 + 6938**

Instructor: Dr. Sarah Earl-Novell, Ph.D.
Email: searlnovell@santarosa.edu
Office Hours: Canvas TechConnect Zoom
 By appointment - email me to schedule a conference call
Important dates: First day of class: 2/16/2021
 Spring break: 3/22/2021 – 3/28/2021
 Last day to drop with W: 4/25/2021
 Last day of class: 5/21/2021



COURSE DESCRIPTION

Welcome to this course in sociology. “Close Relationships and Family Life” is a specific field within sociology and while this class is designed to enhance awareness of self, it primarily focuses on group patterns of behavior in modern society. The particular social forces discussed with reference to each topic are those that go beyond understanding individual differences and emphasize group patterns of behavior. Sociological understanding provides us with tools for analyzing the practical impact and ethical implications of human choices and decisions in the workplace, family, community, and cultures within the world.

This course provides a sociological perspective of the family as a social institution and relationships covering issues related to mate selection, singlehood, cohabitation, language and communication, gender and marital roles, marital adjustment, sexual adjustment, reproduction, child rearing, marital dissolution and abuse, and problems associated with the family in modern industrial society. We will examine the various ways of studying phenomena, and how marriage and family trends are changing. We will focus on three main theories in Sociology: (1) Structure Functionalism, (2) Conflict,

and (3) Symbolic Interactionism, and how some social phenomena (such as divorce or abuse) can be examined using those different theories.

This course is comprised of 9 modules and each module is approximately 8-9 days in length. This means you need to keep on top of deadlines – see the schedule below for important due dates. This course is asynchronous, which means that you don't "attend" class at a set time but instead work through the material at your own pace. It is also a compressed "late start" class so while it is a relatively short course, we cover the same amount of material as a regular course.

COURSE GOALS AND SKILL-BASED OUTCOMES

Perhaps the most important element of this course is *critical thinking*. In essence, this asks you to "think" versus memorize. While this material may seem to be "common sense," it is challenging. You will be required to read and think critically about how the social structures in society have affected your values, attitudes, and behaviors. When teaching this course, my objective is not to negate your belief system and provide you with a new one, but rather to provide you with an environment that allows you to think critically about the attitudes and opinions you have been given. By doing so, it is my expectation that you will develop a belief system that you can claim as your own. Happy Learning & Prepare to Think like a Sociologist!

REQUIRED READING

1. (Textbook) Knox (2018). M&F (4th Ed.). Boston: Cengage. This "low-cost" textbook is available for purchase at the bookstore on campus.
2. (Readings) I will provide links to readings in every Module. These readings will be available free online or available through the SRJC Library.



Try to figure out how best to read for this class as soon as the module opens. The readings can be long and waiting too close to the assignment due dates to begin reading may hurt your performance on forum discussions, quizzes, and exams.

DOING WELL

If you take responsibility and follow the assignments (i.e., participate in forum discussions, prepare for the exams and quizzes, and submit a term paper), you will have no problem doing well in this class. This is not a straightforward lecture-based class. Sociology as a discipline can be most effectively learned through intellectual engaged dialogue.

Students are therefore expected to read the assigned material in a module, identify the critical content of readings, and be active participants in our class forum discussions. Be sure that you understand the material as we go along and ask questions. I use Canvas and will post lectures, announcements, plus your assignment scores throughout the term. It is paramount that you check Canvas and your emails regularly so you're on top of what is required of you. I use the "Announcements" feature on Canvas so please be sure the "Announcement" feature is on and that you receive a notification when I post submission comments on your discussion. Take notes to supplement my lectures and take notes as you complete the required reading each week.

ASSESSMENTS, ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

GRADE DISTRIBUTION

5 discussion forums* @ 30 points each = 150 points

5 online quizzes @ 20 points each = 100 points

3 online Midterm Exams and a Final Exam @ 50 points each = 150 points

1 Term Paper @ 100 points = 100 points

Total = 500 points

*A student discussion forum post is worth 20 points and 2 replies to two different student posts are each worth 5 points (totaling 30 points).

Letter grades will be assigned as follows:

A: 450-500 points

B: 400-449 points

C: 350-399 points

D: 300-349 points

F: 299 points and below

IMPORTANT: Please be aware that Canvas shows you (by default) your grade calculated on *graded* assignments, so if you have any missing assignments, you need to uncheck that box to see your "true" score.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Identify and explain the essential concepts, theories, and research methods used in Sociology to analyze relationships and family life.
2. Critically assess viewpoints and proposed solutions to challenges in marriage and the family.

COURSE OF RECORD

You can view the course of record at:

https://portal.santarosa.edu/SRWeb/SR_CourseOutlines.aspx?Semester=20207&CVID=37677

ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Discussions Forum Posts and Replies (30 points):

This course includes 5 Forum Discussions requiring both an original post written by each student on the topic provided (worth 20 points) and 2 responses to two different student posts (each worth 5 points). Your discussion post should (1) include a clear reference to the reading assignment/or activity that was assigned, (2) have your reaction to the reading or activity (thoughts, opinions, or feelings), and reasons to support or explain your view, (3) be at least 200 words long and well-written. Each reply post should be at least 150 words. (See due dates in the schedule below).

Please contribute as early as you can so other students can respond to your post. Also, please note that you will not be able to see others' posts, until you've posted your original entry, answering the prompt questions. The quality of the entries matters. I will grade your discussions to let you know if your posts meet expectations. Please note that I may not be able grade each discussion right away. Please allow 1-2 weeks for your forum posts to be graded.

Midterm Exams and Final Exam (50 points):

Due to the wide scope of our "Close Relationships and Family Life" course, you will take two midterm exams and a final exam over the entire course. These exams will test you on the material from the assigned chapters of the Textbook M&F by Knox and my lectures. (See due dates in the schedule below). The exams will be timed and administered through our course Canvas site. You will have 75 minutes to complete each exam.

Quizzes (20 points):

As part of your assignment for each module, you are required to read articles, watch documentaries, TED talks, animations or interviews, and/or listen to podcasts. The articles are mostly all written by Sociologists and serve as examples of studies in this discipline. In each module, links to the academic material are provided and you will be quizzed on them. Each quiz will be timed so make sure to pace yourself when you are taking the quiz (45 minutes).

Format of Exams and Quizzes:

The exams/quizzes will consist of multiple-choice and true/false questions presented one question at a time. Once you begin, you cannot stop. You will not be able to back-up to previous questions and you will take the exam/quiz in one sitting. Although these are “open book”, it is unlikely you will do well without preparing by studying. PLEASE do what you can to avoid technical problems. If you have a serious technical problem during an online exam/quiz that prevents you from finishing it, it is important that you email me as soon as possible. When you email me, please make sure to include your name and the course number and section in the email.

Please note that taking a midterm, final exam or quiz with another student or letting another student take the test for you constitutes cheating and will be subject to disciplinary action.

Final Term Paper (100 points):

Part of your assessment is to write a term paper of 2000 words (APA format). (See the due date in the schedule below). For this assignment, choose one question from the selection below and review the grading rubric at the end of the syllabus.

Your textbook, class readings, lectures, and any supplementary readings you find should be used as a resource. Part of this assignment involves doing independent research. You can find supplementary readings via sociology blogs, national associations, and the SRJC library (see links below). Please include a bibliography or reference page at the end of your Final Term paper citing all your sources.

[Lecture Spark](#)

[Contexts](#)

[The Society Pages](#)

[American Sociological Association](#)

[National Council on Family Relations](#)

[SRJC Libraries](#)

Optional: feel free to email me a draft of your term paper for review. This draft should be in bullet-point format.

List of Questions:

1. Do you think marriage will be able to continue as a viable social institution? (see Module #1)
 - Define marriage and social institution. How has marriage changed? Has there been a shift towards individualism? What effect does the trend of individualism have on marriage and divorce rates?
2. Explain the relationship between cohabitation and marriage (see Module #2).
 - Define cohabitation and marriage. What are the statistics for cohabitation in the United States? Does cohabitation result in marriages that last? What are the reasons for cohabitation? Identify the different types of cohabitation relationships.
3. How has your gender role socialization influenced your life? (see Module #3).
 - Define sex, gender, gender identity, and gender roles. What do we mean by gender role socialization? What are the agents of socialization? How has gender role socialization influenced your educational and occupational goals, self-concept, health and relationships? Have you ever been constrained by traditional notions of femininity or masculinity?
4. Is heterosexism evident in today's society? (see Module #4).
 - Define heterosexism, homonegativity, and homophobia. What are the effects of an antigay and heterosexist social climate on the gay population in society? Discuss "coming out" and the challenges associated with the process.
5. Outline and critically evaluate the different sociological factors in relationship development (see Module #5).
 - Define romantic versus realistic love. What do we mean by homogamy? Is there a tendency for individuals to seek a partner with similar characteristics (such as race, age, education, social class, and so on)? Is the durability of a relationship dependent on the extent to which a couple is homogamous?
6. What role does technology and communication play in romantic relationships? (see Module #6).
 - Define technology and communication. What is the impact (negative and positive) on romantic relationships? Are there gender differences in communication?
7. Is there a gendered division of labor in the home? (see Module #7).
 - Define gendered division of labor. In male/female two-parent households, how are household, childcare, and work responsibilities

divided? How are these tasks “gendered”? What kind of special challenges does this create for women in the workplace and at home? How the pandemic amplified the gendered division of labor?

8. What keeps a woman in an abusive relationship? (see Module #8).
 - Define abusive. What are the different types of relationship abuse? Outline and critically evaluate the different reasons for violence and abuse in intimate relationships. Why do women stay in abusive relationships?
9. What influences individuals to have children? (see Module #9).
 - What are the subtle (and not so subtle) pressures on individuals to have children in our society? What are the key takeaways from Jennifer Senior’s interview? Is motherhood a social construction? What do we mean by social construction in this context?

COURSE SCHEDULE

(Subject to minor changes by the professor)

PART 1: THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES - CLOSE RELATIONSHIPS AND FAMILY LIFE

Module #1 (2/16 – 2/24) Introduction

Reading:

- 1) Textbook: Knox Chapter 1, Exploring Marriages & Families Today.
- 2) Lecture: Note this powerpoint summarizes the above chapter.
- 3) Article: “How History and Sociology Can Help Today’s Families” by Stephanie Coontz.
- 4) Article: “What can the history of divorce tell us about the future of marriage?” by Philip N. Cohen.

Assignments for Module #1:

- Discussion Forum #1: submit your discussion post 2/20 by midnight and two replies to students by 2/24 by midnight.
- Online Quiz #1: due 2/24 by midnight

Module #2 (2/25 – 3/5) Diversity in Family Life

Reading:

- 1) Textbook: Knox Chapter 2: Making Choices about Singlehood, Hooking Up, Cohabitation, & Living Apart Together.
- 2) Lecture: Note this powerpoint summarizes the above chapter.
- 3) Article: “Going Solo” by Eric Klinenberg.
- 4) Article: “Is Cohabitation the New Conventional” by Amanda Miller and Sharon Sassler.

Assignments for Module #2:

- Online Quiz #2: due 3/5 by midnight

PART 2: HOW SOCIAL FACTORS SHAPE PATTERNS IN CLOSE RELATIONSHIPS AND FAMILY

Module #3 (3/6 – 3/16) Gender and Ethnicity

Reading:

- 1) Textbook: Knox Chapter 3, Revealing Gender in Relationships.
- 2) Lecture: Note this powerpoint summarizes the above chapter.
- 3) Documentary: Ava DuVernay's film “13th” - on the U.S. prison system and the marriage squeeze.
- 4) Article: U.S. Births Dip To 30-Year Low; Fertility Rate Sinks Further Below Replacement Level by Bill Chappell.

Assignments for Module #3:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Forum #2: submit your discussion post 3/12 by midnight and two replies to students by 3/16 by midnight. • Online Midterm Exam #1: due 3/16 by midnight (based on Chapters 1, 2 & 3 of your Knox textbook and Lectures #1, #2 + #3) |
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Module #4 (3/17 – 3/31) Social Class and Sexual Orientation

Spring Break (3/22 – 3/28)

Reading:

- 1) Textbook: Knox Chapter 7, Examining GLBTQIA Relationships.
- 2) Lecture: Note this powerpoint summarizes the above chapter.
- 3) Documentary: Love Is All You Need.
- 4) Short presentation: Unequal Childhoods - Annette Lareau.

Assignments for Module #4:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online Quiz #3: due 3/31 by midnight • Start work on Final Term Paper: due 5/21 by midnight (see the Grading Rubric at the end of syllabus) |
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PART 3: THE SOCIOLOGY OF ATTRACTION, LOVE, AND MATE SELECTION
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Module #5 (4/1 – 4/9) Who's hot and who's not?

Reading:

- 1) Textbook: Knox Chapter 4, Examining Love & Relationship Development.
- 2) Lecture: Note this powerpoint summarizes the above chapter.
- 3) Article: "The Decline of the Date and the Rise of the College Hookup" by Paula England and Reuben J. Thomas.
- 4) Article: "Homogamy in U.S. Marriages, 2016". National Center for Family & Marriage Research.

Assignments for Module #5:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online Quiz #4: due 4/9 by midnight • Continue to work on Final Term Paper: due 5/21 by midnight (see the Grading Rubric at the end of syllabus) |
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Module #6 (4/10 – 4/19) Language and communication

Reading:

- 1) Textbook: Knox Chapter 5, Integrating Technology & Communication in Relationships.
- 2) Lecture: Note this powerpoint summarizes the above chapter.
- 3) Animation: "The Innovation of Loneliness" by Shimi Cohen.
- 4) Article: "A Cultural History of Mansplaining" by Lily Rothman.

Assignments for Module #6:

- Discussion Forum #3: submit your discussion post 4/15 by midnight and two replies to students by 4/19 by midnight.
- Online Midterm Exam #2: due 4/19 by midnight (based on Chapters 4, 5 & 7 of your Knox textbook and Lectures #4, #5 + #6).
- (If you have time, continue to work on Final Term Paper: due 5/21 by midnight)

PART 4: WORK PRESSURE AND FAMILY OBLIGATIONS
Module #7 (4/20 – 4/28) The Gendered Division of Labor in the Home

Reading:

- 1) Textbook: Knox Chapter 9, Integrating Work and Family Relationships.
- 2) Lecture: Note this powerpoint summarizes the above chapter.
- 3) Interview: The Second Shift at 25: Q & A with Arlie Hochschild.
- 4) Article: [“Motherhood Penalty’ made worse by the effects of the pandemic”](#) by Lucy Warwick-Ching.

Assignments for Module #7:

- Continue to work on Final Term Paper (see the Grading Rubric at the end of syllabus): due 5/21 by midnight
- Optional: Email draft of term paper for review (by 5/7)

PART 5: VIOLENCE IN THE FAMILY
Module #8 (4/29 – 5/7) Patterns of abuse and violence in family life

(note the longer Module due to Thanksgiving holiday)

Reading:

- 1) Textbook: Knox Chapter 10, Reacting to Abuse in Relationships.
- 2) Lecture: Note this powerpoint summarizes the above chapter.
- 3) Article: The 7 P’s of Men’s Violence by Michael Kaufman.
- 4) TED talk: “How Childhood Trauma Affects Health Across a Lifetime” by Dr. Nadine Burke Harris.

Assignments for Module #8:

- Discussion Forum #4: submit your discussion post 5/4 by midnight and two replies to students by 5/7 by midnight
- Online Quiz #5: due 5/7 by midnight
- Optional: Email draft of term paper for review (by 5/7)

PART 6: CHILDREN

Module #9 (5/8 - 5/21) The Decision to Have Children and Parenting Styles

Reading:

- 1) Textbook: Knox Chapter 11, Deciding About Children.
- 2) Lecture: Note this powerpoint summarizes the above chapter.
- 3) Radio Interview: Jennifer Senior "A Parenting Paradox: How Kids Manage To Be 'All Joy And No Fun'".
- 4) Documentary: "Raised Without Gender".

Assignments for Module #9:

- Discussion Forum #5: submit your discussion post 5/12 by midnight and two replies to students by 5/16 by midnight.
- Final Exam: due 5/16 by midnight (based on Chapters 9, 10 & 11 of your Knox textbook and Lectures #7, #8 + #9).
- Final Term Paper: due 5/21 by midnight

COURSE POLICIES

Classroom Etiquette and Student Conduct

Our class time is our safe space to discuss an array of complex, nuanced, and controversial sociological issues. Please be respectful to your classmates and myself during our discussions and in general. We will conduct ourselves in a manner which reflects our awareness of common standards of decency and the rights of others. All students are expected to know the [Student Conduct Policy](#) and adhere to it in this class. Students who violate the code may be suspended from 2 classes and may be referred to the Conduct Dean for discipline.

Make-Up Assignments and Exams

Do not turn in late assignments or miss scheduled exam and quiz dates. I will only allow make-up if you have documentation of a medical illness or must miss class for an approved academic activity. You must inform me of your situation prior to the assignment date. Please make note of our course deadlines now. Due dates for assignments are already announced here, so there are no excuses.

Adding and Dropping

Students are expected to monitor their own status in this class. You should know for certain whether you are officially enrolled or not, and what your grade is at all times. I will not give final grades to students who are not on the grade sheet I get from Admissions and Records. If you decide to drop the class, you do the work. There's no excuse for an "F" on your transcript because you forgot to officially drop the class by the deadline. You may be dropped from the course if you're inactive for 2 weeks throughout the term.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Access and Accommodations: It is the mission of the Santa Rosa Junior College to support inclusive learning environments. If there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in barriers to your inclusion or to accurate assessment of achievement—such as time-limited exams, inaccessible web content, or the use of non-captioned videos—please notify me as soon as possible. Students are also welcome to contact the [Disability Resources Department](#) (DRD). DRD is a resource for students that provides authorization for academic accommodations, training and access to assistive technology, and collaborates on strategies for academic success. You can email me or we can set up a conference call to discuss your accommodations.

Academic Honesty

All written work is to be original; plagiarism, cheating on exams and quizzes, or any other forms of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Any such behavior will be processed in accordance with the College policy on student misconduct. Academic honesty is expected from all students. Please see [Policy 3.11 for Academic Integrity](#). Taking quizzes or exams with a friend(s) is considered cheating.

Communicating with your instructor

The best way to reach me is via email. Please direct your emails to the following address: searlnovell@santarosa.edu. I will respond to your email within forty-eight hours. I never ignore emails so if you don't hear from me, assume I didn't receive your email and try again. When emailing me, please include your full name and the class and section number.

Grading Turn-Around Time

Please allow me at least one week to return your assignments. This way I can adequately review your assignment and issue you a fair grade.

Grading Rubric for the Final Term Paper (100 points)

	90-100	80-89	70-79	60-69	Below 60
Clarity (How clear is the overall paper?). Are the paragraphs well organized and do they flow in a logical fashion? Is the sentence structure sharp? Are there any grammatical or spelling errors. (40 points)	Excellent on all facets. (No problems or only very minor)	Overall very good. Some minor problems in several areas.	Fair. Noticeable problems in several areas.	Not very clear. Many distracting writing issues.	No discernable structure to the paper. Numerous writing issues.
Accuracy (Do you discuss all the essential points?). Are the statements you make summarizing the authors' arguments accurate? Do you misread or misunderstand any points being made. (40 points)	All essential points are covered. Everything stated is accurate.	Most essential points are covered. A few minor inaccuracies.	Some essential points covered.	A few essential points covered.	Points made are inaccurate and/or not related to the reading(s)
Depth/Detail Does your paper synthesize the textual material in a sophisticated and adept manner? (20 points)	Excellent depth and/or detail throughout the paper.	Good depth and/or detail throughout most of the paper.	Some depth and/or detail.	Little depth or detail.	No depth and/or detail.