



Independent Study | in Idaho

SOC 315
Marriage and the
Family

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Course Guide

Independent
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Sociology 315 Marriage and the Family

Lewis-Clark State College
3 Semester-Hour Credits

Instructor:

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Lewis-Clark State College

RV: 6/2010

2-Soc 315

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Soc 315: Marriage and the Family

3 Semester-Hour Credits: LCSC

Welcome!

Whether you are a new or returning student, welcome to the Independent Study in Idaho (ISI) program. Below, you will find information pertinent to your course including the course description, course materials, course objectives, as well as information about assignments, exams, and grading. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the ISI office for clarification before beginning your course.

Policies and Procedures

Refer to the ISI website at www.uidaho.edu/isi and select *Students* for the most current policies and procedures, including information on setting up accounts, student confidentiality, exams, proctors, transcripts, course exchanges, refunds, academic integrity, library resources, and disability support and other services.

Course Description

A study of the institutions of marriage and the family in a cross-cultural perspective, and an analysis of the various factors and forces at work in our time which are affecting relationships within the family.

Recommended prerequisite: Soc 101 and 103 [*Current Social Problems*]

14 graded lessons, 1 final paper, 3 proctored exams

Students may submit up to 2 assignments per week. Before taking exams, students MUST wait for grades and feedback on assignments, which may take up to three weeks after the date of receipt by the instructor.

ALL assignments and exams must be submitted to receive a final grade for the course.

Course Materials

Required Course Materials

- Cherlin, Andrew J. *Public and Private Families: An Introduction*. 6th ed. McGraw-Hill, 2010. ISBN 9780073404356
- Skolnick, Arlene S., and Jerome H. Skolnick. *Family in Transition*. 15th ed. Allyn and Bacon, 2009. ISBN 9780205578771

Recommended Course Materials

- Cherlin, Andrew J. *Public and Private Families: A Reader*. 6th ed. McGraw-Hill, 2010. ISBN 9780073404363

Course Delivery

All ISI courses are delivered through BbLearn, an online management system that hosts the course lessons and assignments and other items that are essential to the course. Upon registration, the student will receive a *Registration Confirmation Email* with information on how to access ISI courses online.

Course Introduction

The course explores families in the United States from a sociological perspective. We will examine the family as an institution rooted in historical and social contexts, focusing on the ways in which society shapes family norms, opportunities, and behaviors. We will also learn about the individual within the family, and how family relationships have changed over time.

Course Objectives

To meet the broad goals listed above, this course is designed to achieve several specific objectives:

1. To provide you with information about historical and contemporary families in the United States
2. To explore the relationships between individuals, as well as families and other social institutions
3. To develop analytical and communication skills that will enable you to examine and assess divergent ideas and perspectives on family issues
4. To help you apply the knowledge and skills that you gain in this course to your everyday life, deepening your understanding of your own beliefs and values and the social world in which you live

Lessons

Overview

Each lesson includes the following components:

1. lesson objectives
2. reading assignment
3. important terms (from the Cherlin textbook)
4. lecture
5. written assignment

Study Hints

- Complete all assigned readings.
- Take notes or highlight important points on each reading assignment assignments.
- Set a schedule allowing for completion of the course one month prior to your desired deadline.

Exams

Overview

- You must wait for grades and comments on lessons prior to taking each subsequent exam.
- For your instructor's exam guidelines, refer to the letter sent in you upon registration and the *Exam Information* sections in this course guide.

See *Grading* for specific information on lesson/exam points and percentages.

Choosing a Proctor/Scheduling Exams

All exams require a proctor unless an exam is self-administered.

To submit your *Proctor Information Form* online, visit the ISI website and select *Forms, Proctor Information Form*. Submit this form at least two weeks before your first exam. Refer to *About ISI Policies* on the ISI website for information on acceptable and unacceptable proctors.

Grading

The course grade will be based upon the following considerations:

14 assignments	@ 30 points each	420
3 examinations	@ 100 points each	300
<u>1 essay paper</u>	<u>@ 100 points</u>	<u>100</u>
	Total points possible	820

The following graded point scale will be used:

762 to 820 = A	631 to 655 = C+	491 and under = F
738 to 761 = A-	598 to 630 = C	
713 to 737 = B+	574 to 597 = C-	
680 to 712 = B	549 to 573 = D+	
656 to 679 = B-	492 to 548 = D	

The final course grade is issued after all assignments and exams have been graded.

Acts of academic dishonesty, including cheating or plagiarism, are considered a very serious transgression and may result in a grade of F for the course.

Contacting Your Instructor

Instructor contact information is posted on your BbLearn site under *Course Rules*.

Assignment Submission Log

- Cherlin, Andrew J. *Public and Private Families: An Introduction*. 6th ed. McGraw-Hill, 2010. ISBN 978-0-07-340435-6
- Skolnick, Arlene S., and Jerome H. Skolnick. *Family in Transition*. 15th ed. Allyn and Bacon, 2009. ISBN 978-0-205-57877-1

Choose a proctor and send the completed *Proctor Information Form* to the ISI office at least two weeks prior to taking your first exam.

Lesson	Reading	Written Assignment	Date Submitted
1	Cherlin, Chapter 1, pp. 4–35 Skolnick, Introduction, pp. 1–10	Essay questions	
2	Cherlin, Chapter 2, pp.38–74 Skolnick, Chapter 1, pp. 13–56	Essay questions	
3	Cherlin, Chapter 3, pp. 80–105 Skolnick, Chapter 3, pp. 101–124	Essay questions	
4	Cherlin, Chapter 4, pp. 108–133	Essay questions	
It is time to make arrangements with your proctor to take Exam 1.			
5	Cherlin, Chapter 5, pp. 136–172	Essay questions	
6	Cherlin, Chapter 6, pp. 176–204 Skolnick, Chapter 4, pp. 125–152	Essay questions	
7	Cherlin, Chapter 7, pp. 208–245 Skolnick, Chapter 5, pp. 153–201	Essay questions	
8	Cherlin, Chapter 8, pp. 248–267 Skolnick, Chapter 9, pp. 349–373	Essay questions	
9	Cherlin, Chapter 9, pp. 272–304 Skolnick, Chapter 9, pp. 349–373 [NOTE: The Skolnick Chapter 9 reading is needed for both Lesson 8 and Lesson 9.]	Essay questions	
It is time to make arrangements with your proctor to take Exam 2.			

Lesson	Reading	Written Assignment	Date Submitted
10	Cherlin, Chapter 10, pp., 308–338	Essay questions	
11	Cherlin, Chapter 11, pp. 342–373	Essay questions	
12	Cherlin, Chapter 12, pp. 376–403	Essay questions	
13	Cherlin, Chapter 13, pp. 406–430	Essay questions	
14	Cherlin, Chapter 14, pp. 434–462	Essay questions	
15	No newly assigned reading	Student Paper	
It is time to make arrangements with your proctor to take Exam 3.			

Lesson 1

Public and Private Families

Lesson Objectives

After reading Lesson 1, you should be able to discuss/explain and have a better understanding of:

1. The boundaries of family life
2. Different ways your family has carried out its public functions

Reading Assignment

Cherlin, *Public and Private Families: An Introduction*, Chapter 1, pp. 4–35
Skolnick, *Family in Transition*, Introduction, pp. 1–10

Important Terms

NOTE: All of the important terms in this course guide are found in the Cherlin textbook.

expressive individualism 6	public family 13	longitudinal survey 22
individualism 6	private family 14	breadwinner-homemaker family 23
monogamy 9	assigned kinship 15	primary analysis 23
externalities 10	boundary ambiguity 15	feminist theory 25
negative externalities 10	created kinship 15	gender 25
polygamy 10	hypothesis 18	late modern era 26
positive externalities 10	objectivity 18	functionalist theory 29
public goods 11	observational study 20	conflict theory 30
free-rider problem 12	exchange theory 22	

Lecture

Boundaries in families are set both by the members of the families and by societal norms. For example, we have gone through periods in American society where it was considered inappropriate to interfere with the relationship between husband and wife. However, through several recent public cases, domestic violence has come to the forefront of society. Family relationships differ from all other relationships because we are members of a family for life—no matter how we feel about the particular members.

All relationships are based on some exchange. It may not be conscious, but there is always give and take; for example, parents look after their children, providing shelter, nourishment, and affection. The situation today is complicated by greater mobility and changing norms in our society.

Written Assignment

(30 points)

A helpful hint for answering an essay question is always to provide detailed information on what the question is asking and follow up with various examples. Answer each question in one to two pages.

1. What is the difference between a *public* family and a *private* family? Explain.
2. What is the Feminist Perspective feminist theory? Explain.

Lesson 2

The History of the Family

Lesson Objectives

After reading Lesson 2, you should be able to discuss/explain and have a better understanding of:

1. Lineages and clans
2. How the hardships of the Great Depression altered family lives

Reading Assignment

Cherlin, Chapter 2, pp. 38–74
 Skolnick, Chapter 1, pp. 13–56

Important Terms

hunter-gatherers 40	polygyny 43	1965 Immigration Act 57
lineage 40	American Indian 44	baby boom 64
matrilineage 40	compadrazgo 55	birth cohort 65
patrilineage 40	mestizo 55	cohabitation 66
conjugal family 43	barrio 56	life-course perspective 68
extended family 43	remittances 56	early adulthood 69
polyandry 43	bilateral kinship 57	labor force 69

Lecture

In the past, families had to bond under very harsh environmental conditions. They had to find and share food and shelter, and protect each other from attack by wild animals and potential human predators.

Some of the traditions that were brought from West Africa are still found in aspects of African American culture, such as the number of children born out of official wedlock and an emphasis on matrilineality. Also, the heritage of slavery binds African Americans together. There is a strong commitment to social change and ensuring that all members of society are treated equally.

Society did not have the formal institutions that we have today, such as hospitals, schools, and Social Security. Families were dependent on one another for survival: thus they had to take on the other functions besides emotional ones.

Those born in the early part of the twentieth century experienced the Great Depression and the repercussions of the Depression, including unemployment and lack of food for many. That encouraged a certain amount of thriftiness, worry, and planning for the future.

Written Assignment

(30 points)

A helpful hint for answering an essay question is always to provide detailed information on what the questions is asking and follow up with various examples. Answer each question in one to two pages.

1. According to Skolnick, kinship status is the object of both formal and informal attention in societies at a high or a low technological level. Explain.
2. According to Cherlin, the life-course perspective helps us to understand social change. Explain.

Lesson 3

Gender and Families

Lesson Objectives

After reading Lesson 3, you should be able to discuss/explain and have a better understanding of:

1. The difference between sex and gender
2. Male domination

Reading Assignment

Cherlin, Chapter 3, pp. 80–105

Skolnick, Chapter 3, pp. 101–124

Important Terms

two-spirit people 80	biosocial approach (to gender differences) 85	patriarchy 93
sex 81	socialization 86	capitalism 94
gender 82	socialization approach (to gender differences) 86	socialism 96
intersexual 82	peer group 87	masculinity 98
gestation 83	interactionist approach (to gender differences) 90	patrilocal 100

Lecture

We tend to think in dichotomies, but what explains the fact that some men have feminine qualities and some women have masculine qualities? Also, why do we have such a difficult time understanding homosexuality and hermaphroditism in our society?

The answers may vary because, while traditionally America was a patriarchy, things are now in a great state of flux. It is very likely that, because men used to hunt and women used to gather, through natural selection we have had certain traits passed on to us, but with so many women in the workforce, gender roles are being reorganized in an unprecedented way.

There are also strong age and racial/ethnic differences. In older generations it was expected that girls would marry and, therefore, that it was less important for them to study. Subsequent generations do not necessarily agree with this idea. Also, minority women have traditionally worked, making education an entirely different discussion for them.

Research indicates that women are still responsible for most of the housework in families. Therefore, children are socialized to believe that “Mom will do it.” The media also plays a pervasive role by sending messages about the different gender-specific behaviors that are “appropriate” for girls and boys.

Written Assignment

(30 points)

A helpful hint for answering an essay question is always to provide detailed information on what the question is asking and follow up with various examples. Answer each question in one to two pages.

1. Can a person’s gender identity be modified? Yes or no. Explain.
2. Skolnick states, men’s desire to protect work prerogatives collides with women’s growing demand for equality and independence. Analyze this statement.

Lesson 4 Social Class and Families

Lesson Objectives

After reading Lesson 4, you should be able to discuss/explain and have a better understanding of:

1. American social classes
2. Classes in contemporary America

Reading Assignment

Cherlin, Chapter 4, pp. 108–133

Important Terms

poverty line 111	ideal type 113	working-class families 115
life chances 112	middle-class families 114	assortative marriage 119
social class 112	upper-class families 114	women-centered kinship 122
status group 112	lower-class families 115	

Lecture

Education has become a more important commodity than money in classifying individuals. A white collar versus a blue collar job plays a significant role in distinguishing classes at this point. Further, it has become difficult to classify families because, in some situations, the wife may have a better job than the husband (at this point about one-fourth of all wives earn more than their husbands).

Minority and lower-income women have traditionally worked. The labor force today depends on women—who would replace them if they withdrew from the workforce? Currently, only upper middle- class and upper-class women can AFFORD to choose not to work.

Depending on their cultural traditions, members of ethnic groups and minorities tend to have much higher expectations than do whites that they will be unemployed.

One should be careful not to overgeneralize. That said, there are some parallels between working-class and upper-class couples: gender roles are more traditional among middle-class families; however, most often both partners now work and, therefore, couples are forced to renegotiate roles.

Written Assignment

(30 points)

A helpful hint for answering an essay question is always to provide detailed information on what the question is asking and follow up with various examples. Answer each question in one or two pages.

1. How would you explain the concept of class according to Max Weber?
2. Explain what the four-class models are.

Exam 1 Information

It is time for you to make arrangements with your proctor to take Exam 1.

Before taking this exam:

- You must submit lessons 1–4 to your instructor before taking this exam.
- Please do not take this exam until you have received graded lessons 1–4 back from your instructor.
- Do not submit any subsequent lessons until you have taken this exam.

Exam components:

- Exam covers lessons 1–4
- Closed-book exam (no books, no notes)
- Essay question format
- 100 points
- One hour time limit

Items to take with you when you take the exam:

- photo identification
- V number
- pen

Exam grades and comments:

- **Graded exams will not be returned to you.**

Lesson 5

Race, Ethnicity, and Families

Lesson Objectives

After reading Lesson 5, you should be able to discuss/explain and have a better understanding of:

1. Racial-ethnic groups
2. Racial and ethnic intermarriage
3. Social capital and immigrant families

Reading Assignment

Cherlin, Chapter 5, pp. 136–172

Important Terms

Asian American 138	intersectionality 152	consensual union 159
Hispanic 138	mediating structures 154	assimilation 160
racial-ethnic group 138	total fertility rate (TFR) 156	immigrant enclave 160
non-Hispanic white 140	transnational families 158	social capital 163

Lecture

Socially constructed terms define what constitutes an ethnic or racial group. The problem is that these terms conjure up stereotypes in people's minds, even though individuals who are classified into these groups vary widely. There is no such thing as a pure racial group. Also, people do not necessarily identify with the group into which they have been classified.

As time goes on, traditions will continue to be introduced from one group into another. More children will have mixed backgrounds, making the issue of classification even more complex than it is now.

Written Assignment

(30 points)

A helpful hint for answering an essay question is always to provide detailed information on what the question is asking and follow up with various examples. Answer each question in one to two pages.

1. Why do sociologists distinguish between racial and ethnic groups for the study of the family?
2. In 1967, the Supreme Court, ruling on a case brought against the state of Virginia by a white man, Richard Loving, and his black wife, Mildred Jeter, declared such laws unconstitutional (*Loving v. Virginia*, 1967). Explain this case and why it was so important for other intermarriages.

Lesson 6 Sexualities

Lesson Objectives

After reading Lesson 6, you should be able to discuss/explain and have a better understanding of:

1. Sexual identities
2. Marital and extramarital sex
3. Queer Theory

Reading Assignment

Cherlin, Chapter 6, pp. 176–204

Skolnick, Chapter 4, pp. 125–152

Important Terms

sexual identity 179

social constructionist perspective (on sexuality) 180

Kinsey Report 181

integrative perspective (on sexuality) 184

queer theory 187

family of choice 189

living apart together (LAT) 190

extramarital sex 194

sexual monogamy 194

nonmarital birth ratio 198

selection effect 200

Lecture

Sociology tells us that sexual behavior, our most private activity, and romantic love, our most personal emotion, are heavily influenced by society. Sex and love are structured in large part by society.

Traditionally, marriage is seen as the uniting of a man and a woman; however, Massachusetts and a few European countries now recognize and allow same-sex marriages. In the past, marriage centered on the couple's procreation and raising of children. Now, as more people come to think of marriage as being centered on love and intimacy between two adults, the idea of same-sex marriages becomes more plausible. Additionally, many gay and lesbian couples do have children, from former heterosexual marriages, through modern medical procedures, or by other means. In the United States, the idea of gay marriage is currently a matter of considerable debate.

Written Assignment

(30 points)

A helpful hint for answering an essay question is always to provide detailed information on what the question is asking and follow up with various examples. Answer each question in one to two pages.

1. Explain how the relationship among love, sex, and marriage has changed over time.
2. In 1967, the Summer of Love was a "holy pilgrimage," according to the Council for a Summer of Love. Examine why sex in Haight-Ashbury was revolutionary.

Lesson 7

Cohabitation and Marriage

Lesson Objectives

After reading Lesson 7, you should be able to discuss/explain and have a better understanding of:

1. Courtship and dating
2. The wedding as a status symbol
3. Cohabitation

Reading Assignment

Cherlin, Chapter 7, pp. 208–245
 Skolnick, Chapter 5, pp. 153–201

Important Terms

union 209	individualized marriage 218	marriage market 235
courtship 210	cohabitation 227	specialization model 236
hooking up 213	pure relationship 230	income-pooling model 237
institutional marriage 216	multiple-partner fertility 232	union formation 238
companionate marriage 217		

Lecture

There is much confusion about appropriate behavior for both sexes these days, including dating and marriage. For many people, cohabitation is seen as a trial period, not as an end in itself. We tend to idealize the romantic relationship in the United States and put unrealistic expectations on partners. How much the public is concerned about the rise of cohabitation and childbearing outside marriage depends on people's religious and political views. In Scandinavian countries, the state helps support women and their children, so there are not the associations with poverty that we have in the United States.

Written Assignment

(30 points)

A helpful hint for answering an essay question is always to provide detailed information on what the question is asking and follow up with various examples. Answer each question in one to two pages.

1. Discuss why some people prefer cohabitation, while others prefer marriage.
2. Why has cohabitation increased dramatically since the 1970s?

Lesson 8 Work and Families

Lesson Objectives

After reading Lesson 8, you should be able to discuss/explain and have a better understanding of:

1. Division of labor in marriages
2. Shift work and child care
3. Dual-earner marriages

Reading Assignment

Cherlin, Chapter 8, pp. 248–267
Skolnick, Chapter 9, pp. 349–373

Important Terms

labor force 249	spillover 260
service sector 249	flextime 262
care work 252	responsive workplace 262
time-diary studies 256	parental leave 263
role overload 258	telecommuting 264

Lecture

Earnings and employment are important determinants of the relationship between wives and husbands. Several factors contribute to increased participation in married women’s labor force. During the twentieth century, the service sector of the economy expanded significantly—consisting of the workers who provide personal services such as education, health care, communication, and so forth.

The movement of married women into the labor force is one of the most important changes in American family life in the past century. It has profoundly altered everyone’s lives because it has affected the balance of power between women and men.

Written Assignment

(30 points)

A helpful hint for answering an essay question is always to provide detailed information on what the question is asking and follow up with various examples. Answer each question in one to two pages.

1. In families where the women’s earnings are greater than their husbands’ earnings, would you agree that it is the opposite of the exchange theory? (Cherlin, Ch. 1, pp. 22–24) Yes or no. Explain.
2. Analyze this statement: “The rise in working time among couples is not concentrated among those with children at home.”

Lesson 9

Children and Parents

Lesson Objectives

After reading Lesson 9, you should be able to discuss/explain and have a better understanding of:

1. Socializing children
2. Adoption
3. Single parents
4. Two-parent families

Reading Assignment

Cherlin, Chapter 9, *Public and Private Families*, pp. 272–304

Skolnick, Chapter 9, pp. 349–373

[NOTE: This Skolnick chapter reading is needed for both Lesson 8 and Lesson 9.]

Important Terms

authoritarian style (of parenting) 273	norm 274	generativity 279
authoritative style (of parenting) 273	value 274	mass incarceration 287
permissive style (of parenting) 273	androgynous behavior 277	donor insemination 288

Lecture

Opinions will vary about whether raising a child is more difficult today than it was a few decades ago. Several factors for the difficulty include pressure through the Internet, availability of drugs, and crime in school, more working parents, and increased socialization periods for children, with less available supervision.

Parents receive satisfaction from raising children, through emotional ties, their children's achievements, and the continuation of their genetics and family name, among other factors.

Written Assignmen

(30 points)

A helpful hint for answering an essay question is always to provide detailed information on what the question is asking and follow up with various examples. Answer each question in one to two pages.

1. As parents socialize their children, they act in two broad ways. Name both ways and explain why they are so important to children's growth into adulthood.
2. Why do single parents think that they need to work as much as possible to support their families? Explain.

Exam 2 Information

It is time for you to make arrangements with your proctor to take Exam 2.

Before taking this exam:

- You must submit lessons 5–9 to your instructor before taking this exam.
- Please do not take this exam until you have received graded lessons 5–9 back from your instructor.
- Do not submit any subsequent lessons until you have taken this exam.

Exam components:

- Exam covers lessons 5–9
- Closed-book exam (no books, no notes)
- Essay question format
- 100 points
- One hour time limit

Items to take with you when you take the exam:

- photo identification
- V number
- pen

Exam grades and comments:

- **Graded exams will not be returned to you.**

Lesson 10

Older People and their Families

Lesson Objectives

After reading Lesson 10, you should be able to discuss/explain and have a better understanding of:

1. Multigenerational households
2. Skipped-generation households
3. Mortality decline
4. Fertility decline

Reading Assignment

Cherlin, Chapter 10, *Public and Private Families*, pp., 308–338

Important Terms

active life expectancy 310	young-old 311	multigenerational households 323
mortality 310	fertility 312	skipped-generation households 323
centenarian 311	Medicaid 313	activities of daily living (ADLs) 326
gerontologist 311	Medicare 313	intergenerational solidarity 328
old-old 311	'tweeners 313	intergenerational ambivalence 332
older population 311	generalized exchange 321	
oldest-old 311		

Lecture

The changes that occurred in the lives of the elderly in the last half of the twentieth century were generally positive: longer life expectancy, higher income, and greater independence. Better health and affluence of the elderly have allowed them to lead independent lives while still retaining frequent contact with their children and grandchildren—a style of life both the elders and their children, for the most part, preferred.

When a family crisis arises, the elderly are often willing and able to help. Gerontologist Vern Bengtson argues that the great social changes in American families over the past several decades have increased the importance of multigenerational bonds in family life. Longer lives and better health for the elderly mean more shared years of life for grandparents, parents, and children. The increase in divorce and in childbearing outside marriage has lessened the importance of the nuclear family, and has made parents more reliant on their own aging parents.

Written Assignment

(30 points)

A helpful hint for answering an essay question is always to provide detailed information on what the question is asking and follow up with various examples. Answer each question in one to two pages.

1. Explain how family life for elderly women differs from elderly men.
2. The mortality decline has changed in two important ways. Identify both ways, and explain why people tend to have longer lifespans.

Lesson 11

Domestic Violence

Lesson Objectives

After reading Lesson 11, you should be able to discuss/explain and have a better understanding of:

1. Two kinds of violence
2. Partner rape
3. Child abuse

Reading Assignment

Cherlin, Chapter 11, *Public and Private Families*, pp. 342–373

Important Terms

domestic violence 342	intimate	foster care 358
terrorism 347	situational couple	elder abuse 360
violence 347	child abuse 354	frustration-aggression perspective 366
incest 356		social learning perspective 366
		social exchange perspective 367

Lecture

Domestic violence occurs among all classes; the problem is not limited to the poor, but evidence suggests that it is more prevalent among low-income women and men. Sociologists argue that the structural position of the poor—their lack of opportunities, their segregation in disadvantaged neighborhoods, the racism that minority group members often face—is responsible for the difference.

Physical abuse by a spouse or romantic partner is not just an act of anger; often, it is an act of control. Through the use of physical force, some seek to control the movement and activities of their partners. They may wish to keep their partners dependent on them and available to them at all times.

Written Assignment

(30 points)

A helpful hint for answering an essay question is always to provide detailed information on what the question is asking and follow up with various examples. Answer each question in one to two pages.

1. Discuss how the political and medical models of domestic violence differ.
2. Why are women more likely to report being victimized by an intimate partner than are men?

Lesson 12 Divorce

Lesson Objectives

After reading Lesson 12, you should be able to discuss/explain and have a better understanding of:

1. Three eras of divorce
2. Era of unrestricted divorce
3. Child custody
4. Long-term adjustment

Reading Assignment

Cherlin, Chapter 12, *Public and Private Families*, pp. 376–403

Important Terms

annulment 379	no-fault divorce 382 legal custody 390	joint physical custody 391
era of restricted divorce 379	physical custody 390	cooperative parenting 393
era of divorce tolerance 380	joint legal custody 391	parallel parenting 393
era of unrestricted divorce 381		crisis period 396

Lecture

The experience of having one's parents divorce is not uncommon in childhood. Approximately 40 percent of American children under the age of 18 will witness their parents' divorce. The process is often difficult. Nearly all children are upset when they first learn of the separation, although a minority who are in highly conflicted families may also feel some relief. For the first year or two after the divorce, commonly referred to as the *crisis period*, difficulties are likely to persist.

Written Assignment

(30 points)

A helpful hint for answering an essay question is always to provide detailed information on what the question is asking and follow up with various examples. Answer each question in one or two pages.

1. Describe in detail the three eras of divorce.
2. Discuss how legal custody differs from physical custody in a divorce.

Lesson 13 Stepfamilies

Lesson Objectives

After reading Lesson 13, you should be able to discuss/explain and have a better understanding of:

1. The stepfamily
2. The transitional period
3. Effects of the stepfamily on children
4. Divorce and remarriage

Reading Assignment

Cherlin, Chapter 13, *Public and Private Families*, pp. 406–430

Important Terms

cohabiting stepfamily 410	stepfamily 410	blood relatives 411
married stepfamily 410	bilateral kinship 411	intimate outsider 419

Lecture

At current rates, about one-third of all adults can expect to marry, divorce, and remarry during their lifetimes—a far higher proportion than in previous generations. When neither spouse has children from previous marriages, remarried life can be very similar to life in the first marriages. To be sure, the spouses tend to be older, more established in their careers, and more set in their preferences about personal life, but the basic day-to-day interaction is not all that different. However, when one or both partners have children from a previous marriage, the remarriage creates a stepfamily. In the past, most stepfamilies formed after the death of a parent; today, the overwhelming number form after divorce. In both types of stepfamilies, the new stepparent must adjust to the immediate presence of the children of the other spouse. This adjustment can be difficult, not just for the stepparent, but for the biological parent and the stepchildren as well.

Written Assignment

(30 points)

A helpful hint for answering an essay question is always to provide detailed information on what the question is asking and follow up with various examples. Answer each question in one to two pages.

1. Explain why some children sometimes have a difficult time adjusting to a remarriage.
2. How have increases in divorce and remarriage altered families?

Lesson 14

The Family, the State, and Social Policy

Lesson Objectives

After reading Lesson 14, you should be able to discuss/explain and have a better understanding of:

1. The welfare state
2. Social Security Act of 1935
3. Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)
4. Welfare reform

Reading Assignment

Cherlin, Chapter 14, *Public and Private Families*, pp. 434–462

Important Terms

Social Security Act of 1935 434	family policy 436	Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) 443
Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) 435	nation 437	entitlement 444
Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA) 435	nation–state 437	block grant 445
	state 437	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) 445
	family wage system 438	
	welfare state 438	

Lecture

In 1966, the United States Congress passed the most sweeping changes since the Great Depression in the program that provided financial assistance to lower-income families with children. Bill Clinton promised in his 1992 presidential campaign to “end welfare as we know it,” as the program is commonly called. During his presidency, it was transformed from an open-ended source of income to a program that required recipients to work, and limited the amount of time that families could spend in the program. The debate over the welfare reform bill, and its consequences, reflected many of the main themes of the broader policy debates between liberals and conservatives over family issues. In 1996, this bill became law.

Having studied the sociology of the family, you should be in a better position to evaluate the debate over its current and future state. The issue on which debates have centered over the past few decades is how well families care for children. Conservatives often blame trends on a cultural drift toward greater individualism—a focus on individual growth and self-fulfillment—which is said to have eroded the strength of social ties, including marriage. In contrast, defenders of contemporary families often argue that the drop in children’s well-being is exaggerated, and that forces outside of the family’s control are responsible for both decreased well-being and changes in family life.

Written Assignment

(30 points)

A helpful hint for answering an essay question is always to provide detailed information on what the question is asking and follow up with various examples. Answer each question in one to two pages.

1. Describe the welfare state. Has it helped low-income families? Explain.
2. How does the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) reinforce the obligation to work?

Lesson 15

Student Paper

Written Assignment

(100 points)

The written assignment for Lesson 15 is an essay on the family. Choose one of the two topics below:

Topics:

1. What are the key components to this thing we call “love”? What do you look for in a mate? Would you be willing to settle for less? Why or why not? Do you think you follow a storyline in your relationships? What can be done to change your storyline, if you have one?
2. Discuss how the breakup of a relationship or a divorce affects the people involved. Is it possible to have a “good” divorce? What would that good divorce look like? What are the particular issues related to marriage and the dynamics associated with it?

Paper requirements:

A minimum of eight pages, typed, double-spaced, and proofread, this paper is an essential component of the course. You must complete this paper to receive a final grade for the course.

This paper will be evaluated on several bases:

- the accuracy of the facts you use to describe the social conditions that influenced your actions (therefore, it is wise to read a major portion of the textbooks before writing);
- the astuteness of your perceptions about the factors likely to influence your actions;
- creativity; and
- the clarity of your presentation.

Exam 3 Information

It is time for you to make arrangements with your proctor to take Exam 3.

Before taking this exam:

- You must submit lessons 10–14 to your instructor before taking this exam.
- Please do not take this exam until you have received graded lessons 10–14 back from your instructor.

Exam components:

- The exam covers lessons 10–14
- Closed-book exam (no books, no notes)
- Essay question format
- 100 points
- One hour time limit

Items to take with you when you take the exam:

- photo identification
- V number
- pen

Exam grades and comments:

- **Graded exams will not be returned to you.**