DRAFT SYLLABUS

Soc 8540 : Topics in Family Sociology

Patriarchy, Power, & Pay:
Historical and Comparative Perspectives on Family Demography

Spring 2020
Instructor: Steven Ruggles, ruggles@umn.edu
Class Schedule: Tuesdays, 4:00-6:30, room TBA
Office Hours: Tuesdays, 1:00-3:00 or by appointment

Course Description and Goals:
This seminar will explore the sources of revolutionary changes in family life, including the marriage boom and bust, the rise of divorce and cohabitation, and the decline of multigenerational families. Although the course will focus primarily on the United States, we will also examine family trends in other parts of the world. We will examine the impact on families of factors including shifting norms and values; the rise of wage labor (first among men and then among women); inequality; and contraception and abortion.

Each week we take up a different aspect of family change with classic and recent scholarship that highlights the state of knowledge with regard to that topic. The required readings must be read by all of us. The “recommended for further reading” selections may be read by those who have a particular interest in that area, but they will not be discussed in class.

Requirements
This course is a seminar. Students are expected to complete all of the required readings for each class meeting and participate actively in class discussions. The “further readings” are not required, and are included only for those students who which further depth on a particular issue.

Two students will lead each weekly seminar, beginning with a brief presentation of key issues in the weekly readings.

Student performance in the seminar will be evaluated based on the following:

- Class participation (25%): Students are expected to make regular contributions to class discussions. Students should post at least two questions or discussion points about each week’s readings to our shared Google Drive by 11pm the Monday before the weekly Tuesday class meeting. Grading will consider the quality of student participation in submitted questions and class discussion. Students are encouraged to do the readings carefully, make notes in preparation for class discussions, and give thought to how the readings from a particular week may relate to other readings encountered in the course.

- Discussion Questions and in-class presentations (25%): Students will take three turns preparing discussion questions on one week’s readings and making an in-class presentation on the readings. Students will sign up for their presentation weeks during the second class meeting. Students should limit their in-class presentations to about 15
minutes and should focus on the assigned readings. Student presenters should upload copies of the discussion questions to the Google Drive. Presentations should both summarize the assigned readings (subject matter, methodology, findings, theoretical contributions) and offer some critical reflections on the arguments put forth in the readings. The presenters will then guide the discussion of the entire group.

- **Final Project (3 parts, total 50%):** Student will craft a paper related to the course and to their own interests. Ideally, students will design projects that will further their own development as scholars and researchers; examples include research proposals; pilot studies or other small empirical projects; critical literature reviews focused on a particular topic related to family demography. Students will identify a topic in consultation with me by February 11, and present a one-page prospectus for their project at the February 18 class meeting (5%). Length will depend on the project, but a rough guide would be 4000-6000 words. On April 14th, you should submit a rough draft of your paper to share with peers for editing (7%). You will discuss the draft papers with your peers in class on April 21st. The last day of class, April 28, students will provide a 20 minute (conference-style) presentation of their project and receive feedback from the class (8%). Final projects are due electronically by Friday, May 8, 2019 (30%).

- There will be no tests, no midterms or finals!

**Schedule**

**Week 1, January 21**

**Perspectives on Family Change in the United States**


Coontz, S. 2015. The real story of the American family. *American Prospect*


**Further Reading:**


**Week 2, January 28**

**Cultural Determinists**


**Further Reading:**

**Week 3, February 4**  
**Gender Revolution**  

**Further Reading:**
Week 4, February 11  
**European Family System**


*Further Reading:* 


Week 5, February 18  
**Household Economics and its Dissenters**


*Further Reading*  

Week 6, February 25  
**Nuptiality**


**Further Reading**


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**Week 7, March 3**

**Divorce**


Cohen, P.N. The coming divorce decline. Socius 5: 1-6

**Further Reading**


**Week 9, March 17**

**Race Differentials in Marriage**


**Further Reading**


**Week 10, March 24**

**Inequality**


Week 11, March 31
Contraception and Abortion


Week 12, April 7
Living Arrangements of the Aged in Historical Comparative Perspective


Further Reading


Week 13, April 14
Cohabitation


**Week 14, April 21**

**Gender, Patriarchy & Time Use**


**Further Readings**


Agnese Vitali, Bruno Arpino. 2016. Who brings home the bacon? The influence of context on partners’ contributions to the household income. *Demographic Research* 35: 1213–1244


**Week 15, April 28**

**Presentations**

**University of Minnesota Policy Statement**

The University has important policies regarding student conduct, grading, makeup work, equity and diversity, disability accommodations, and academic freedom. If you are not familiar with these policies, see [https://policy.umn.edu/education/syllabusrequirements-appa](https://policy.umn.edu/education/syllabusrequirements-appa)