Course Description

The objective of this course is three-fold: (1) Reading a textbook on gender stratification at work (2) Studying major theories and empirical research in the field of family sociology, focusing on class differences and gender relations and (3) Conducting individual research on a topic of student’s choice. Sociology of family includes four major areas: union formation and dissolution; parenting and children’s socialization; work and family; and family policies. Textbooks are mostly concerning the US context, but we will adopt comparative perspectives wherever relevant and examine the cultural and socioeconomic context of family practices.

Course Requirement

Attendance: The final grade will be lowered by one level per two weeks of absence without permission.

Course Requirement: (1) Participation in class discussions, plus a one-page written summary of the week’s core readings each week, (2) Presentation of the week—each student twice during the semester, preferably on the weeks when the topics are related to the student’s research project and (3) Course paper and oral presentation— proposal and final paper. Each of the first two requirements will comprise 20% and the course paper will comprise 60% of the course grade.

Course Paper: An empirical research paper, which should have the following components: title, a statement of the research issue and its significance, theoretical background and previous studies, hypotheses or research questions, data and methods (either qualitative or quantitative), discussion of the findings, and conclusion.

A proposal with 10 or more literatures is due by the 10th week.

Learning Objective

1) Learn the perspectives on gender stratification at workplaces
2) Learn the major issues in the field of family sociology
3) Learn the grand and middle-level sociological theories on family
4) Learn how to conduct empirical research related family issues

Textbooks


(Reference Textbooks)
Gerson, Kathleen 2009. The Unfinished Revolution: Coming of Age in a New Era of Gender, Work, and Family, Oxford University Press (G)

Course Outline

Week 1: Overview
Conducting research

Week 2-4: Stalled Gender Revolution; Gender and Work (PR)

Week 2 (January 18)

SS Reading 6; (G)(Gerson) Unfinished Revolution
Pedulla, David S. and Sarah Thébaud 2015 “Can We Finish the Revolution? Gender, Work-Family Ideals, and Institutional Constraint.” American Sociological Review 80(1) 116-139

PR Chapter 1 Work and gender
PR Chapter 2 Gendered work in time and place

Week 3 (January 25)

PR Chapter 3 An overview of sex inequality at work
PR Chapter 4 Sex segregation in the workplace
PR Chapter 5 Moving up and taking charge

Week 4 (February 1)

PR Chapter 6 Sex differences in earnings


Four recent articles from ASR related to gender wage gaps: care work, overwork, high-school, activism (choose one)
Week 5-7  Trend in Union Formation and Dissolution: “Class Divide”
Global revolution in family and personal life, cohabitation, LTA, marriage, divorce/separation, remarriage, unmarried and married childbearing, birth control, household structures

Week 5 (Feb 8)  Class divide in cohabitation, marriage, and union dissolution

*Social Class and Changing Families (CE): Introduction
Red Families v. Blue Families (CC): Chapters 1 through 8

SS Reading 9; (Cherlin) Marriage-Go-Round;
(CE) Chapter 3: (Cherlin)
*NYT, July 14, 2012, Two Classes, Divided by ‘I Do’


Week 6 (Feb 15)  International trend: Convergence?


(Reference Reading)

Week 7 (Feb 22)  Unmarried or unintended childbearing

*(CE) Social Class and Changing Families: Chapter 1
(CE) Chapter 4: (McLanahan) Fragile families


**Week 8-10 Parenting: Socializing Children**
Cultural contradictions of motherhood, Fatherhood, Unequal childhoods, Diverging development, Transnational childrearing

Week 8 (March 1) Childrearing: Concerted cultivation

SS Reading 3: (Hays) Cultural contradictions of motherhood & intensive parenting


*(reference reading)*

Chua, Amy 2011 Battle hymn of a tiger mother


*(CE) Chapter 6: (Lareau) Social class and the transition to adulthood: Differences in parents’ interactions with institutions*


Week 9 (March 8)  Children from disadvantaged families

*James Heckman, Science 2006 (Volume 132), Skill Formation and the Economics of Investing in Disadvantaged Children
(Heckman video) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tOt-dkB98UY (from 15th minute!)

SS Reading 18 (Furstenberg) Diverging development: The not-so-invisible hand of social class in the US
SS Reading 19 (Settersten) The long and twisting path to adulthood

Week 10 (March 15)  Fatherhood; Non-resident fathers

(CE) Chapter 4. Low-income urban fathers and the “package deal” of family life (SS Reading 15 (Edin))
SS Reading 30 (Edin) Unmarried with children


Research proposal due: Brief Presentation (Literature Review)

Week 11-12  Family and Work
Working hours and shifts, dual-earner family, family-friendly work environment, gender division of labor, housework, stratification and family

Week 11 (March 22)  Gender division of labor: Work, housework, & care work

(PR) Chapter 7 Paid work and family work
SS Reading 21 (Stone) The rhetoric and reality of ‘opting out’
SS Reading 23 (Williams) One sick child away from being fired

(Reference reading)
SS Reading 20 (Hochschild) The second shift
SS Reading 24 (Rubin) Families on the fault line
(SS Reading 28, 16th Edition) (Presser, Harriet) The Economy that Never Sleep
Week 12 (April 5)  Care work across borders

*Glenn, Evelyn N. 2010. *Forced to Care: Coercion and Caregiving in America.*
Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press  (Ch. 1 Who cares? Ch. 7 Creating a caring society)


(Reference Reading)


**Week 13 (April 12)**  **Family Policies**
Work flexibility; parental leave; childcare, income support, child support


*Esping-Anderson 1990. Introduction, Chapter 1
Esping-Anderson 1990. Chapters 2-3

(CE) Chapter 7 Family Change, Public Response (Smeeding & Carlson)

**Week 14-15:  Grand Theories of Family: (WKM)**

Week 14 (April 19)
(WKM) Chapters 1 through 5: Rational choice; Symbolic interaction; Life course
SS Reading 1: (Goode) Theoretical importance of the family
SS Reading 2: (Giddens) The global revolution in family and personal life

Week 15 (April 26)
(WKM) Chapters 6 through 11: Conflict; Feminist; (Systems; Ecological)
SS Reading 4: (Giele) Decline of the family: Conservative, liberal, and feminist views

**Week 16 (May 3)  Student presentation of course projects; Wrapping up**

Week 17  Course Paper Due