

**SEMESTER AT SEA COURSE SYLLABUS**  
University of Virginia, Academic Sponsor

**Voyage: Spring 2016**

**Discipline: Sociology**

**SOC 2052-101: Sociology of the Family**

**Division: Lower**

**Faculty Name: Romel W. Mackelprang**

**Credit Hours: 3; Contact Hours: 38**

**Pre-requisites:** None

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Families are being challenged in a rapidly changing world. The concept of family has is evolving rapidly in North America and throughout the world. Bonds holding families together and they are being challenged by local, country, and global forces. Economic conditions, societal structures, social divisions, inequalities in the applications of social policies are creating unprecedented challenges to family structures and stability. Yet, in the midst of turbulent times, many families demonstrate remarkable trust, resilience, cohesion, and overcome threatening forces.

In this course, we will explore the forces threatening and supporting families. Together, we will investigate the meanings of family and how global forces affect local communities and families. We will evaluate our individual and societal beliefs about families and compare them to the countries and cultures we are visiting on our journey. Collectively, we will create a learning community that expands our knowledge, challenges our beliefs, and increases our understanding.

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

The course has five objectives for the new skills and understandings students that will develop by semester's end:

1. Students will reflect on how they define the structures and purposes of their own families as a template from which to compare and contrast their personal experiences and understandings with those of colleagues and of people and cultures in countries throughout the journey/ semester.
2. Identify and comprehend multiple definitions and understandings of family within and throughout North America and globally. We will explore diverse family forms and constructions, the implications of diverse definitions of family, and the reasons families are common social structures throughout the world.
3. Develop frameworks for understanding diverse families and family structures domestically and globally.
4. Identify societal forces that support and strengthen families as well as those that stress and threaten families.

5. Understand ways in which globalization and the global economy affects families worldwide.
6. Demonstrate enhanced understanding of the sociology of families in multiple national and cultural contexts. This will include delivering original media presentations (e.g. poster presentations, power points, short films), in which students integrate course content and integrating SAS experiences with multiple cultures.

## **REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS**

AUTHOR: Andrew Cherlin

TITLE: Public and Private Families: An Introduction

PUBLISHER: McGraw Hill

ISBN #: 0078026679

DATE/EDITION: 2013/ 7<sup>th</sup>

AUTHOR: Judith Stacey

TITLE: Unhitched: Love, Marriage and Family Values from West Hollywood to Western China.

PUBLISHER: New York University

ISBN #: 9780814783825

DATE/EDITION: 2011

## **TOPICAL OUTLINE OF COURSE**

**Depart Ensenada- January 5:**

**B1- January 8:**

Introductions

Students' views of marriage and family

**B2-January 10:**

Families in contemporary societies.

Views from North America and the South Pacific

Reading: Cherlin, Chapter 1.

**B3- January 12:**

The evolution of families through history

Reading: Cherlin, Chapter 2

**Honolulu: January 12**

**B4-January 15:**

Families and gender

Reading: Cherlin, Chapter 3  
Stacey, Introduction

**B5-January 18:**

Social class and families  
Cultural influences and families

Reading: Cherlin, Chapter 4

Assignment 1 Due:

Study Day: January 19

**B6- January 21:**

Race, ethnicity and families  
North American and Asian concepts of nuclear and extended family  
Reading: Cherlin, Chapter 5

**B7-January 23:**

Japanese and North American concepts of families  
The other: Uniqueness and racial diversity in the homogenous societies  
Reading: Cherlin, Chapter 5 (continued)

*Yokohama: January 24-25*

In-Transit: January 26

*Kobe: January 27-28*

**B8- January 30:**

Cultural perspectives of love and marriage and families  
Mosuo families in China:  
Reading: Stacey, Chapter 5

*Shanghai: January 31- February 1*

In-Transit: February 2-3

*Hong Kong: 4-5*

**B9- February 7:**

Families in the aftermath of war and violence  
Disabilities and families in developing the developing world  
Extended families in North America and Vietnam  
Readings: Aftermath: Consequences for Vietnamese People  
Relationships Among Family Members in Vietnam

*Ho Chi Minh: February 8-12*

**B10- February 14:**

Family structures around the world.

Urban and rural families

Reading: Cherlin, Chapter 9: Children and Parents

Imig, D. Rural Education, Urban and Rural Families: A Comparative Study of the Impact of Stress on Family Interaction.

**Singapore: February 15****B11-February 17:**

Intergenerational and multi-generational family issue

Reading: Cherlin, Chapter 10. The Elderly and their Families.

**Yangon: February 18-22****B12-February 24:**

Sexualities and families.

Readings: Cherlin, Chapter 6. Sexualities

Stacy: Love, Sex, and Kinship in Gay El Lay

**B13- February 26:**

Family structures, cohabitation, and marriage.

Consanguinity in Western and Indian cultural contexts.

Readings: Cherlin, Chapter 7. Cohabitation and Marriage

Rao, T. S. S., Asha, M. R., Sambamurthy, K., & Rao, K. S. J. (2009).

Consanguinity: Still a challenge. Indian Journal of Psychiatry, 51(1), 3–5.

doi:10.4103/0019-5545.44897

**Cochin: February 27-March 3****B14-March 5:**

Work and workplace influences on family life and roles

Cherlin: Chapter 8. Work and Families

Study Day: March 6

**B15-March 8:**

Conflict and families

Domestic violence

Cherlin: Chapter 11

**Port Louis: March 9****B16- March 11:**

Divorce and family dissolution

Readings. Cherlin: Chapter 12

Amato, P. & Previti, D. People's Reasons for Divorcing: Gender, Social Class, the Life Course, and Adjustment

Study Day: March 12

**B17-March 14:**

The impact of poverty and affluence on families

HIV/ AIDS and African families

Reading: Stacey: Chapter 3. A South African Slant on the Slippery Slope

**Cape Town: March 15-20**

**B18- March 22:**

Family structures

Partners and parents

Family subsystems: Parents spouses, children

Readings: Stacey: Chapter 2. Gay Parenthood and the end of Paternity as we knew it.

**B19-March 24:**

Healthy sex and marriage

Sexuality and families: healthy and unhealthy expressions

Families in West Africa and Ashanti cultures

Readings: Herndon. Family Life Among the Ashanti of West Africa

Richard G. Wight, Allen J. LeBlanc, and M. V. Lee Badgett. Same-Sex Legal Marriage and Psychological Well-Being: Findings From the California Health Interview Survey. American Journal of Public Health: February 2013, Vol. 103, No. 2, pp. 339-346.

**B20-March 26:**

Variations in family structures

Global perspectives on monogamy and polygamy

Reading: Stacey. Chapter 4. Paradoxes of Polygamy and Modernity

**Tema: March 27-28**

**Takoradi: March 29-31**

**B21- April 2:**

Blended and reconstituted marriages and families

Reading: Cherlin. Chapter 13

**B22-April 4:**

Families and Society

Laws and policies impacting families

Reading: Cherlin. Chapter 14. The Family, the State, and Social Policy

**B23: April 6:**

Families in contemporary and emerging environments and societies.

Reading: Cherlin. Chapter 15.

*Casablanca: April 7-11*

Study Day: April 12

**B24: Finals Day: April 14:**

Integrative assignment presentation day.

*April 16: Disembarkment Day*

## FIELD LAB

### February 9, 2015: Ho Chi Minh City

This field lab will expose students to family issues in Vietnam. In the morning, students will visit the

Dieu Giac Temple Orphanage that is run by Buddhist monks and nuns, who care for about 100 abandoned or orphaned street children. These children range from a few months to 18 years of age and represent multiple ethnic and religious groups. Students will talk with staff about the issues facing Vietnamese families and the factors impacting the need for orphanages such as Dieu Giac, integration of the orphans into schools and society, and the children's involvement in learning handcrafts such as knitting, embroidering and making wooden toys that sold at the pagoda's souvenir shop to raise fund for the orphanage. The majority of the morning will be spent interacting with the children and helping the nuns serve the children a special lunch sponsored by the Destination Asia Vietnam and Semester at Sea.

In the afternoon, students will visit the War Remnant Museum. They will participate in a guided tour of the museum and have an opportunity to discuss, with museum staff, the US Vietnam war from a Vietnamese perspective; including the impacts of the war on Vietnamese families during and in the aftermath of the war. After this, students will be free to tour the museum's sites on their own.

#### Academic Objectives:

1. Students will understand family policies and societal conditions in Vietnam, including those that impact orphans and their place in society.
2. Students will assess cultural factors including secular and religious influences on children

and families.

3. Students will gain perspective on the US Vietnam war and how the conflict affected Vietnamese people and families, during and in the aftermath, of the war.
4. Students will compare and contrast issues facing Vietnamese families with issues facing North American families and families from one other country and culture to which students have been exposed on the voyage.

**Assignment:** Students will write a 3-5 page research paper that connects insights from the field trip to class learning. Specifically, they will choose an area of course content (e.g. the impact of laws and policies on families, the impacts of violence/ war, cultural influences on how families are defined) and apply their conceptual learning to their experiential learning in a Ghanaian context. Papers will incorporate at least four references from the professional literature to support their conclusions.

## METHODS OF EVALUATION

1. **Participation and attendance:** Attendance and participation are mandatory for this course. Participation includes active listening, contributions to class discussions, and responding to the instructor's requests for contributions to class discussions. Attendance and participation are worth 5% of the total grade, however, more than three absences will result in a drop of one full grade (barring significant extenuating circumstances).
2. **Paper #1:** Students will complete a 3 page paper (approximately) discussing their families of origin, how the concept of family was defined in their families of origin. They will then discuss their definitions and beliefs about what defines families and how their views are shaped by experience that might include social class, education, ethnicity, culture, and emerging laws and policies. Due January 17, this paper will comprise 15% of the final grade.\*
3. **Quizzes:** Weekly quizzes, generally consisting of 5-10 multiple choice questions will be taken using the onboard intranet. Quizzes will primarily cover class readings, supplemented by class discussions and lectures. Combined quizzes will comprise 20% of the course grade.
4. **Integration Papers:** Students will write five, one page integration papers by applying course content from the classroom to in-port experiences. These papers will, a) address the chosen class content, b) apply in-port experiences to class content, and c) discuss personal insights and contrasts between the two learning experiences. It is fully expected that in port experiences will not always be harmonious with readings and/or discussions. 20% of final grade.\*
5. **Field trip assignment, integrative paper.** (See field trip for full articulation of the assignment.) 20% of total grade.\*
6. Students will complete a final integrative assignment that will be presented in poster and/or power point format to colleagues. The format for presentations will mirror “poster sessions” at professional conferences in which students will present their work to individuals or small groups from the class. Other voyage participants will also be invited to see students’ works. Students will compare and contrast families from four countries/cultures including their own on the following definitions and concepts of family along

dimensions such as:

- a. What constitutes
- b. Nuclear and extended families
- c. Biological and non-biological families
- d. Roles of family members including spouses/ partners, parents, elders, children, and others
- e. Households and family
- f. Purposes of marriage/ partnerships (e.g. love, children, duty)
- g. Sexuality and families

Presentations will outline these dimensions and provide comparisons between the four groups chosen. 20% of total grade.\*

\*Note: Written assignments and presentations will be graded using rubrics developed for specific assignments using the following general format:

Sample Rubric for Grading Student Papers and Assignments

Criteria	Scoring range 1= poor to 10 =superior	Instructor feedback
Depth and breadth of coverage of topic assigned is		
Content is accurate and well supported		
Articulates insights and learning		
Writing conventions (e.g. construction, spelling, grammar)		

### **RESERVE BOOKS AND FILMS FOR THE LIBRARY**

Selected volumes will be identified and placed on reserve prior to the voyage.

### **ELECTRONIC COURSE MATERIALS**

Additional course materials will be provided by the instructor or arranged well in advance of the semester.

### **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

Instructor will supply any additional materials for use in the course.

### **HONOR CODE**

Semester at Sea students enroll in an academic program administered by the University of Virginia, and thus bind themselves to the University's honor code. The code prohibits all acts of lying, cheating, and stealing. Please consult the Voyager's Handbook for further explanation of what constitutes an honor offense.

Each written assignment for this course must be pledged by the student as follows: "On my honor as a student, I pledge that I have neither given nor received aid on this assignment." The pledge must be signed, or, in the case of an electronic file, signed "[signed]."