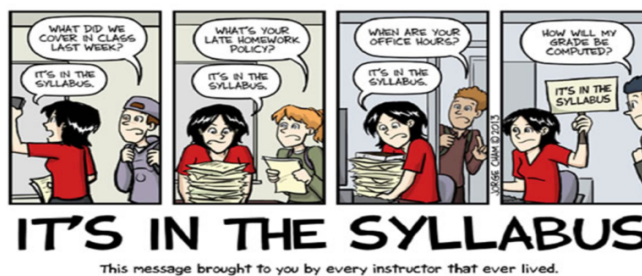


**San Jose State University  
Department of Sociology and Interdisciplinary Social Sciences  
Summer Session Syllabus**



(June 5, 2023 – August 11, 2023)

*“I tell my students, ‘When you get these jobs that you have been so brilliantly trained for, just remember that your real job is that if you are free, you need to free somebody else. If you have power, then your job is to empower somebody else.’” - Toni Morrison*

### **Land Acknowledgement**

We acknowledge and are mindful that San Jose State University sits on the land of the Ohlone and the Muwekma Ohlone people, who trace their ancestry through Missions Dolores, Santa Clara, and San Jose. We remember their connection to this region and give thanks for the opportunity to live, work, and learn on their traditional homeland.

### **Course and Contact Information**

Professor: Dr. Yolanda Wiggins  
Email: yolanda.wiggins@sjsu.edu  
Virtual Office Hours: By appointment

**Please note that this class is strictly online. All assignments are due on Sundays by 11:59PM. No late assignments will be accepted.**

**IMPORTANT: You are responsible for regularly checking the course Canvas page and your email for notifications relevant to the course.**

### **Course Description**

We are all experts of sorts on the family. We have lived in families, observed family dynamics, and compared our own family experiences with those of others. Families have been at the center of our personal and emotional lives. This course will provide an opportunity to look at something familiar (the family) in a new way. We will focus on the family as a social institution—a set of structured social arrangements for meeting certain human needs—and we will examine the larger social forces that shape those structures. We will use a comparative approach to families, emphasizing their diversity both across time and space and within present-day U.S. society—paying particular attention to how social inequality shapes family experiences.

This course will help us avoid simplistic understandings of contemporary families by facilitating a critical sociological analysis of the relationship between the family and the ever-changing economic, political, social and cultural landscape in which contemporary family forms exist.

By the end of this class, you should be able to place your own personal experience of families in a larger social, cultural, and historical context.

### **Student Learning Outcomes**

1. Understand the causes of social inequities in family experiences. You will learn how systems of privilege organized gender, race, class, and sexual orientation structure family life.
2. Think critically about how family shapes social life at both individual and structural levels.
3. Effectively communicate what you have learned about the sociology of the family in both written and oral form.
4. Read and evaluate scholarly research on family.
5. Take your sociological education outside of the classroom and into your everyday life.

### **Required Texts**

There is no textbook for the class. Rather than building this course around a textbook, I have carefully selected readings, podcasts, and video clips that nicely pair with the topics we will be exploring. It's well documented that textbooks aren't cheap. As a first-generation college student, myself, I know that for some students, affording course materials takes priority over paying for meals or flights home, or pursuing their first-choice major. I want to even the educational playing field in my course and provide each student with free access to exciting, engaging, and digestible course materials. I firmly believe that education is a **universal right for everyone** and should not simply be a privilege for those who come from financially advantaged and privileged backgrounds. The materials for each week are uploaded in advance on Canvas (our course's webpage). It is my hope that the selected material is both informative and engaging.

### **What to Expect from me as a Professor this Semester:**

- I believe that you as a student should, at all times, know what you are expected to do in the course and also know where you stand in terms of your grade. This syllabus provides a detailed explanation of the course expectations, and I will regularly update Canvas with your course grades in a timely manner.
- In regard to the format of the course, I recognize that there are many types of learners. Therefore, I will assess your learning in a variety of ways: papers, discussion board forums, etcetera. How will the course be taught? Because this is an online, summer course, I will post 15–20-minute video clips (using PowerPoint) where I lecture on course material. Learning will also happen through discussion group forum posts with your peers.
- I really enjoy working with and talking to students. If you have concerns or questions regarding the course or your educational/professional goals more generally, I invite you to make an appointment to speak with me. If I learn about external opportunities (i.e.,

internships, part-time and/or full-time employment, undergraduate research assistantships, enrichment programs/workshops, interesting talks, events, etcetera), I will be sure to share them with you. I believe that learning takes place in a variety of spaces—not simply the classroom—and diversifying your learning experiences, space, and potential networks help you grow intellectually, professionally, and personally.

**\*\*\* NOTE: I reserve the right to make changes to the course syllabus and will always notify you if that happens. \*\*\***

### **What I Expect from you this Summer Session**

- **ATTENDANCE:** This summer semester, our course will be conducted strictly in an online only format. With that being said, there will be numerous discussions to keep you engaged. Please ask questions, express confusions, and share understandings! In these discussion forums, participate fully and meaningfully. Read your classmate's posts and respond in ways that reflect what you've read. **Ask questions. Challenge our thinking. Challenge your own.**
- Please feel free to email me, but make sure to use proper email etiquette: Put "SOC1 170 [followed by the subject of the email]" in the subject line, address the email to me, Dr. Wiggins, check your spelling, etcetera. Also, if you ask a question that can be answered by referring back to the syllabus, I will probably tell you to reread the syllabus. I will respond to your email within 24 hours. If you have not received a response after that time, send me another email.
- Be respectful in your emails and discussion forums. This respect should not only be for me, but for your peers as well. I welcome differing opinions, but rudeness, bigotry, homophobia, transphobia, xenophobia, etcetera is unacceptable and will not be tolerated at any time, both on my part and yours.
- I expect your best effort. As your instructor, I will do my best to make the course material understandable and engaging. However, this course will be what you make it. If you put effort into the course, you will learn a great deal, have an enjoyable experience, and also earn a good grade.

### **Course Components**

- **Weekly Reading Reflection Statements:** Students will submit weekly reflection paper statements on the assigned material (i.e., readings, podcasts, media clips). **The weekly reflection statements should be no more than 1-2 pages in length.** Typed statements should be double-spaced and use 12pt Times New Roman font. No matter how many readings, podcasts, and/or media clips you are assigned for the class, your statement never needs to be more than 1-2 pages. These should NOT simply be a summary of the material; they should contain your critical thinking and analysis as you use the material as supporting evidence. The reflections should be critical and thoughtful. These statements are not intended to be complicated or time-consuming. They are meant to make sure that you keep up with the reading. These are due on Canvas each Sunday.

How to structure weekly reading reflection paper:

- Briefly discuss the reading. Respond/react to the assigned material/reading. Do you agree with the material? Disagree? Why? Did it remind you of something else

you have read or experienced in your life and/or someone you know has experienced?

- **Let's Talk" Discussion Posts:** The discussion board is the space where we build community through (virtual) conversational-style discussion. You are expected to take part in the discussion board through audio or video recorded posts that simulate in class discussion and demonstrate your careful reading/listening/watching of the course material, while also responding to at least one of your peers' posts. Your participation in the discussion board is crucial and designed so that we can engage with each other by reflecting on the course materials in a more informal way than the weekly reflection papers. Both your video or audio post and your response to a peers' posts should demonstrate thoughtful engagement with the assigned material and provided prompts, as well as draw connections to course themes.

### **"LET'S TALK" DISCUSSION POST GUIDELINES**

**NOTE: For these discussion threads, you will upload three separate entries.**

You are expected to post a video or audio recording of your own. Next, you are expected to respond to at least two of your classmate's entries. These responses will be graded based on thoughtfulness and thoroughness of your post. Discussion forum entries are graded according to the following rubric:

**3 points:** Audio or video post fully addresses the discussion post topic prompt, poses an original question or critique, makes connections between material, and stimulates substantial follow-up. Author has responded to **two** other students' entries with substantive comment.

**2 points:** Audio or video post demonstrates partial understanding of material and minimal effort in post, but does not stimulate further class discussion. Responded to only one classmate's entry.

**1 point:** Audio or video post demonstrates that the author has not read/watched/listened to the assigned material for the week. Author does not respond to any entries by others.

\* **Final Course Exam:** In this class, students will also complete an exam. This exam will assess your knowledge on broad concepts outlined within the readings and recorded short lecture. The exam will be a combination of multiple-choice and definitional or short answer questions. Please note that there will be no make-up exams.

Final grades will be computed on the following basis:

94-100% = A	80-82% = B-	60-65% = D
90-93% = A-	76-79% = C+	< 60% = F
86-89% = B+	73-75% = C	
83-85% = B	70-72% = C-	

## **Our Learning Community**

Please respect our learning space. Be invested in our time together. Your classmates are important resources. Form study groups to discuss course material, pool information, and peer edit assignments. I recommend that you exchange email addresses and phone numbers with at least two other students the first week of class.

San Jose State University is committed to providing an environment consistent with the academic nature and core values of the institution in which students can participate in learning as a humanizing, social activity. Open discussion and disagreement are encouraged when done respectfully and in the spirit of academic discourse. As such, please:

- behave in accordance with the Student Conduct Code and other University policies.
- refrain from disrupting the ability of fellow student to learn.

Examples of disruption include:

- Technological use that significantly or repeatedly distracts others
  - Interrupting class by arriving late or leaving early
  - Not allowing others to participate in discussion; cutting people off during discussions
- communicate in a respectful fashion when interacting online.

Feel free to email me to schedule a time to meet virtually. Consider yourself warmly invited to discuss the readings, career possibilities/opportunities, or anything else! There are aspects about college that can be confusing. Professors can appear intimidating or scary. I am here to help. Please utilize me as a resource!

## **Student Resources**

- **The Writing Center** provides individualized support to assist you in better understanding course material and to aid you on your path to success. Services are free and include one-on-one tutoring, group tutoring, interactive writing conferences, and academic skills coaching to discuss effective study strategies. Online tutoring services have been expanded significantly. Please see the [Center's website](#) or call: (408) 924-2308 to schedule an appointment.
- **Accessible Education Center (AEC)** provides comprehensive services in support of the educational development and success of students. If you are a student in need of academic accommodations, please contact ACE within the first week of class. From there we can discuss your learning needs and appropriate accommodations. For more information, please visit <https://www.sjsu.edu/aec/> or call: (408) 924-6000.
- **Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)** offers brief individual, couple, and group counseling to student members of our community. CAPS services are confidential and free of charge. Call (408) 924-5910 for an initial consultation appointment or see their [website](#) for more information.

## **Confidentiality, Mandatory Reporting, and Sexual Assault**

As your professor, one of my responsibilities is to help create a safe learning environment on campus and in the classroom. I also have a mandatory reporting responsibility related to my role

as a SJSU faculty member. I am required to share information regarding sexual misconduct or information about a crime that may have occurred on SJSU's campus with the University. For information and resources regarding sexual misconduct or assault visit the [Title IX/Gender Equity Issues website](#) or [Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion's website](#).

### **Academic Integrity**

All academic work for this course must meet the University's standards of academic integrity. Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to cheating on tests and plagiarizing the work of others. Please review the [university's policies on academic integrity](#). Per departmental policy, all students will submit written assignments to TurnItIn.com (via Canvas), a website that helps check the originality of student work.

### **Religious Holidays**

Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to reasonably and fairly deal with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments, or required attendance. In this class, you should notify me at least two weeks ahead of time to request special accommodation if you have a conflict.

### **Course Outline and Reading Schedule**

**NOTE:** *Please complete the reading assignment before the listed class, except for the first day.*

Week 1 Introduction to the Family: Past and Present  
June 5-9

#### **READINGS AND OTHER ASSIGNED MATERIAL**

Meadow & Stacey "Families"

Watch Dr. Stephanie Coontz's video: "The Way We Never Were: American Families and the Nostalgia Trap"

#### **TO-DO'S THIS WEEK:**

**Reading reflection due on Sunday, June 11<sup>th</sup> by 11:59PM**

Week 2 Families: Past and Present (Continued)  
June 12-16

#### **READINGS AND OTHER ASSIGNED MATERIAL**

D'Emilio & Freedman "Family Life and Regulation of Deviance"

Thornton & Dill "Fictive Kin," Paper Sons and Compadrazgo

#### **TO-DO'S THIS WEEK:**

**Reading reflection due on Sunday, June 18<sup>th</sup> by 11:59PM**

Week 3  
June 19-23

Family Formations

READINGS AND OTHER ASSIGNED MATERIAL

Brown. "How Cohabitation is Reshaping American Families."

Pfeffer. "Normative Resistance and Inventive Pragmatism Negotiating Structure and Agency in Transgender Families."

Montes. "The Role of Emotions in the Construction of Masculinity."

Moore. "Gendered Power Relations Among Women."

TO-DO'S THIS WEEK:

**Reading reflection & Discussion Post #1 due on Sunday, June 25<sup>th</sup> by 11:59PM**

Week 4  
June 26-30

Marriage and Intimate Relationships

READINGS AND OTHER ASSIGNED MATERIAL

Gerstel & Sarkisian. "Marriage: The Good, the Bad, and the Greedy."

Coontz. "Two Birds Within One Nest" and "A Heaving Volcano."

Edin & Kafelas. "Unmarried with Children."

Armstrong, Hamilton, and England. "Is Hooking Up Bad for Young Women?"

Grazian. "The Girl Hunt"

TO-DO'S THIS WEEK:

**Reading reflection due on Sunday, July 2<sup>nd</sup> by 11:59PM**

Week 5  
July 3-7

Reproduction

READINGS AND OTHER ASSIGNED MATERIAL

Bell. "It's Way Out of My League"

Almeling & Waggoner. "More or Less Than Equal."

Blackstone. "Childless...or Childfree?"

Kubo. "Desirable Difference."

Heston. "Utopian Kinship? The Possibilities of Queer Parenting."

TO-DO'S THIS WEEK:

**Reading reflection due on Sunday, July 9<sup>th</sup> by 11:59PM**

Week 6  
July 10-14

**Diverse Family Experiences and Strategies**

READINGS AND OTHER ASSIGNED MATERIAL

Dreby. "The Burden of Deportation on Children in Mexican Immigrant Families."

King, Harris, and Heard. "Racial and Ethnic Diversity in Nonresident Father Involvement."

TO-DO'S THIS WEEK:

**Reading reflection & Discussion Post #2 due on Sunday, July 16<sup>th</sup> by 11:59PM**

Week 7  
July 17-21

**Intermarriage and Intersectionality**

READINGS AND OTHER ASSIGNED MATERIAL

Qian. "Breaking the Last Taboo: Interracial Marriage in America."

TO-DO'S THIS WEEK:

**Reading reflection due on Sunday, by July 23<sup>rd</sup> 11:59PM**

Week 8  
July 24-28

**Parenthood by Adoption**

READINGS AND OTHER ASSIGNED MATERIAL

Bartholet. "International adoption: The human rights issue. Baby markets: Money and the new politics of creating families."

TO-DO'S THIS WEEK:

**Reading reflection & Discussion Post #3 due on Sunday, July 30<sup>th</sup> by 11:59PM**

Week 9  
July 31-Aug 4

**Union Dissolution and Re-partnering**

READINGS AND OTHER ASSIGNED MATERIAL

Risman. "Families as They Really Are."

TO-DO'S THIS WEEK:

**Reading reflection due on Sunday, August 6<sup>th</sup> by 11:59PM**



Week 10  
Aug. 7-11

Family, the State, and Social Policy  
READINGS AND OTHER ASSIGNED MATERIAL  
Reading TBD

TO-DO'S THIS WEEK:

**Reading reflection & Final Exam Due August 10<sup>th</sup> by 11:59PM**