TEXAS STATE

Distance & Extended Learning

SOCl 3337: Correspondence

Course Sample
Welcome to
SOCI 3337
The Family

New to the course? Click the Course Content link at left, then read the Get Started materials.

Returning to the course? Click the Course Content link and resume where you left off.
Course Content

Get Started

- Syllabus
- Meet Your Instructor
- Course Study Schedule (.pdf)
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Lesson 1 - An Introduction to the Study of Families

- Lesson Objectives
- Reading Assignment
- Discussion
- Self-Assessment 1
- Assignment 1

Lesson 2 - Gender Roles

- Lesson Objectives
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Lesson 3 - Loving and Dating

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Lesson One

What is a Family?

A necessary beginning for a study of the family is to answer one basic question: what is a “family”? This is not so easily answered, however, because sociologists, the Census Bureau, and other research entities often define “family” differently.

For this course, a family will be defined as having the following characteristics:

- two or more persons living together who are related by blood, marriage and/or adoption;
- a primary group (a group with close, face-to-face relationships) that forms an economic unit and cares for its children;
- individuals who assume identities that are compatible with the family unit as a whole; and
- individuals who are committed to maintaining the family over extended periods of time.

Box 1.1, on p. 5, gives excellent examples of the variety of family groupings found in the United States and in other countries.

Types of Families

In this course the assumption can be made that a family need not include marriage, though it usually does. Those families in which marriage is not the norm include single-parent families, homosexual couples and their children who live together, other singles who cohabit as a primary group, and cross-generational groupings. Terms often used to identify types of families include the following:

- family of orientation - the family into which a person is born;
- family of procreation - the family a person establishes at marriage;
- nuclear (or modern) family - husband, wife and children who live together;
- post-modern family - families other than the nuclear family;
- extended/multigenerational family - relatives of husband and wife who may or may not live with the nuclear family;
- voluntarily child-free family - family that chooses not to have children; and
- reconstructed/blended families - a new family formed by a husband, wife, and one or more children from a previous marriage.

Family Functions

As a part of American society (and other societies in the world), families are expected to contribute in constructive ways. Functions of families include the following:

- regulating sexual behavior of family members;
- reproducing the species;
- rearing children responsibly and teaching them the rules of society (socialization);
- defining gender roles;
- providing economic and emotional security; and
- placing family members within a larger societal strata, e.g., upper class, middle class, working class.

Interpretations of these functions often vary among families. For example, what one family believes to be the exemplary sexual code might not be satisfactory to another family, e.g., sexuality prior to marriage. Each family must make important decisions based on its own values, history, needs and current situation. Additionally, what may be appropriate today may not be appropriate next year. Norms and values change.
Assignment One

Assignment - In progress

Title: Assignment 1
Due: Dec 31, 2018 5:00 pm
Status: In progress
Grade Scale: Points (max 25.0)
Modified by instructor: Jul 28, 2014 1:04 pm

Instructions

This assignment is worth 25 points.

Per your Study Guide, you may submit no more than two assignments per week.

Answer the questions below in a single document with one-inch margins on all sides. Each question should be answered in clear and concise sentences, using proper grammar, spelling, and punctuation. You do not have to retype each question, but you should clearly number the question you are answering. Remember to answer the question.

At the top of your assignment document, type the course number, the assignment number, and your name.

Name and save your file using your name and assignment number, e.g., "JaneSmith2." Then attach the saved document as a .doc, .docx, or .rtf file, and click Submit.

Answer each of the following in detail using your own words:

1. Select two of the theoretical perspectives used in studying families. Discuss each theory in detail, giving the major premises, strengths, and weaknesses. (14 points)

2. When a researcher develops a survey to examine how a wife’s employment affects marital satisfaction, a “representative sample” is needed. What is a representative sample? (1 point)

3. How do “historical events” affect family life and family decisions? (Be specific and detailed in your response.) (5 points)

4. Name and discuss four characteristics of knowledgeable decision-making. (5 points)