Course Description and Objectives
This course explores families in the United States from a sociological perspective. We will examine the family as an institution rooted in historical and social context, focusing on the ways in which society shapes family norms, opportunities, and behaviors. We will emphasize the connection between social change (major historical transformations in society) and corresponding family changes. We will also learn about individuals within families, and how family relationships have changed over time.

Course Objectives:
In order to meet this broad goal, the course has been designed to achieve several specific objectives:
(1) to provide information about historical and contemporary families in the United States;
(2) to explore the relationships between individuals, families, and other social institutions;
(3) to develop analytical and communication skills that will enable you to examine and assess divergent ideas and perspectives on contemporary family issues.

Liberal Studies Statement
The Liberal Studies Program at Florida State University has been designed to provide a perspective on the qualities, accomplishments, and aspirations of human beings, the past and present civilizations we have created, and the natural and technological world we inhabit. This course has been approved as meeting the requirements for Liberal Studies Area III, History and Social Science, and in combination with your other Liberal Studies courses, provides an important foundation for your lifelong quest for knowledge.

Required Materials
Students are expected to read assigned material before the class in which the topics are covered. You should purchase the following required textbook:


This text is available in many formats, including an eBook, an unbound version and a traditional hard copy. I will provide additional materials and readings throughout the semester either as files available on the course website or paper copies distributed in class.
**Class Communication – Email and Course Website**
The official method of communication at FSU is your ACNS garnet email account. FSU policy states: “In order to stay informed and aware, you are required to check it 3 times per week. If you choose to have your garnet account forwarded; you still will be responsible for all information distributed.” This applies to our class and you will be responsible for information emailed to the class and posted on the course website. Be connected! Please check for class emails (that will go to your garnet account) and check the Announcements page of our course website frequently.

**Course Requirements:**
Your final grade will be based on the quality of your performance with respect to the course assignments and responsibilities. The allocation of points is as follows:

1. **Quizzes – 20%**. Quizzes based on assigned reading material will be administered online using Blackboard. These multiple-choice quizzes will be posted under the “Assignments” tab as outlined in the course calendar. The course calendar and unit course library folders identify required readings.

2. **Discussion Boards (Online Group Projects) – 40%**. At four points in the semester, a discussion topic will be posted on the course website discussion board located on Blackboard. Each student is expected to post a 200-500 word position statement, in formal essay form, to the discussion topic and to post two 75-200 word replies to other students’ position statement postings. Positions must include a citation to course material and a word count. Based on the relevance and quality of your posts, you may earn a possible 10 points for your contribution in each group discussion. There will be no credit given for late postings on the discussion board or for non-academic discourse and other inappropriate postings. Remember, to receive full credit for each group discussion, you must post three times: a position (not opinion) statement with a 200-word minimum and at least two reactions with a 75-word minimum, by the deadlines posted on the syllabus. Participation in online group discussions together will comprise 40% of your grade.

3. **Exams – 40%**. Three exams will cover material from assigned readings and materials covered in class. Students should take class notes. Topics discussed in class will generally parallel material in the Cherlin text; however, I will bring information into the lecture that does not come from the text. You are responsible for information presented in the classroom, the text and other assigned readings covered during the course. The exam dates are listed in the course calendar. **The final exam must be taken on the date scheduled by the Registrar’s Office – Thursday, April 30, 7:30 am. Please save the date.**

**Grading Summary**
Discussion Boards = 40 percent  
Three Exams = 40 percent  
Quizzes = 20 percent  
Total = 100 percent

**Formula for calculating weighted grades:**
Discussion board average (.40) + Exam average (.40) + Quiz Average (.20) = your grade

**Grading Scale**
A: 94-100; A-: 90-93; B+: 87-89; B: 84-86; B-: 80-83; C+: 77-79; C: 74-76; C-: 70-73; D+: 67-69; D: 64-66; D-: 60-63; F: 0-59

**Excused Absences**
The following and only the following absences are eligible to be excused: Religious holidays, as specified in FSU policy; absences due to representing FSU at official functions, including intercollegiate debating or varsity sports events; verified emergencies and/or medical illness. Medical illness refers to conditions that are serious in nature and require treatment by medical professionals and/or surgical or other
treatments. Documentation is required for an absence to be excused for the purposes of makeup work. **Makeup work must be completed within 2 weeks of the original due date.**

**Class Attendance Policy**
While I will not take roll, class attendance is required. Students are responsible for all content missed, including assignments, knowledge, or skills that were covered in the missed class. Documentation is required for an absence to be excused for the purposes of makeup work. Makeup work must be completed within 2 weeks of the original due date. Please provide a copy of the documentation to your instructor and keep a copy for your own records. There will be no credit given for late postings on the discussion board. The discussion board is a group project that requires timely participation for the benefit of all group members. Should extra credit opportunities arise, only those students who have completed all assigned work (no missing work or zeroes) will be eligible to participate.

**Classroom Discourse**
This is a seminar/discussion course in which you will read, evaluate and discuss scholarly and popular works on a wide variety of topics. Each week before class, you should read, watch, or listen to the assigned material and be ready to critically discuss it during class. Assigned readings are listed on the Course Calendar and can be found in the Course Library unit folder, along with other materials. The required text will be supplemented with links or PDFs, made available on Blackboard. **Meaningful and constructive dialogue is encouraged in this class. This necessitates a degree of mutual respect, willingness to listen, and tolerance of opposing points of view. Respect for individual differences and alternative viewpoints will be maintained at all times in this class. One's words and use of language should be temperate and within acceptable bounds of civility and decency, regardless of the subject under discussion.**

**Classroom Courtesy**
Classroom courtesy is necessary to ensure that all students have the opportunity to learn without distractions.

- Coming in late and leaving early are disruptive and disrespectful to the instructor and to the other students; **plan to attend for the entire class time.**
- Please, do not talk during lectures unless recognized by the professor or discussion leader. Students are encouraged to share observations and questions with the class.
- **No cell phones, iPads, iPods (or other devices on which you are not actively note taking for class).** If you must have a cell phone to receive emergency calls about children or other family members, keep it on vibrate. In addition, please remove all headphones or earpieces not used as a hearing aid for class lecture. I will ask you to discontinue using and remove devices if I determine that it is disruptive to me or other students.
- Please, do not use social media during class unless it is intended for class participation. If you tweet please hashtag our class - #FamProbs, @Soc_Doc

**Incomplete Grades**
Missing work or uncompleted assignments are insufficient reasons for a grade of Incomplete. An Incomplete grade will not be given except under extenuating circumstances at the instructor’s discretion. Note that the College of Social Science guidelines require that students seeking an “I” must be passing the course.

**Academic Honor Policy**
Students are expected to abide by the Academic Honor Policy of the Florida State University, including the statement on Values and Moral Standards published in The Florida State University General Bulletin. The Academic Honor Policy outlines the University's expectations for students' academic work, the procedures for resolving alleged violations of these expectations, and the rights and responsibilities of
students and faculty throughout the process. Please see the following website for a complete explanation of the Academic Honor Policy: http://www.fsu.edu/~dof/honorpolicy.htm

**Academic Dishonesty**
Students must abide by the highest standards of academic integrity. Any form of academic dishonesty will result in a "zero" for that particular assignment or an "F" for the course, at the instructor’s discretion. Any student who plagiarizes, cheats on exams, or otherwise behaves in a dishonest way may be reported to the university administration for further disciplinary action as specified in the Academic Honor Policy (http://www.fsu.edu/~dof/forms/honorpolicy.pdf).

**Americans with Disabilities Act**
Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should: (1) register with and provide documentation to the Student Disability Resource Center; (2) bring a letter to the instructor indicating the need for accommodation and what type. This should be done during the first week of class. For more information about services available to FSU students with disabilities visit http://www.fsu.edu/~staffair/dean/StudentDisability/.

**Religious Holidays**
Students are allowed to miss class due to observance of religious holidays, but they are still responsible for all materials assigned outside of and covered in class on the day(s) missed. You must talk with your instructor in advance of missing a class for religious holiday observance reasons.

**Syllabus Change Policy**
The syllabus and course calendar are guides for the course and are subject to change with notice.