

# Contemporary Families in the United States CRN 31094

## HDFS 201 Winter 2018: T R 10:00 a.m. MKH 203

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**Office Hours:** [Click here to make an appointment on my calendar](#). I am glad to speak with you by via [ZOOM](#) as available.

**Support Staff:** Sonya James, [james@linnbenton.edu](mailto:james@linnbenton.edu), 541 917 4258, NSH 101.

### Course Description

An introduction to families with application to personal life. Focuses on diversity in family structure, social class, race, gender, work and other social institutions.

### Course Learning Outcomes

1. Use theoretical frameworks to interpret the role of the individual and family within social process and institutions.
2. Critique the nature, value, and limitations of the basic methods of studying individuals and families.
3. Using historical and contemporary examples, describe how perceived differences, combined with unequal distribution of power across economic, social, and political institutions, result in discrimination.
4. Explain how difference is socially constructed.
5. Analyze current social issues and place them in historical context(s).
6. Analyze ways in which the intersections of social categories such as race, ethnicity, social class, gender, religion, sexual orientation, disability, and age are related to difference, power, and discrimination in the United States.
7. Synthesize multiple viewpoints and sources of evidence to generate reasonable conclusions.

**HDFS 201 Contemporary Families in the United States** fulfills the Social Processes and Institutions (SPI) and Difference, Power, and Discrimination (DPD) requirements in the Baccalaureate Core for Oregon State University.

Human beings are inevitably social, influencing and being influenced by social groups. The social sciences study social institutions and processes and deal with the human behaviors and values that form and change them, and are essential for an understanding of contemporary society.

The DPD requirement engages students in the intellectual examination of the complexity of the structures, systems, and ideologies that

sustain discrimination and the unequal distribution of power and resources in society. The unequal distribution of social, economic, and political power in the United States and in other countries is sustained through a variety of individual beliefs and institutional practices. These beliefs and practices have tended to obscure the origins and operations of social discrimination such that this unequal power distribution is often viewed as the natural order. Examination of DPD course material is intended to enhance meaningful democratic participation in our college community and our increasingly multicultural U.S. society.

## Class Structure

This class is taught with technology enhancement and in a [“flipped” format](#). In flipped classes, some of the baseline content is delivered primarily away from F2F time. In this class that is your textbook and the weekly Moodle lessons. You’ll read and participate in those on your own, then take the baseline quiz by Tuesday at noon each week.

The “homework” --or higher -level thinking and assignments (Weekly Wonders)-- are completed in face to face (F2F) class, with support from the Instructor and your peers. Some Weekly Wonders will be submitted individually; some will be submitted via your team. Some will be graded for quality (A-F); some will be graded with full points for full participation only.

You are expected to attend class two times per week. It is fundamental to your success in this course to come to every class section prepared for class. I **expect** you to have questions and thoughts about the course content; these will develop your critical thinking skills. Be prepared to stand, move around, use your tablet and the internet, and talk each day; do not become too attached to your seat. We will move in class. Students will use their LBCC email accounts to access your google drive; **be sure you know your email and password**.

## Required Materials

- Cherlin, A. J. (2017). *Public and Private Families: An Introduction (8th Ed.)* Boston: McGraw Hill (Using the 7th edition is fine as well, although there are some terminology/content differences).
- Three readings:
  - Rank, Mark R. (2003). [“As American as Apple Pie”](#). *Contexts*, 2 (3). 41-49.
  - Johnson, Allen (nd). [“The Social Construction of Difference”](#). 15-20.
- Your choice of a novel/memoir: *The Girl In The Tangerine Scarf* by Mohja Kahf, 2006 (novel); *What Night Brings* by Carla Trujillo, 2003 (novel); *The Other Wes Moore* by Wes Moore, 2010 (memoir); *Stubborn Twig* by Lauren Kessler, 2008 (nonfiction); *Once Upon a Quinceanera* by Julia Alvarez, 2007 (nonfiction)

## Evaluation

1. **Open note/Open book Quizzes: Quizzes** (taken online) are **due by 9:00 a.m. Tuesday each week**. The quiz is designed to demonstrate your completion of text and Moodle lesson reading. Completing the reading will enable you to take part in class activities and Weekly Wonders with the baseline knowledge (understanding and remembering as defined on [Bloom's Taxonomy](#)) needed in order to complete the WWs. **You have two tries for every quiz and unlimited time, but the deadline is firm. Quizzes will not be made up or reopened; take your quiz early!** Lowest quiz grade dropped. (*10 points per week x 9 = 90 points*).
2. **Weekly Wonders:** Each week (or so) you will earn 50 - 100 WW points. **Sometimes points will be awarded on the basis of participation only; sometimes based on quality of work.** (*50 - 100 points per activity X 8 = 500 points*).
  - Weekly Wonders will focus on **the readings/lectures of the current week with an expectation that material from previous weeks has been understood and retained**. Most WWs will involve critical thinking and the [higher levels of thinking as defined by Benjamin Bloom's Taxonomy](#) (analyzing, evaluating, synthesizing, creating).
  - Most Weekly Wonders take place in class; partial make ups are available. If you must miss class for an extended period, be in touch with me and the Center for Accessibility Resources right away
  - I do not accept any e-mailed assignments.
  - I use Turnitin, a tool to educate students about using too much similarity (plagiarism) in written work.

### Evaluation Totals

Quizzes	90
WWs 1,2,3,4,6(50 each)	250
WW5/Midterm	100
WW7	60
<u>WW8/Portfolio</u>	<u>100</u>
Total	600

**540 - 600 A**

**480 - 539 B**

**420 - 479 C**

**360 - 419 D**

**Under 360: F**

## Instructor's Notes

It is my purpose to help you understand the concepts in this class as deeply as possible. I want you to retain these concepts in your long-term memory, as opposed to your short-term memory. To reach this goal, we will all engage in critical thinking. What is critical thinking? [Take a look at this article \(linked and attached\) and pay attention especially to numbers one, two, and five.](#) I'll be looking for you to question and think in a critical manner throughout the course.

The assignments are intended to help you make personal and cultural connections, and to support the development of your [sociological imagination](#). How is what we are studying relevant to you? Can you look at your life experience from an alternative view? Making these kinds of connections is both more challenging and more rewarding than merely memorizing content.

Class time is valuable and I will be focused on teaching and learning during the time that we have together each week. Please feel comfortable eating, drinking, and leaving the room for the bathroom or communication needs. If you distract me with unfocused behavior, I will call you on it. Be respectful. If you have personal business to attend to (e.g. phone calls/texting, conversations, or other class work), *take care of it outside of the classroom*. We will be using lots of electronic technology in this class; use it respectfully. Access to internet searches and applications will greatly enhance the course experience for all of us. I expect you to apply yourself to your education during class hours. *You are the person who has the greatest impact on your learning and on your grade.*

Please ask questions pertaining to the class during class time. If it is a personal matter, tell me after class, telephone, or email me. Please head your e-mails with HDFS 201 F2F.

I make it a high priority to grade your work promptly. *Late work is an exception, and will be graded at my discretion, following the grading of all on-time work from all of my classes.* If you submit late work, it will be graded by Week 11. (Note the late work deadlines on the course calendar). Not all WWs may be fully made up.

## Extra Credit

Extra credit is at the discretion of the Instructor. Any Extra credit available to one student must be available to all students. In this course, the following opportunities exist for Extra credit. Extra credit will be graded during Week 11.

1. [Domestic Violence Essay Question](#). (up to 8 points).
2. Dick Weinman [documentary](#) and [response](#) (up to 10 points).
3. [Transgender TED talk](#) and [response](#) (up to 10 points).
4. [International Family Change](#) Essay Question (up to 8 points).
5. Other opportunities during the term as determined by Instructor.

### **LBCC Comprehensive Statement of Nondiscrimination**

LBCC prohibits unlawful discrimination based on race, color, religion, ethnicity, use of native language, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, veteran status, age, or any other status protected under applicable federal, state, or local laws.

### **Campus Resources**

Many resources such as the Library, Learning Center, the Writing Desk, and Family Connections, are available to you as a student. They are described on the LBCC website.

You should meet with your instructor during the first week of class if:

- You have a documented disability and need accommodations,
- Your instructor needs to know medical information about you, or
- You need special arrangements in the event of an emergency.

If you have not accessed services and think you may need them, please contact the Center for Accessibility Resources in Red Cedar Hall 105 or at 541 917-4789. If you have documented your disability, remember that you must complete a Request for Accommodations form every term in order to receive accommodations.

## Course Schedule HDFS 201 Winter 2018 F2F

- Weekly Reading (Text, Moodle Lesson/Book)
- Quizzes due every Tuesday at 9:00 a.m. (except first week; quiz is due on *Thursday*).
- WWs due in class or via Moodle as per syllabus, subject to change.

Week	Topic	Reading	Work Due
<b>Part I (Weeks 1-2: Family variations; theories; studying families; social processes and institutions; social characteristics and social construction of difference; privilege and oppression; family structures; history of families and social policy.</b>			
<b>1</b> 8-14 Jan	The study of families and theoretical perspectives; terminology and definitions	Syllabus, Chapter 1 & <a href="#">The Social Construction...</a> article	<b>Quiz 1 due by <i>Thursday</i> 9:00 a.m.</b>
<b>2</b> 15-21 Jan	History of Families and Social Policy	Chapters 2 & 14	<b>T: Quiz 2 (by 9:00 a.m.) R: WW1/Slideshow Draft due in class</b>
<b>Part II (Weeks 3-5) Social characteristics of individuals and families; implicit bias; intersectionality.</b>			
<b>3</b> 22 - 28 Jan	Gender	Chapter 3; <b>first 1/3 of novel due</b>	<b>T: Quiz 3; Submit final WW1 due by 9:00 a.m.; WW2 work R: WW2 in class (presentation)</b>
<b>4</b> 29 Jan - 4 Feb	Social Class and Poverty	Chapter 4 & <a href="#">Apple Pie article</a>	<b>In Class: <a href="https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html">https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html</a> T: Quiz 4 R: WW3/In Class</b>
<b>5</b> 5-11 Feb	Race and Ethnicity	Chapter 5; <b>second 1/3 of novel due</b>	<i>(All late work from weeks 1-4 due by Tuesday 9:00 a.m.)</i> <b>T: Quiz 5, WW4 (midterm) prep R: WW3/In Class Book Clubs</b>

<b>Part III (Weeks 6-7): Family formation and development; love relationships.</b> <b>Outcomes addressed: #3 and 5.</b>			
<b>6</b> 12-18 <i>Feb</i>	Sexualities, Dating, Union Formation & Dissolution	Chapter 6,7	<b>T: Quiz 6; WW4/Midterm Questions in class: open note, open computer, open book</b> <b>R: extra credit WW8 outcome demo due</b>
<b>7</b> 19 -25 <i>Feb</i>	<i>Continued</i>	Chapter 12	<b>T: Quiz 7; WW8 demo by Liz (in class)</b> <b>R: WW5/In Class</b>
<b>Part IV (Weeks 8-10): Working families; children and parents; intergenerational relationships; intersectionality; difference, power and discrimination.</b>			
<b>8</b> 26 <i>Feb -4</i> <i>Mar</i>	Working Families	Chapter 8	<b>T: Quiz 8</b> <b>R:WW6/In Class</b>
<b>9</b> 5-11 <i>Mar</i>	Parent-Child Relations, the Elderly, and Families	Chapters 9 & 10	<b>T: Quiz 9; WW8 <i>draft</i> presentation via Google Drive/In Class</b> <b>R:WW7/In Class</b>
<b>10</b> 12-18 <i>Mar</i>	<i>Continued</i>	<b>Finish novel</b>	<i>(All late work from weeks 5-9 and extra credit due by Tuesday 9:00 a.m.)</i> <b>T: Quiz 10; Novel/memoir discussion</b> <b>R: WW7/In Class</b>
<b>11</b> <i>Mar</i> <b>20th</b>	Final (WW8) due: 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday, March 20th.		<b>WW8 due by 10:00 a.m. No late assignments accepted.</b>

*The Instructor reserves the right to make changes in the course schedule. Changes will be announced in class and posted in the live link to this syllabus. My Moodle course page will be "under construction" this term. I am in process of changing books into lessons. Sometimes you will see a book icon (green) and sometimes a "lesson" that has a white icon with little rectangles. The icon will vary week to week, based on my progress, but the content is the same. Liz*

**Excerpted from: What Exactly is Critical Thinking? From *Inside Higher Ed*, October 11, 2012 (Note: the election referred to is the **2012** election)**  
By **Paul Gary Wyckoff**

"Everyone applauds the idea of critical thinking, and liberal arts colleges often make their ability to teach critical thinking a key selling point. But no one seems to define what they mean by that term.

As I prepared for the start of classes this fall, I tried to pinpoint the critical thinking skills I really want my students to learn. And as I listened to public debates on everything from tax policy to Obamacare, five essential thinking skills seemed to be missing, again and again. So, based on our dysfunctional national dialogue, here are the "core competencies" I hope to instill in my students:

**1. The ability to think empirically, not theoretically.** By this I mean the habit of constantly checking one's views against evidence from the real world, and the courage to change positions if better explanations come along. I have great admiration for scholars like Richard Muller, the University of California physicist and global warming skeptic, whose work was heavily funded by the conservative Koch brothers. When new, more comprehensive data from his own research team provided convincing evidence of global temperature increases, **Muller changed his mind, and later sounded the alarm about carbon dioxide emissions.** Unfortunately, however, much of our public debate on many issues seems to be a clash of theoretical world views, with neither side willing to dispassionately examine the evidence or modify their views. In Congress, the individuals most willing to change their minds – the moderates – have been systematically driven out by more extreme candidates who are dedicated to holding fast to their predetermined positions, regardless of subsequent facts.

**2. The ability to think in terms of multiple, rather than single, causes.** When you drop a book, it will fall on the floor -- a single-cause event. But most of the interesting things in the world have multiple causes; educational success, for example, is affected by a student's aptitude, but also by the educational achievements of the student's parents, the quality of the school he or she attends, and the attitudes and intelligence of the other students in that school. In such cases, simple comparisons become unreliable guides to action, because the effects of intervening variables haven't been screened out. So, for example, judging a president by Reagan's famous question – "Are you better off now than you were four years ago?" – implicitly assumes that presidential actions are the only variable affecting the economy. This is, of course, nonsense – our globalized economy is affected by a huge variety of factors, including exchange rates, oil prices, the fate of the European Union, the strength of the Chinese economy, and so on. In these situations, we need higher-order analysis that adjusts for these external factors to gauge the true effect of a policy.....

**5. The ability to understand one's own biases.** An expanding literature in psychology and behavioral economics suggests that we are full of unconscious biases, and a failure to understand these biases contributes to poor decision-making. Perhaps the most common and dangerous of these is confirmation bias, the tendency to seek out information in accordance with our previous views and ignore or dismiss information contrary to those views. This undermines our ability to weigh the evidence in an evenhanded manner. Our media culture reinforces this problem, as liberals have their MSNBC, *The Nation*, *The New York Times* and think tanks like the Center for American Progress, while conservatives have their Fox News, the *National Review*, *The Wall Street Journal* and the Heritage Foundation. In the current world, no one need bear the inconvenience of contrary information....."