COURSE DESCRIPTION
The family is an integral institution in society. Families provide the context in which individual lives unfold: they foster deep emotional ties to others and shape how we view and engage in relationships and our lives. In this sense, families are “private institutions.” Families also play a role in the greater society: in addition to serving as a major agent of socialization for our children and taking on the responsibility for the elderly, they also contribute to generating and perpetuating social inequalities (e.g., racial, gender, class) through the different roles placed upon the individual family members and the life chances those families have. In this sense, families are “public institutions” that matter for society as a whole.

This course will examine families as both private and public institutions from a sociological perspective. The course’s major goals are to learn about differences in family structure over time and to challenge our own assumptions about families. While the focus will be on the United States, research about families in other countries in Europe and Asia will be discussed as well.

COURSE MATERIALS
There will be a course reader available for purchase at the YISS bookstore.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS
Attendance is mandatory. If you come in late (10 minutes+), your attendance will not be counted for that day but you are still required to attend. Also, you are expected to read the assigned chapters/articles listed underneath the lecture date prior to class so that you can participate fully in the discussions. Any student caught cheating on the exams/presentation will automatically receive an F in the course.

Your grade will be based on the following:
- Course participation: 15%
- Midterm: 30%
- Group presentation: 25%
- Final: 30%

COURSE SCHEDULE
This syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.

Week 1: The Family – private and public realms
June 30: Overview of course

July 1: History of family
1. William Goode, Theoretical Importance of Family
2. Selections from Stephanie Coontz (1993) The Way We Never Were and the Nostalgia Trap
July 2: The public and private realms of family
  1. Giddens, Global revolution in Family and Personal Life
  2. Goffman – Insanity of Place
  3. Janet Giele, Decline of the Family: Conservative, Liberal and Feminist Views

Week 2: Changing and Diverse Family Structures
July 6: Childhood, technology and family
  1. Mintz, S. Beyond Sentimentality: American Childhood as a Social & Cultural Constraint

July 7: Adoption/Surrogacy
  1. Jones, Maggie. Why a Generation of Adoptees Is Returning to South Korea. NY Times Sunday Magazine. 1/14/15
  2. Kuczynski, Alex. Her Body, My Baby. NY Times Sunday Magazine. 11/30/08

July 8: Race/Class
  1. Selections from Stack, Carol. 1983. All Our Kin. Basic Books

July 9: Gay and Lesbian Families
  1. Stacey, J. 1999. “Gay and Lesbian Families are Here; All our Families are Queer; Let’s Get Used to It!” pp. 372-405 in American Families: A Multicultural Reader

Week 3: Family and the State
July 13: Family and Law

July 14: Welfare

July 15: Midterm review
July 16: Midterm

**Week 4: Cohabitation/Marriage, Divorce and Parenting**

July 20: Marriage/Cohabitation
1. Judith Seltzer – Cohabitation and Family Change
3. Pasley, Kay and Brad Moorefield. Stepfamilies: Changes and Challenges

July 21: Marriage/Cohabitation

July 22: Divorce
1. Selections from Coontz, S. 1997 *The Way We Really Are*
2. Amato, Paul. Divorce in Social and Historical Context: Changing Scientific Perspectives on Children and Marital Dissolution

July 23: Parenting

**Week 5: Family and Work**

July 27: The Mommy Wars
2. Selections from Sandberg, Sheryl. 2013. *Lean In*

July 28: Mastering the Balancing Act

July 29: The Father’s Perspective

July 30: Class presentations
Week 6: Family Violence and Wrap-up

August 3: Domestic Violence

August 4: Child Abuse

August 5: Course Wrap-Up and Review

August 6: Final