



Department of Sociology, Social Work and Family Sciences

Sociology of the Family 2050

3 Units

Fall 2025

Thursdays 5:30-8:00pm

Rhor Hall 111

Final Presentations: Thursday 12/11/2025 and 12/18/2025 5:30-8:00pm

INFORMATION	SPECIFICS FOR THE COURSE
Instructor title and name:	Brittany Alanis, MSW
Phone:	619-307-9520
Email:	Balanis@pointloma.edu
Office location and hours:	By appointment, please email

PLNU Mission

To Teach ~ To Shape ~ To Send

Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged, character is modeled and formed, and service is an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we strive to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

General Education Mission

PLNU provides a foundational course of study in the liberal arts informed by the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. In keeping with the Wesleyan tradition, the curriculum equips students with a broad range of knowledge and skills within and across disciplines to enrich major study, lifelong learning, and vocational service as Christ-like participants in the world's diverse societies and culture.

Course Description

PLNU's catalog indicates this course as a “study of the changing nature and function of the family as a basic institution of society with emphasis upon variety related to culture, class, and ethnicity.” This is a required course for the social work major and contributes knowledge and experiences to help build the foundational competencies identified by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) needed for social work practice. The relationship between this course and the CSWE Competencies are attached. The course specifically contributes to competencies numbered 2,3,6,7,8. CSWE Competencies - SOC2050.xlsx. In particular, SOC 2050 will introduce you to various perspectives in the study of marriage and family. During our shared journey, we will critically explore the connections between our own personal lives and the larger societies in which we live by evaluating the following: the historical background of the American family system; cross-cultural comparisons of families; non marital lifestyles; and the impact of policy, social class, race, and ethnicity on the family. We will also turn our attention to how sociologists approach the study of intimacy; gender; partner selection; communication and conflict resolution; work and the family; power and violence, and divorce and resilience. This class will give you the ability to understand how people make sense of the world. This understanding is critical for your professional and personal lives. In addition, when you read or hear claims about families, you will be able to examine the assumptions or premises of arguments, think about possible sources of bias, look at the evidence, and consider alternative interpretations and solutions. The class requirements encourage a “hands-on” experiential approach that allows you to actively grapple with the ideas, issues, and problems inherent in the field. Lectures will be augmented with discussion, group work, activities, and videos. One component of this student-driven course will be peer evaluation, peer response, peer collaboration and to use these collective processes to support our mutual learning goals. This compels you to have a stake in the class: it depends on cooperative learning as well as the expertise, dedication, and interest of the instructor.

Program and Course Learning Outcomes

Together, we will:

1. Understand and articulate the differences between the concept of family as a public and private institution.
2. Understand the family within the main Sociological Frameworks
3. Demonstrate an understanding of how the structure of families and family relationships are influenced by key social, economic, political and cultural forces.
4. Demonstrate an understanding of how constructions of gender, race, sexuality, ethnicity, age and class affect family structure and the experiences of family members.
5. Discuss how families are connected to and shaped by culture and other major institutions especially political and economic processes.
6. Understand the importance of advocacy in helping vulnerable population's access available services.
7. Relate differences in the core concepts to their impact on social well-being.

Required Texts and Recommended Study Resources

- **Marriages, Families, and Relationships: Making Choices in a Diverse Society** by Mary Ann Lamanna, Agnes Riedmann, Susan D. Stewart | 15th Edition | Copyright 2025 9780357948552

Students are responsible for having the required course textbooks prior to the first day of class. All supplemental materials posted on this course site (including articles, book excerpts, or other documents)

are provided for your personal academic use. These materials may be protected by copyright law and should not be duplicated or distributed without permission of the copyright owner.

Assignments at a Glance

Week/Date	Textbook Chapter and Title	Discussion Questions Due	In person Class?
Week 1 9/4/25	None	A little about you and Week 1 survey Due <u>9/4/25</u>	Yes
Week 2 9/11/25	Chapter 1 Defining Family and Making Choices	Week 2 Discussion Questions due <u>9/10/25</u> Classmate responses due <u>9/11/25</u>	Yes
Week 3 9/18/25	Chapter 2 Studying Marriage and Family	Week 3 Discussion Questions due <u>9/17/25</u> Classmate responses due <u>9/18/25</u>	Yes
Week 4 9/27/25	Chapter 3 Gender and Family	Week 4 Discussion Questions due <u>9/24/25</u> Classmate responses due <u>9/25/25</u>	Yes
Week 5 10/2/25	Chapter 4 Sexuality and Intimate Relationships	Week 5 Discussion Questions due <u>10/1/25</u> Classmate responses due <u>10/2/25</u>	Yes
Week 6 10/9/25	Chapter 5 Love and Choosing a Partner	Week 6 Discussion Questions due <u>10/8/25</u> Classmate responses due <u>10/9/25</u>	Yes
10/12/25 Due by 11:59pm	Exam 1 (Chapters 1-5)	x	x
Week 7 10/16/25	Chapter 6 Non-marital Lifestyles	Week 7 Discussion Questions due <u>10/15/25</u> Classmate responses due <u>10/16/25</u>	Yes
Week 8 10/23/25	Fall Break	x	No Class
Week 9 10/30/25	Chapter 7 Marriage	Week 9 Discussion Questions due <u>10/29/25</u> Classmate responses due <u>10/30/25</u>	Yes
Week 10 11/6/25	Chapter 8 Reproduction and Parenting + Chapter 9	Week 10 Discussion Questions due <u>11/5/25</u> Classmate responses due <u>11/6/25</u>	Yes

	Challenges for Raising Children		
Week 11 11/13/25	Chapter 10 Work and Well Being	Week 10 Discussion Questions due <u>11/12/24</u> Classmate responses due <u>11/13/24</u>	Yes
Week 12 11/20/25	Chapter 11 Communication	Week 11 Discussion Questions due <u>11/19/24</u> Classmate responses due <u>11/20/24</u>	Yes
11/23/25 Due by 11:59pm	Exam 2 (Chapters 6-11)	x	x
Week 13 Thanksgiving 11/27/25	x	x	No Thanksgiving Holiday
Week 14 12/4/25		Relationship Questions Due by 12/4/25	No
Week 15 12/11/25 Final Presentations	10 min time slot	x	Yes
Week 16 12/18/25 Final Presentation	10 min time slot	x	Yes

FINAL EXAMINATION (Project Presentations)

There will be two examinations during the semester. There will be no final exam. Instead, you will be presenting your semester long project during the final exam slot. Successful completion of this class requires participating in the final project presentation on its scheduled day. The final examination schedule is posted on the [Class Schedules](#) site. If you find yourself scheduled for three (3) or more final examinations on the same day, you are authorized to contact each professor to arrange a different time for one of those exams. However, unless you have three (3) or more exams on the same day, no requests for alternative final examinations will be granted.

The Course Project is worth 15% of the grade and you have several options: from mindful volunteering, to creating an original art piece or conducting research in the community. The Course Project has you extend your sociological learning outside the classroom doors through authentic hands-on experiences that offers opportunities to meaningfully serve as leaders and agents of hope and change. Projects will culminate in Presentations at the end of the semester. Refer to the Course Project information page in the Week 1 Module on Canvas for detailed instruction.

Course Credit Hour Information

In the interest of providing sufficient time to accomplish the stated Course Learning Outcomes, this class meets the PLNU credit hour policy for a 3 unit class delivered over 15 weeks. It is anticipated that students will spend a minimum of 37.5 participation hours per credit hour on their coursework. For this course, students will spend an estimated 112.5 total hours meeting the course learning outcomes. The time estimations are provided in the Canvas modules.

Assessment and Grading

Grades will be based on the following:

A	B	C	D	F
A 93-100	B+ 87-89	C+ 77-79	D+ 67-69	F Less than 59
A- 90-92	B 83-86	C 73-76	D 63-66	
	B- 80-82	C- 70-72	D- 60-62	

Final Examination Policy

Successful completion of this class requires taking the final examination on its scheduled day. The final examination schedule is posted on the [Traditional Undergraduate Records: Final Exam Schedules](#) site. If you find yourself scheduled for three (3) or more final examinations on the same day, you are authorized to contact each professor to arrange a different time for one of those exams. However, unless you have three (3) or more exams on the same day, no requests for alternative final examinations will be granted.

Content Warning

I acknowledge that each of you comes to PLNU with your own unique life experiences. This contributes to the way you perceive various types of information. In SOC 2050 all of the class content, including that which may be intellectually or emotionally challenging, has been intentionally curated to achieve the learning goals for this course. The decision to include such material is not taken lightly. If you encounter a topic that is intellectually challenging for you, it can manifest in feelings of discomfort and upset. In response, I encourage you to come talk to me or your friends or family about it. Class topics are discussed for the sole purpose of expanding your intellectual engagement in the area of Sociology and I will support you throughout your learning in this course.

Incompletes and Late Assignments

All assignments are to be submitted/turned in by the beginning of the class session when they are due—including assignments posted in Canvas. Incompletes will only be assigned in extremely unusual circumstances.

Spiritual Care

Please be aware PLNU strives to be a place where you grow as whole persons. To this end, we provide resources for our students to encounter God and grow in their Christian faith. If you have questions, a desire to meet with the chaplain or have prayer requests you can contact your professor or the [Office of Spiritual Life and Formation](#).

State Authorization

State authorization is a formal determination by a state that Point Loma Nazarene University is approved to conduct activities regulated by that state. In certain states outside California, Point Loma Nazarene University is not authorized to enroll online (distance education) students. If a student moves to another state after admission to the program and/or enrollment in an online course, continuation within the program and/or course will depend on whether Point Loma Nazarene University is authorized to offer distance education courses in that state. It is the student's responsibility to notify the institution of any change in his or her physical location. Refer to the map on [State Authorization](#) to view which states allow distance education outside California.

PLNU Copyright Policy

Point Loma Nazarene University, as a non-profit educational institution, is entitled by law to use materials protected by the US Copyright Act for classroom education. Any use of those materials outside the class may violate the law.]

PLNU Recording Notification

In order to enhance the learning experience, please be advised that this course may be recorded by the professor for educational purposes, and access to these recordings will be limited to enrolled students and authorized personnel.

Note that all recordings are subject to copyright protection. Any unauthorized distribution or publication of these recordings without written approval from the University (refer to the Dean) is strictly prohibited.

PLNU Academic Honesty Policy

Students should demonstrate academic honesty by doing original work and by giving appropriate credit to the ideas of others. Academic dishonesty is the act of presenting information, ideas, and/or concepts as one's own when in reality they are the results of another person's creativity and effort. A faculty member who believes a situation involving academic dishonesty has been detected may assign a failing grade for that assignment or examination, or, depending on the seriousness of the offense, for the

course. For all student appeals, faculty and students should follow the procedures outlined in the University Catalog. See [Academic Policies](#) for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy

You are allowed to use Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Gemini Pro 1.5, GrammarlyGo, Perplexity, etc) to generate ideas, but you are not allowed to use AI tools to generate content (text, video, audio, images) that will end up in any work submitted to be graded for this course. If you have any doubts about using AI, please gain permission from the instructor.

PLNU Academic Accommodations Policy

PLNU is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all its programs, services, and activities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students with disabilities may request course-related accommodations by contacting the Educational Access Center (EAC), located in the Bond Academic Center (EAC@pointloma.edu or 619-849-2533). Once a student's eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, the EAC will work with the student to create an Accommodation Plan (AP) that outlines allowed accommodations. Professors are able to view a student's approved accommodations through Accommodate.

PLNU highly recommends that students speak with their professors during the first two weeks of each semester/term about the implementation of their AP in that particular course. Accommodations are not retroactive so clarifying with the professor at the outset is one of the best ways to promote positive academic outcomes.

Students who need accommodations for a disability should contact the EAC as early as possible (i.e., ideally before the beginning of the semester) to assure appropriate accommodations can be provided. It is the student's responsibility to make the first contact with the EAC. Students cannot assume that because they had accommodations in the past, their eligibility at PLNU is automatic. All determinations at PLNU must go through the EAC process. This is to protect the privacy of students with disabilities who may not want to disclose this information and are not asking for any accommodations.

Language and Belonging

Point Loma Nazarene University faculty are committed to helping create a safe and hospitable learning environment for all students. As Christian scholars we are keenly aware of the power of language and believe in treating others with dignity. As such, it is important that our language be equitable, inclusive, and prejudice free. Inclusive/Bias-free language is the standard outlined by all major academic style guides, including MLA, APA, and Chicago, and it is the expected norm in university-level work. Good writing and speaking do not use unsubstantiated or irrelevant generalizations about personal qualities such as age, disability, economic class, ethnicity, marital status, parentage, political or religious beliefs, race, gender, sex, or sexual orientation. Inclusive language also avoids using stereotypes or terminology that demeans persons or groups based on age, disability, class, ethnicity, gender, race, language, or

national origin. Respectful use of language is particularly important when referring to those outside of the religious and lifestyle commitments of those in the PLNU community. By working toward precision and clarity of language, we mark ourselves as serious and respectful scholars, and we model the Christ-like quality of hospitality.

If you (or someone you know) have experienced other forms of discrimination, you can find more information on reporting and resources at www.pointloma.edu/nondiscrimination.

Sexual Misconduct and Discrimination

In support of a safe learning environment, if you (or someone you know) have experienced any form of sexual discrimination or misconduct, including sexual assault, dating or domestic violence, or stalking, know that accommodations and resources are available through the Title IX Office at pointloma.edu/Title-IX. Please be aware that under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, faculty and staff are required to disclose information about such misconduct to the Title IX Office.

If you wish to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting responsibility, you can contact Counseling Services at counselingservices@pointloma.edu or find a list of campus pastors at pointloma.edu/Title-IX.

If you (or someone you know) have experienced other forms of discrimination or bias, you can find more information on reporting and resources at www.pointloma.edu/bias

PLNU Attendance and Participation Policy

Regular and punctual attendance at all class sessions is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. If the student is absent for more than 10 percent of class sessions, the faculty member will issue a written warning of de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent, the student may be de-enrolled without notice until the university withdrawal date or, after that date, receive an “F” grade. A portion of the credit hour content will be delivered asynchronously and attendance will be determined by submitting the Discussion assignments by the posted due dates. Failure to meet these standards will result in an absence for that day. See [Academic Policies](#) in the Undergraduate Academic Catalog. If absences exceed these limits but are due to university excused health issues, an exception will be granted. One of the goals for this class will be to stimulate creative and critical thinking which requires being involved in the analysis and discussion of various topics. Participation means being prepared by doing the readings before synchronous/face to face class meetings and offering substantive insights and comments during class discussions. You will earn five points in total for each week’s synchronous contribution.

Use of Technology

In order to be successful in the online or hybrid environment, you'll need to meet the minimum technology and system requirements; please refer to the [Technology and System Requirements](#) information. Additionally, students are required to have headphone speakers, microphone, or webcams

compatible with their computer available to use. Please note that any course with online proctored exams requires a computer with a camera (tablets are not compatible nor allowable) to complete exams online. Problems with technology do not relieve you of the responsibility of participating, turning in your assignments, or completing your class work.

Loma Writing Center

The Loma Writing Center exists to help all members of the PLNU community cultivate transferable writing skills to engage their academic, professional, personal, and spiritual communities. We work toward this goal by conducting one-on-one consultation sessions, supporting writing education across the PLNU community, and participating in ongoing writing center research.

Getting feedback from the Loma Writing Center while you're in the process of working on an assignment is a great way to improve the quality of your writing and develop as a writer. You are encouraged to talk with a trained writing consultant about getting started on an assignment, organizing your ideas, finding and citing sources, revising, editing for grammar and polishing final drafts, and more. For information about how to make in-person or online appointments, see [Loma Writing Center webpage](#) or visit the Loma Writer Center on the first floor of the Ryan Library, room 221.

- [Appointment Calendar](#)
- [Website](#)
- Email: writingcenter@pointloma.edu

Lomabooks Instructions for Students:

This course is part of our course material delivery program, **LomaBooks**. The bookstore will provide each student with a convenient package containing all required physical materials; all digitally delivered materials will be integrated into Canvas. You should have received an email from the bookstore confirming the list of materials that will be provided for each of your courses and asking you to select how you would like to receive any printed components (in-store pick up or home delivery). If you have not done so already, please confirm your fulfillment preference so the bookstore can prepare your materials. For more information about **LomaBooks**, please go: [HERE](#)