



Department of Sociology, Social Work, and Family Science

SOC 2050-1 – Sociology of the Family

3 units

Class days: Thursdays

Instructor: Alina M. Baltazar, PhD, MSW,
LMSW-C, CFLE

Class hours: 5:30pm-8:00pm

E-mail: alinabaltazar@pointloma.edu
Phone: 619-849-2374

Meeting location: Rohr Hall
108

Office location: Rohr Hall 115, separate
entrance on the left side (Eastern) of the building

Office hours: by appointment, please email

Final Exam: 5/8/2025 @
7:30pm

Project Presentations: during final exam timeslot

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 becomes an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we aspire to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

Foundational Explorations 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.

Department Mission

As followers of Christ, our mission is to nurture servant scholars who critically and empirically evaluate social systems, cultural patterns, and basic human needs to constructively engage as agents of hope with individuals, families, and communities.

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; nonmarital 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.

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 populations access available services.
7. Relate differences in the core concepts to their impact on social well-being.

This is a shared learning journey. I'm in. Are you?

REQUIRED TEXTS AND RECOMMENDED STUDY RESOURCES

Marriages, Families, and Relationships: Making Choices in a Diverse Society.

Lamanna, Mary Ann. Marriages, Families, and Relationships: Making Choices in a Diverse Society. 15th Edition ISBN-13: 978-0-357-94855-2

Additional readings will be available free on Canvas

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.

ELECTRONICS IN THE CLASSROOM: As a host of this classroom, I have a policy about phones and laptop computers and devices like them. This policy is to allow you to become more

comfortable taking a break from technology, allowing you to be in the present moment and adding to your professional tolerance of being without devices all of the time. 1. I will give you a “tech break” during class - please do not check your phones until that time. If there is a big life circumstance going on, please let me know at the beginning of class and we will talk about your use of your phone. 2. There will be times when I will ask you to take out your laptop and smart devices in the classroom to further our collective learning. Other than that, I strongly recommend NOT using laptops in class. The reasons are threefold:

a. It is hard to not check other things, which impairs your learning. You most likely are not aware of the impairment, but the research is quite clear.

http://www.slate.com/articles/health_and_science/science/2013/05/multitasking_while_studying_divided_attention_and_technological_gadgets.html Links to an external site.

b. Even if it doesn't impair your learning, it impairs others learning.

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0360131512002254> Links to an external site.

c. You write more but learn less. Writing your notes creates synthesis which increases learning.

<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/a-learning-secret-don-t-take-notes-with-a-laptop/> d. It also impairs long-term retention. This new study shows a causal effect with grades being lower by about half a letter grade.

<https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2018/07/27/class-cellphone-and-laptop-use-lowers-examscores-new-study-shows>

Links to an external site. So I am asking you not to use laptops unless you need or strongly prefer a laptop to take notes. In that case talk to me beforehand, and we will make that work.

ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

Grades will be based on the following:

Sample Standard Grade Scale Based on Percentages

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

Assignment distribution:

Participation @ 5 points each	70 (17%)
Discussion Boards @ 10 points each	130 (32%)
Surveys @ 2 points each	6 (1%)
Course Project	60 (15%)
Exam 1	70 (17%)
Exam 2	70 (17%)
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Total points for course	406

It is possible to earn up to an additional 20 points in extra credit from the various options below. Choose TWO activities from the three options listed. Points will be added to the total class points.

- Relationship Qs EC (Week 8) 10 points possible
- Sabbath Activity EC (Week 11) 10 points possible
- Film EC (Week 15) 10 points possible

FINAL EXAMINATION (aka 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.

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 SOC2050, 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.

If you encounter a topic that is 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, and I will support you throughout your learning in this course.

Trigger/Sensitivity Warning

I acknowledge that each of you comes to PLNU with your own unique life experiences. This contributes to the way you perceive several types of information. In SOC 2050 Sociology of the Family, we will cover a variety of topics, some of which you may find emotionally triggering/activating, particularly the domestic violence topic. Each time this topic appears in a reading or unit, it is marked on the syllabus and/or will be announced in class. The experience of being emotionally triggered versus intellectually challenged are different. The main difference is that an individual must have experienced trauma to experience being emotionally triggered, whereas an intellectual challenge has nothing to do with trauma. If you are a trauma survivor and encounter a topic in this class that is triggering for you, you may feel overwhelmed or panicked and find it difficult to concentrate. In response, I encourage you to take the necessary steps for your emotional safety. This may include leaving class while the topic is discussed or talking to a therapist at the Counseling Center. Should you choose to sit out on discussion of a certain topic, know that you are still responsible for the material; but we can discuss if there are other methods for accessing that material, and for assessing your learning on that material. Class topics are discussed for the sole purpose of expanding your intellectual engagement in the area of [subject/major], and I will support you throughout your learning in this course.

PLNU ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION POLICY

Regular and punctual attendance at all **synchronous** classes/ in person classes is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. If the student is absent for more than 10 percent of class sessions (virtual or face-to-face), 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 drop date or, after that date, receive the appropriate grade for their work and participation. 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 class meetings and offering substantive insights and comments **during** class discussions. You will earn **five** points in total for each week's synchronous contribution.

Some weeks will require some participation before class. See Canvas for the weeks that list Reflection Question or Scale in the Session Agenda line. The syllabus makes a note of these weeks as well.

COURSE PROJECT

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 and the Final Module on Canvas for detailed instructions.

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 students have questions, a desire to meet with the chaplain or have prayer requests you can contact the [Office of Spiritual Development](#).

USE OF TECHNOLOGY

In order to be successful in the online 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 compatible with their computer available to use. If a student is in need of technological resources please contact student-tech-request@pointloma.edu.

Problems with technology do not relieve you of the responsibility of participating, turning in your assignments, or completing your class work.

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 online (distance education) outside of 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.

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. If assignments are submitted late without a legitimate excuse (illness, no access to technology, etc.), there will be a 10% reduction each week past the deadline.

Incompletes will only be assigned in extremely unusual circumstances. If you have a medical emergency, psychological crisis or death in the family, obviously I will work with you to find a way for you to make up your work. Documentation is required to do so *within two days* of missed work.

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. Faculty should follow and students may appeal using the procedure in the university Catalog. See [Academic Policies](#)

[Links to an external site.](#)

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, iA Writer, Marmot, Botowski, etc.) in this course. Any work that utilizes AI-based tools must be clearly identified as such, including the specific tool(s) used. For example, if you use ChatGPT, you must cite ChatGPT including the version number, year, month and day of the query and the statement "Generated using OpenAI. <https://chat.openai.com/>"

PLNU ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS POLICY

PLNU is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all its programs, services, and activities. 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 619-849-2486). Once a student's eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, the EAC will issue an academic accommodation plan ("AP") to all faculty who teach courses in which the student is enrolled each semester.

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 and/or if they do not wish to utilize some or all of the elements of their AP in that course.

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.

I will do everything in my power to make this class accessible to **all** students. If I am doing something that interferes with your learning, please e-mail me or schedule a time to meet. If you need assistance with course material, want to continue a discussion, or just talk, please let me know. My door is always open.

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.

You may report an incident(s) using the [Bias Incident Reporting Form](#).

COURSE SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNMENTS AT-A-GLANCE

DATE PRESENTED	CLASS CONTENT
Week 1: January 16, 2025	Introduction to Course
Review Canvas logistics and orient to class	
Due Thursday 1/16/25, before class:	<i>WK1 Share "A Little About You"</i>
Due Thursday 1/16/25, before class	<i>WK1 Survey</i>
Week 2 : January 23, 2025	Making Family Choices in a Changing Society
Textbook:	Chapter 1
Readings/ videos on Canvas: TV Families over the years, Sociological Imagination	The Way we Weren't(Coontz),
Due Tuesday 1/21/2025: by Wednesday 1/22/25	WK2 Discussion (classmate responses
Due Thursday 1/23/2025 8 p.m.	Reflection Question
Week 3: January 30, 2025	Exploring Relationships & Families
Textbook:	Chapter 2
Readings/ video on Canvas: Research), Three Major Paradigms in Society, Crack Babies	Research on family trends(Pew

Due Tuesday 1/28/25:
due Wednesday 1/29/25

WK3 Discussion (classmate responses)

Due Thursday 1/30/2025 8 p.m.

Reflection Question

Week 4: February 6, 2025

Gender Identities & Families

Textbook:

Chapter 3

Readings/ Videos on Canvas:

Video - Baby Daddy, Mars and

Venus today, Good morning Britain, TED Talk - Angela Kade Goepferd

Due Tuesday 2/4/25:
due Wednesday 2/5/25

WK4 Discussion (classmate responses)

Due Thursday 2/6/2025 5:30 p.m.

Reflection Question

Week 5: February 13, 2025

Our Sexual Selves

Textbook:

Chapter 4

Readings/ videos on Canvas:

Is Hooking up bad for women?

(Armstrong, Hamilton England), Sex needs a new Metaphor (Al Vernacchio)

Due Tuesday 2/11/25:
due Wednesday 2/12/25)

WK5 Discussion (classmate responses)

Week 6: February 20, 2025

Love and Choosing a Life Partner

Textbook:

Chapter 5

Readings/ videos on Canvas:

Modern Romance(Aziz Ansari),

Pandemic Dating(Lang)

Due Tuesday 2/18/25:
responses due Wednesday 2/19/25)

WK6 Discussion (classmate

Due Thursday 2/20/25 5:30 p.m.

Scale due

Due Thursday 2/20/25, before class:

Project Proposal

Exam 1 Due: Monday February 24th, 2024

Week 7: February 27, 2025**Non-marital Lifestyles**

Textbook:

Chapter 6

Readings/ videos on Canvas:
approach to relationships (Renfro), How cohabitation is reshaping American families (Brown), Living Single (DePaulo)

Millennials have figured out an

Due Tuesday 2/25/25:
due Wednesday 2/26/25)

WK7 Discussion (classmate responses

Spring Break**March 3-7, 2025****Week 8: March 13, 2025****Marriage**

Textbook:

Chapter 7

Readings/ Videos:
Arranged Marriages (Page), Video - The Next America

Marriage, a history (Coontz),

Due Tuesday 3/11/25:
due Wednesday 3/12/25)

WK8 Discussion (classmate responses

*Due Wednesday (3/12/25):**Relationship Qs Extra Credit***Week 9: March 20, 2025****Deciding about Parenthood**

Textbook:

Chapter 8

Read/ watch:
Abortion Over Adoption (Khazan), TED Talk - Designer Babies(Blair)

Why So Many Women Choose

Due Tuesday 3/18/25:
due Wednesday 3/19/25)

WK9 Discussion (classmate responses

Due Thursday 3/20/25 5:30 p.m.

Reflection Question

Week 10: March 27, 2025**Raising Children in a Diverse Society**

Textbook: Chapter 9

Read: The new reality of Jane Crow (Clifford, Silver- Greenberg), Relentlessness of Modern Parenting (Miller), How Black Mothers Struggle to Navigate “Thug” Imagery(Dow)

Due Tuesday 3/25/25: WK10 Discussion (classmate responses due Wednesday 3/26/25)

Due Friday 3/28/25: WK10 Project’s Sociological Lens Assignment

Last day to drop semester classes: March 28, 2025

Week 11: April 3, 2025**Work and Family**

Textbook: Chapter 10

Read/ Watch: Two Women returning to Work(Collins)

Due Tuesday 4/1/25: WK11 Discussion (classmate responses due Wednesday 4/2/25)

Due Thursday 4/10/25 5:30 p.m. Sabbath Activity Extra Credit

Week 12: April 10, 2025**Communication**

Textbook: Chapter 11

Read/ Watch: Four types of Communication (Smalley), No Sound, No Fury, No marriage (Pritchett), 10 Ways.... (Headlee)

Due Tuesday 4/8/25: WK12 Discussion (classmate responses due Wednesday 4/9/25)

Week 13: Easter Recess April 17-21st

No in-person class or assignments due this week. Use this week to work on your final project and to get yourselves organized for a strong end to the semester.

Week 14: April 24, 2025

Textbook:

Read:
Him (Steiner), Interview with Marta Palaez.Due Tuesday 4/22/25:
due Wednesday 4/23/25)**Power and Violence in Families**

Chapter 12

He Held a Gun to my Head. I Loved

WK14 Discussion (classmate responses

Exam 2 Due: Monday April 28th, 2025**Week 15: May 1, 2025**

Textbook:

Read/ Watch:
(Lucy Hone), Rethinking Infidelity (Perel)Due Tuesday 4/29/25:
responses due Wednesday 4/30/25)*Due Thursday 5/1/25 by 5:30pm***Divorce, Resilience and Hope**

Chapter 13, 14, 15

The Three Secrets of Resilient People

WK15 Discussion (classmate

*Film Extra Credit Assignment***Final Exam: May 8, 2025 @ 7:30pm: Class Project Presentations**