



**FACULTY OF ARTS AND SCIENCE  
SOCIOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY  
FAMILY LIFE CYCLE SOAN 2222.001  
COURSE OUTLINE Fall 2011**

**ALAN D. BROWN**

**EVARISTUS 440**

**OFFICE HOURS: MONDAY/WEDNESDAY 2:00-3:00 AND BY APPOINTMENT**

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**TEACHING AND LEARNING PLATFORM:**

Moodle login: <http://moodlelive.msvu.ca>

Moodle Student Guide: <http://moodlelive.msvu.ca/mod/resource/view.php?id=34234>

Technical Help: If you require assistance with Moodle, please first contact Distance

Learning: (902) 457-6717; Email: [online@msvu.ca](mailto:online@msvu.ca)

**CLASS MEETS: MONDAY/WEDNESDAY 12:30-1:45 (SAC 508)**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** An examination of the various stages of the family life cycle from courtship to marital breakup. The dynamics of family life are explored from a variety of perspectives.

**COURSE PRE-REQUISITES:** Prerequisite: SOAN 1101, or SOAN 1102 and 1103, or permission of the instructor

**COURSE GOAL:** The goal of this course is to encourage students to critically examine different approaches to understanding forms of intimacy, marriage and family. Students will be expected to not only master the theoretical and methodological approaches to discussing families, but to develop a critical understanding of policy and social change.

**STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES:**

At the conclusion of this course, you should be able to:

- Identify the functions and dysfunctions surrounding family life
- Elaborate the importance of diversity in discussing families.
- Highlight the historical development of family forms in contemporary Canadian society.
- Outline the main theoretical and methodological approaches used to study marriage and the family in the social sciences.

**COURSE TEXT(S):**

Coontz, Stephanie. (2005). *Marriage, A History: How Love Conquered Marriage*. New York: Penguin Books. (Hereafter: COONTZ)

Weston, Kath (1991). *Families We Choose: Lesbians, Gays, Kinship*. New York: Columbia University Press. (Hereafter: WESTON)

White, James M., Larson, Lyle E., Goltz, J. Walter, and Brenda E. Munro (2005). *Families in Canada: Social Contexts, Continuities, and Changes*. Toronto: Pearson Education Canada. (Hereafter: WHITE)

#### **ONLINE RESOURCES:**

From time to time additional supplemental materials will be posted to our course website on Moodle. I also encourage students to make use of the public forum and posting facilities available to them on our course webpage.

#### **TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGIES:**

This course is designed in the spirit of the principles of active learning. My role in the course is to facilitate and encourage discussion and debate. Notes and handouts will be provided from time to time to assist you in your note taking and for preparing your written work.

**SYLLABUS (WHAT WE WILL BE DOING, LEARNING AND WHEN THROUGHOUT THE COURSE):**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Activity</b>
Sept 7	Introduction to Class	N/A	
Sept 12-14	Foundations	White Ch 1-3; 5	Sept 14 Reaction Paper 1
Sept 19-21	Histories: Traditional Marriage?	White pp78-94 Coontz pp 1-52	
Sept 26-28	Erotics and Politics	Coontz 53-144	
Oct 3-5	Happily Ever After?	Coontz 145-246	Oct 3: Reaction Paper 2 Oct 5: Midterm Distributed
Oct 10	HOLIDAY—No Classes		
Oct 12	...Or Not?	Coontz 247-304	
Oct 17-19	Intimate Connections	White Ch 6-7	Oct 17: Midterm Due
Oct 24-26	I do's (and don'ts)	White Ch 8-9	
Oct 31/Nov 2	Family (Dys)Functions	White Ch 10-12	Nov 2: Reaction Paper 3
Nov 7-9	Been there...done that...got the t-shirt	White Ch 13-14	
Nov 14-16	Families of Choice	Weston 1-76	
Nov 21-23	Diversity of Choices	Weston 77-164	Nov 21: Reaction Paper 4
Nov 28-30	Stressing Choices	Weston 165-end	
Dec 5	Wrapping Up	White Ch 15 Coontz 305-314	Final Exam Distributed DUE: December 12

In consultation with the class, the instructor reserves the right to amend the above course plan with reasonable notice to you.

**ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION:**

<b>REACTION PAPERS (4 @ 10%)</b>	<b>40%</b>
<b>MIDTERM</b>	<b>30%</b>
<b>FINAL</b>	<b>30%</b>

**TOTAL 100%**

**ASSIGNMENTS: DELIVERABLES AND EXPECTATIONS:**

**Reaction/Reflection Papers** (4 total worth 40% of your final grade)

The reflection papers you will be handing in to me are your chance to add your own thoughts and analysis to what you have read. I will distribute the topic of the paper to you ahead of time and expect you to draw on class readings and discussions. I do not want you to simply summarize the readings - I already know what the content of the readings is. You don't need to regurgitate it back at me. What you should do is use the readings as a "jumping off" point to write on your thoughts about the reading (see list of tips below).

## **How to get full credit for your reflection papers**

- Make sure everything is grammatically correct, spelled correctly and makes linguistic sense. This is the biggest thing I will take off points for in most cases. You may have great ideas in your paper, but if I can't understand what you are trying to communicate due to horrible grammar and spelling, then you are looking at 7 out of 10 points at the most.
- Go into detail in explaining yourself and your ideas. I am looking for depth of thought in your writing. Show me you truly understand the concepts in the reading.
- Don't summarize the readings. You may refer to something in the reading, but I don't want the entire reflection paper to be a summarization of the reading. Instead, comment on your thoughts regarding the reading - do you agree or disagree with what was written? Why or why not? Did the reading make you question or think about something else? What questions were you left with after doing the reading? Can you relate the reading to something going on in the media today? Does the author of a given reading have a valid and logical argument? If an article details a study that was done, was the study done in a manner that is valid?
- Length of reflection papers should be at least 1 page long. A 1 page paper should be extremely well-written and concise (in other words, not just rambling about nothing for the sake of getting a page worth to hand in). Most students tend to write about 2 pages I encourage students to make use of the public forum and posting facilities available to them

### **MIDTERM AND FINAL EXAMINATIONS** (30% EACH of final grade)

The midterm and final assessments in this course will be done as take-home exams. In each case, you will be given a number of choices at least 1 week before the examination is due from which you will be required to select 2 or 3 questions. Each question should be written as a stand-alone essay (that means do NOT write one essay attempting to link questions together). The page limits and other guidelines will be discussed in class.

### **UNDERGRADUATE GRADING SCHEME:**

The Mount's Undergraduate Course Guidelines for Marking can be read at:  
<http://www.msvu.ca/en/home/programsdepartments/undergradprograms/regulations/gradingexaminations.aspx>

### **LATE ASSIGNMENTS:**

Given the structure of this course, it is imperative that you keep up with assignments. To that end, I will generally not accept late work, except under exceptional circumstances.

### **GUIDELINES FOR WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS:**

You must submit all written assignments to receive a final grade. You must submit a hardcopy and/or an electronic version of your written assignment, which should be an example of an original, acceptable piece of scholarly work and follow the minimum/maximum page range indicated in the assignment details.

Your written assignment must include the following information:

- a cover page that states:
  - your name
  - course title/name/number
  - your student I.D. #
  - title of assignment
  - date

Format:

- Times Roman text font
- 12 point font
- 1" margin
- double-spaced
- paginated (numbered)
- citation style as per MLA, APA, etc.

You are responsible for keeping a back-up copy of all your written work.

### **LANGUAGE:**

Correct use of language is one of the criteria included in the evaluation of all written assignments.

### **COURSE POLICIES**

#### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:**

You play a vital role in contributing to and maintaining the culture of academic integrity expected of everyone at MSVU. Statement on Plagiarism and Cheating: University regulations on Plagiarism and Cheating and academic offenses will be strictly enforced. These regulations including applicable procedures and penalties are detailed in the University Calendar and are posted on Department notice boards and on the Mount website at:

<http://www.msvu.ca/en/home/programsdepartments/undergradprograms/regulations/academicoffenses.aspx>

**Read them!**

If you have any questions, please contact me.

**ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:**

Students who have a disability and who require academic accommodations must register with Disability Services (<http://www.msvu.ca/disabilityservices>) as early as possible in order to receive accommodations.

**RESEARCH:**

Students who conduct research involving human participants must have their research reviewed in accordance with the *MSVU Policies and Procedures for Ethics Review of Research Involving Humans* before starting the research. Check with your course professor or Chair of the Department about proper procedure.

**Class Attendance:**

Regular attendance is expected of students at all classes; the Mount recognizes the significance of attendance by stating it in the Academic Calendar at:

<http://www.msvu.ca/en/home/programsdepartments/undergradprograms/regulations/classattendance.aspx>

**HELPFUL MSVU ONLINE RESOURCES FOR YOU:**

Distance Learning and Continuing Education

<http://www.msvu.ca/Distance/index.asp>

For course-related/administrative inquiries, textbook inquiries, proctor inquiries, etc.

Email Distance Learning: [distance@msvu.ca](mailto:distance@msvu.ca) or call (902) 457-6511, toll free 1-800-665-3838.

Undergraduate Academic Calendar

<http://www.msvu.ca/calendar/undergraduate.asp>

Library

<http://www.msvu.ca/library/>

Writing Resource Centre

<http://www.msvu.ca/en/home/student services/academicadvisingsupport/writingresourcecentre/default.aspx>

Student Services

<http://www.msvu.ca/en/home/student services/default.aspx>

**PLEASE NOTE:**

Class Cancellation Line: (902) 457-6566