

**Common Course Outline**  
**SOCL 121**  
**Marriage and the Family**  
3 Semester Hours  
**Community College of Baltimore County**

Description

**Marriage and the Family**

Applies sociological concepts, theories, research, and cross-cultural perspectives toward understanding the American courtship, marriage, and family. Discusses love, sex, marital adjustment, parenting, family disorganization, changing gender roles, alternate lifestyles, and family variations by social class, ethnic group, and race.

Prerequisite: ACLT 052 or ACLT 053

Overall Course Objectives

1. Define the sociological perspective as applied to the study of family life.
2. Define the concept of family, taking into account contemporary trends in family life.
3. Understand the differences between objective and subjective thinking as it relates to current knowledge of the American family.
4. Identify and apply the major theoretical perspectives used to explain marriage and the family patterns.
5. Describe the main patterns of mate selection and current trends in marital status and childbearing choices within the social and historical context. Illustrate an awareness of the relationship between ethnic diversity and family issues in the U.S.
6. Describe concepts of human sexuality, sexual behavior and sexual orientation.
7. Illustrate an understanding of the concepts of gender role and gender identity in the context of negotiating family life in the U.S. and relate this to theories of power in relationships.
8. Demonstrate knowledge of current research on conflict management, common defense mechanisms and apply constructive communication approaches.
9. Explain issues involved in the stages of the life course of the family (i.e. parenting, widowhood).

Major Topics

- Theoretical perspectives on the family
- Love and sexuality

- Pairing and singlehood
- Marriage patterns
- Parenting
- Divorce and remarriage
- Family economics
- Conflict resolution
- Gender roles
- Aging and family relationships

#### Course Requirements

Grading/Exams: Grading procedures will be determined by the individual faculty member but will include the following: 3 exams, optional project

Writing: The individual faculty member will determine specific writing assignments.

#### Other Course Information

This course is a social sciences elective.