FLORIDA ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY

# NEW COURSE PROPOSAL
# Undergraduate Programs

**Department** Sociology

**College** Arts & Letters

*(To obtain a course number, contact **erudolph@fau.edu**)*

UUPC Approval 1/26/26
UFS Approval
SCNS Submittal
Confirmed
Banner Posted
Catalog

**Prefix** SYO

**Number** 3151

*(L = Lab Course; C = Combined Lecture/Lab; add if appropriate)*

**Lab Code**

**Type of Course**: Lecture

**Course Title**: Family Politics: American Families and the Welfare State

**Credits** *(See Definition of a Credit Hour)*: 3

**Effective Date** *(TERM & YEAR)*: Fall 2026

**Grading** *(Select One Option)*
- **Regular** ◉
- **Sat/UnSat** ○

**Course Description** *(Syllabus must be attached; see Template and Guidelines)*

This course will examine how social and economic forces have shaped the American family, from reform movements and charitable organizations in the colonial and industrial era, to state-run welfare services in the Progressive Era, culminating in the policies of recent decades. We will track how social institutions, socioeconomic trends, regulatory frameworks, and political shifts have influenced American values and norms linked to marriage, reproduction, and child raising. We will consider how those policies may differently affect families of varying socioeconomic backgrounds.

**Prerequisites, with minimum grade*** N/A

**Corequisites** N/A

**Registration Controls** *(Major, College, Level)* None

***Default minimum passing grade is D-.** **Prereqs., Coreqs. & Reg. Controls are enforced for all sections of course***

**WAC/Gordon Rule Course**

☐ **Yes** ☑ **No**

WAC/Gordon Rule criteria must be indicated in syllabus and approval attached to proposal. See WAC Guidelines.

**Intellectual Foundations Program (General Education) Requirement** *(Select One Option)*

None

General Education criteria must be indicated in the syllabus and approval attached to the proposal. See Intellectual Foundations Guidelines.

**Minimum qualifications to teach course**

PhD in Sociology or related area

**Faculty Contact/Email/Phone**

W McConnell/wmcconnell@fau.edu/216 990 4398

**List/Attach comments from departments affected by new course**

Political Science & Social Work (emails attached)

| ***Approved by*** | ***Date*** |
|---|---|
| Department Chair: Ann Branaman | 1/5/2026 |
| College Curriculum Chair: Robin Larson | 01/15/2026 |
| College Dean: | 01/15/2026 |
| UUPC Chair: Korey Sorge | 1/26/26 |
| Undergraduate Studies Dean: Dan Meeroff | 1/26/26 |
| UFS President: | |
| Provost: | |

Email this form and syllabus to mjenning@fau.edu seven business days before the UUPC meeting.

**FLORIDA ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY**

# SYO 3151

## Family Politics: American Families and the Welfare State

**Date:** Thursday 2:00 PM - 3:20 PM

**Building:** Phil Smith Hall Boca **Room:** 307

**3 Credit(s)**

**Fall 2026 - 1 Full Term**

## Instructor Information

Matty Lichtenstein
**Email:** mlichtenstein@fau.edu
**Office:** Culture & Society 260
**Office Hours:** Tuesday/Thursday 12pm-2pm
**Phone:** (561) 297-3270 (Sociology main office)

## Course Description

This course will examine how social and economic forces have shaped the American family, from reform movements and charitable organizations in the colonial and industrial era, to state-run welfare services in the

Progressive Era, culminating in the policies of recent decades. We will track how social institutions, socioeconomic trends, regulatory frameworks, and political shifts have influenced American values and norms linked to marriage, reproduction and child raising. We will consider how those policies may differently affect families of varying backgrounds.

There are no prerequisites for this course.

## Instructional Method

**Mixed Online and Classroom**
50% of the course is delivered online. (Hybrid)

## Required Texts/Materials

**All materials will be provided through Canvas.**

## Course Objectives/Student Learning Outcomes

- To develop an understanding of the basic legal, social, and cultural concepts that underlie regulation of the family.
- To develop an understanding of how social and political institutions shape the daily lives of American parents and children.
- To learn how to use evidence-based research to think critically about social policies that impact families today.

## Course Evaluation Method

Participation (25%) - Class participation constitutes the following: 1) Read all required texts, and ideally take notes so that you can refer to them during class discussions and activities; 2) attend class and actively engage in class discussions (20%), and 3) do a student presentation at the end of the semester (5%).

Quizzes (20%) – Every Tuesday by 9pm, you will need to complete a timed quiz on Canvas, based on the readings for that week. The quiz will be posted by Tuesday at 2pm or earlier, and it will consist of 1-2 open-ended questions. You will then have another short-answer quiz on Thursday, based on both Tuesday and Thursday readings. I will drop the lowest quiz grade.

In-class assignments (15%) – these are drafted and submitted in class and will be graded; if you lose credit due to errors, you may revise and resubmit for an improved grade. Note that some of these in- class assignments will require preparation beforehand; I will assign guidelines in advance.

Midterm (20%) – Midterm will take place on Thursday 10/2 at the regular class time and place.

Final exam (20%) – The final will take place on Tuesday 12/9 at 1:15pm.

## Attendance Policy Statement

Students are expected to attend all their scheduled University classes and to satisfy all academic objectives as outlined by the instructor. The effect of absences upon grades is determined by the instructor, and the University reserves the right to deal at any time with individual cases of non-attendance. Students are responsible for arranging to make up work missed because of legitimate class absence, such as illness, family emergencies, military obligation, court-imposed legal obligations, or participation in University-approved activities. Examples of University-

approved reasons for absences include participating on an athletic or scholastic team, musical and theatrical performances, and debate activities. It is the student's responsibility to give the instructor notice prior to any anticipated absences and within a reasonable amount of time after an unanticipated absence, ordinarily by the next scheduled class meeting. Instructors must allow each student who is absent for a University-approved reason the opportunity to make up work missed without any reduction in the student's final course grade as a direct result of such absence.

## Time Commitment Per Credit Hour

For traditionally delivered courses, not less than one (1) hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction each week for fifteen (15) weeks per Fall or Spring semester, and a minimum of two (2) hours of out- of-class student work for each credit hour. Equivalent time and effort are required for Summer Semesters, which usually have a shortened timeframe. Fully Online courses, hybrid, shortened, intensive format courses, and other non-traditional modes of delivery will demonstrate equivalent time and effort.

## Course Grading Scale

| Letter Grade | Percentage |
|---|---|
| A | 100 - 94% |
| A- | < 94 - 90% |
| B+ | < 90 - 87% |
| B | < 87 - 83% |
| B- | < 83 - 80% |
| C+ | < 80 - 77% |
| C | < 77 - 73% |
| C- | < 73 - 70% |
| D+ | < 70 - 67% |
| D | < 67 - 63% |
| D- | < 63 - 60% |
| F | < 60 - 0% |

## Grade Appeal Process

You may request a review of the final course grade when you believe that one of the following conditions apply:

- There was a computational or recording error in the grading.
- The grading process used non-academic criteria.
- There was a gross violation of the instructor's own grading system.

University Regulation 4.002 of the University Regulations contains information on the grade appeals process

## Policy on Make-up Tests, Late work, and Incompletes

Please contact me at least 24 business hours before the deadline if you believe your assignment will be delayed. If a last-minute emergency occurs, you have up to 24 hours after the due date to provide written documentation that explains the lateness. Unexcused late assignments will result in 50% off your assignment grade. For an excused absence, you can make up the Thursday quiz for full credit if you arrange with me to take it before I return graded quizzes the next class, or you can make it up for partial credit after that. There is no make-up for unexcused absences.

## Policy on the Recording of Lectures

Students enrolled in this course may record video or audio of class lectures for their own personal educational use. A class lecture is defined as a formal or methodical oral presentation as part of a university course intended to present information or teach students about a particular subject. Recording class activities other than class lectures, including but not limited to student presentations (whether individually or as part of a group), class discussion (except when incidental to and incorporated within a class lecture), labs, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving student participation, test or examination administrations, field trips, and private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the lecturer, is prohibited.
Recordings may not be used as a substitute for class participation or class attendance and may not be published or shared without the written consent of the faculty member. Failure to adhere to these requirements may constitute a violation of the University's Student Code of Conduct and/or the Code of Academic Integrity.

## Artificial Intelligence Preamble

FAU recognizes the value of generative AI in facilitating learning. However, output generated by artificial intelligence (AI), such as written words, computations, code, artwork, images, music, etc., for example, is drawn from previously published materials and is not your own original work.

FAU students are not permitted to use AI for any course work unless explicitly allowed to do so by the instructor of the class for a specific assignment. **[Policy 12.16 Artificial Intelligence]**

Class policies related to AI use are decided by the individual faculty. Some faculty may permit the use of AI in some assignments but not others, and some faculty may prohibit the use of AI in their course entirely. In the case that an instructor permits the use of AI for some assignments, the assignment instructions will indicate when and how the use of AI is permitted in that specific assignment. It is the student's responsibility to comply with the instructor's expectations for each assignment in each course. When AI is authorized, the student is also responsible and accountable

for the content of the work. AI may generate inaccurate, false, or exaggerated information. Users should approach any generated content with skepticism and review any information generated by AI before using generated content as-is.

If you are unclear about whether or not the use of AI is permitted, ask your instructor before starting the assignment.

Failure to comply with the requirements related to the use of AI may constitute a violation of the **Florida Atlantic Code of Academic Integrity, Regulation 4.001.**

Proper Citation: If the use of AI is permitted for a specific assignment, then use of the AI tool must be properly documented and cited. For more information on how to properly cite the use of AI tools, visit **https://fau.edu/ai/citation**

## AI Language Specific To This Course

- AI Prohibited: The use of AI to assist in any work assigned in this specific course is prohibited.

## Code of Academic Integrity

Students at Florida Atlantic University are expected to maintain the highest ethical standards. Academic dishonesty is considered a serious breach of these ethical standards, because it interferes with the university mission to provide a high quality education in which no student enjoys an unfair advantage over any other. Academic dishonesty is also destructive of the university community, which is grounded in a system of mutual trust and places high value on personal integrity and individual responsibility. Harsh penalties are associated with academic dishonesty. For more information, see University Regulation 4.001.

## Faculty Rights and Responsibilities

Florida Atlantic University respects the rights of instructors to teach and students to learn. Maintenance of these rights requires classroom conditions that do not impede their exercise. To ensure these rights, faculty members have the prerogative to:

• Establish and implement academic standards.

• Establish and enforce reasonable behavior standards in each class.

• Recommend disciplinary action for students whose behavior may be judged as disruptive under the Student Code of Conduct University Regulation 4.007.

## Disability Policy

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA), students who

require reasonable accommodations due to a disability to properly execute coursework must register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS) and follow all SAS procedures. SAS has offices across three of FAU's campuses – Boca Raton, Davie and Jupiter – however disability services are available for students on all campuses. For more information, please visit the SAS website at www.fau.edu/sas/.

## Religious Accommodation Policy Statement

In accordance with the rules of the Florida Board of Education and Florida law, students have the right to reasonable accommodations from the University in order to observe religious practices and beliefs regarding admissions, registration, class attendance, and the scheduling of examinations and work assignments. University Regulation 2.007, Religious Observances, sets forth this policy for FAU and
may be accessed on the FAU website at www.fau.edu/regulations.

Any student who feels aggrieved regarding religious accommodations may present a grievance to the executive director of The Office of Civil Rights and Title IX. Any such grievances will follow Florida Atlantic University's established grievance procedure regarding alleged discrimination.

## Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) Center

Life as a university student can be challenging physically, mentally and emotionally. Students who find stress negatively affecting their ability to achieve academic or personal goals may wish to consider utilizing FAU's Counseling and Psychological Services (**CAPS**) Center. CAPS provides FAU students a range of services – individual counseling, support meetings, and psychiatric services, to name a few
– offered to help improve and maintain emotional well-being. For more information, go to http://www.fau.edu/counseling/

## Student Support Services and Online Resources

- Center for Learning and Student Success
- (CLASS) Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)
- FAU Libraries
- Office of Information Technology
- Helpdesk Center for Global Engagement
- Office of Undergraduate Research and Inquiry (OURI)

- Student Accessibility Services
- Student Athlete Success Center
- (SASC) Testing and Certification
- Test Preparation
- University Academic Advising Services

**The Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL)**

The CTL has a variety of FREE TUTORING and other academic support services to help you succeed in your courses. You are encouraged to build your academic support team early in the term and meet with your team regularly. At the CTL, you can practice difficult course content, develop skills, and learn academic success strategies -- in person and online. Learn more about FAU academic support at **www.fau.edu/ctl**.

## Title IX Statement

In any case involving allegations of sexual misconduct, you are encouraged to report the matter to the University Title IX Coordinator in the Office of Civil Rights and Title IX (OCR9). If University faculty become aware of an allegation of sexual misconduct, they are expected to report it to OCR9. If a report is made, someone from OCR9 and/or Campus Victim Services will contact you to make you aware of available resources including support services, supportive measures, and the University's grievance procedures. More information, including contact information for OCR9, is available at **https://www.fau.edu/ocr9/title-ix/**. You may also contact Victim Services at **victimservices@fau.edu** or 561-297-0500 (ask to speak to an Advocate) or schedule an appointment with a counselor at Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) by calling 561-297- CAPS.

## Course Topical Outline

*Note: this schedule is tentative and I reserve the right to make changes during the semester.*

***Module 1: Family Regulation from the Colonial to the Progressive Era***

*Week 1: Course Introduction.*
- Syllabus review
- Brewer, Holly. *By Birth or Consent*, (2012), pp. 1-8.

*Week 2: The Public/Private Divide in Early Regulatory Efforts*
- *Tues. 8/26*: Abramovitz, Mimi. *Regulating the Lives of American Women*, (1996), pp. 52-60, 75-83, 94-100.
- *Thurs. 8/28*: Grossberg, Michael. *Governing the Hearth*, (1985), pp. 234-244.

*Week 3: The Family in the Progressive Era – Professionalization, Advocacy, and Family Regulation*

- *Tuesday 9/2*: Katz, Michael. *In the Shadow of the Poorhouse*, (1996), pp. 60-61, 70– 87
- *Thursday 9/4*: Review Katz reading for quiz.

*Week 4: Valuing Children*

- Tuesday 9/9: Zelizer, Vivan. *Pricing the Priceless Child*, (1985), pp. 3-12, 22-32, 43-55
- Thursday 9/11: Katz, Michael. *In the Shadow of the Poorhouse*, (1996), pp. 117-119, 128-150.

*Week 5: Reproductive Regulation in the Antebellum and the Progressive Eras*

- *Tuesday 9/16:* Luker, Kristen. *Abortion and the Politics of Motherhood*, pp. 11-27.
- *Tuesday 9/16:* Stern, Mina. "Forced Sterilization Policies in the US," (2020).
- *Thursday 9/18:* Luker, Kristen. *Abortion and the Politics of Motherhood*, pp. 27-39.

***Module 2: Consolidating the American Semi-Welfare State - Transforming Family Regulation***

*Week 6: Family Regulation in a Nascent Welfare State*

- *Tuesday 9/23:* Morgan and Campbell, *The Delegated Welfare State*, (2011), pp. 56-65.
- *Thursday 9/25:* Abramovitz, Mimi. *Regulating the Lives of Women*, (1996), pp. 215-235.

*Week 7: Mid-century Shifts in Family Policy and Regulation*

- *Tuesday 9/30:* Abramovitz, Mimi. *Regulating the Lives of Women*, (1996), pp. 313-342.
- *Thursday 10/2:* ***MIDTERM***

*Week 8: How Child Welfare became Child Protection*

- *Tuesday 10/7:* Nelson, Barbara. "Making an Issue of Child Abuse," (1984), pp. 5-19.
- *Thursday 10/9:* Lindsey, Duncan. *Welfare of Children*, (2004), pp. 119-127, 143-158.

*Week 9*: *Regulating the Family in a Neoliberal Age I*

- *Tuesday 10/14:* Grossberg, Michael. "Liberation and Caretaking," (2011) - p. 19-37.
- *Thursday 10/16:* Abramovitz, Mimi. *Regulating the Lives of Women*, (1996), p. 351-361

*Week 10*: *Regulating the Family in a Neoliberal Age II*

- *Tuesday 10/21:* Abramovitz, Mimi. *Regulating the Lives of Women*, (1996) - pp. 361-381.
- *Thursday 10/23:* Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act 1980, pp. 1-4.

***Module 3: Regulating Reproduction from the Twentieth Century to the Contemporary Era***

*Week 11: Regulating Reproduction in the 20th and 21st Centuries*

- *Tuesday 10/28:* Dubow, Sara. *Ourselves Unborn*, (2010), pp. 112-142.
- *Thursday 10/30:* Waggoner, Miranda. *Zero Trimester,* (2017), pp. 1-23.

*Optional:*

- Richardson, Sara. *The Maternal Imprint*, (2021), pp. 139-160.
- Martin, Nina. "The Last Person You'd Expect to Die in Childbirth," 2017.
- Listen to "A Life-or-Death-Crisis for Black Mothers," 2018, minutes 9-17.

*Week 12, November 4, 6: The Politics of Reproductive Regulation*

- *Tuesday 11/4:* Luthra, Shefali. *Undue Burden*, (2024), pp. 190-210.
- *Thursday 11/6*: Luthra, Shefali. *Undue Burden*, (2024), pp. 133-156

***Module 4: Family Policy Today – Poverty, Childcare, and Gender Roles***

*Week 13, November 11, 13*: *Redefining Marriage*

- *Tuesday 11/11*: Zeitz, Josh. "The Making of the Marriage Equality Revolution," (2015), Politico.
- *Thursday 11/13*: Review Zeitz reading for quiz

*Week 14, November 18, 20*: *The Costs of Family*

- *Tuesday, 11/18*: Edin and Schaefer, *Living on $2 a Day*, (2016), chapter 1.
- *Thursday 11/20:* DOL. "Childcare costs," *(*2024).
- *Thursday 11/20:* Miller, "How Other Nations Pay for Childcare," (2021).

*Optional:*

- Koball and Jiang, "Basic Facts about Low-Income Children." 2018.
- Kantor et al., "Childcare Costs are Skyrocketing Around the Globe," (2024).