Course Description
This course is an introduction to sociological and social psychological perspectives on intimate relationships, marriage, and diverse family forms.

This course examines the life events and challenges everyone has or will have to deal with. Over the next 10 weeks, topics covered include partner(s) choice, love, sexualities, marriage, divorce, intimate-partner violence, work, and parenting. This is not a "how-to" course; students explore the research and theories developed about these various topics, particularly from a sociological and psychological perspective.

In the spirit of C. Wright Mills’ sociological imagination: individuals cannot make knowledgeable choices without understanding how their individual biographies are connected to the larger historical and cultural context in which they take place. Therefore, students will learn how to use the sociological imaginations when confronting the challenges we all face when navigating our intimate lives.

Course Outcomes/Learning Objectives

1. **Learning Objective One: Learn about theoretical frameworks, theories, and concepts.**
   a. There will be quiz questions on the definitions of a sociological theoretical framework, theory, or concept from reading or lecture.
   b. There will be short case studies analysing cultural memes demonstrating the student’s ability to apply theoretical frameworks.
   c. Students will be expected to participate in online discussion groups generating questions and critiques of theoretical frameworks.
2. **Learning Objective Two: Learn about other scholars’ sociological empirical research**
   a. Students will read original works of sociologists and social psychologists on the topics outlined in course description.

3. **Learning Objective Three: Learn how to collect and analyze data using sociological research methods**
   a. Students will take part in online, anonymous surveys to learn how the class represents a microcosm of the broader picture depicted in course readings.
   b. Students will be expected to interview someone outside the class for a research paper on, “the ways we fall in love.”

4. **Learning Objective Four: Learn about inequality through a sociological lens**
   a. Students will be taught how to use an intersectional approach to all course readings, paying particular attention to the wide range of experiences depicted in the course reading material.

**Required Materials**


2. *All About Love* by bell hooks

**Major Assignments**

1. Three exams each worth 30 points (total of 90 points)
   a. See [Exam Description](#) for more information and due dates
   b. See [Practice Test Questions](#) for sample questions

2. Class Research Paper worth 70 points
   a. See [Writing Assignment Requirements](#) for more information
   b. See [Class Research Paper Details](#) for more information

3. Five Reading Quizzes each worth 10 points (total of 50 points)
   a. See [Reading Quizzes](#) for more information

4. Online Group Discussions worth 120 points
   a. See [Cultural Memes as Dominant Discourses](#) for more information
   b. See [Group Discussion Netiquette](#) for more information
   c. See [Discussion Group Deadlines](#) for more information
**Class Grade**
Your grade is based on a total of 330 possible points. There are two extra credit options each worth 15 points for a total of 30 points (equivalent of one exam).

**Grading Criteria**

*Which Assignments Count the Most?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading Quizzes</td>
<td>15% - Final Grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Paper</td>
<td>21% - Final Grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exams</td>
<td>27% - Final Grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Discussions</td>
<td>36% - Final Grade</td>
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*Final Grade Based on 330 Possible Points*

**Flexibility Statement**
The instructor reserves the right to modify course content and/or substitute assignments and learning activities in response to institutional, weather, or class situations.

Remote learning is new to me and many of you. Therefore, flexibility is key! I will work with the class to make any changes that will improve the learning (and teaching) experience.

**Course Calendar/Schedule**
Due to COVID-19, this class has been quickly adapted for remote learning. A rough outline of the course calendar can be found by clicking one the following link: *Weekly Pedagogical Flow*.

**Please Note: the Weekly Pedagogical Flow is a Google Doc**
The course outline is a living document meaning the reading schedule, required work, and due dates may change. The *Weekly Pedagogical Flow* will be kept as a Google Doc so changes can be shared instantly.

**Exam Description**
Exams will be posted on D2L for one week. Students will have two hours to take the exam and will only be allowed one attempt.
All exams will consist of 30 fill-in-the-blank, true/false, or short vignettes questions testing students on vocabulary and the ability to identify sociological frameworks.

**Exam Due Dates**

First Exam: opens 4/27 and closes 5/1  
Second Exam: opens 5/18 and closes 5/24  
Third Exam: opens 6/7 and closes 6/14

**Practice Test Questions**

On D2L there will be practice quizzes with roughly 5 questions for students to become familiar with the kind of questions they will find on the three exams. These practice quizzes are designed for the exams not for reading quizzes.

**Writing Assignment Requirements**

All written assignments should be submitted on D2L using the assignment’s dropbox which can be found by clicking on Activities, then Assignments. Please do not email course work.

Assignments must be type in 12-point font, double-spaced, using one inch margins on all sides. Please include a title at the top of the first page just before the first paragraph.

All submitted papers need to be checked and corrected for spelling errors and grammar. Be sure to answer writing assignment questions in complete sentences. If you require assistance in this area, the PSU Writing Center can help. Papers with high numbers of spelling, grammatical, or sentence structure errors will be penalized 25% of assignment grade.

**Class Research Paper Details**

Students will be responsible for a research paper that includes three components:

1. **First Interview - Due April 24th**

   Students will interview someone who is “fresh in love.” Identify an individual who is in a relationship they describe as happy/exciting which is less than 9 months old. Students must record the interview. Recordings can be audio or video and need to include the following questions:
   
   a. How do you know you are in love/ falling in?  
   b. How do you know this is the person(s) you wanted to be with?  
   c. What does love mean to you?  
   d. What kind of relationship do you want?  
   e. your questions - you may add questions based on course material to shape the interview to match your interests

2. **Second Interview - Due May 8th**

   Students will interview someone who is in a long term “loving” relationship. Identify an individual who is in a relationship they describe as “loving” which is more than 8 years old. Students must record the interview. Recordings can be audio or video and need to include the following questions:
   
   a. How do you know you’re in a loving relationship?
b. How do you know this is the person(s) you want to be with?
c. What does love mean to you now?
d. Has the kind of relationship you want changed over time?
e. **your questions** - you may add questions based on course material to shape the interview to match your interests

3. **Written Analysis - Due May 22nd**

This paper will be used to compare and contrast the two interviews using at least one theoretical perspective from the Lamanna, *et. al.* book (it may be easier to use more than one). To earn full credit, students must explain their observations using the language/key concepts outlined in the course material. For example, if an interviewee says, “I felt something special when I was around them and that’s how I knew. I was in love!” A student can use Labeling Theory to explain how the individual describes physiological stimuli, and then, labels it as love.

**Reading Quizzes**

Every other week, a short quiz will be posted for students as preparation for the main exams. Questions will be based on the readings assigned for the previous two weeks. Quiz questions will be multiple choices only.

**Cultural Memes as Dominant Discourses**

We embody our cultural stories, narratives, and norms. For example, why do you find or feel some memes resonate more than others? Sociologically, memes are a great way to analyze what narratives and norms are popular at a given historical moment. More importantly, your reaction to memes can be a powerful way to explore what you have internalized and how it shapes the choices you make.

Students will need to find three memes that really resonate for them and relate it to the course material. Memes will be posted in a group discussion for the class to analyze. You may not post a meme that is identical to one that has already been discussed, but you may use memes with the same images and different messaging.

**What is a meme you ask?**

A meme is "an idea, behavior or style that spreads from person to person within a culture." A meme acts as a unit for carrying cultural ideas, symbols or practices, which can be transmitted from one mind to another through writing, speech, gestures, rituals, or other imitable phenomena ([Boundless.com](https://www.boundless.com), accessed March 28, 2020). An example of a meme for this class would be:
When posting your meme, be sure to 1) identify the norm or narrative you think is being expressed and why, 2) then use one sociological perspective to explain the implications of the meme.

**Example:**

One narrative the meme above is depicting is the American cultural norm of indirectly communicating sexual interest in someone, which often makes flirting so confusing. The character looks apprehensive and is trying to answer the question: flirting or being nice? This issue is deeply gendered and connected to power dynamics.

From a feminist perspective, this norm causes a lot of sexual danger across the board, but for women in particular, there is vitriol and anger when “just being nice” is perceived as flirting; the cultural story represented here is that privilege breeds entitlement, particularly in heteropatriarchal societies, this aggrieved entitlement can extend to social and sexual exchange, leading dominant cultural groups to objectify those with less power.

This is a reflection/awareness exercise as much as it is intellectual. How many times have you experienced this interaction? Have you been blamed for your niceness? How did you navigate this interaction?

**Discussion Group Deadlines**

Each Week, students are expected to post at least once under a forum topic and reply twice to another student’s post. Posts need to be completed by Sunday, 11:30 pm.

**What to Post - Forum Topics or Meme**

Most forum topics will have question prompts in the topic description section to help shape posts. For example, a forum topic under “Reading Questions” may have a topic asking students to compare two theories. Posting under this topic would require the student to discuss how one theory works differently than another. Make sure to answer all questions when posting. Students may use personal experience; however, when using personal experience to make a point, students must also include cited literature to earn full credit.

Students may post a meme, which will count for the post-of-the-week as well as one of the three meme assignments required for the term.

Replies should be used to generate student discussion around the course material. For example, if there is a post comparing queer theory with social construction theory, a student can reply by adding insight to the comparison or ask questions. Replies are also expected to include cited work.

**Extra Credit Options**

To ensure you earn the grade you want in this class, there will be the opportunity to do two extra credit papers (15 points each) for a total of 30 points.

Extra credit can be a reflection paper based on participating in an event relevant to the class (this can be done online given COVID-19 precautions). For example, going to a community event
focused on relationships, Gender, families, or sexualities. A second option is to write a paper analyzing a movie, documentary, or podcast relevant to the course material. Papers should be a minimum of two pages, maximum of four pages.

**Event Reflection Components**
1. Explain why you picked this event and how you feel it is relevant to the class.

2. Outline how your social location (e.g. race/ethnicity, class, age, gender identity, etc.) may have shaped your reaction to the event. For example, did you feel comfortable in the space? If yes, why? If not, explain. Were there themes that came up that you found interesting or offensive? Be sure to focus on how your identities informed your experience.

3. Connect at least one theoretical concept from any class material to the event content. Please use a quote from any class readings to illustrate which theoretical framework you are invoking. For example, you could discuss the way social constructionism was invoked by the way the event was organized.

**Analysis Paper Components**
1. Explain why you picked this documentary, movie, or podcast and how you feel it is relevant to the class.

2. Connect at least one theoretical concept from any class material to the event content. Please use a quote from any class readings to illustrate which theoretical framework you are invoking. For example, you could discuss how exchange theory helps explain the rules of romantic comedies.

**Course Attendance and Make-up Policies**
I will not accept late work. Please be sure to upload assignments on time when they are due. Most assignments are due on Friday by 11:50pm.

**PSU Policies & Resources**
Here are some important links to resources you may want to take some time and read.

**PSU Grading System**
Undergraduate:  

Drop/Withdraw Deadline  
Disability Access Statement
If you have, or think you may have, a disability that may affect your work in this class and feel you need accommodations, contact the Disability Resource Center to schedule an appointment and initiate a conversation about reasonable accommodations.

The DRC is located in 116 Smith Memorial Student Union
   call: 503-725-4150
   email: drc@pdx.edu
   visit: https://www.pdx.edu/drc

Safe Campus Statement
Portland State University desires to create a safe campus for our students. As part of that mission, PSU requires all students to take the learning module entitled Creating a Safe Campus: Preventing Gender Discrimination, Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Assault. See http://www.pdx.edu/sexual-assault/safe-campus-module.

If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can find the appropriate resources on PSU’s Enrollment Management & Student Affairs: Sexual Prevention & Response website at http://www.pdx.edu/sexual-assault.

Student Food Security
Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, and believes this may affect their performance in the course, is urged to contact Committee for Improving Student Food Security for support at foodhelp@pdx.edu.

Furthermore, please notify the professor if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable her to provide any resources that she may possess.

Title IX Reporting
As an instructor, one of my responsibilities is to help create a safe learning environment for my students and for the campus as a whole. Please be aware that as a faculty member, I have the responsibility to report any instances of sexual harassment, sexual violence and/or other forms of prohibited discrimination.

If you would rather share information about sexual harassment, sexual violence or discrimination to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting responsibility, you can find a list of those individuals on PSU’s Enrollment Management & Student Affairs: Sexual Prevention & Response website at http://www.pdx.edu/sexual-assault.

For more information about Title IX please complete the required student module “Creating a Safe Campus: Preventing Gender Discrimination, Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Assault” in the “My Courses” section of D2L.
**Academic Integrity**
Academic integrity is a vital part of the educational experience at PSU. Please see the [PSU Student Code of Conduct](http://pdx.smartcatalogiq.com/en/2016-2017/Bulletin/Graduate-Studies/Enrollment/Incomplete) for the university’s policy on academic dishonesty. A confirmed violation of that Code in this course may result in failure of the course.

**Incomplete Policy**
Students do not have a right to receive or demand an Incomplete grade. The option of assigning an Incomplete grade is at the discretion of the instructor when the following criteria are met.

- **Eligibility Criteria:**
  1. Required satisfactory course completion/participation.
  2. Reasonable justification for the request.
  3. Incomplete grade is not a substitute for a poor grade.
  5. Resolving the Incomplete.


**Cultural Resource Centers**
The Cultural Resource Centers (CRCs) create a student-centered inclusive environment that enriches the university experience. We honor diversity, explore social justice issues, celebrate cultural traditions, and foster student identities, success, and leadership. Our centers include the Multicultural Student Center, La Casa Latina Student Center, Native American Student & Community Center, Pan African Commons, Pacific Islander, Asian, Asian American Student Center and the Middle Eastern, North African, South Asian program. We provide student leadership, employment, and volunteer opportunities; student resources such as computer labs, event, lounge and study spaces; and extensive programming. All are welcome!

**Zoom Use**
We will use Zoom for virtual meetings and recordings in this course. Your use of Zoom is governed by the [Acceptable Use Policy](http://pdx.smartcatalogiq.com/en/2016-2017/Bulletin/Graduate-Studies/Enrollment/Incomplete) and [PSU’s Student Code of Conduct](http://pdx.smartcatalogiq.com/en/2016-2017/Bulletin/Graduate-Studies/Enrollment/Incomplete). A record of all meetings and recordings is kept and stored by PSU, in accordance with the Acceptable Use Policy and FERPA. Individual use and distribution of recording is limited to academic purposes.

**Turnitin**
Students agree that by taking this course all required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. Use of Turnitin.com page service is subject to the Usage Policy and Privacy Pledge posted on the Turnitin.com site.