



## Marriage and the Family

SOC 404.01

Spring 2022

3 credit hours

15 week semester; TR 9:30a-10:45a

# UNIVERSITY of MARY

Instructor	Dr. Karen Hooge Michalka [Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Sociology]
Office Hours	M-F 11-12 in Welder 171 or by appointment at <a href="https://tinyurl.com/kmichalka">https://tinyurl.com/kmichalka</a>
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The family is the basis of society. As the family is, so is the society. And it is human beings who make a family – not the quantity of them, but the quality of them.  
– Ashley Montagu

### Course Description

This course explores the theory of family development with an emphasis on the American setting. We look at changing roles in family, adolescence, parenthood, mate selection, and crisis.

### Course Information

This course has no prerequisites and is a core elective.

### Relationship of the Course to the Program of Study

- **Servant Leadership:** In this course, students will be able to practice servant leadership through considering the foundational importance of the family in society.
- **Benedictine Values:** This course will specifically expose students to the Benedictine values of respect for persons, service, hospitality, community, moderation, and prayer in our topics and readings, regular discussions, and final research project.
- **Core Competencies:** This course incorporates the core competencies of spirituality and ethics, communication, critical thinking, and global stewardship. This is described in more depth under course objectives.

### Course Objectives

- O1 Express in written and oral form a number of theories and issues around families and marriage. (*Global Stewardship, Communication, Critical Thinking, Community, Respect*)
- O2 Express in written and oral form how to identify, describe, explain, and evaluate sociological theories, case studies, and issues specifically related to families and marriage. (*Global Stewardship, Communication, Critical Thinking, Community, Respect*)
- O3 Locate, evaluate, and synthesize information regarding contemporary debates and issues surrounding marriage and families. (*Critical Thinking*)
- O4 Develop time management, organizational, and academic skills. (*Communication, Critical Thinking, Global Stewardship, Spirituality & Ethics, Respect for Persons, Community, Hospitality, Moderation,*

Service)

### Workload Expectations

Since this is a three (3) credit undergraduate course lasting sixteen (16) weeks, students can expect to spend a minimum of three (3) hours per week in instructional time and another six (6) hours per week studying outside of instructional time (for a total of 135 total hours over the course of the semester).

### Major Assignments

Assignment	Course Objective(s) met	Evaluation Method	Approximate Time to Complete	Points per Assignment
Attendance and class participation (10%)	O1, O2, O3, O4	Points are earned as students attend class and participate in class discussions and activities	1.25 hours per meeting	80 points cumulative over the semester
Reading quizzes (15%)	O1, O2, O3, O4	For each reading, students will complete an online quiz.	40 hours	6 points each x 20 readings (lowest 4 grades dropped) = 120
Genogram Family Relationships Project (15%)	O1, O2, O3, O4	Points are earned for constructing a complete genogram and writing a paper analyzing portions of the family of origin.	10 hours	120 points
Take home multiple choice and short answer exams (30%)	O1, O2, O3, O4	Students will earn points for answering multiple choice and written exam questions	10 hours	120 points each x 2 exams = 240 points
Research Project (40%)	O1, O2, O3, O4	Students will earn points for the quality of their work in producing original research on parenting blogs through a prospectus, preliminary report, and final paper	30 hours	Prospectus: 40 points Preliminary report: 120 points Research paper: 160 points = 320 points
			<b>Total Points:</b>	<b>800</b>

A(93) A-(90) B+(87) B(83) B-(80) C+(77) C(73) C-(70) D+(67) D(63) D-(60) F(<60)

Final grades are rounded to the first decimal point, so an 89.5 would round to an A-, while an 89.4 rounds to a B+.

### What does your grade mean? And how can you improve it?

The difference between a B or an A is not a matter of points – these letter grades represent different *kinds* of performances.

D and F: Incomplete or unacceptable work. There is a failure to master the basic substance of the course.

There is poor performance in basic skills such as writing or logic. Often, there are also poor attitudes or work habits, or an inability to adequately balance the competing demands on your time. To improve “D” or “F” level work to a “C”, you need to work on all of the above points. Talk to your professor earlier rather than later, make a solid plan for improvement, find accountability, and follow through.

C: Acceptable performance. Shows a mastery of the basic substance of the course, but the basic skills are often marginal. To increase “C” level work to a “B”, you need to improve your basic skills, master more advanced or intricate course topics, and you need more critical reasoning.

B: Solid, competent performance. Shows a good mastery of basic skills and can summarize and use course skills adequately. To improve “B” level work to an “A”, you need analysis, insight, and a creative approach.

A: Exemplary performance. All the basic skills have been mastered. Shows originality, creativity, depth of analysis. “A” work sees beyond the obvious and looks for relationships and connections.

B-level writers ask:

- What happened?
- When did it happen?
- Where did it happen?
- Who made it happen?

These are descriptive questions. They describe what happened but don't go deeper.

A-level writers ask:

- Why did it happen?
- How did it happen?
- What might have prevented it from happening?
- How did it affect other things?
- What are connections that most other people have missed?
- What will happen as a result of it?
- What might have happened if it didn't happen?
- What have I found out about it that nobody knew before?
- What are some unanswered questions that nobody thought of before?

These are analysis questions. They unpack the incident to see how it works and what it implies.

### **Items required**

SOC 404: Marriage and the Family Reader, available in the campus bookstore.  
Something to take notes on.

### **Excused Absence Policy**

The University has a policy on excused absences related to sponsored or sanctioned activities and events. The policy is available for review online [<http://bit.ly/2thGRjo>]. Students participating in such activities and events are expected to review this policy and comply with it. As long as appropriate prior notification is given according to this policy, students and faculty reach a mutual agreement concerning make-up work, and students complete the work in question, faculty shall not penalize a student for missing a class or exam when they were granted an excused absence from the University. Any questions concerning the policy may be referred to the course instructor who may refer the question to the athletic director, student activities director, or academic affairs for response.

### **Policy Regarding Late Assignments and Missed Exams**

I expect that we will keep to the dates on the syllabus for assignments and exams. If an assessment needs to be moved, I will make an announcement in class and on Canvas. Students must complete assignments and exams on the assigned dates. There will be an automatic 10% penalty for any late assignments. This includes chapter quizzes, assignments, and exams. Do not expect exceptions. Students who will have University-sponsored activities on dates of the seated exams should make accommodations to take the exam *before* rather than after the date on the syllabus.

### **Channel for Communication Relating to this Course**

*Dr. Michalka* → *Dr. Leroy Huizenga* → *Dr. David Tamisiea* → *Dr. Diane Fladeland*

### **Statement on Academic Honesty**

Students are expected to read the University of Mary's Academic Honor Code and Honor System and abide by all the standards of conduct and requirements contained therein. When a student is in doubt about whether or not an action might constitute an Academic Honor Code violation, she or he should request clarification from the instructor **before** the action in question is undertaken. The Academic Honor Code is available for review on my.umary.edu using the following link: <http://bit.ly/2t3ORSu>

### **Statement Regarding Reasonable Accommodations**

The University of Mary, in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and in the spirit of our mission, offers support for disabled students who provide required documentation. Students with disabilities who need accommodations should apply to the Office of Student Accessibility Services. For further information, contact the Student Success Center, located in the lower level of Welder Library, at (701) 355-8264 or success@umary.edu

### **Mutual Expectations**

I offer students my best by coming to class prepared with thoughtful lectures, discussion questions, exercises, and applications. I commit to being available to my students in my office hours and around campus. I do my best to make my expectations for assignments clear and reasonable. Sometimes class activities or readings don't turn out the way I hoped, and I commit always to be improving my courses. I offer students the opportunity to provide constructive feedback partway through the semester, and I implement student suggestions into my course. I care that students are making progress in the course, and I do my best to connect struggling students to resources that can help them.

In turn, I expect my students will give me their best, regardless of the time of day, external concerns, or level of interest in the course material. I expect my students to be always remembering that this is a brief period of your life when you are dedicating your time and energy to your studies, with the end goal of developing the habits of mind to communicate effectively, think critically, act with moral courage, and develop expertise in the area of sociology of the family.

### **Respectful discussions**

In learning about human diversity and inequality, difficult topics come up. All students are expected to be reflective about topics or issues that bring up emotions or discomfort within them, and to communicate with the professor if needed. At the beginning of our semester, we will be able to practice Benedictine values of respect for persons by determining our shared expectations and norms for discussing as a class or in small groups.

### **Technology in the classroom**

Current research on the use of technology in the classroom shows us that laptops and tablets can be useful, but the increased temptation to distract ourselves – as well as the potential to distract those sitting around us – have negative impacts on our learning. I prefer that you take notes by hand, but allow you to use your discretion in taking notes on your laptop or a tablet.

I request that you keep your phones put away during class, and that you do not have them on your desk or the table in front of you. If you are in the midst of an emergency and are waiting for a telephone call, please inform me before class and take any calls outside of the classroom. If I see a student misusing technology in the classroom, I will count him or her absent for the day and I reserve the right to address or dismiss students who are being disruptive in their use of technology.

## Condensed Course Outline/Important Dates

Section 1 –Defining the Family and the Family Today

Section 2 –Interpersonal Relationships and the Family

- Prospectus Due Feb. 10
- Exam 1 due by March 7

Section 3 –Families in Context & Crisis

- Genogram project by Mar. 15
- Preliminary Report Due Apr. 12
- Final Project
- Exam 2

## Detailed Schedule

Topic	Date	What to do to be prepared for class
Introduction to course, each other, & laying out discussion guidelines	Jan 13	<input type="checkbox"/> Get a hold of the reader, available in the bookstore <input type="checkbox"/> Access our course on Canvas <input type="checkbox"/> Contact Dr. Michalka with any questions <input type="checkbox"/> Read Geiger and Livingston "8 Facts about Love and Marriage" Pg. 1-4 in reader <input type="checkbox"/> Read Dimock 2019 "Defining Generations" pg. 5-7 in reader
<b>Section 1. Defining the Family and the Family Today</b>		
Historical changes in the family	Jan 18	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Cherlin 2004 "The Deinstitutionalization of American Marriage" pg. 8-21 in reader <input type="checkbox"/> Complete quiz
The "Family in Decline" and "Family Change" Perspectives	Jan 20	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Giele 1996 "Decline of the Family: Conservative, Liberal, and Feminist Views" pg. 22-38 in reader <input type="checkbox"/> Complete quiz
The growth of the expressive relationship	Jan 25	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Cancian and Gordon 1988 "Changing Emotion Norms in Marriage: Love and Anger in U.S. Women's Magazines since 1900" pg. 39-73 in reader. (pages 55-73 are optional) <input type="checkbox"/> Complete quiz
The impact of family: the development of empathy	Jan 27	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Read Szalavitz and Perry 2010 "Chapter 5 – Lies and Consequences" pg. 74-87 in reader <input type="checkbox"/> Complete quiz
<b>Section 2. Interpersonal Relationships and the Family</b>		
Changes in societal views of sex	Feb 1	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Rhoades and Stanley 2014 "Before 'I Do'" pg. 88-105 in reader <input type="checkbox"/> Complete quiz
Young adults and the mating process & Methods: Content analysis	Feb. 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Laner and Ventrone 2000 "Dating Scripts Revisited" pg. 106-110 in reader <input type="checkbox"/> Read: Nicolas 2021 "Content Analysis" pg. 111-113 in reader <input type="checkbox"/> Complete quiz <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Introduce semester-long Media Content Analysis project</b>
Mothers and femininity	Feb. 8	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Geiger et al. 2019 "6 Facts About U.S. Moms" pg. 114-117 in reader <input type="checkbox"/> Read Blair-Loy 2003 "Introduction" to <i>Competing Devotions</i> pg. 118-125 in reader <input type="checkbox"/> Complete quiz
Feminism and families	Feb. 10	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Wilcox and Nock 2007 "'Her' Marriage After the Revolutions." Pg. 126-129 in reader <input type="checkbox"/> Complete quiz <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Prospectus due</b>
Fathers	Feb. 15	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Livingston and Parker 2019 "8 Facts About American Dads" pg. 130-135 in reader <input type="checkbox"/> Read Townsend 2009 "The Four Facets of Fatherhood" pg. 136-144 in reader

		<input type="checkbox"/> Complete quiz <input type="checkbox"/> Read Apesoa-Varano et al. 2018 "If You Were Like Me, You Would Consider It Too': Suicide, Older Men, and Masculinity" pg. 145-161 in reader <input type="checkbox"/> Complete quiz
Masculinity and fatherhood	Feb. 17	
Parenting styles and attachment	Feb. 22	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Szalavitz and Perry 2010 "Chapter 6 – No Mercy" pg. 162-174 in reader <input type="checkbox"/> Read: Baumrind 1991 Parenting Styles pg. 175 in reader <input type="checkbox"/> Complete quiz
The Genogram	Feb. 24	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Jolly et al. 1980 "The Genogram" pg. 176- 180 in reader <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>In class, introduce Family Relationships Project</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Complete quiz
Catch up and review day	Mar. 1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> In class, Review short answer exam questions <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Complete both the online multiple choice and the short answer questions for Exam 1 by Monday, March 7th</b>
	Mar. 3	<i>No class – Spring Break</i>
<b>Section 3 – Families in Context &amp; Crisis</b>		
Leaving Home and Individuation	Mar. 8	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Bellah et al. 2008 "Finding Yourself" pg. 181-184 in reader <input type="checkbox"/> Read HolyWhiteMountain 2018 "The Blackfeet Brain Drain" pg. 185-188 in reader <input type="checkbox"/> Complete quiz
Social Class - Wealth	Mar. 10	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Wood 2008 "The Secret Fears of the Super-Rich" pg. 189-195 in reader <input type="checkbox"/> Complete quiz
Social Class & Cohabitation	Mar. 15	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Stanley et al. 2006 "Sliding Versus Deciding: Inertia and the Premarital Cohabitation Effect" pg. 196-206 in reader <input type="checkbox"/> Complete quiz <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Genogram Family Relationship paper due</b>
Social Class - Poverty	Mar. 17	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Edin and Reed 2004 "Why Don't They Just Get Married? Barriers to Marriage Among the Disadvantaged" pg. 207-213 in reader <input type="checkbox"/> Complete quiz
Violence and Control	Mar. 22	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Johnson 2008 "Control and Violence in Intimate Relationships" pg. 286-290 in reader <input type="checkbox"/> Complete quiz
Divorce	Mar. 24	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Wilcox 2009 "The Evolution of Divorce" pg. 278-285 in reader <input type="checkbox"/> Complete quiz
Illness and Death	Mar. 29	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Lawton "Chapter 5: Invisible Suffering: The Social Death" pg. 290-306 in reader <input type="checkbox"/> Complete quiz
Family Structure – Intergenerational Families	Mar. 31	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Pinson-Millburn et al. 1996 "Grandparents Raising Grandchildren pg. 232-238 in reader <input type="checkbox"/> Complete quiz
Family Structure – Same-Sex Relationships	Apr. 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Manning et al. 2014 "Child Well-Being in Same-Sex Parent Families: Review of Research Prepared for American Sociological Association Amicus Brief" pg. 214-231 in reader <input type="checkbox"/> Complete quiz
Adoption and Transracial families	Apr. 7	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Shanley 2009 "Transracial and Open Adoption: New Forms of Family Relationships" pg. 257-260 in reader <input type="checkbox"/> Complete quiz
In-class project workshop	Apr. 12	<input type="checkbox"/> Bring your project materials to class for an in-class workshop on analyzing content analysis and writing a research paper <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Preliminary Report due by 11:59 pm</b>
Families and Religion	April 14	<input type="checkbox"/> Read: Mahoney et al. 2003 The Sanctification of Family Relationships pg. 261-277 in reader <input type="checkbox"/> Complete quiz
Immigration and Acculturation	Apr. 19	<input type="checkbox"/> Read Qin 2008 "'Our Child Doesn't Talk To Us Anymore':

		Alienation in Immigrant Chinese Families" pg. 239-256 in reader <input type="checkbox"/> Complete quiz
Catch-up and Review Day	Apr. 21	<input type="checkbox"/> In class, review for exam <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Complete online multiple choice and short answer portions of exam by Apr. 25 at 3pm</b>
	Apr. 25	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Final paper due by 3pm</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Final exam due by 3pm</b>

## Assessments and Assignments

### Attendance

- Students will be expected to be in class and to participate in discussions and activities. I understand that students may have to miss class for a variety of reasons, some excused (such as University related activities or COVID quarantining) or unexcused (such as traveling for a family event). All excused absences and up to *three* unexcused absences can be made up. To do so, students must complete a make-up assignment form at <https://tinyurl.com/UMarySocMakeup> for *each* day that they are missing.

### Weekly Quizzes

- There will be 24 quizzes based on the assigned reading since the previous quiz. These will be taken online. If they are completed before class begins, students will earn a bonus point (to be added manually). They are due by 11:59pm on the assigned day. These are open-book. The lowest four grades will be dropped.

### Genogram: Family Relationship Assignment

- Students will have the opportunity to consider the interpersonal relationships of their own family by building a genogram assignment and writing a 3 page family analysis paper focusing on a particular set of relationships.
- Using the instructions in the Jolly et al. 1980 reading "Genogram," construct your own family genogram.
  - It must include at least three generations (suggestion: your grandparents, parents, and siblings; or your parents, your siblings, and your children, nieces and nephews).
  - It must include your immediate family, and can include immediate in-laws and aunts and uncles. You can use your discretion as to how far out you want to include. (for instance, if you grew up close to your cousins, and especially if you want to write about them in the paper, it would appropriate to include them in your genogram)
  - It might be easiest to hand draw, using a larger piece of paper. If you desire and it is not too stressful, this can also be constructed using a computer program, such as Illustrator. However you design your genogram, **it should be complete.**
- I acknowledge that there can be a great deal of sensitive and private information that comes across in a genogram. These will be private, shared only with me, the professor. If there is a situation that you would prefer not to disclose, indicate that in the paper and focus on other situations you feel comfortable analyzing.
- In turning our attention to our own families, which can be sources of great support as well as stress and even trauma, it is possible that many different emotions may come up. I encourage

you to pay attention to those experiences, and to share, as you feel comfortable, in the paper about how this class is leading you to reflect on your own family of origin.

- In addition to the mapped-out genogram, you should include a 3-4 page paper, double spaced, 12 point, Times New Roman font with 1-inch margins that focuses on the particular situation of *one or two relationships or one or two themes*. For instance, if one person in particular is a focal point that others revolve around, perhaps write about that person in the context of the entire family, or if mental or physical health concerns are a major topic in your family, focus on that. There are a number of directions that you can take this paper portion of the project, and as it is a more intimate look at your family, I encourage you to be reflective before plunging in to a potentially big issue.
- Your paper should cite the article on genogram, and it **should cite at least three other readings from our class for a total of 4 citations**. Use the topics and readings we have covered to provide more context and illumination for your personal family genogram project. Citations should be in-text, in parenthesis, and then with full appropriate citation style in a “works cited” section at the end of the paper.

### Exams

- There are two exams during the semester. One covers sections I and II, and the second covers section III. For both exams, they will be taken online. There will be a few short answer questions – the prompts will be provided to students beforehand, given them a chance to prepare. Once they open the exam online, students will also see multiple choice questions based on the readings. The exam is open book; however, once the students open it on Canvas, it will automatically close after a period of time.

### Media Content Analysis Project

- **Background:** Movies, music, blogs, magazines, social media influencers, etc.: there are so many sources of content that we consume that tell stories about who we are and socialize us in our understandings of family and marriage. Some of these media sources have become big business, adding an additional layer to the consumerism of families.
- **Objectives:** The purpose of this semester-long project will be for students to learn the method of content analysis and apply it to a sociologically interesting question. In the fourth week of the course, students will read an article on the method of content analysis and we will discuss the media landscape and the way views of family are woven throughout. Students will either choose to complete the project with a partner or on their own and will work throughout the semester semester-long project analyzing and writing up sociological findings related to a small field of media content on families. They will do this by first writing a **prospectus**, then over the next 7 weeks, gather and analyze data in a **preliminary report**, and finally, write a **final paper** on their findings.
- **Prospectus:** After discussing the topic in class, students will make decisions about the type of media they want to study, the delineation of the scope of the project, the topic, and other details of their project. They will submit a prospectus form based on the following template.



## Prospectus Template

Group Members	
Topic of Project	
What topic are you pursuing?	
Which scholars have written about this before? What insights about the topic might be interesting for you?	
What questions do you still have about this topic that you hope you will learn from this project?	
Try to summarize your interest in this topic into one sentence. This will be the start of your focus, and your research question.	
Methods of Project	
What type of media do you want to focus on? Be very specific here. What <i>media</i> , how <i>many</i> objects (movies, posts, etc) do you think you'll need to study, what is interesting about choosing this type of media?  (For example: Do you want to study the ads in magazines targeting new parents or brides-to-be, etc? Do you want to analyze the movies of Tyler Perry or Nora Ephron? Do you want to unpack the parenting advice on the personal blogs of conservative homeschooling families? The possibilities are endless).	
Explain how you will use content analysis to study your chosen topic within your chosen media. What specifically will you do?  (watch a movie, read a blog post; code for certain images, words, themes) why is it the best way to learn about the research question? What are limitations of this method?)	
What makes content analysis a good method to study this topic in this way compared to other methods (such as interviews, experiments, observations, etc).	
Are there particular weaknesses to using content analysis to study your chosen topic? That is, are there things we would miss by looking at written, visual, or oral content that we might see by studying the topic from a different method?	
Making plans	
Lay out a schedule for the next several weeks for conducting the project. You do not want to leave it all for the end.	
What format will you keep your research in? (Excel charts, Word documents, handwritten notes, a combination?)	
<i>If working with a partner</i> - How will you ensure that the work of the project is shared equally? What are your commitments to each other?	

- **Preliminary Reports:** After conducting your research and after an in-class workshop, but before writing the final paper, group members will write and submit a preliminary report with the following information.

### Preliminary Report Template

Group Members	
Background of project	
Tentative Project Title	
Describe how the original schedule has lined up with actual research. Were you able to keep to schedule, or did you have to adjust it? Did you have to add in more objects to analyze?	
Initial Findings	
Describe in detail particular topics, themes, and codes that you have been following. Have your themes changed from the prospectus to the preliminary report? What are your preliminary conclusions about the perspective, advice, and orientation of this parenting blog? (This portion should be rather long because it pulls from the detailed coding and analysis that you have been building throughout the project. If you want to include this as a stand-alone chart, indicate that here).	
Connecting your project to the sociology of marriage and family	
What are specific and detailed ways that your research connects to the articles that we have been reading in our class? Do any of your results seem to conflict with, further illustrate, or flesh out topics from our class? Include at least <i>three</i> ways here.	
What specific other resources have you gone to and included here? You might include other articles that you have found on Google scholar or WorldCat or through the library; interviews that you conducted with a blogger; books or films, connected YouTube channels, etc.	
What are some of the things we learn about your topic from your project – the major take-aways?	
Final steps	
Lay out a schedule for writing the final paper	

- **Final paper:** Your final paper, which I expect to be at least 8 pages, and may be up to 12+ pages (depending on how you present your data) will be a standard research paper. It must include the following sections:
  - An **abstract** - An abstract is a self-contained, short, and powerful statement that describes a larger work. It includes, in brief (usually less than 200 words total):
    - **Reason for writing:** What is the importance of the research? Why would a reader be interested in the larger work?
    - **Problem:** What problem does this work attempt to solve? What is the scope of the project? What is the main argument/thesis/claim?
    - **Methodology:** An abstract of a scientific work may include specific models or approaches used in the larger study. Other abstracts may describe the types of evidence used in the research.
    - **Results:** Again, an abstract of a scientific work may include specific data that indicates the results of the project. Other abstracts may discuss the findings in a more general way.
    - **Implications:** What changes should be implemented as a result of the findings of the work? How does this work add to the body of knowledge on the topic?
    - More info: <https://writingcenter.unc.edu/tips-and-tools/abstracts/>
  - **Introduction** – The introduction usually starts by providing the general background needed to understand the importance of the focus. Placing the paper in the context of the literature or some current debate is one strategy; stating the assignment that you are fulfilling is another. Often the introduction concludes with an overview of the rest of the paper.
  - **Literature Review** – The literature review (sometimes also called “Relevant Background,” “Theoretical background”) grounds your project in peer-reviewed studies that other sociologists and other scientists have conducted.
    - Starting with the articles provided in class, think about keywords, topics, or ideas that interest. Search, using those keywords, on different databases such as WorldCat, Google Search, or others provided through Welder Library.
    - Download the articles that look promising and check out (through Inter Library Loan if necessary) related books.
    - Read these articles. In your literature review, you will briefly summarize previous studies while stating how they are relevant to your project.
    - More suggestions can be found at <https://writingcenter.unc.edu/tips-and-tools/literature-reviews/>
  - **Methods** - It is imperative that you tell the reader such things as the techniques you used, the time and length of the study, the number of settings and subjects, the nature of the data, researcher-subject relations, checks on data, and other information that might help them evaluate the soundness of your procedures and the nature of your subject.

- **Findings and Discussion** - The section on findings and discussion will take up the bulk of the analysis and is driven from the thesis or focus. In the introduction, you have stated your topic, and here you argue your thesis, present your theme, and illuminate your topic. In writing the middle portion of the paper, the focus keeps you on track. Everything that is included should be directly related to it.
  - The nature of the sections, what you include in them and how they relate to each other, grows out of further analysis of your coded data.
  - After you have singled out a few coding categories embodied in your focus, you should begin working with them, reading them over, and looking for patterns, or elements.
  - Present alternative points of view and discuss why the one you chose was more consistent with the data. If there are subjects with a minority point of view that you did not discuss, then mention them. You should pretend you are your paper’s worst critic— raise all the tough questions and then deal with them one by one. Whatever style you choose make sure that it permits you to confront alternative explanations for your findings.”
  - (Adapted from Oregon State University’s “Writing for Undergraduate Sociology” <https://liberalarts.oregonstate.edu/sites/liberalarts.oregonstate.edu/files/sociology/pdf/socwritingguide1-7.pdf> )
- **Conclusion** - You can do a number of things in the conclusion of your paper. Often the focus is incisively restated and your argument reviewed. The implications of what you have presented can also be elaborated. Many research reports end with a call for further research.
- **Bibliography** - Include a works cited where you cite your references using an academic style, such as MLA, APA, or Chicago. It is fine to use any approved academic style, but you must be consistent. Refer to Purdue’s Online Writing Lab (OWL) for specifics about the style. You need to include at least six references. Three of these can come from the book, but at least three need to come from other, peer-reviewed, academic articles in the social sciences.

Here’s what one sociology professor has to say about writing up findings: “Writing up the main body is really like doing a **translation**. You take what you have heard and seen and put it down on paper so that it makes sense to your readers as it made sense to you. As a “translator” you take the words of one language and transpose them rather literally into the words of another. Translators must understand nuances of meaning in both languages. A good qualitative paper is well-documented with description taken from the data to illustrate and substantiate the assertions made. Quoting your subjects and presenting short sections from the field notes and other data helps convince the reader; it also helps your reader get closer to the people you have studied. The quotations not only tell what they said, but how they said it and what they are like. The quotations and the author’s interpretations should intertwine to form a flowing paragraph which nicely modulates the particular with the general.” - Dwaine Plaza “Writing Within Sociology”