1. **Course number and short description of course:**

   Sociology of the Family, Soc 213 covers the institution of the family and other intimate relationships. Emphasis is placed upon choices made at each stage of the life cycle from mate selection, gender roles, balancing work and family life, communication, parenthood, diverse lifestyles, divorce and remarriage, and aging. It is offered in both online and as a traditional class for college transfer students. It is also required as part of the Human Services/Social Services Associate degree program.

   The required textbook, *M&F* by David Knox (2010) focuses on choices in relationships. An understanding of the structural and cultural influences in American society are presented and address the various impact on individual decisions throughout the life cycle.

2. **Description of module:**

   The topics of gender roles, same-sex families, marriage, parenting, balancing work and family life, and aging are studied in detail in the American context. Assigned readings, lectures, and relevant websites reinforce and address these choices within the American family. A detailed study of European countries- societal expectations, media representations of the ideal family and governmental/business policies on the family- will be taught as a group project.

3. **Objectives:**

   - To acknowledge the impact of cultural and social forces, as well as social policy on the formation and maintenance of interpersonal relationships.
   
   - Describe the benefits of and give examples of work-family policies and programs within the European Union.
   
   - Examine the family leave policies, health outcomes, same-sex laws, religious influences, economic opportunities, educational attainment, and parenthood choices of Denmark, France, Germany, Spain, Sweden, and Italy.
   
   - Review the impact of the European media in shaping the expectations of men and women in the family.
   
   - Review the data on women’s employment, fertility rates and day care by age according to OECD reports.
4. Methodology:

- **Lectures** giving context of European values and beliefs, law and policy, and media during the first week of class will be given to students, with supplemental online resources to explore. Maps of Europe from the Center for European Studies will be handed out to each student.

- **Group tasks** will be assigned after students select groups and desired European country from the following list: Denmark, France, Germany, Spain, Sweden, and Italy. Tasks involve research into the institutions, policies, and media regarding family leave and women’s employment. Class time will be set aside to work in the computer lab and in group consultation.

- **Create a handout for the class on selected European country.** Students must address the following social institutions: politics and laws, economy (work), education, religion, health care, violence, and gender roles—in how they regard the women in the family. Also, a media source (TV shows and movies in particular) example will be summarized and cited as a demonstration of their reflection of values and norms of the particular country.

- **Present outline of European country to class and distribute handout.**

- **Complete a comparison of the other European countries with regards to the social institutions and impact of culture and media.** (Handout at end of this document)

- **Complete a final paper (individually) on new insights and comparisons with USA.**

5. Evaluation:

Students will be assessed on both the group and individual efforts in the project. The components of the project involve research, compiling the information for class handouts, give feedback and comparisons with other European nations, and completing a final synthesis of the impact of country-level policies and institutions on individual choices within the family.

6. Resources:

Educational Media Resources Online (http://emro.lib.buffalo.edu/emro/)

Euro TV  http://www.eurotv.com/index.cfm


International TV Explorer  http://www.international-television.org/itve/

Moss & Deven eds. Parental leave- progress or pitfall?: research and policy issues in Europe. 1999.

National Film Board of Canada: [http://www.nfb.ca/](http://www.nfb.ca/)


European Country presentations: Audience checklist and notes for social institutions of specific countries. Topic: family leave, gender roles, women’s employment

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