

## **Course Syllabus- The Family of Tomorrow: Navigating Diversity, Inclusion and Gender Identity**

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**Language of Instruction:** English

**Professor:** Giulia Giovannini / Laura Esteve

**Professor's Contact and Office Hours:** [giulia.giovannini@upf.edu](mailto:giulia.giovannini@upf.edu) / [laura.esteve@upf.edu](mailto:laura.esteve@upf.edu). Office hours: appointment through email with the professor.

**Course Contact Hours:** 30 hours

**Recommended Credit:** 4 ECTS credits

**Weeks:** 2

**Course Prerequisites:** None

**Language Requirements:** Recommended level in the European Framework B2 (or equivalent: Cambridge Certificate if the teaching language is English, DELE or 3 semesters in the case of Spanish)

**Course structure:** Lectures, Workshops and Seminars

**Course classification:** Introductory

### **Course Description:**

In the rapidly changing landscape of family dynamics and parenthood, this course delves deep into the intricate web of modern family structures, gender equality, and the evolving roles of parents. In a world where families come in all shapes and sizes, this course provides a comprehensive exploration of diverse family models, emphasizing equality, inclusivity, and the role of gender in parenting.

Students will embark on a journey to understand the multifaceted concept of family, including same-sex and LGBTQI+, single-parent, multiparental, and traditional families. We'll unravel the complexities of surrogacy, reproductive technologies, and the legal frameworks surrounding parenthood, with a focus on international issues and comparative perspectives.

Our focus on gender equality within the family will encourage critical thinking about roles and responsibilities, challenging traditional norms. The course fosters empathy, inclusivity, and advocacy for equal parenting and family support, with an eye toward international challenges and solutions.

Through a blend of lectures, interactive discussions, case studies, and research projects, students from diverse academic backgrounds will gain interdisciplinary insights, honing their cultural competency, critical thinking, and communication skills. They'll be equipped to navigate the ever-evolving landscape of contemporary parenthood and make a positive impact in fostering equality and inclusivity within families of today and tomorrow, both at home

and on the global stage. Additionally, an overview on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the goals of the United Nations' 2030 Agenda

will be provided, in order to remark the importance of sustainable practice for the future.

This course will enable students from various backgrounds to gain a well-rounded understanding of “the Family of Tomorrow” and prepare them to engage with the evolving dynamics of families in the 21st century, with a keen understanding of international issues in this context.

### **Learning Objectives:**

1. Understanding Diversity → To familiarize students with the wide array of family structures and dynamics in the modern world.
2. Interdisciplinary Knowledge → To encourage students to approach the subject from multiple academic angles, fostering a holistic understanding.
3. Inclusivity and Empathy → To cultivate empathy and inclusivity towards individuals and families from diverse backgrounds.
4. Analytical Thinking → To develop critical thinking skills for evaluating the social, psychological, legal, and ethical aspects of family diversity.
5. Communication Skills → To improve students' ability to communicate effectively and engage in discussions about sensitive topics.
6. Personal engagement → To empower students to advocate for inclusive policies and practices and to promote self-awareness and challenge personal biases and preconceptions.

### **Course Workload:**

The course is divided into lectures, discussions, and field studies. Students should be prepared to read, when required, materials uploaded by the professors.

### **Methods of Instruction:**

- Interdisciplinary Approach: Emphasize the importance of various disciplines, including sociology, psychology, law, anthropology, and gender studies, in understanding family diversity.
- Lectures and Discussions: Weekly lectures on specific topics and open discussions and debates to encourage diverse perspectives and critical thinking. Regularly have students reflect on their own biases and attitudes towards family diversity. In order to do so, we will be alternating theoretical and practical classes.

- Case Studies: Analyze real-life case studies to understand the complexities of diverse family dynamics. Sometimes, students will have to do group projects or presentations. We believe that collaborative projects will encourage teamwork and application of knowledge.

### **Method of Assessment :**

In-class presentation: 15%

Class participation: 15%

Midterm exam: 35%

Final exam: 35%

### **Absence Policy:**

Attending class is mandatory and will be monitored daily by professors. The impact of absences on the final grade is as follows:

<b>Absences</b>	<b>Penalization</b>
Up to two (2) absences	No penalization.
Three (3) absences	1 point subtracted from final grade (on a 10 point scale)
Four (4) absences	The student receives an INCOMPLETE for the course

The BISS attendance policy does not make a distinction between justified and unjustified absences. All absences—whether due to common short-term illnesses or personal reasons—are counted toward the total amount and cannot be excused. Therefore, students are responsible for managing all their absences.

Only in cases of longer absences—such as hospitalization, prolonged illness, traumatic events, or other exceptional situations—will absences be considered for exceptions with appropriate documentation. The Academic Director will review these cases on an individual basis.

Students must inform the Instructor and the International Programs Office promptly via email if serious circumstances arise.

### **Classroom Norms:**

- No food or drink is permitted.
- There will be a ten-minute break during the class.
- Students must come to class fully prepared.

## Course Contents:

Lecture 1: Intro. The sexual family
Lecture 2: Gender and anti discrimination policies
Lecture 3: Same-sex relationships in Spain and in the European Union. European Court of Justice (ECJ) case-law.
Lecture 4: Surrogacy and ART + In-class activity on Surrogacy
Lecture 5: Right to know the origins
Lecture 6: Social parenthood + In-class activity
Lecture 7: Monoparental, multiparental and polyamorous relationships
Lecture 8: In-class activity: Group presentations (15% of the final grade)
Lecture 9: Midterm (MCQ - 35% of the final grade); trans parenthood and gender identity.
Lecture 10: Final exam (35% of the final grade)

**Required Readings:** The professor will assemble a course pack or indicate mandatory textbooks for each session.

## Recommended bibliography:

Students are encouraged to consult the following sources on their own.

ABRAMS, Paula L., «The Bad Mother: Stigma, Abortion and Surrogacy», The Journal of Law, Medicine & Ethics, Volume 43, Issue 2, 2015, pp. 179-191.

ALBERTSON FINEMAN, Martha, “The Sexual Family. Feminist and Queer Legal Theory: Intimate Encounters, Uncomfortable Conversations”, M.A. Fineman, J. E. Jackson, and A. P. Romero, eds., Ashgate, 2009, Emory Public Law Research Paper N. 09-74, Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=1516635>

AMOS QC, Tim, RAINER, Joe “Parenthood for Same-Sex Couples in the European Union: Key Challenges”. In: Boele-Woelki K, Fuchs A, eds. Same-Sex Relationships and Beyond: Gender Matters in the EU. European Family Law. Intersentia; 2017, pp. 79-122.

BAINHAM, Andrew, DAY SCLATER, Shelley, RICHARDS, Martin, "What is a Parent: A Socio-Legal Analysis", Bloomsbury Publishing, 1999, pp. 25-107.

BARTLETT, Katharine T. / STACK, Carol B., «Joint Custody, Feminism and the Dependency Dilemma», Berkeley Woman's Law Journal, 9, 1986.

CUTAS, Daniela, "On triparenting. Is having three committed parents better than having only two?", Journal of Medical Ethics, 37(12):735-8, 2011. doi: 10.1136/jme.2011.043745

FRIEDAN, Betty, *The Femenine Mystique*, 1963.

POLIKOFF, Nancy D., «We Will Get What We Ask for: Why Legalizing Gay and Lesbian Marriage Will Not "Dismantle the Legal Structure of Gender in Every Marriage"», Vol. 79, No. 7, 1993, Virginia Law Review, pp. 1535-1550.

SATZ, Debra, «5. Markets in Women's Reproductive Labor», Why Some Things Should Not Be for Sale: The Moral Limits of Markets, Oxford University Press, 2010.

JACOBS, Susan Beth, «The Hidden Gender Bias Behind?The Best Interest of the Child? Standard in Custody Decisions», Georgia State University Law Review, Vol. 13, Issue 3, Article 5, 1996, pp. 845-901.

WEST, Robin, *Introduction to the Research Handbook on Feminist Jurisprudence. Research Handbook on Feminist Jurisprudence*. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2019. <https://doi.org/10.4337/9781786439697.00007>. (Section on Liberal Legal Feminism).

Last revised, January 2025