

Family Studies 2250A Family Policy in Canada
Brescia University College, Western University
Fall 2017

Instructor: Dr. Paul Barker

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Class: Mon. 4:30-5:30 and Wed. 3:30 to 5:30, St. James Building, Room 204

Office Hours: After class or by appointment

Course Description

This course is an introduction to the study of government policies and programs affecting families in Canada. Areas of family policy considered include child care, parental leave, income support, and pension arrangements for the elderly. The course emphasizes the structure and operation of family policies, but it also seeks to determine the usefulness of family programs and any need for reforms.

The pre-requisite for this course is any Family Studies 1000-level course or permission of the instructor.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the course, students will be able to do the following:

- ✓ Identify the major areas of government policy directed at families in Canada
- ✓ Apply the appropriate family policies to the needs of the various types of Canadian families
- ✓ Assess the ability of family policies to achieve their objectives in helping families and addressing larger societal needs
- ✓ Understand and question if necessary the underlying conceptions and assumptions of Canada's family policies

Competencies

In pursuing and achieving the learning objectives, students also will develop competencies in several areas. The Brescia competencies are as follows:

Communication: The ability to exchange information and meaning effectively across cultures, space and time through appropriate modes of communication. Includes oral, written, and interpersonal or group communicate, as well as the ability to use current or innovative media.

Critical Thinking: The ability to engage in thinking characterized by the rational, informed, independent, and open-minded exploration of issues, ideas, and events before accepting or formulating a conclusion.

Inquiry and Analysis: The ability to reach informed decisions by breaking down complex issues, exploring evidence, demonstrating information literacy, and describing relationships among persons, things, or events.

Problem Solving: The ability to create and execute a strategy to answer a question or achieve a goal. Includes being able to anticipate the consequence of a potential solution, select a strategy among several alternatives, and decide when an acceptable outcome has been reached.

Self Awareness and Development: The ability to draw meaning, knowledge and value from honest and fair reflection and self evaluation. Students are able to recognize their values and their impact on others, and make a commitment to personal growth.

Social Awareness and Engagement: The ability to respect and be open to diversity (e.g. cultural, religious, political). Students take personal responsibility to actively engage in and contribute to creating positive change in local, regional, national, or global communities and societies.

Valuing: The ability to make decisions or choose actions based on the consistent application of moral principles and ethical codes. Students must also be able to understand the ideas informing one's beliefs and be accountable for their actions

Evaluation

Participation	10%
Application Report (Nov. 27 th)	20%
Test (Oct. 25 th)	30%
Final exam (final exam period)	40%

The following provides details on evaluation:

Participation: The participation mark will be based on attendance and contribution to class discussions. Attendance will be taken on a random basis and contribution to class discussions will be determined by the instructor. Each of the two components will be marked out of ten and then the sum of these two marks will be divided by two to determine the final participation mark.

Application Report: Each student will write an application report which applies the *appropriate* government policies and programs to a hypothetical family. The instructor will provide portraits of three hypothetical families and the student will choose one to complete the assignment. The report will be about five pages in length and include an introduction, an analysis section, and a conclusion. The intent of the assignment is to demonstrate the student's familiarity with family policies. Three criteria will be used to assess the reports: good writing, sound organization, and thorough analysis. A late penalty of two percentage points per day (excluding Saturday and Sunday) applies to this assignment. This means a mark of 80 would be reduced to 78 if the paper were one day late.

Test and Final Exam: The test will be 90 minutes in length and have three parts. The first two parts consist of short-answer questions of varying length. The last part consists of short-essay questions. Each part offers students choice. The final exam has the same format as the test, but is twice as long (three hours). Also, the exam is cumulative but weighted towards material covered after the first test.

Books

The course relies on articles and materials made available through the class website. There is no textbook for the course.

Weekly Outline

Week 1

Sept. 11, 13 What is family policy?

Reading 1: Lydia Miljan, *Public Policy in Canada* (Toronto: OUP, 2012), ch. 6

Reading 2: Mark Dickerson et al., *An Introduction to Government & Politics*, 9th ed. (Toronto: Nelson, 2014), ch. 22

Week 2

Sept. 18, 20 Marriage, Divorce, and Family Law ...

Reading 3: M. Eichler, *Marriage and Divorce* (Canadian Encyclopedia, 2016)

Reading 4: *Family Laws* (package includes various pieces of legislation affecting marriage and divorce)

Reading 5: Court case: *Halpern v. AG Canada et al.* (2003) at

<http://www.ontariocourts.ca/decisions/2003/june/halpernC39172.htm>

Week 3

Sept. 25, 27 Fertility Rate and Maternity/Parental Leave

Reading 6: Anne Milan, *Fertility: Overview 2009 to 2011* (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 2012)

Reading 7: Aziz Ansari, *Modern Romance* (New York: Penguin Press, 2015), ch. 1

Reading 8: *Notes on Maternity and Parental Leave* (and **Quebec**)

Week 4

Oct. 2, 4 Family Policy & the Tax System

Reading 9: Canada Revenue Agency (CRA), *T1 General 2016* at

<https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/cra-arc/migration/cra-arc/E/pbg/tf/5006-r/5006-r-16e.pdf>

Reading 10: Kevin Milligan, "The Tax Recognition of Children in Canada: Exemptions, Credits, and Cash Transfers," *Canadian Tax Journal* (2016) 64:3 (**Quebec**)

Reading 11: Jamie Golombek, "A **Quebec-Style** Refundable Tax Credit? How the Taxman Could Do a Better Job of Looking after your Kids," *National Post* June 2, 2017

Week 5

Oct. 16, 18 Harper v. Trudeau

Reading 12: Department of Finance, *Backgrounder: Helping Families Prosper* (Conservative Proposal)

Reading 13: Liberal Party, *Justin Trudeau's Plan for Fairness for the Middle Class* (Liberal Proposal)

Reading 14: Short Articles on Implementation of Trudeau's *Canada Child Benefit*

Week 6

Oct. 23 Contracts + Family Policy

Reading 15: Sarah Boesveld and Tristen Hopper, "One law student has a radical proposal for fixing marriage: Cut it off after four years," *National Post*, August 8, 2014 + Mandy Len Catron, "To Stay in Love, Sign on the Dotted Line," *New York Times*, June 23, 2017.

Oct. 25 **TEST**

Week 7

Oct. 30, Nov. 1 Early Childhood Education and Care (Child Care)

Reading 16: CCHP21, *Early Childhood Education and Care*, December 2016 (**Quebec**)

Reading 17: Laurie Monsebraaten, "Ontario Commits to Universally Accessible Child Care," *Toronto Star*, June 6, 2017 + Government of Ontario, *Ontario's Renewed Early Years and Child Care Policy Framework, 2017* (Toronto: Queen's Printer for Ontario, 2017)

Week 8

Nov. 6, 8 Working Income Tax Benefit, Ontario Works, and Social Impact Bonds

Reading 18: *Working Income Tax Benefit*

Reading 19: *Articles on Social Impact Bonds*

Reading 20: *Overview of Ontario Works Program & Details on Ontario Works Program*

Week 9

Nov. 13, 15 Guaranteed Annual Income Experiment

Reading 21: Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services, *Ontario's Basic Income Pilot* at <https://news.ontario.ca/mcss/en/2017/04/ontarios-basic-income-pilot.html>

Reading 22: Hugh Segal, *Finding a Better Way: A Basic Income Pilot Project for Ontario* at https://files.ontario.ca/discussionpaper_nov3_english_final.pdf

Reading 23: Rob Rainer, *A Basic Income Guarantee for All: The Time Has Arrived*, February 9, 2016

Week 10

Nov. 20, 22 Full-Day Kindergarten & Postsecondary Education

Reading 24: Janette Pelletier, *Ontario's Full-Day Kindergarten: A Bold Public Policy Initiative* (Public Sector Digest, 2004)

Reading 25: CRA, *Registered Education Savings Plans* (and appended material)

Reading 26: CRA, *Additional PSE Benefits*

Week 11

Nov. 27, 29 Elderly + Family Policy

Reading 27: Andre Leonard, *Canada's Aging Population and Public Policy: Statistical Overview* (Ottawa: Library of Parliament, February 2012)

Reading 28: Thomas Klassen, *Retirement in Canada* (Toronto: OUP, 2012), ch. 3

Week 12

Dec. 4, 6 Poverty and Families

Reading 29: Don Kerr and Joseph Michalski, "Family Poverty in Canada: Correlates, Coping Strategies, and Consequences," in D. Cheal and P. Albanese, eds., *Canadian Families Today*, 3rd ed. (Toronto: OUP, 2014)

2017-18 BRESCIA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE ACADEMIC POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

1. POLICY REGARDING MAKEUP EXAMS AND EXTENSIONS OF DEADLINES

When a student requests academic accommodation (e.g., extension of a deadline, a makeup exam) for work representing 10% or more of the student's overall grade in the course, it is the responsibility of the student to provide acceptable documentation to support a medical or compassionate claim. All such requests for academic accommodation **must** be made through an Academic Advisor and include supporting documentation. Academic accommodation for illness will be granted only if the documentation indicates that the onset, duration and severity of the illness are such that the student could not reasonably be expected to complete her academic responsibilities. Minor ailments typically treated by over-the-counter medications will not normally be accommodated. Documentation shall be submitted as soon as possible to the student's Academic Advisor indicating the period of illness and when the student should be able to resume academic responsibilities. Students must submit their documentation along with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested no later than two business days after the date specified for resuming responsibilities. Appropriate academic accommodation will be determined by the Dean's Office in consultation with the student's instructor(s). Please note that personal commitments (e.g., vacation flight bookings, work schedule) which conflict with a scheduled test, exam or course requirement are **not** grounds for academic accommodation.

A UWO Student Medical Certificate (SMC) is **required** if a student is seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds. This documentation should be obtained at the time of the initial consultation with the physician/nurse practitioner or walk-in clinic. A SMC can be downloaded from: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf. The student must request documentation sufficient to demonstrate that her ability to meet academic responsibilities was seriously affected. Please note that under University Senate regulations documentation stating simply that the student "was seen for a medical reason" or "was ill" is **not** adequate to support a request for academic accommodation.

Whenever possible, requests for academic accommodation should be initiated in advance of due dates, examination dates, etc. Students must follow up with their professors and Academic Advisor in a timely manner.

The full policy on requesting accommodation due to illness can be viewed at: <http://westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2017/pg117.html>

2. ACADEMIC CONCERNS

If you feel that you have a medical or personal problem that is interfering with your work, contact your instructor and Academic Advisor as soon as possible. Problems may then be documented and possible arrangements to assist you can be discussed at the time of occurrence rather than on a retroactive basis. Retroactive requests for academic accommodation on medical or compassionate grounds may not be considered.

If you think that you are too far behind to catch up or that your work load is not manageable, you should consult an Academic Advisor. If you consider reducing your workload by dropping one or more courses, this must be done by the appropriate deadlines (refer to the Registrar's website, <http://brescia.uwo.ca/academics/registrar-services/> or the list of official dates <http://westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2017/pg7.html>). You should consult with the course instructor and the Academic Advisor who can help you consider alternatives to dropping one or more courses.

Note that dropping a course may affect OSAP eligibility and/or Entrance Scholarship eligibility.

The Dean may refuse permission to write the final examination in a course if the student has failed to maintain satisfactory academic standing throughout the year or for too frequent absence from the class or laboratory (<http://westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2017/pg130.html>)

3. ABSENCES

Short Absences: If you miss a class due to a minor illness or other problems, check your course outline for information regarding attendance requirements and make sure you are not missing a test or assignment. Cover any readings and arrange to borrow notes from a classmate. Contact the course instructor if you have any questions.

Extended Absences: If you have an extended absence, you should contact the course instructor and an Academic Advisor. Your course instructor and Academic Advisor can discuss ways for you to catch up on missed work and arrange academic accommodations, if appropriate.

4. POLICY ON CHEATING & ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf. Students are responsible for understanding the nature of and avoiding the occurrence of plagiarism and other academic offences. Students are urged to read the section on Scholastic Offences in the Academic Calendar. Note that such offences include plagiarism, cheating on an examination, submitting false or fraudulent assignments or credentials, impersonating a candidate, or submitting for credit in any course without the knowledge and approval of the instructor to whom it is submitted, any academic work for which credit has previously been obtained or is being sought in another course in the University or elsewhere. Students are advised to consult the section on Academic Misconduct in the Western Academic Calendar.

If you are in doubt about whether what you are doing is inappropriate or not, consult your instructor, the Student Services Centre, or the Registrar. A claim that "you didn't know it was wrong" is not accepted as an excuse.

The penalties for a student guilty of a scholastic offence (including plagiarism) include refusal of a passing grade in the assignment, refusal of a passing grade in the course, suspension from the University, and expulsion from the University.

Plagiarism:

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence (see Scholastic Offence Policy in the Western Academic Calendar).

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

Computer-marked Tests/exams:

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating. Software currently in use to score computer-marked multiple-choice tests and exams performs a similarity review as part of standard exam analysis.

5. PROCEDURES FOR APPEALING ACADEMIC EVALUATIONS

All appeals of a grade must be directed first to the course instructor. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the course instructor, a written appeal signed by the student must be sent to the Department Chair. If the response of the department is considered unsatisfactory to the student, she may then submit a signed, written appeal to the Office of the Dean. Only after receiving a final decision from the Dean may a student appeal to the Senate Review Board Academic. A Guide to Appeals is available from the Ombudsperson's Office, or you can consult an Academic Advisor. Students are advised to consult the section on Student Academic Appeals under Academic Rights and Responsibilities in the Western Academic Calendar

(<http://westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2017/pg112.html>).

Note that final course marks are not official until the Academic Dean has reviewed and signed the final grade report for the course. If course marks deviate from acceptable and appropriate standards, the Academic Dean may require grades to be adjusted to align them with accepted grading practices (http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/exam/evaluation_undergrad.pdf and http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/exam/finalgrades.pdf).

6. PREREQUISITES

Unless you have either the prerequisites for a course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you will be removed from the course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisite(s).

7. SUPPORT

Support Services

The Brescia University College Registrar's website, with a link to Academic Advisors, is at <http://brescia.uwo.ca/academics/registrar-services/>. The website for the Student Development Centre at Western is <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>.

Mental Health and Wellness

Students may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to your learning, such as increased anxiety, feeling overwhelmed, feeling down or lost, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. Services are available to assist you with addressing these and other concerns you may be experiencing. You can learn more about mental health and wellness at Brescia at <http://brescia.uwo.ca/life/mental-health-wellness/>. Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental_Health@Western <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Sexual Violence

All members of the Brescia University College community have a right to work and study in an environment that is free from any form of sexual violence. Brescia University College recognizes that the prevention of, and response to, Sexual Violence is of particular importance in the university environment. Sexual Violence is strictly prohibited and unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Brescia is committed to preventing Sexual Violence and creating a safe space for anyone in the Brescia community who has experienced Sexual Violence.

If you or someone you know has experienced any form of Sexual Violence, you may access resources at <http://brescia.uwo.ca/life/sexual-violence/>.

Portions of this document were taken from the Academic Calendar, the Handbook of Academic and Scholarship Policy and the Academic Handbook of Senate Regulations. This document is a

summary of relevant regulations and does not supersede the academic policies and regulations of the Senate of the University of Western Ontario.