

Brescia University College
Family Studies 4220B
Theoretical Perspectives in Family Studies Research
Jan.-Apr. 2018
T 11:30-12:30, Th. 11:30-1:30, MRW 152

Professor: Dr. Lara Descartes
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Office hours: before class by appt., or
after class, just let me know in or after class

Office: St. James 124
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Prerequisite: 3000-level
Family Studies class

Course Description:

Students will be introduced to the major theoretical frameworks used by social scientists to explain variation in family life including life span, life course, developmental, social learning, social exchange, social conflict, symbolic interactionist, ecological, family systems and feminist theory perspectives. This is a rigorous course and students are expected to demonstrate advanced work.

Course Objectives and Competencies:

1. Students will review what theory is, and how theory aids family studies research and practice (critical thinking, inquiry and analysis).
2. Students will become familiar with some of the main bodies of theory used in family studies (critical thinking, inquiry and analysis).
3. Students will become aware of how these bodies of theory have developed in family studies over time (critical thinking, inquiry and analysis).
4. Students will demonstrate their research, analytic, and critical thinking skills through comparing different theories' applicability and usefulness for a selected social issue (critical thinking, inquiry and analysis, problem solving).
5. Students will show that they can synthesize and apply theory (critical thinking, inquiry and analysis, problem solving).
6. Students will create a new analytic approach to a selected social issue (critical thinking, inquiry and analysis, problem solving).
7. Students will create a class session to teach others about a specific theory's application (critical thinking, communication, inquiry and analysis).
8. Students will demonstrate their transferable skills through clearly communicating their work in written (paper, exams) and oral forms (leading class, participation) (problem solving, communication, critical thinking, inquiry and analysis).

Required Text:

Smith, S. R., Hamon, R. R., Ingoldsby, B. B., & Miller, J. E. (2017). *Exploring Family Theories, 4th Ed.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Articles are available through the library's website.

Evaluation and Grading:

| | | | |
|----------------|-----|---------|-----|
| Participation | 10% | | |
| Group teaching | 20% | Exams | |
| Term paper | 20% | midterm | 20% |
| | | final | 30% |

Participation

This includes: Informed participation in class. Attendance. Attention. Every Thursday (minus two) you should also turn in one question related to that week's readings.

Submitting these, on Owl before class, will add to your participation mark. There are 12 major readings (including Daly and Connidis), and you should submit at least 10 questions over the course of the term. I'll pick one question for class discussion each time; that will earn that person a bonus point on the final exam. A good discussion question might be 'what would structural functionalism look like if it incorporated feminist theory?' or even 'how might the field of health care have developed differently if it came from an interpretivist instead of an objectivist perspective?' ☺ A question that would not get picked or even contribute positively toward a participation grade would be something like 'what are the assumptions of systems theory?'

Group teaching and term paper

We'll go over a chapter on Th. (the 2 hr. block). Students will guide us through the chapter's sample reading on T. (the 1 hr. block). There will be ~2-3 students per group, depending on class enrolment. Your group teaching chapter will form the basis for your term paper. Term papers are to be written separately. There is a separate handout on this. Submit via turnitin (assignments tab in Owl) and hard copy.

Exams

Two exams, one in class and one during finals. Multiple choice and long answer questions. Everything will be covered; lectures, student teaching, etc. Cumulative final.

Course Policies:

This course has an Owl site where marks will be posted, and where we will have a discussion board open. This discussion board can be used for questions, comments, and observations by any of us during any part of the term. All of us should feel free to contribute, to comment on others' postings, etc. As you're doing a week's readings for example, feel free to post questions on anything that's unclear, any observation you want to share, etc.

This syllabus may be amended by the professor if needed.

Assignments/Grades: The policies governing requests for accommodation for course components worth 10% or more of the course grade are outlined in the Academic Policies section included at the end of the course outline (i.e., exam makeups and late assignments are only possible with permission from an academic advisor, normally given only with *documentation* of a medical or personal emergency). Late assignments get 5 points off per day otherwise, where the day ends at 4 pm.

Course Calendar: Read the main chapter by Th. For T., read the sample reading.

| Date | Topic | Readings and assignments |
|-------------|---|--|
| Jan. 9 | Course introduction, What is theory? | Introduction of Smith & Hamon |
| Jan. 11 | Structural functionalism theory | C2 |
| Jan. 16 | | Group 1 Williams, T., & Kolkka, T. (1998). Socialization into wheelchair basketball in the United Kingdom: A structural functionalist perspective. <i>Adapted Physical Activity Quarterly</i> , 15, 357-369. |
| Jan. 18 | Family development theory | C3 |
| Jan. 23 | | Group 2 C3 Sample reading |
| Jan. 25 | Symbolic interactionism theory | C1 |
| Jan. 30 | | Group 3 C1 Sample reading |
| Feb. 1 | Family stress theory | C4 |
| Feb. 6 | | Group 4 C4 Sample reading |
| Feb. 8 | Critiquing family theories | Daly, K. (2003). Family theory versus the theories families live by. <i>Journal of Marriage and Family</i> , 65, 771-784. |
| Feb. 13 | Finish 'critiquing family theories,' begin 'ambivalence theory' | |
| Feb. 15 | Exam | Midterm in our regular classroom |
| Feb. 27 | Ambivalence theory | Connidis, I., & McMullin, J. (2002). Sociological ambivalence and family ties: A critical perspective. <i>Journal of Marriage and Family</i> , 64, 558-567. |
| Mar. 1 | Family systems theory | C5 |
| Mar. 6 | | Group 5 C5 Sample reading |
| Mar. 8 | Human ecological theory | C6 |
| Mar. 13 | | Group 6 C6 Sample reading |
| Mar. 15 | Conflict theory | C7 |
| Mar. 20 | | Group 7 C7 Sample reading |
| Mar. 22 | Social exchange theory | C8 |
| Mar. 27 | | Group 8 C8 Sample reading |
| Mar. 29 | Feminist theory | C9 |
| Apr. 3 | | Group 9 C9 Sample reading |
| Apr. 5 | Biosocial theory | C10 |
| Apr. 10 | | C10 Sample reading Term Papers Due (turnitin and hard copy) |
| Apr. 14-30 | Final Exam, Date TBD by registrar | Final Exam, Date TBD by registrar |

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|------------|---|
| A+ 90-100 | One could scarcely expect better from a student at this level |
| A 80-89 | Superior work which is clearly above average |
| B 70-79 | Good work, meeting all requirements, and eminently satisfactory |
| C 60-69 | Competent work, meeting requirements |
| D 50-59 | Fair work, minimally acceptable |
| F below 50 | Fail |

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.