

Brescia University College
Family Studies 4220B
Theoretical Perspectives in Family Studies Research
January-April 2015
M 2:30-3:30, W. 1:30-3:30, Room 201

Professor: Dr. Lara Descartes
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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:

1. Students will learn what theory is, and how theory aids family studies research and practice.
2. Students will become familiar with some of the main bodies of theory used in family studies.
3. Students will see how theory has developed in family studies over time.
4. Students will use theory to think through several social issues, and will demonstrate their analytic and critical thinking skills through comparing different theories' applicability and usefulness for selected social issues.
5. Students will hone their transferable skills through clearly communicating their work in written (paper, exams) and oral forms (leading class, participation).

Prerequisite:

3000-level Family Studies class

Required Texts:

Smith, S. R., Hamon, R. R., Ingoldsby, B. B., & Miller, J. E. (2009). *Exploring Family Theories, 3rd Ed.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Articles are available through the library's website.

Evaluation and Grading:

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

Participation

This includes: Informed participation (the kind that shows that you've done the readings) in class. Attendance. Attention.

Group teaching and term paper

We'll go over a chapter on Weds. (the two hr. block). Students will use that lecture to guide us through the chapter's sample reading the following Mon. (the 1 hr. block). There will be roughly two students per group, depending on class enrolment. Your group teaching will form the basis for your term paper. There will be a separate handout on this.

Exams

Two exams, one in class and one during finals. Multiple choice and short essay questions. Everything will be covered; lectures, student teaching, etc. The final is cumulative.

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.

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).

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

Final Note This syllabus may be amended by the professor if needed.

Course Calendar:

Read the main chapter by Weds. For Mon., read the sample reading for the prior week's chapter.

Date	Topic	Readings and assignments
Jan. 5	Course introduction	
Jan. 7	What is theory?	Introduction
Jan. 12	Family theory today	Daly, K. (2003). Family theory versus the theories families live by. <i>Journal of Marriage and Family</i> , 65, 771-784.
Jan. 14	Symbolic interactionism	C1
Jan. 19		Group 1 C1 Sample reading
Jan. 21	Structural functionalism	C2
Jan. 26		Group 2 C2 Sample reading
Jan. 28	Family development	C3
Feb. 2		Group 3 C3 Sample reading
Feb. 4	Family stress	C4
Feb. 9		Group 4 C4 Sample reading
Feb. 11	Exam	Exam
Feb. 23	Go over exam	
Feb. 25	Family systems	C5
Mar. 2		Group 5 C5 Sample reading
Mar. 4	Human ecological	C6
Mar. 9		Group 6 C6 Sample reading
Mar. 11	Conflict	C7
Mar. 16		Group 7 C7 Sample reading
Mar. 18	Social exchange	C8
Mar. 23		Group 8 C8 Sample reading
Mar. 25	Feminist	C9
Mar. 30		Group 9 C9 Sample reading
Apr. 1	Biosocial	C10
Apr. 6	Term Papers Due	C10 Sample reading
Apr. 11-30	Final Exam, Date TBA	Final Exam

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 on medical grounds 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. 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 under the Medical Documentation heading of the following website: <https://studentservices.uwo.ca/secure/index.cfm> . If it is not possible to have an SMC completed by the attending physician/nurse practitioner, 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. All documentation is to be submitted to an Academic Advisor.

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 statement of University policy regarding extensions of deadlines or makeup exams can be found at <http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2014/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, www.registrar.uwo.ca, for official dates). 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.

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.

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 Academic Rights and Responsibilities in the Western Academic Calendar.

6. PREREQUISITES AND ANTIREQUISITES

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 prerequisites.

Similarly, you will also be deleted from a class list if you have previously taken an antirequisite course unless this has the approval of the Dean. These decisions may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course because you have taken an antirequisite course.

7. SUPPORT SERVICES

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

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.