

**Family Studies 2250A Family Policy in Canada  
Brescia University College, Western University  
Fall 2016**

Instructor: Dr. Paul Barker  
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Class: Mon. 12:30-2:30, Wed. 1:30-2:30, Room 302  
Office Hours: Mon. 11:30-12:30, Wed. 12:30-1:30

### **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 elderly persons. 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 and Competencies**

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 and the ability of these areas to provide a more fair and equitable Canadian society (valuing).
- ✓ Apply the appropriate family policies to the needs of any Canadian family (problem-solving).
- ✓ Assess the ability of family policies to achieve their objectives in helping families and addressing larger societal needs (inquiry and analysis).
- ✓ Question and challenge the underlying conceptions and assumptions of Canada's family policies (critical thinking).

### **Evaluation**

Participation	10%
Application (Dec. 5)	20%
Test (Oct. 24)	30%
Final exam (final exam period)	40%

### **Books**

The course relies on articles and materials made available through the class website.

# Weekly Outline

## Week 1

Sept. 12, 14                    What is family policy?

Reading 1: Mark Dickerson et al., *An Introduction to Government & Politics*, 9<sup>th</sup> ed. (Toronto: Nelson, 2014), ch. 22 (*and how to influence government*)

Reading 2: Lydia Miljan, *Public Policy in Canada* (Toronto: OUP, 2012), ch. 6

## Week 2

Sept. 19, 21                    Marriage, Divorce, and Family Law ...

Reading 4: M. Eichler, *Marriage and Divorce* (Canadian Encyclopedia, 2014)

Reading 5: *Family Laws* (package includes various pieces of legislation affecting marriage and divorce)

Reading 6: *Court case: Halpern v. AG Canada (2003)*

## Week 3

Marriage, Divorce and Family – a different perspective

Sept. 26, 28

Reading 7: Alain de Botton, “Why you will marry the wrong person,” *New York Times*, May 28, 2016

Reading 8: Aziz Ansari, *Modern Romance* (New York: Penguin Press, 2015), ch. 1.

## Week 4

Oct. 3, 5                        Fertility Rate and Maternity/Parental Leave

Reading 9: Anne Milan, *Fertility: Overview 2009 to 2011* (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 2012)

Reading 10: Kevin Milligan, *Quebec’s Baby Bonus: Can Public Policy Raise Fertility?* (Montreal: IRPP, 2002) + Economist, “Breaking the baby strike,” July 25, 2015.

Reading 11: *Notes on Maternity and Parental Leave*

## Week 5

Oct. 12                         Fertility Rate, Marriage, and Dating

Reading 12: Aziz Ansari, *Modern Romance* (New York: Penguin Press, 2015), chs. 2, 4

## Week 6

Oct. 17, 19                    Tax Rates, Tax Credits, Tax Deductions ...

Reading 13: Canada Revenue Agency (CRA), *T1 General 2015*

Reading 14: CRA, *Canada Child Benefits*

Reading 15: CRA, *Child Care Expense Deduction*

## Week 7

Oct. 24                    **TEST**

Oct. 26                    Harper v. Trudeau

Reading 16: Department of Finance, *Background: Helping Families Prosper* (Conservative Proposal)

Reading 17: Liberal Party, *Justin Trudeau's Plan for Fairness for the Middle Class* (Liberal Proposal)

Reading 18: Articles on Implementation of Trudeau's *Canada Child Benefit*

## Week 8

Oct. 31, Nov. 2            Child Care + Debate – in-kind benefit or cash?

Reading 19: Carolyn Ferns and Martha Friendly, *The State of Early Childhood Education and Care in Canada, 2012* (Toronto: Canadian Resource and Research Unit, 2014)

Reading 20: Tasha Kheiriddin, "Busting Canada's Daycare Myths," *National Post* April 29, 2015

Reading 21: Cheryl Collier and Rianne Mahon, "One Step Forward, Two Steps Back: Child Care Policy from Martin to Harper," in A. Maslove, ed., *How Ottawa Spends 2008-2009* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's, 2009)

## Week 9

Nov. 7, 9                    Working Income Tax Benefit, Ontario Works, and Social Impact Bonds

Reading 22: *Working Income Tax Benefit*

Reading 23: *Articles on Social Impact Bonds*

Reading 24: *Overview of Ontario Works Program & Details on Ontario Works Program*

## Week 10

Nov. 14, 16                Full-Day Kindergarten & Postsecondary Education

Reading 25: Janette Pelletier, *Ontario's Full-Day Kindergarten: A Bold Public Policy Initiative* (Public Sector Digest, 2004)

Reading 26: CRA, *Registered Education Savings Plans* (and appended material)

Reading 27: CRA, *Additional PSE Benefits*

## Week 11

Nov. 21, 23                Quebec – the way to go in family policy?

Reading 28: Catherine Krull, "Investing in Families and Children: Family Policies in Canada," in D. Cheal & P. Albanese, eds., *Canadian Families Today 3<sup>rd</sup> ed.*

Reading 29: Patricia Evans, "Parental Benefits in Canada and Quebec," in A. Westhues and B. Wharf, eds., *Canadian Social Policy: Issues and Perspectives*

## Week 12

Nov. 28, 30                      Elderly + Family Policy

Reading 30: Andre Leonard, *Canada's Aging Population and Public Policy: Statistical Overview* (Ottawa: Library of Parliament, February 2012)

Reading 31: Thomas Klassen, *Retirement in Canada* (Toronto: OUP, 2012), ch. 3

## Week 13

Dec. 5, 7                         Poverty and how families are doing + Course Review

Reading 32: Don Kerr and Joseph Michalski, "Family Poverty in Canada: Correlates, Coping Strategies, and Consequences," D. Cheal & P. Albanese, eds., *Canadian Families Today 3<sup>rd</sup> ed.*

### 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 and appropriate 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 has 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.

## 2016-17 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.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2016/pg117.html> 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://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/accommodation\\_illness.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_illness.pdf)

### 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](http://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 (<http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2016/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.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2016/pg113.html>

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 Student Academic Appeals under Academic Rights and Responsibilities in the Western Academic Calendar (<http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2016/pg112.html> )

## 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 prerequisite(s).

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://brescia.uwo.ca/academics/registrar-services/> . 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://uwo.ca/health/mental\\_wellbeing/](http://uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/) for information including 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.