

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

SOC 271 (B1): Introduction to the Family (Winter 2017)

Instructor: Robin Willey
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Time: T R 11:00– 12:20
Place: Tory Lecture B2
Office Hours: by appointment

Course Description and Objectives:

This course will provide a survey of recent sociological thought on the “family.” It will focus on the family as a product of particular social, cultural, biological, and historical contexts. In other words, this class will investigate the family as a form of social, cultural, and political *practice*—something that we *do*, rather than something that *is*—that reproduces particular familial formations and ideologies. The class will be divided into five sections through which we will approach a number of trends and topics that have shaped, and continue to shape Canadian families. Part one will focus on the common theories and concepts sociologists use to analyze families. This section will also look into some the biological and historical foundations for familial practices and kinship. Part two looks into the influence of religion and ritual in family formation. Part three investigates the trends and patterns of Canadian family life through a life course perspective. Part four focuses on state interest in the family and how “the family” can be deployed as ideology. Finally, part five wraps-up the class and looks into the future of “the family” in Canada.

Course objectives:

By the end of this class, students should be able to:

1. Show extensive knowledge of the trends and dynamics that shape Canadian familial practices
2. Acknowledge the diversity of family forms that make up Canadian family life
3. Question and evaluate the purpose and repercussions of arguments that attempt to define “natural” and/or “normal” family life
4. *Critically* evaluate how they *do* family in their own lives and acknowledge the potential social, cultural, economic, and historical ramifications of these practices.

Texts:

Cheal, David and Patrizia Albanese (eds). 2014. *Canadian Families Today: New Perspectives* (Third Edition). Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press.

Other Articles and Chapters: Required materials are posted on eClass and are available through the University of Alberta library.

Grade Distribution (see “Explanatory Notes”):

Activity:	Percent of Grade	Date
eClass assignment 1	7%	February 16 th
eClass assignment 2	8%	April 6 th
First Midterm	25%	February 2 nd
Second Midterm	30%	March 14 th
Final Exam	30%	Tentatively April 19 th (location TBA)

Explanatory Notes on Exams and Assignments:

This course includes three non-cumulative examinations: two mid-terms (25% and 30%), and a final exam (30%). These exams will be made up of multiple choice and/or true/false questions. Examinations will cover all lecture, video, and reading material up to the date of the exam. I will provide and discuss sample exam questions in-class prior to each exam date.

In addition, students will be asked to complete two assignments (7% and 8%) submitted through eClass. These assignments will be about 200 words in length and encourage the student to creatively and critically engage with class material. I will post more specific instructions on eClass and discuss those instructions in class.

Grading Scheme:

Letter Grade	Percentage	Description	Value
A+	90-100		4.0
A	86-89	Excellent	4.0
A-	82-85		3.7
B+	78-81		3.3
B	74-77	Good	3.0
B-	70-73		2.7
C+	66-69		2.3
C	62-65	Satisfactory	2.0
C-	58-61		1.7
D+	54-57	Poor	1.3
D	50-53	Minimal Pass	1.0
F	0-49	Fail	0.0

Class Schedule

Part I: Theory, History, and Concepts	
Jan. 10	Introduction and syllabus
Jan. 12	Concepts and theory READING: <u>Chapter 1</u>
Jan. 17	Historical considerations READING: <u>Chapter 2</u>
Jan. 19	Intimacy, commitment, and family formation READING: <u>Chapter 3</u>
Part II: Ritual, Religion, and Family Formation	
Jan. 24	Sacred texts and the family READING: <u>Frymer-Kensy chapter</u> Frymer-Kensy, Tikva. 1996. "The Family in the Hebrew Bible." In <i>Religion, Feminism, and the Family</i> , 55-73, edited by Anne Carr et al. Louisville: John Knox Press.
Jan. 27	Religion and mate selection READING: <u>Willey article</u> Willey, Robin. 2013. "The Evangelical Sexual Marketplace: An Ethnographic Analysis of the Exchange and Conversion of Erotic Capital in an Evangelical Church." <i>Canadian Journal of Family and Youth</i> 5(1): 1-37.

Jan. 31	Religion and mate selection
Feb. 2	MIDTERM 1 (25%)
Feb. 7	Pre-wedding rituals READING: Grazian article Grazian, David. 2007. "The Girl Hunt: Urban Nightlife and the Performance of Masculinity as Collective Activity," <i>Symbolic Interaction</i> 30(2): 221-243.
Feb. 9	Marriage and Death READING: Chapter 8
Part III: Life Course	
Feb. 14	Breaking-up and divorce READING: Chapter 5
Feb. 16	Ageing READING: Chapters 6 & 7 ASSIGNMENT 1 DUE (7%)
Feb. 21	READING WEEK! NO CLASS!
Feb. 23	READING WEEK! NO CLASS!
Feb. 28	Parenting READING: Chapter 4
Mar. 2	Parenting READING: Reich article Reich, Jennifer A. 2014. "Imagined Gated Communities and the Privilege of Choice." <i>Gender & Society</i> 28(5): 679-704.
Part IV: Ideology, Policy, and the State	
Mar. 7	Work READING: Chapter 9
Mar. 9	Poverty READING: Chapter 10
Mar. 14	MIDTERM 2 (30%)
Mar. 16	Immigrant, visible minority, and aboriginal families READING: Chapter 12
Mar. 21	Disability READING: Chapter 13
Mar. 23	Violence READING: Chapter 14
Mar. 28	Same-sex marriage READING: Chapter 11
Mar. 30	Self-pleasure READING: Garlick article Garlick, Steve. 2012. "Masculinity, Pornography, and the History of Masturbation." <i>Sexuality & Culture</i> 16: 306-320.
Apr. 4	Self-pleasure
Part V: The Future of the Family and other Conclusions	
Apr. 6	Three conclusions READING: Chapter 16 ASSIGNMENT 2 DUE (8%)
Apr. 11	Review

Apr. 19	FINAL EXAM—tentative date (30%)
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Academic Integrity:

“The University of Alberta is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the Code of Student Behaviour (online at <http://www.governance.ualberta.ca/en/CodesofConductandResidenceCommunityStandards/CodeofStudentBehaviour.aspx>) and avoid any behaviour that could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from the University.”

Learning and working environment:

The Faculty of Arts is committed to ensuring that all students, faculty and staff are able to work and study in an environment that is safe and free from discrimination and harassment. It does not tolerate behaviour that undermines that environment. The department urges anyone who feels that this policy is being violated to:

- Discuss the matter with the person whose behaviour is causing concern; or
- If that discussion is unsatisfactory, or there is concern that direct discussion is inappropriate or threatening, discuss it with the Chair of the Department.

For additional advice or assistance regarding this policy you may contact the Student Ombuds Office: (<http://www.ombudservice.ualberta.ca/>). Information about the University of Alberta Discrimination and Harassment Policy and Procedures is described in UAPPOL at <https://policiesonline.ualberta.ca/PoliciesProcedures/Pages/DispPol.aspx?PID=110>.

In addition, this class will deal with a number of difficult and controversial topics that may have an effect on students in attendance. If you have any issues with the class material or discussion then please feel free to contact your instructor or make use of any services available on campus, such as the Peer Support Centre. For more information, visit the Centre’s website at <https://www.su.ualberta.ca/services/psc/>.

Academic Honesty:

All students should consult the information provided by the Student Conduct and Accountability regarding avoiding cheating and plagiarism in particular and academic dishonesty in general (see the [Academic Integrity Undergraduate Handbook](#) and [Information for Students](#)). If in doubt about what is permitted in this class, ask the instructor.

An instructor or coordinator who is convinced that a student has handed in work that he or she could not possibly reproduce without outside assistance is obliged, out of consideration of fairness to other students, to report the case to the Associate Dean of the Faculty. See the [Academic Discipline Process](#).

Recording of Lectures:

Audio, photos, or video recording of lectures, labs, seminars or any other teaching environment by students is allowed only with the prior written consent of the content author(s) or as a part of an approved accommodation plan. Recorded material is to be used solely for personal study,

and is not to be used or distributed for any other purpose without prior written consent from the content author(s).

Attendance, Absences, and Missed Grade Components:

Students are required to contact the instructor by email within two working days following the missed exam or term work (or as soon as the student is able, with regard to the circumstances) to apply for an excused absence. Excused absences are not automatic and are at the discretion of the instructor, who may request supporting documents.

For incapacitating medical illness, students can present one of the following:

- "[University of Alberta Medical Statement](#)" signed by a doctor (this cannot be required, but must be accepted if provided in lieu of other documents).
- "[Medical Declaration Form for Students](#)" (for Faculty of Arts students).
- "Statutory Declaration" (for students in Faculties other than Arts, to be obtained from home Faculty or the Office of the Registrar).

For all other cases, such as domestic afflictions or religious convictions, the student should submit appropriate documentation to the situation. This could include the following:

- For a death in the family – a copy of the death certificate
- For a religious conflict – a letter from the church or pastor
- For a car accident – a copy of the accident report
- For other serious afflictions – consult with Instructor or Department about appropriate documents

The student is required to complete equivalent term work or term exam as decided by the instructor. If the student does not complete the make-up work/exam as prescribed by the instructor, a raw score of zero will be assigned for the missed term work or term exam.

Absence from a Final Exam

Students must apply to their home Faculty for a deferred final exam, regardless of the reason. Instructors cannot grant deferred final exams. Deferred exams are not granted automatically and will be considered only for acceptable reasons such as incapacitating mental and/or physical illness, severe domestic affliction, or for circumstances described in the University's Discrimination, Harassment and Duty to Accommodate Policy (including religious belief). Unacceptable reasons include, but are not limited to personal events such as vacations, weddings or travel arrangements. Students will need to present appropriate supporting documents – they should contact their home Faculty to find out what documents they need.

Should your faculty approve you to write a deferred exam, it will be held:

Time: Saturday, May 6, 2017 @ 9:00 AM

Location: TBA

Submission of Late Assignments:

Late assignments will be marked down 1% of their total class grade per day (including weekends). For example, an assignment that was graded 6 out of 7, and was submitted 2 days late would be dropped to 4 out of 7.

Student Accessibility Services:

If you have special needs that could affect your performance in this class, please let me know during the first week of the term so that appropriate arrangements can be made. If you are not already registered with Student Accessibility Services, contact their office immediately (2-800 SUB; Email sasrec@ualberta.ca; Email; phone 780-492-3381; WEB www.ssds.ualberta.ca).

Required Notes:

Policy about course outlines can be found in the **Course Requirements, Evaluation Procedures and Grading section** of the University Calendar.