



2210F (570)
CHILDHOOD, YOUTH, AND PUBLIC POLICY
Fall/Winter 2026-2027

Instructor: S. Saravanamuttu
Email: ssarav22@uwo.ca

Course Information

Calendar Description:

This course examines childhood and youth as they are structured by public policies. It introduces students to historical, ethnographic, discursive, and structural approaches as in diverse policy matters arising in schooling, health care, recreational programs, work, family law, and political participation.

Pre-requisite(s): Childhood and Youth Studies 1025F/G or the former Childhood and Social Institutions 1025F/G.

Anti-requisite(s):

Extra Information: 3 lecture hours

Course Weight: 0.50

Breadth: Category A

Subject Code: CYS

Mode of Instruction:

Notice: Unless you have either the requisites for this course (fulfilment of pre-requisites, no anti-requisite conflicts), or special permission from your Dean to enrol in it, you may be removed from this 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.

King's University College
Childhood and Youth Studies CYS 2210F –
Childhood, Youth, and Public Policy Fall 2026

Course information:

CYS 2210F Childhood, Youth, and Public Policy:

Instructor: Siobhán Saravanamuttu

Contact Information: ssarav22@uwo.ca

Office hours: Office hour information can be found on OWL Brightspace

Course description: This course examines childhood and youth as they are structured by public policies. It introduces students to historical, ethnographic, discursive, and structural approaches as in diverse policy matters arising in schooling, health care, recreational programs, work, family law, and political participation.

CYS 2210F will introduce students to three major public policy arenas relating to childhood; poverty and income support, education, and public health. The course covers three distinct eras of Canadian public policy delivery, allowing students to observe changes in the provision of social policy relating to childhood and youth between the late 1800s and the present period. In particular, students will be encouraged to investigate the evolution of the role and perception of childhood as communicated through public policy priorities across the three historical periods. The course will uncover the social, economic, and political contexts within which major policy provisioning has occurred, and their corresponding impact on the broader social experience of childhood. Finally, students should expect to gain an introduction to major concepts in critical Canadian public policy studies, as they relate to historical periods and policy arenas discussed throughout the course.

Antirequisites: The former Childhood and Social Institutions 2250F/G, the former Childhood and Social Institutions 2256F/G, and the former Childhood and Social Institutions 2253F/G

Prerequisites: Childhood and Youth Studies 1025F/G or the former Childhood and Social Institutions 1025F/G,

Course learning outcomes:

CYS 2210F contributes to Program Learning Outcomes 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 9:

- CYS students acquire a general knowledge of the key concepts, theoretical approaches and assumptions within the field of childhood and youth studies. They come to see children as competent social actors and understand the implications of this fact for children's participatory rights in a local, national and global contexts. Those who obtain an Honours Specialization (HSP) in CYS demonstrate the ability to assess issues and critique arguments about the politics of childhood, social justice for children, and children's rights and capabilities in various institutional contexts.
- CYS students become familiar with interdisciplinary approaches to childhood and learn to evaluate and distinguish between them. Those who complete an HSP come to understand how these approaches intersect with other fields and disciplines, and formulate their own research questions in upper division seminars.
- CYS students gain a working knowledge of case law, statutory law, public policy, and institutional features of childhood and youth in the past and the present. They critically reflect on the significance of various norms, rules, and practices for young people. They consider these structures in terms of

power relationships between children, parents, and professionals, as well as those between racial, ethnic, migrant, gender, class, and national groups.

- CYS students apply analytic tools within childhood studies, and defend their ideas and arguments in oral and written forms. HSP students conduct research in childhood studies. Apply and defend ideas and arguments in speech and writing and in communication with others.
- CYS students are able to assess the applicability of research and its social implications for public debate, policy, law, and professional practice. HSP students are able to offer critique and alternative perspectives on how research should be applied and what implications it might have for diverse communities in and beyond Canada.
- CYS students come to appreciate that the way we position children and youth as persons shapes our policy positions and the research questions. HSP students develop the ability to place children's and youths' own experiences and perceptions at the center of research methods and policy/legal debate.
- CYS students develop lines of argument and to make sound judgements in accordance with major concepts, theories and methods in childhood studies. Be able to use a range of techniques to frame questions, evaluate arguments and concepts and propose solutions.
- CYS students gain the ability to communicate accurate information and clear arguments orally and in writing.

Mode of Instruction: In-Person

Course textbooks/materials:

- Required readings will be made available to students online via the course page. There is no textbook purchase required.

Method of evaluation:

Assessment	Weight	Due Date
Weekly Reading Journal	30%	Weekly – work will be assessed and grades provided 4 times throughout the term
In-Class Midterm Exam	30%	Week 6
Final Exam	40%	TBD

- **Please note that Friday Make-Up exams may only be written with instructor's consent.**
- **As of September 1, 2026, students will incur a fee of \$45.00 per make-up assessment booked with the Exam Office.**
- **As of September 1, 2026, for any Special Exams booked outside of the designated special exam days, students will incur a fee of \$75.00. The designated Special Exam Days for 2026-27 are January 8 and 9, 2027, and May 7 and May 12, 2027.**

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

CYS AI Usage Policy: Intentional usage of artificial intelligence or language generation or translation applications by students to summarize readings or complete assigned work for this course must be approved by the instructor and noted by the student in the submitted work itself. This mandate does not refer to aspects of AI programming embedded into applications such as Word, Chrome, etc. It applies to all intentional usage of AI as a 'co-reader' or 'co-writer.' Students must do their own reading and writing to

construct their own voices as democratic citizens. They are not allowed to write text and feed it into a computer application to improve it or translate it. Asking an application to compose text and then changing words before submitting it as your own, constitutes plagiarism. The use of Grammarly or similar applications is prohibited. Using plagiarism checkers to see if plagiarized text has been altered enough to avoid detection is itself a form of academic dishonesty. Students must compose text, choose words, construct logic flow, structure sentences and paragraphs using their own minds and in response to what they read, hear, and experience. When you borrow words or ideas from another person or from a machine this must be placed in quotation marks and properly cited.

CYS Late Penalties Policy:

Penalties for late papers or projects may be avoided if extensions are requested in advance. Otherwise, a two-mark deduction will be taken for each of the first five days it is late (including weekends). After 5-days without communication, a zero will be assigned.

Students are expected to schedule appointments and other responsibilities around class time. To be excused from participatory requirements (attendance or homework, etc.) due to temporary illness or an unavoidable scheduling conflict, contact the instructor directly via email as soon as you are aware of the problem.

Ordinary problems of this nature do not require documentation or communication with the Dean's Office; they will be dealt with by the course instructor.

If a student experiences a disruption in their ability to study or participate in the course for more than one week, or if there is a personal loss or trauma of a serious nature, they may request more extensive accommodations, counselling, and other forms of help. The best way to do this is to contact the instructor and/or the Academic Dean's Office.

Schedule of Classes, Readings, Assessments:

Weekly Topic	Required Readings	Assessment
Week 1 – Introduction and Theories of ‘The Child’ and ‘Childhood’	- Please review the course outline - Chapter 1 & 2 – McNamee, S. (2016). <i>The social study of childhood</i>. Palgrave.	N/A
Week 2 – Contextualizing Policy Provisioning in Canada	Chapters 1 & 6 – Turner, J.C. & Turner, F.J. (2009). <i>Canadian social welfare</i>. Pearson Education Canada.	Week 2 Reading Journal due in class
Policy Era 1: ‘Turn of the Century’ (~late 1800s – WWII)		
Week 3 – Child Poverty at the Turn of the Century	- Struthers, J. (2006). “In the interests of the children”: Mother’s allowances and the origins of income security in Ontario, 1917-1930. In Blake, R.B. & Keshen, J.A. (eds.). <i>Social fabric or patchwork quilt: The development of social policy in Canada</i>. Broadview Press. Pages 203-207. Blake, R.B. (2006). In the children’s interest? Change and continuity in a century of Canadian social welfare initiatives for children. In Blake, R.B. & Keshen, J.A. (eds.). <i>Social fabric or patchwork quilt: The development of social policy in Canada</i>. Broadview Press.	Week 3 Reading Journal due in class
Week 4 – Education at the Turn of the Century	- Clubine, C. (2012). Motherhood and public schooling in Victorian Toronto. In Burke, S.Z. & Milewski, P. (eds.). <i>Schooling in transition: Readings in the Canadian history of education</i>. University of Toronto Press. - McIntosh, R. (2012). The boys in the Nova Scotian coal mines. In Burke, S.Z. & Milewski, P. (eds.). <i>Schooling in transition: Readings in the Canadian history of education</i>. University of Toronto Press. - Stanley, T.J. (2012). White supremacy, Chinese schooling, and school segregation in Victoria: The case of the Chinese students’ strike, 1922-1923. In Burke, S.Z. & Milewski, P. (eds.). <i>Schooling in transition: Readings in the Canadian history of education</i>. University of Toronto Press.	Week 4 Reading Journal due in class
Week 5 – Public Health at the Turn of the Century	- Kurbegović, E. & Sasges, B. (2024). Who is the public in public health? In McLaren, L., Juzwishin, D.W.M. & Mendoza, R.V. (eds.). <i>A history of public health in Alberta, 1919-2019</i>. University of Calgary Press. - Gleason, M. (2013). Learning the body: Schools, curriculum, and health. In <i>Small matters: Canadian children in sickness and health, 1900-1940</i>. McGill-Queen’s University Press.	Week 5 Reading Journal due in class

	Leadley, A. (2021). Better baby contests at the CNE: Spectacles of public health, hygiene, and nationhood in early-twentieth century Toronto. <i>Theatre Research in Canada</i>, 42(1).	
Week 6 – Midterm Exam	No required readings	In-class midterm exam
Policy Era 2: ‘The Welfare State’ (post WWII - ~1980s)		
Week 7 – Child Poverty and the Welfare State	- Carbone, S., Power, E., & Holland, M. R. (2018). Canada’s missed opportunity to implement publicly funded school meal programs in the 1940s. <i>Critical Public Health</i>, 30(2), 191–203. https://doi.org/10.1080/09581596.2018.1524849 - Marshall, D. & Danby, N.D. (2006). The significance of children’s universal rights: Official views on poverty and the family. In <i>The Social Origins of the Welfare State: Québec families, compulsory education, and family allowances, 1940-1955</i>. Wilfrid Laurier University Press. Pages 207-214. Blake, R.B. (2006). In the children’s interest? Change and continuity in a century of Canadian social welfare initiatives for children. In Blake, R.B. & Keshen, J.A. (eds.). <i>Social fabric or patchwork quilt: The development of social policy in Canada</i>. Broadview Press.	Week 7 Reading Journal due in class
Week 8 – Education and the Welfare State	- Gleason, M. (1999). Constructing normal citizens? Psychology in postwar schools. In <i>Normalizing the ideal: Psychology, schooling, and the family in postwar Canada</i>. University of Toronto Press. - Gleason, M. (2012). Disciplining children, disciplining parents: The nature and meaning of advice to Canadian parents, 1945-1955. In Burke, S.Z. & Milewski, P. (eds.) <i>Schooling in Transition: Readings in Canadian History of Education</i>. University of Toronto Press.	Week 8 Reading Journal due in class
Week 9 – Public Health and the Welfare State	- Carstairs, C., Philpott, B. & Wilmshurst, S. (2018). Fighting apathy and ignorance: National campaigns. In <i>Be wise! Be healthy!: Morality and citizenship in Canadian public health campaigns</i>. University of British Columbia Press. - Myers, Tamara. (2015). Didactic sudden death: Children, policy, and teaching citizenship in the age of automobility. <i>Journal of Childhood and Youth</i>, 8(3), 451-475.	Week 9 Reading Journal due in class
Policy Era 3: Neoliberalism (~1980s – present)		
Week 10 – Child Poverty and Neoliberalism	- Breheny M. (2023). The Trouble with Child Poverty. <i>Perspectives in biology and medicine</i>, 66(4), 566–578. https://doi.org/10.1353/pbm.2023.a909727 - Wallace, R., & Goodyear-Grant, E. (2020). Writing Gender Out or Working It Back In? Media	Week 10 Reading Journal due in class

	Coverage of Child Benefits in Canada. <i>Journal of Women, Politics & Policy</i>, 41(4), 441–456. https://doi.org/10.1080/1554477X.2020.1783932	
Week 11 – Education and Neoliberalism	• Winton, S. (2020). Parent fundraising in Toronto schools: Coordinating policy layers. In Winton, S., & Parekh, G. (Eds.). <i>Critical perspectives on education policy and schools, families, and communities</i>. Emerald Publishing. • Janzen, M., & Heringer, R. (2023). Who Is the “Student”? A Critical Analysis of Neo-Liberal Education Reform Legislation. <i>Canadian Journal of Education / Revue Canadienne de l’éducation</i>, 46(3), 545–569. https://www.jstor.org/stable/27281627	Week 11 Reading Journal due in class
Week 12 – Public Health and Neoliberalism	• Orisini, M. (2007). Discourses in distress: From “health promotion” to “population health” to “you are responsible for your own health”. In Smith, M.C. & Orsini, M. (eds.). <i>Critical policy studies</i>. UBC Press. • Power, E. (2016). Fat children, failed (future) consumer-citizens, and mother’s duties in neoliberal consumer society. In Polzer, E. & Polzer, E. (eds.). <i>Neoliberal governance and health: Duties, risks, and vulnerabilities</i>. McGill-Queens University Press. • Cayen, L., Polzer, J. & Knabe, S. (2016). Tween girls, Human Papillomavirus (HPV), and the deployment of female sexuality in English Canadian magazines. In Polzer, E. & Polzer, E. (eds.). <i>Neoliberal governance and health: Duties, risks, and vulnerabilities</i>. McGill-Queens University Press.	Week 12 Reading Journal due in class

1. Academic Accommodations (Accessibility)

Accessibility Services works to ensure that academic programs are accessible to all students, and supports students who may have a condition related to, but not limited to, vision, hearing, mobility, different ways of learning, mental health, chronic illnesses, chronic pain, autism spectrum disorder, ADD/ADHD, and temporary conditions (beyond short-term academic consideration). Accessibility Services provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive assessment. The accommodation policy can be found here [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#). Information on Accessibility Services at King's can be found [here](#).

2. Academic Consideration for Student Absences

Students must be approved to write a makeup exam or for an extension of the assignment deadline. If you need to miss an exam or the deadline for the assignment, please follow these instructions.

There are two ways to seek academic consideration:

(i) Academic consideration based on medical or compassionate grounds

If a student is unable to meet a course requirement due to substantial but temporary extenuating circumstances (medical or compassionate grounds), they should contact the Academic Advising Office. As a rule, documentation is required for academic consideration.

For academic consideration requests on medical grounds, the Student Medical Certificate (SMC) is the appropriate documentation. The SMC is available at <https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/pdfs/student-medical-certificate.pdf>

- King's students: The Academic Advising Office website is located in DLH 104. The Academic Advising website is <https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/academics/academic-advising>.
- If your home faculty is Huron or at Western, please submit your documentation to your faculty's academic counselling office.
- Requests must be made as soon as possible, and no later than 48 hours after the missed assessment.

You may submit requests for academic consideration through the **Student Absence Portal**, linked on this website:

<https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/academics/academic-advising/academic-consideration-requests-and-student-absence-portal>

(ii) Academic consideration through an undocumented absence

Students are permitted one academic consideration request without supporting documentation per term per half-course (0.5) weight.

- Note that instructors may designate one assessment per half-course weight as requiring formal supporting documentation. Please refer to the course outline to confirm this which assessment has been designated as requiring documentation for consideration (that is, exempt from undocumented absences).
- Undocumented absences can not be used as the basis for academic consideration for December or April exams.

If an instructor has built flexibility into their assessments (e.g., “complete 8 of 10 quizzes”), this flexibility will already address consideration needs and thus academic consideration may be denied.

For further information on the academic consideration policy, please see https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration_Sep24.pdf

c) Absences from Final Exams

If you miss the Final Exam, **contact your Academic Advising Office** as soon as you are able to do so. They will assess your eligibility to write the “Special Examination” (the name given by the University to a makeup Final Exam).

You may also be eligible to write the Special Exam if you are in a multiple exam situation (i.e., you are scheduled to write more than 2 exams in 23-hour period, or more than 3 exams in a 47-hour period).

If a student fails to write a scheduled Special Examination, the date of the next Special Examination (if granted) normally will be the scheduled date for the final exam the next time this course is offered. The maximum course load for that term will be reduced by the credit of the course(s) for which the final examination has been deferred. See the Academic Calendar for details (under [Special Examinations](#)).

d) Religious Accommodations

Students should consult the University’s list of recognized religious holidays, and should give notice in writing to the instructor and their Academic Advising Office if a course requirement will be affected by a religious holiday/observance. Notice must be given as early as possible, and no later than two weeks prior to an examination, and one

week prior to a midterm test date. It is the responsibility of such students to inform themselves concerning the work done in classes from which they are absent and to take appropriate action.

3. Support Services

Accessibility, Counselling and Student Development at King's University College:
<https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/student-supports-and-services/accessibility-services>

Students experiencing emotional or mental health distress can access services at King's University College: <https://kings.uwo.ca/campus-life/student-supports/>

Good2talk is an online and phone resource for students, available 24/7, with services in English, Mandarin, and French: <https://good2talk.ca>, 1-866-925-5454

MentalHealth@Western provides a complete list of options on how to obtain help: <https://www.uwo.ca/health/mental-health/index.html>

Academic Support Services at King's University College:
<https://kings.uwo.ca/academics/academic-supports/>

4. Statement on Gender-Based Sexual Violence

King's and Western are committed to reducing incidents of gender-based sexual violence (GBSV) and providing compassionate support to anyone who is going through or has gone through these traumatic events. If you are experiencing or have experienced GBSV (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at the following website: [Mental Health and Wellness at King's](#).

You can reach supports at King's by emailing care@kings.uwo.ca or calling 519-930-4640 to reach a Social Worker who can offer help.

You can also reach Western's Gender-Based Violence & Survivor Support Case Manager by email (health@uwo.ca) or by calling 519-661-3568. Additional support services can be found <https://www.uwo.ca/health/gbsv/support/index.html>

5. Statement on Use of Electronic Devices

Use of Electronic Devices: Unless explicitly stated otherwise, you are not allowed to

have a cellphone, or any other electronic device, with you during tests or examinations. Unauthorized possession of such a device during a test or examination constitutes an academic offence.

Use of Laptops, Tablets, and Smartphones in the Classroom: King's University College at Western University acknowledges the integration of new technologies and learning methods into the curriculum. The use of electronic devices such as laptop computers, tablets, or smartphones can contribute to student engagement and effective learning. At the same time, King's recognizes that instructors and students share jointly the responsibility to establish and maintain a respectful classroom environment conducive to learning.

The use of electronic devices by students during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., shall be for matters related to the course at hand only. Students found to be using electronic devices for purposes not directly related to the class may be subject to sanctions under the Student Code of Conduct; see

https://kings.uwo.ca/sites/2025/assets/files/campus/Kings_Code_of_Student_Conduct.pdf

Inappropriate use of electronics (e.g., laptops, tablets, smartphones) during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., creates a significant disruption. As a consequence, instructors may choose to limit the use of electronic devices in these settings. In addition, in order to provide a safe classroom environment, students attending in-person class sessions are strongly advised to operate laptops with batteries rather than power cords.

6. Statement on Academic Offences

King's is committed to academic integrity. Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, is posted at

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_offences.pdf

It is expected that students will submit work that is truly their own, completed without external assistance (human or artificial) except as explicitly permitted by the course instructor. **Check with you instructor to check which tools, including generative AI (ChatGPT, translation tools, grammar-checking tools) are permitted in each course.** Note that although some courses may permit the use of such tools, it does not mean use of such tools is permitted in other courses.

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; see

https://elearningtoolkit.uwo.ca/tools/Originality_Reports_-_TurnItIn.html.

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.

7. Copyright of Course Material

Lectures and course materials, including PowerPoint presentations, tests, outlines, and similar materials are protected by copyright. Faculty members are the exclusive owner of copyright in those materials they create. Students may take notes and make copies for their own use. Students may not allow others to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly (whether or not a fee is charged) without the express written consent of a faculty member. Unauthorized sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

Similarly, students own copyright in their own original papers and exam essays. If a faculty member wishes to post a student's answers or papers on the course website, they should ask for the student's written permission.

8. Use of Recordings

Participants in this course are not permitted to record the sessions, except where recording is an approved accommodation and/or the participant has the prior written permission of the instructor. Unauthorized recording and/or sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

9. Policy on Attendance

Any student who, in the opinion of the instructor, is absent too frequently from class or laboratory periods in any course, will be reported to the Dean of the Faculty offering the course, after due warning has been given. On the recommendation of the department concerned, and with the permission of the Dean of that Faculty, the student will be debarred from taking the regular examination in the course.