



Sociology 2285a (670)
The Family
Fall/ Winter 2026-2027

Instructor: K. Baugartner
Email: kbaumga2@uwo.ca

Course Information

Calendar Description:

This course examines sociological, psychological, and other research perspectives on diverse family structures and functioning.

Antirequisite(s): Family Studies and Human Development 1010 A/B, [Sociology 2235](#), [Sociology 2132A/B](#), [Sociology 2134A/B](#).

Prerequisite(s): 1.0 Sociology courses at the 1000 level, or registration in the Honours Specialization or Major module in Childhood and Youth Studies. Note: [Sociology 1050A/B](#) cannot be used to fulfill this prerequisite.

Extra Information: 3 hours.

Course Weight: 0.50
Breadth: Category A
Subject Code: SOCIOLOG

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

Sociology 2285

Sociology of the Family

Online (Asynchronous)

Prof: Dr. Kayla Baumgartner

Email: kbaumga2@uwo.ca

- Please contact me by email, not via OWL

Office hours: Zoom – Mondays, 5:30-6:30pm, or by appointment

Meeting ID # 579 358 3166

Teaching Assistant: TBD

Course Description:

This course introduces students to the sociological analysis of families and gives them an understanding of family within the larger social system. The course begins by looking at different conceptual and theoretical issues, which challenge the commonly-held views of the family. We will consider how families are formed and look at the choices that people make regarding marriage and parenting. We will take a closer look at different aspects of family life, including the distribution of paid and unpaid work within families, diverse family forms and intergenerational issues. We will consider adversities experienced by families, including violence, addictions, and divorce. Finally, we will consider policy issues relevant to families and the future prospects for the family in a changing society.

Learning Outcomes:

After completing this course, students will be able to

- Understand the intersection between family life and the public sphere.
- Comprehend the various theories used to explain the structure and dynamics of families.
- Understand how families from various cultures are connected, despite their different lifestyles.
- See how contemporary patterns of work reflect changes in the economy and ideologies of gender.
- Recognize that there is no single institutionalized life course with respect to family development.
- Appreciate the diversity in structure and processes of families in contemporary Canadian society.
- See how difficulties like poverty, abuse, addictions, etc. negatively impact family members.

Prerequisites: Sociology 1020 or 1021E or enrollment in the Honors Specialization, Major or Minor module in Family Studies, or the Honors Specialization or Major module in Childhood and Social Institutions.

Course Materials

- Family Matters: An Introduction to Family Sociology in Canada (5th ed) by Barbara A. Mitchell – Available online through <https://canadianscholars.ca/book/family-matters-fifth-edition/>. Ebook price \$102.95. Also note that a hard copy will be available for a 2-hour loan at the King's Library.
- Other course materials will be posted to OWL under Course Content – Resources.

Evaluation

"Concept in Context" Discussions (20%)

Sociological Autobiography (25%)

Midterm Exam (25%)

Final Exam (30%)

"Concept in Context" Discussions (five total, every other academic week)

Every two weeks, you will find and post to OWL a real-world example that connects directly to a concept, theory, or theme from the course. Your example can come from anywhere, e.g., an ad, a TV or movie scene, a social media post, a public sign, a news article, or something you encounter in your own community. But you must clearly describe where you found it and upload the image or screenshot. In your short, written analysis (200 - 250 words), explain how the example illustrates the concept, citing either the textbook or an article cited within the textbook to support your explanation. All citations must include page numbers. These posts are meant to spark connections between course material and everyday life, so choose examples that are fresh, specific, and relevant. Due dates and further instructions will be posted to OWL.

Sociological Autobiography (due December 11 by noon)

For this assignment, you'll explore your own life through a sociological lens while also critically engaging with artificial intelligence. First, you'll use an AI tool to generate a short autobiographical essay that connects aspects of your personal or family experience to specific concepts from the course. Then, you'll revise and expand that draft into a fully researched paper, drawing on course materials and credible academic sources to correct inaccuracies, add depth, and strengthen your arguments. You'll also include a short reflection on what the AI got right, what it missed, and how the process shaped your understanding of the topic. Further instructions will be posted to OWL.

Midterm & Final Exams(November 2 and TBD)

Students will have one midterms and one final exam. These exams will be administered via Proctortrack (accessed through OWL). There will be a 24-hour period under which to complete them, but once started, students will have an hour and a half to finish the midterm, and two hours for the final. To ensure academic integrity, students will need to log into Proctortrack in OWL (further instructions will be posted). The final exam will NOT be cumulative, but will cover all material, including the PPT slides, recordings, assigned readings, videos, guest presenters, etc. since the midterm. The format of these exams may include multiple choice, short answer questions, definitions, and true/false questions.

[Link to Western's Scholastic Discipline policy](#)

Notice on Turnitin

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>)

Notice on AI policy

In your Sociological AutobAlography assignment, you will have the opportunity to use AI to "write" an assignment, while your graded essay will be one that you have written yourself. No other use of AI is permitted throughout the course. Students will be asked to provide links from the UWO Library for all cited articles. When requested, students must also provide PDF copies of those sources. If a student is unable to produce the requested copy, the student will fail the assignment, and will not be given the opportunity to re-write it.

Notice on remote proctoring

Note that this course uses Proctortrack for its midterm and final assessments. To access this service, students will need the following:

- Stable, high-speed internet connection
- Webcam
- Microphone
- A quiet, private location
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Timeline

*Note: While this is an asynchronous online course, the lectures themselves will be posted Monday evenings. These are the dates shown. You can find the lectures in OWL under Content - Course Lectures

Week 1 (September 14) - Course Introduction

Reading: None

Week 2 (September 21) - How do we think about families?

Reading: Mitchell, Chapter 1 - *Family Matters: An Introduction to the Sociology of Canadian Families*

Week 3 (September 28) - How did we get here?

Reading: Mitchell, Chapter 4: *Canadian Families in Historical, Cross-Cultural, and Global Context*

CiC #1 due to OWL by noon

Week 4 (October 5) - How do we form relationships?

Reading: Mitchell, Chapter 7 - *Close Relations in Youth and Young Adulthood: Establishing Partnerships and Forming Families*

Week 5 (October 19) - How do we raise our children?

Reading: Mitchell, Chapter 8 - *Families and Children in the Early Years: Childhood, Socialization, and Shifting Ideologies of Parenthood*

CiC #2 due to OWL by noon

Week 6 (October 26) - What happens when a marriage falls apart?

Reading: Mitchell, Chapter 10: *Family Dissolution and the Brady Bunch: Separation, Divorce, and Remarriage*

Week 7 (November 2) - **Midterm Exam** (on OWL)

Available in Tests & Quizzes section on OWL from 12:01 AM on November 2 - 11:59 PM on November 2. Once a student begins the assessment they will have 90 minutes to finish.

Week 8 (November 9) - How does health affect the family?

Reading: Mitchell, Chapter 13 - *Families, Health, and Well-Being: Choices and Constraints over the Life Course*

CiC #3 due to OWL by noon

Week 9 (November 16) - How does poverty impact the family?

Reading: Mitchell, Chapter 14 - Trying to Make Ends Meet: Family Poverty, Living on the Margins, and Financial Struggle

Week 10 (November 23) – How does violence impact the family?

Reading: Mitchell, Chapter 15 - Families in Crisis: Family Violence, Abuse, and Stress

CiC #4 due to OWL by noon

Week 11 (November 30) – What challenges do immigrant and queer families face?

Readings: Mitchell, Chapter 5 - Immigration and the Changing Ethnic Mosaic of

Canadian Families; Chapter 9 - All Our Families

Week 12 (December 7) – How does policy shape our families?

Reading: Mitchell, Chapter 16 - Families in Crisis: Family Violence, Abuse, and Stress

CiC #5 due to OWL by noon

****Final Exam: Date TBD, but will also be held online via OWL/Proctortrack during the final exam period****

**KING'S UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
GENERAL COURSE POLICIES
2026-27**

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 at [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 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 cell phone, 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.