

**Lakehead University
Department of Sociology
Sociology, Gerontology, Women's Studies 2501 YDE
Family Sociology**

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Fall and Winter Semesters: 2026-2027
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Office Hours: Monday 1.00 to 4.00

Should you need any assistance or have a question I am only an email away and happy to help/answer questions. Please note: I check and respond to emails during my working hours of Monday to Friday, 8:30 am to 4:30 pm. I will not regularly see or respond to emails outside of these hours.

Course Description

Families are shaped by historical and cultural change. It is through examining the social, political, and cultural milieu of Canadian society that a full understanding of the family in Canada can be achieved. Family is not static and recognizing the complexity of family and family as a social construction, provides a starting point for sociological analysis of family. This course will examine the family in Canada by challenging traditional approaches to the study of family. A critical approach will provide the means to engage in discourse on family in a historical context and what this means for family in Canada today. Several substantive areas will be discussed in detail: what family is, family histories, family forms, ethnicity and families, divorce, socialization and youth, economics and poverty, violence, intimacy, work, theoretical perspectives, law and public policy, and aging and families. Central to our discussion are the structured inequalities that shape the form of family life.

Important Note: This is a web course. This means the whole course is online. You will find a weekly lecture which includes the discussion questions you are to answer and links which you are to open and read or videos to watch. The exams are written online, in the course D2L site. In a web course there are no zoom lectures, we do not meet in-person, and lectures are not taped.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Two textbooks are required. The approximate textbook costs are provided below and reflect current LU bookstore pricing (prices subject to change). The texts may be available from other sources at reduced prices. Additional short readings will be posted to the D2L course website. Readings posted to D2L are free of charge. As well, there is a bridal magazine required for lecture 11, if it is accessed online, it will be free, if it is purchased, the price will vary depending on the magazine you choose.

Tepperman, Lorne, Sandra Colavecchia, and McDaniell, Susan, 2026. *Close Relations An Introduction to the Sociology of Family*. 7th ed. North York, ON: Pearson. (LU bookstore price: \$97.99, only available in e-version)

Fox, Bonnie J., Ed. 2014. *Family Patterns, Gender Relations*. 4th ed. Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press. (LU bookstore price: \$137.99 print, e-version 68.99).

Course Requirements

Students are expected to regularly check the D2L site and actively participate in group discussions. As well, reading assignments are to be completed for the date they are assigned. The reading list is attached to this syllabus. This course is designed to be interactive and group discussion is a central component of the course.

All times for this course are Thunder Bay time, Eastern Daylight Time.

Course Objectives

Understand the Canadian family.

Use your sociological imagination to examine the complexities of family life in Canada.

Examine the multitude of family forms.

Examine Indigenous families in Canada.

Describe and discuss major sociological theories as they relate to the family.

Examine societal issues and concerns such as: family violence, adoption, youth, divorce, poverty, work, law and public policy, and intimate relationships.

Critically examine social structural and historical forces that shape families.

Understand gender, socioeconomic status, race/ethnicity, age, etc. will have an impact on family and family life.

Enhance writing and analytical skills through a poster assignment.

Enhance language and collegial skills through teamwork during class discussions.

Develop critical skills.

Enjoy the material!

Evaluation

Marks

Due Dates

Midterm Examination

15%

November 2, 2026

Midterm Examination

10%

January 25, 2027

Poster Research Assignment

25%

March 1, 2027

Final Examination

15%

Set by the Registrar

Participation

35%

Throughout the course

100%

Late assignments and rescheduling of examinations must be accompanied by a note from a medical doctor or counsellor. Please refer to [Lakehead University Calendar](#).

Lectures

Each week is designed to be a 3-hour class, not including weekly readings, assignments, or studying for examinations. The three hours is to go over the lecture material, clicking on and reading the links provided, searching for information when requested to do so, watch any videos listed, answer discussion questions, etc.

Please note: submitted work (discussion posts, exams, assignments, etc.) may be run through an AI detection program.

Examinations

The examinations will incorporate lectures, class discussions, films and assigned readings. Examinations are not cumulative. Examinations are designed, in such a way, those who have carefully read the required readings, carefully read the links, watched the videos, understood the lectures, fully addressed the discussion questions, and worked to clearly understand course material, should have no trouble answering the questions.

To be clear: You must not access any sources or materials (in print, online, recordings, or in any other way, including course material, texts, videos, notes you have taken, etc.) to complete any course examinations. The exams are to be completed solely, without collaboration with any other person. Your examination answers are to be based on what you have learned in the course and are to be in your own words. Use of AI, including programs like, but not limited to Grammarly is considered plagiarism.

Exams are to be written directly in the space provided, in the D2L exam site. To be clear, no examination answers are to be answered outside the D2L site and cut and pasted into the exam.

The November and January examinations are at 6.00 pm, Eastern Daylight Time. Everyone will write the examinations at the same time. The examination times are firm. The final examination is set by the registrar.

Please note: Time for all students, for the midterms, begins at 6.00 pm and if the exam, for example, is one hour in length, no questions registered after 7.00 pm will be graded. If you have a registered accommodation, for example, to have an additional 30 minutes, your time will be adjusted, and you will have until 7.30 to finish the exam. Any posts after 7.30 will not be graded.

Poster Research Assignment

You are to choose one Canadian social policy and examine the policy in detail, noting the impact of the policy on family. You will create a poster outlining the policy, why the policy was implemented, what the social issues surrounding the policy are, what is the impact of the policy, etc. For example, you could choose to look at adoption disclosure laws in Ontario. In your examination of adoption disclosure laws, you would investigate the arguments for and against adoption disclosure, what impact is there on those adopted? What impact is there for parents who gave a child up for adoption? Were/are there differences between mothers and fathers whose child is/was placed for adoption? Has the law changed? Another example of policy is the Sex Education curriculum in Ontario schools. The changed curriculum generated debate, parental arguments either for or against the changes, and questions on the state mandating the policy. In this assignment the importance of investigating why or why not changes is legislated should be clearly outlined.

For this assignment you are taking an in-depth look at one policy, examining the impact of the policy on family. The intersection of policy on the family has implications on numerous levels. Your research could entail a look at past legislation to review changes in the policy. Of particular note is the historical/social context. For example, if you were examining same-sex marriage laws you might want to note the timing of the passage of these laws, in terms of the social milieu of the time. Why were the laws not changed earlier? The rationale for changed policy is an important statement about the social world and the impact on family. You can include interesting and fun facts. You are to reference your sources and include a separate reference page, listing all the sources used.

The research projects will be posted for the entire class to read. There will be time devoted to reading the posters, posing questions, and answering questions. Research Projects are to be posted by 9.00 am on March 1, 2027. Posters posted after 9.00 am March 1 and before 9.00 am on March 2, 2027, will be docked 5 late marks. Should you submit your poster any time after 9.00 am and before 6.00 pm on March 2, 2027, you will be docked 10 late marks. **No posters will be accepted after 6.00 pm on March 2, 2027.**

Posters must be submitted in PDF format. Posters not in a readable format will be treated as late posters, with marks docked until they are readable. Should the poster not be resubmitted in a readable format by March 2, 2027, at 6.00 pm, there will be no grade assigned.

There is a forum set up to post your poster. Classmates can ask questions or make comments simply by hitting reply under your posting and you can make your response in the same way. Responding in this way keeps all questions/comments/responses in one place, which makes it easier for all concerned. You can post your poster beginning February 27, 2027. Comments to posters can begin on March 1, 2027, at any time. Questions/comments must be made prior to Friday, March 5, 2027, at 2.00 pm.

Remember to post your poster in the poster forum specifically designed for posters. You also need to post your poster in the assignments folder. The poster will be graded in the assignment folder and only you can see the comments and grade in the assignment folder.

Google has a number of sites that tell you how to design a poster. Type in academic posters and you will find a number of examples. **If you were handing in a hardcopy of the poster it would be on standard Bristol board, which is 22 X 28 inches; this is the size your poster is to be. You will be creating your poster online, based on the instructions found in content. You are to use the site posted in the link or google docs to create your poster. There is an example, crafted by former Graduate Assistant, Ms. Sierra Korczynski to help you. The format and headings are there as an example, you do not have to use them.**

You are to use a minimum of 6 sources, 3 of which **must be** academic sources, in your poster. Academic sources are peer reviewed.

While you can use the textbook in your poster, it does not count as one of the required sources. Images are to be cited and do not count as one of the minimum 6 required sources.

The following link discusses peer reviewed sources.

Distinguish between Popular and Scholarly Journals

You are to use the American Sociological Association (ASA) style guide when formatting your poster. Posters are not double-spaced. You must cite all your sources, a reference page is not citing sources, they must be cited in the poster.

To be clear: you must cite direct quotes, paraphrasing, any idea or thought not your own, including any information taken from online sources. The citations are to appear in the body of the poster, for example, (Smith 1942:86). Each citation includes the author, date, and page. All sources are to appear in the reference page. Failure to cite all sources is plagiarism. Use of AI is considered plagiarism.

Posters without citations will receive a grade of zero.

Please refer to the grading rubric, posted on the D2L site.

Do not use “I”, “me”, or “my” in academic work

The librarian session, on November 3, is designed specifically to help you with this assignment.

Participation

Participation is a significant part of your overall mark. Your participation mark is based on your contribution to group discussions and asking questions/making comments and answering questions/comments on the poster assignment. This entails fulsome responses to group discussions/poster questions/comments; stating “I agree” or “I disagree” without adding why you agree or disagree is not considered a fulsome discussion. Repeating what a group member has said in discussion posts/questions/comments is not a fulsome discussion. Participation means engaging with the material. You are to answer each discussion question in each lecture. While you certainly can agree or disagree with a post, you need to outline your rationale for doing so. Critical thinking is not about opinions. Critical thinking is rational, unbiased, evidence-based thought.

If you are concerned you will be repeating what a group member has posted you might want to answer the question and then read and comment on what your group members have said.

Each of you is assigned to a discussion group forum and will work with your group throughout the course. Discussion forums can only be viewed by the members of the group and me. Respectfulness of answers is to be practiced. You do not have to agree with your classmates, you can respectfully disagree. Academia is about discourse and critical thought.

Each question, in each lecture and the questions/comments and responses to questions/comments on posters will be marked out of 4 possible marks, following the list below. Your answers should not only reflect that you have read the material/watched the videos in question, but have thought about and further analysed it. Additionally, you should read the responses of your peers to avoid repeating or copying their answers, as well as to further your group discussion regarding that question.

- 0 Marks: No answer or answer reveals a fundamental misunderstanding of the question or content being asked about.
- 1 Mark: Answer reveals you have read the relevant material and provided an answer.
- 2 Marks: Answer shows an understanding of the material being asked about and appropriately addresses the question.
- 3 Marks: Answer illustrates a full understanding of the material and the question, as well as the capacity to engage with the discussion beyond merely answering the question.
- 4 Marks: Answer proves that you have not only understood the material and question, but are able to deeply discuss the sociological relevance provoked by the question and the material.

Discussions are not marked for length, only for content. Googling an answer is not a sufficient response. Any outside sources, used in posts, require a citation. While each post is read and graded, those who post before 2.00 pm, each Tuesday, can expect a comment on at least one post.

Interaction is an important part of learning and working together collegially. While you will not lose marks for not responding to group members posts, thoughtful, fulsome responses are duly noted and it can be the case, with the information provided in the response to a group member's post, it clarifies your original answer moving the mark from a 0 to 1, or 1 to 2, or 2 to 3, or 3 to 4. As well, I have been known to use responses to group members to occasionally assign bonus marks.

Discussion posts for lectures open at 8.00 am on Monday, except for week 1 when discussion posts open on Tuesday. The last posts for discussion questions need to be made by 2.00 pm on Thursday. Discussion posts will close each week on Thursday at 2.00 pm, except for weeks 1, 4, 22, and 26, when posts are due on Friday at 2.00 pm. The following week's lecture will open each Thursday at 2.00 pm for those who want to read ahead. The poster forum will open, for discussion, Monday, March 1, 2027, and will close on Friday, March 5, 2027, at 2.00 pm.

Reading posters and making comments/asking questions and responding to questions/comments asked of your poster is a peer review process and part of the participation grade. While you are to read all the posters, you are to select at least 10 of your classmates' poster assignments to read in-depth and ask questions/make comments on these. As well, you are to answer questions/comments asked of your poster. Please ask questions/make comments of the posters of your group members before examining the posters of those in other groups. Doing so ensures everyone has questions/comments to address and everyone's work is read in-depth by some classmates. Respectfulness is expected when asking questions/making comments or responding to questions/comments. Questions/comments/responses are to be fulsome. Saying nice colours is not a fulsome comment. There are no readings assigned for the week March 1 to March 5; the focus of the week will be on reading and discussing the posters.

The participation grades will be calculated weekly and I will post the total participation grades, to that point, in myinfo, once a month, so you know how you are doing. As the grade will change, if you want to track your participation, record the grade when the participation mark is posted.

American Sociological Association (ASA)

All assignments in the Department of Sociology are to follow the ASA (American Sociological Association) style guide. The guide can be accessed on the web. Google ASA Style Guide and a number of examples will be available for you to choose from. One example is posted in content.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is unacceptable and subject to various sanctions. Please see the university regulations section on academic dishonesty in the Lakehead University Calendar.

Medical or Compassionate Consideration

Should you require academic consideration for medical or compassionate reasons, you will need a note from a physician or counsellor. Please refer to the current Lakehead University Calendar for detailed information.

As a university student, you may sometimes experience mental health concerns or stressful events that interfere with your academic performance and negatively impact your daily activities. All of us can benefit from support during times of struggle. If you or anyone you know experiences academic stress, difficult life events or feelings of anxiety or depression, Student Health and Wellness is here to help. Their services are free for Lakehead Students and appointments are available. You can learn more about confidential mental health services available on and off campus at lakeheadu.ca/shw. Remember that getting help is a smart and courageous thing to do- for yourself, for those you care about, and for those who care about you. Asking for support sooner rather than later is almost always helpful.

Please use Lakehead Email to converse with me lforbes@lakeheadu.ca. Any notices I send will be through your Lakehead Email account.

Should you need any assistance or have a question I am only an email away and happy to help/answer questions.

The Following is Lakehead University's Policy for Students Engaged in Remote Learning at Lakehead University.

(1) Academic Integrity

A breach of Academic Integrity is a serious offence. The principle of Academic Integrity, particularly of doing one's own work, documenting properly (including use of quotation marks, appropriate paraphrasing and referencing/citation), collaborating appropriately, and avoiding misrepresentation, is a core principle in university study. Students are strongly advised to familiarize themselves with the Student Code of Conduct - Academic Integrity ("[The Code](#)") - and, in particular, sections 26 and 83 through 85. Non-compliance with the Code will NOT be tolerated in this course and the Code will be adhered to in terms of disciplinary action. The Code provides a full description of academic offences, procedures when Academic Integrity breaches are suspected and sanctions for breaches of Academic Integrity.

(2) Copyright Compliance:

I understand and agree that all instructional, reference, and administrative materials to which I am given access in this course (the "course materials"), whether they consist of text, still or kinetic images, or sound, whether they are in digital or hard copy formats, and in whatever media they are offered, are protected in their entirety by copyright, and that to comply with this copyright and the law:

(1) I may access and download the course materials only for my own personal and non-commercial use for this course; and

(2) I am not permitted to download, copy, store (in any medium), forward or share, transmit, broadcast, show, post or play in public, adapt, or change in any way any text, image, or sound component of the course materials for any other purpose whatsoever except as expressly authorized, and only to the extent authorized, in writing, by the course instructor.

I further understand and agree that, if I infringe the copyright of the course materials in any way, I may be prosecuted under the Lakehead University Student Code of Conduct – Academic Integrity, which requires students to act ethically and with integrity in academic matters and to demonstrate behaviours that support the University's academic values.

(3) Exam/Assignment/Discussion Post Integrity:

I understand and agree that:

(1) Unless otherwise allowed by the course instructor, I must complete the assignments/discussion posts in this course without the assistance of anyone else.

(2) Unless otherwise allowed by the course instructor, I must not access any sources or materials (in print, online, or in any other way) to complete any course exam.

I further understand and agree that, if I violate either of these two rules, or if I provide

any false or misleading information about my completion of course assignments or exams, I may be prosecuted under the Lakehead University Student Code of Conduct – Academic Integrity, which requires students to act ethically and with integrity in academic matters and to demonstrate behaviours that support the University's academic values.

(4) GenAI Use Prohibited

Generative artificial intelligence (Generative AI or GenAI) is a category of AI systems capable of generating text, images, or other media in response to prompts. These systems include ChatGPT and its variant Bing (built by OpenAI) and Bard (built by Google) among several others. Other Generative AI models include artificial intelligence art systems such as Stable Diffusion, Midjourney, and DALL-E. Use of systems including, but not limited to Grammarly are prohibited.

Any use of GenAI systems to produce assignments/discussion posts/exams for this course is not permitted. All work submitted for evaluation in this course must be the student's original work. The submission of any work containing AI generated content will be considered a violation of academic integrity ("Use of Unauthorized Materials").

Fall Semester Reading and Lecture Schedule

Week 1: Tuesday, Sept. 8 to Friday, Sept. 11

Lecture 1: Introduction to Family Sociology (2 hours)

Reading: Tepperman Preface

Week 2: Monday, Sept. 14 to Thursday, Sept. 17

Lecture 2: Families and Family-Like Relationships 1 (3 hours)

Reading: Tepperman Chapter 1

Week 3: Monday, Sept. 21 to Thursday, Sept. 24

Lecture 3: Families and Family-Like Relationships 2 (3 hours)

Reading: Fox Chapter 1

Reading: Fox Chapter 2

Week 4: Monday, Sept. 28 to Friday, Oct. 2

Lecture 4: Historical Perspectives on Canadian Families 1 (3 hours)

Reading: Tepperman Chapter 2

Reading: Fox Chapter 3

Please note: Tuesday, September 30 is Truth and Reconciliation Day and there are no classes. Posts for this week are due on Friday.

Week 5: Monday, Oct. 5 to Thursday, Oct. 8

Lecture 5: Historical Perspectives on Canadian Families 2 (3 hours)

Reading: Fox Chapter 4
Reading: Fox Chapter 5

Week 6: Monday, Oct. 12 to Thursday, Oct. 15
Thanksgiving and Study Week No classes

Week 7: Monday, Oct. 19 to Thursday, Oct. 22
Lecture 6: Historical Perspectives on Canadian Families 3 (3 hours)
Reading: Fox Chapter 20

Week 8: Monday, Oct. 26 to Thursday, Oct. 29
Lecture 7: Historical Perspectives on Canadian Families 4 (3 hours)
Reading: Fox Chapter 19
Reading: Fox Chapter 21

Week 9: Monday, Nov. 2 to Thursday, Nov. 5
Midterm Examination: Monday, November 2, 2026, 6.00 pm, Eastern Standard Time

Library Session: November 3, at 10.00 am.

The library session is designed specifically to assist you with your poster assignment. Professional librarian, Debra Gold, will lead this session.

Week 10: Monday, Nov. 9 to Thursday, Nov. 12
Lecture 8: How Families Begin Dating and Mating 1 (3 hours)
Reading: Tepperman Chapter 3 Pages 69 to 88
Reading: Fox Chapter 10

Week 11: Monday, Nov. 16 to Thursday, Nov. 19
Lecture 9: How Families Begin Dating and Mating 2 (1½ hours)
Reading: Tepperman Chapter 3 Pages 88 to 107
Reading: Fox Chapter 9

Lecture 10: Happy and Healthy Relationships (1½ hours)
Please note: you are to read Tepperman Chapter 5 for this lecture. As there are already two readings assigned for this week, the hour and a half scheduled for this lecture includes time to read chapter 5 and answer a discussion question.

Week 12: Monday, Nov. 23 to Thursday, Nov. 26
Lecture 11: Types of Intimate Couples (3 hours)
Reading: Tepperman Chapter 4
Reading: Fox Chapter 11

Week 13: Monday, Nov. 30 to Thursday, Dec. 3

Lecture 12: Types of Intimate Couples (3 hours)

Reading: Fox Chapter 15

Reading: Fox Chapter 7

Winter Semester 2027 Reading and Lecture Schedule

Week: 14: Monday, Jan. 4 to Thursday, Jan. 7

Lecture 13: Parenting 1 (3 hours)

Reading: Tepperman Chapter 6

Week: 15: Monday, Jan. 11 to Thursday, Jan. 14

Lecture 14: Parenting 2 (3 hours)

Reading: Fox Chapter 13

Reading: Fox Chapter 16

Week: 16: Monday, Jan. 18 to Thursday, Jan. 21

Lecture 15: Parenting 3 (3 hours)

Reading: Fox Chapter 12

Week: 17: Monday, Jan. 25 to Thursday, Jan. 28

Midterm Examination: Monday, January 25, 2027, 6.00 pm, Eastern Standard Time

Lecture 16: Work and Family Life 1 (1½ hours)

Reading: Tepperman Chapter 7

Week: 18: Monday, Feb. 1 to Thursday, Feb. 4

Lecture 17: Work and Family Life 2 (3 hours)

Reading: Fox Chapter 18

Reading: Fox Chapter 8

Week: 19: Monday, Feb. 8 to Thursday, Feb. 11

Lecture 18: Stress and Violence 1 (3 hours)

Reading: Tepperman Chapter 8

Week: 20: Monday, Feb. 15 to Thursday, Feb. 18

Family Day and Study Week No classes

Week: 21: Monday, Feb. 22 to Thursday, Feb. 25

Lecture 19: Stress and Violence 2 (3 hours)

Reading: Fox Chapter 27

Week: 22: Monday, Mar. 1 to Friday, Mar. 5

Posters are due Monday, March 1, 2027, 9.00 am

Please note: there is an extra day added to this week to read and make comment/ask questions/respond to comments/questions on the posters. The discussion post for this week will close at 2.00 pm, on Friday, March 5. This week will be spent reviewing the posters and asking and answering questions on the posters. There is no lecture and assigned readings this week.

Week: 23: Monday, Mar. 8 to Thursday, Mar. 11

Lecture 20: Divorce and Ending Relationships 1 (3 hours)

Reading: Tepperman Chapter 9

Week: 24: Monday, Mar. 15 to Thursday, Mar. 18

Lecture 21: Divorce and Ending Relationships 2 (3 hours)

Reading: Fox Chapter 25

Reading: Fox Chapter 26

Week: 25: Monday, Mar. 22 to Thursday, Mar. 25

Lecture 22: Family Transitions and Diversity 1 (3 hours)

Reading: Tepperman Chapter 10

Week: 26: Tuesday, Mar. 30 to Friday, Apr. 2

Lecture 23: Family Transitions and Diversity 2 (3 hours)

Reading: Fox Chapter 17

Reading: Fox Chapter 22

Easter Monday is a holiday, classes this week begin on Tuesday

Please note: as you have all the course material available to you, there will be no reviews. You might want to create your study notes as you go through each unit.

Please note: It is up to you to determine the 3 hours you want to devote to the class each week. The discussion forums are open each Monday morning and close Thursday at 2.00 pm, with the exceptions of weeks 1, 4, 22, and 26 when posts are due on Friday at 2.00 pm.

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References

Distinguish between Popular and Scholarly Journals

[University of California, Santa Cruz](https://guides.library.ucsc.edu/distinguish-between-pop...)

<https://guides.library.ucsc.edu/distinguish-between-pop...> Retrieved April 1, 2026.