

Course ID:	Course Title:	Winter 2021
SO 200	Sociology of Families	Prerequisite: SO 121
		Credits: 3

Class Information		Instructor Information		Important Dates	
Delivery:	Online	Instructor:	Joel Thiessen, PhD	First day of classes:	Mon, Jan 11
Days:	Tuesdays/Thursdays	Email:	jathiessen@ambrose.edu	Last day to add/drop, or change to audit:	Sun, Jan 24
Time:	10:00-11:15am	Phone:	403-410-2000 ext.2979	Last day to request revised final exam:	Mon, Mar 8
Room:	Zoom	Office:	L2105	Last day to withdraw from course:	Fri, Mar 19
Lab/ Tutorial:	N/A	Office Hours:	Tuesdays, 10:00-11:15am; Thursdays 1:00-3:00pm, by appointment only (in-person or virtual)	Last day to apply for coursework extension:	Mon, Mar 29
Final Exam:	No Final Exam			Last day of classes:	Fri, Apr 16

Course Description

A study of the function and structure of the family and its place in society. The emphasis is on the family as a social institution and its cultural foundations.

Expected Learning Outcomes

Course Learning Outcomes	Behavioural Science Program Learning Outcomes	Assignments
To develop a sociological account for how and why families have changed over time in Canada, and the impact of such changes in Canadian society.	#1	#1, 3, and 4
To cultivate a sociological lens to make sense of family perceptions, experiences, and narratives over the life course.	#1 and 2	#1, 2, 3, and 4
To draw on sociological theory, concepts, and data on the family to inform critical reflection and	#1, 5, and 6	#2, 3, and 4

application for everyday family, organizational, and public policy settings.		
To grapple with one's Christian thinking and practice in the area of family life.	#1, 6, and 7	#1, 2, and 4

Behavioural Science Program Outcomes:

1. Have a sound understanding of individual and group behaviour which will assist them in dealing with people professionally and personally;
2. Be able to integrate knowledge of both the psychological and societal processes which bear upon human emotions, cognition and behaviour;
3. Have an understanding of research methodology in the behavioural sciences, including constructing and implementing quantitative and qualitative research designs, analyzing and critiquing empirical results, and presenting clear outcomes and recommendations to appropriate audiences;
4. Have a facility with current technology in the field of behavioural science (e.g., electronic databases, computer analysis software such as SPSS);
5. Perceive human needs with empathy, develop ethically responsible attitudes toward social problems and, in particular, vulnerable populations in society, and be empowered to give voice to these issues in the public and professional arena;
6. Be prepared to engage ethically with individuals from diverse backgrounds (i.e., racial, ethnic, religious, gender and sexual orientation) in a manner that maintains the dignity and respect for all people;
7. Develop a Christian view of sociological and psychological processes in conjunction with scientific study;
8. Be prepared to work with integrity and confidence in a variety of human service fields or continue on to graduate work or after-degree programs

Textbooks

Bengston, Vern, Norella Putney and Susan Harris. 2013. *Families and Faith: How Religion Is Passed Down Across Generations*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

McDaniel, Susan, Lorne Tepperman and Sandra Colavecchia. 2019. *Close Relations: An Introduction to the Sociology of Families*. 6th Edition. North York, ON: Pearson.

Course Schedule

On Tuesdays we will not meet together synchronously. Rather, students will watch posted lectures online. On Thursdays we will meet together online synchronously (marked with an asterisk *), to unpack student questions about assigned content and to collectively interact and grapple with the implications and applications of the materials learned earlier in the week.

Date	Topic	Reading/Preparation in Advance	Assignment Deadlines
Tues, Jan.12	Course Introduction & Families and Family-Like Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Close Relations</i> – Chapter 1 	

Thurs, Jan. 14	*Families and Family-Like Relationships		
Tues, Jan.19	Historical Perspectives on Canadian Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Close Relations</i> – Chapter 2 • “Contemporary Practice of Traditional Aboriginal Child Rearing: A Review” – article available on Moodle 	
Thurs, Jan.21	*Historical Perspectives on Canadian Families		
Tues, Jan.26	How Families Begin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Close Relations</i> – Chapter 3 	
Thurs, Jan.28	*How Families Begin		
Tues, Feb.2	Types of Intimate Couples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Close Relations</i> – Chapter 4 	
Thurs, Feb.4	*Types of Intimate Couples		
Mon, Feb.8			Exam #1
Tues, Feb.9	Happy and Healthy Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Close Relations</i> – Chapter 5 	
Thurs, Feb.11	*Happy and Healthy Relationships		What advice would you give? Discussion #1
Tues, Feb.16	NO CLASS (Reading Week)		Research & Application Assignment #1 – 9:55am
Thurs, Feb.18	NO CLASS (Reading Week)		
Tues, Feb.23	Families and Faith	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Families and Faith</i> – Part 1 & 2 	
Thurs, Feb.25	*Families and Faith		
Tues, March 2	Families and Faith	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Families and Faith</i> – Part 3 	
Thurs, March 4	*Families and Faith		
Tues, March 9	Parenting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Close Relations</i> – Chapter 6 	Research & Application Assignment #2 – 9:55am
Thurs, March 11	*Parenting		
Tues, March 16	Parenting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Hyper Parents and Coddled Kids” Documentary – available on Moodle 	
Thurs, March 18	*Parenting		What advice would you give? Discussion #2
Mon, March 22			Exam #2
Tues, March 23	Work and Family Life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Close Relations</i> – Chapter 7 	
Thurs,	*Work and Family Life		

March 25			
Tues, March 30	Stress and Violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Close Relations</i> – Chapter 8 	
Thurs, April 1	*Stress and Violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guest Speaker – Dr. Nancy Nason-Clark • “Victims/Survivors” – article available on Moodle 	
Tues, April 6	Divorce and Ending Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Close Relations</i> – Chapter 9 	Research & Application Assignment #3 – 9:55am
Thurs, April 8	*Divorce and Ending Relationships		What advice would you give? Discussion #3
Tues, April 13	Family Transitions and Diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Close Relations</i> – Chapter 10 • “Flying Solo” Documentary – available on Moodle 	
Thurs, April 15	*A Glimpse Into the Future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Close Relations</i> – Chapter 11 	
Fri, April 16			Research Project – 9:00am
Mon, April 19			Exam #3

Requirements:

*It is students’ responsibility to make note of and submit all assignments by the deadlines below. Failure to submit all assignments will result in an automatic failing final grade. Late assignments will lose 20%/day.

1) Exams (42%) – Feb.8, Mar. 22, and Apr.19 @ 11:59pm

In a strictly online course, it can be difficult to stay motivated and disciplined to remain on top of assigned readings and class-wide times together. To assist with this challenge, students are strongly encouraged to read all required readings in advance of each class, to take notes when reading, document questions that arise, and make connections between ideas and assigned readings. Students will then complete three online exams. Each exam will include 45 multiple choice questions that can be completed anytime between 12:01am and 11:59pm MST on the due date. Once the exam begins, students will have 70 minutes to complete the exam. Exams are not cumulative. Each quiz is worth 14% of the final grade.

2) Research & Application Assignments (27%) – Feb.16, Mar.9, and Apr.6 @ 9:55am

Few institutions impact individuals as personally or deeply as the family. The following writing assignments are designed to help you reflect personally – against the backdrop of sociological theory, concepts, and data – about your own family experiences. Drawing on assigned readings in the course plus two peer-reviewed scholarly sources, answer the following questions in one page (double spaced, 1” margins on all sides, 12-size font), plus a correctly formatted (ASA) title page and bibliography. Each assignment is worth 9% of your final grade. Late assignments will receive a zero. Evaluation of this assignment is based on the Grading Rubric later in the syllabus: (a) theory, method, and data (25 marks); (b) analysis and application (25 marks); (c) logical and coherent argument (20 marks); (d) grammar and spelling (20 marks); (e) formatting (10 marks).

- **Feb.16 (9:55am):** How (un)happy and (un)healthy was/is your family, and why?

- **Mar.9 (9:55am):** Drawing on Part 3 of *Families and Faith*: Which, if any, of the following terms apply to you: rebel, zealot, prodigal, religious none (and explain)? In the assigned reading we learn of several social factors that contribute to effective or ineffective faith transmission. Compare these with your own experiences.
- **Apr.6 (9:55am):** All families experience stress. Identify a central stressor in your family life, including the perceived cause, response, and outcome to that stressor.

3) “What advice would you give?” Discussions (6%) – Feb.11, Mar.18, and Apr.8

We will take three classes to address “what advice would you give?” questions, in light of course materials as well as external research sources. During these classes students will meet in smaller groups to research and discuss an assigned question, before coming together as an entire class to exchange our learnings and insights. Students receive 6% for participating in all three conversations. Arriving late for these discussions will result in a 1% deduction, and not showing up at all will result in a 2% deduction, per missed/late discussion.

4) Research Project (25%) – April 16 @ 9:00am

Select one of the following three options, and submit your project as a 5-6 page paper or propose and submit an alternate creative medium (e.g., video, poster/bulletin board, board/card game). If students choose an alternative creative medium, they must discuss the proposed idea and receive approval and specific parameters moving forward from the professor prior to Thursday, February 25. In addition to drawing on your textbooks, read and review at least 10 peer-reviewed sources (i.e. academic books and articles) to anchor your empirical support.

- **Marriage Proposal:** Drawing especially, but not exclusively, on material from chapter 5 (happy and healthy relationships), chapter 6 (parenting), chapter 7 (work and family), and the book *Families and Faith*, develop a marriage proposal for your future spouse that addresses things that you “would like to see” and things that you “hope to avoid” in your marriage. For example, how do you envision gender roles in the family; what do you anticipate the division of labour looking like; would you like to have children (if so, how many and at what stage in the family life); what might your approach to parenting look like (and what role, if any, might extended family have); what are your views on working outside the home and the balance with family life; how will you approach the subject of religion?
- **Family Assessment:** As you consider your own family, what are the strengths of your family dynamics and realities, and what areas possibly warrant opportunity for attention and development?
- **COVID-19 and Family Life:** How has COVID-19 positive and negatively impacted family life in Canada? (*If selected, students can work on this question/assignment in groups of up to five – only one student needs to submit the assignment on behalf of the group).

When writing, the first paragraph (approximately ¼ page) should clearly state what this paper is about in the context of the larger literature, the overall argument to the paper, and what makes this topic significant. Subsequent paragraphs should generally have the following structure, all the while building a consistent and clear argument from one paragraph to the next: *insight* (“key claim/idea I will develop is...” - 1st sentence of each paragraph), *evidence* (“data that supports my claim...” - middle sentences of each paragraph), and *interpretation* (“what this all means is...” - last sentence or two of each paragraph). The concluding paragraph (approximately ¼ page) should synthesize the interpretations throughout into a larger integrated statement, pointing back to the overall argument and the ways that this paper builds on and extends the literature accounted for in the paper. The final paragraph should also delineate the implications of your argument for our understanding of society.

A title page and bibliography (in addition to the 5-6 pages) are expected, correctly formatted to ASA guidelines (see link provided on Moodle). Papers should be double spaced, with 1" (2.54cm) margins on all sides, 12-point font, and submitted on Moodle as a Microsoft Word document. Evaluation of this assignment is based on the Grading Rubric later in the syllabus: (a) theory, method, and data (25 marks); (b) analysis and application (25 marks); (c) logical and coherent argument (20 marks); (d) grammar and spelling (20 marks); (e) formatting (10 marks). Although not required, students are strongly encouraged to exchange their projects with one other student to receive candid feedback based on the criteria above, and to then account for that feedback before submitting the final project.

Note that your paper submission may go through a plagiarism software – Turnitin – that compares your paper against other books, articles, online sources, and papers submitted to other universities and Ambrose. It is your responsibility to be aware of what constitutes plagiarism (see “Policies” section of the syllabus).

Communication and Attendance:

My sole task in this course is to help create an environment for you to maximally learn and succeed. Toward this end, student-initiated communication with me is critical, especially if you have questions about course content and expectations, or if you are falling behind. Unless you reach out and communicate with me, I have no way to know what your needs are or how to best help you through this course. I want to encourage you to proactively communicate with me, and to not leave your communications until it is too late. When it comes to assignments, you will be held accountable for your communication (or lack thereof).

I have a high regard for our times together in class – this time is sacred. You are free to attend class or not, but should you decide to do so, I expect the following without exception:

- Read the assigned materials in advance of class
- Arrive on time
- Actively participate in class activities

If you cannot uphold all three of these expectations, you are discouraged from attending class. Should honoring these class boundaries become a problem, the professor reserves the right to ask you to leave class or possibly withdraw from the course.

Grade Summary:

The available letter grades and percentages for course grades are as follows. A detailed chart of what constitutes an ‘A,’ ‘B,’ or ‘C,’ etc. is also included below:

A	96% and above	(GPA – 4.0)	C	63 - 67%	(GPA – 2.0)
A	91 - 95%	(GPA – 4.0)	C-	60 - 62%	(GPA – 1.7)
A-	86 - 90%	(GPA – 3.7)	D+	56 - 59%	(GPA – 1.3)
B+	82 - 85%	(GPA – 3.3)	D	50 - 55%	(GPA – 1.0)
B	75 - 81%	(GPA – 3.0)	F	Below 50%	
B-	72 - 74%	(GPA – 2.7)			
C+	68 - 71%	(GPA – 2.3)			

Because of the nature of the Alpha 4.00 system, there can be no uniform University-wide conversion scale. The relationship between raw scores (e.g. percentages) and the resultant letter grade will depend on the nature of the course and the instructor’s assessment of the level of each class, compared to similar classes taught previously.

Please note that final grades will be available on the student registration system. Printed grade sheets are not mailed out.

Grading Rubric

	Theory, Method, Data: Correctly employs paradigms, theories, concepts, and empirical research. Both breadth and depth of resources are relied upon, demonstrating an integrated understanding of the area of study.	Analysis and Application: Student is able to extend past summarizing research/theory, and clearly analyze and apply the research/theory (e.g., implications and consequences)	Logical and Coherent Argument: Logical and coherent argument that flows from beginning to end.	Grammar and Spelling: Writing is clear and effective communicating central ideas	Formatting: Use of appropriate writing style (i.e., ASA) and other formatting particulars (i.e., page length, font size, margins)	Oral Presentations: Material is clearly, confidently, and creatively communicated. Both breadth and depth of resources are relied upon, demonstrating an integrated understanding of the area of study.
A 86-100	Consistently achieved – paradigms, theories, concepts, and empirical research are summarized and used accurately and in relevant ways	The majority of assignment demonstrates a balance in summarizing and describing theory/research and analysis and application	Clearly states central thesis and purpose of paper Each sentence/paragraph logically leads to the next Carefully selected details which support general statements and central thesis	Few to no spelling, grammar, or other writing errors. Words, sentences, and paragraphs flow smoothly	Consistently achieved	Communicates effectively main theme, thesis, or primary focus of presentation. Establishes order to ideas and points out relationships between them. Number and quality of main points are sufficient Presentation of ideas develops to a logical

						<p>conclusion and/or summary</p> <p>Strong presentation style, demonstrated through non-verbal communication, body language, voice, and eye contact.</p>
B 72-85	Mostly achieved - paradigms, theories, concepts, and empirical research are summarized and used fairly accurately.	Some idea of how chosen topic bears on the development of sociological thought (i.e., some analysis and application beyond merely summarizing existing theory/research)	<p>Clear central thesis</p> <p>Appropriate details/synthesis most of the time.</p> <p>Sentences/paragraph generally flow logically together</p>	<p>Some spelling, grammar, and writing errors</p> <p>Some awkward transitions between words, sentences, and paragraphs</p>	Mostly achieved	<p>Communicates to some degree the main theme, thesis, or primary focus of presentation.</p> <p>Ideas follow a general logical flow with presenter providing some synthesis between points</p> <p>Number and quality of main points are sufficient</p> <p>Logical conclusion and/or summary provided that develops from the presenter's points</p> <p>Moderate presentation</p>

						style, demonstrated through non-verbal communication, body language, voice, and eye contact
C 60-71	Inconsistently achieved - paradigms, theories, concepts, and empirical research are often summarized or used inaccurately, or not at all.	Little to no connection made to the development of paradigmatic thought in terms of analyzing or applying the theory/research	Adequately limited central thesis Details/synthesis may be repetitious or absent altogether. Sentences/paragraphs rarely, if ever, flow logically together	Several spelling, grammar, and writing errors Several awkward transitions between words, sentences, and paragraphs	Inconsistently achieved	Unclear presentation of main theme, thesis or focus of presentation Little order to ideas and relationships between points not clarified clearly Number and quality of main points are lacking in sufficiency Weak conclusion and/or summary Presentation style lacking as demonstrated through non-verbal communication, body language, voice, and eye contact <i>And so on....</i>

Ambrose University Academic Policies:

Communication

All students have received an Ambrose e-mail account upon registration. It is the student's responsibility to check this account regularly as the Ambrose email system will be the professor's instrument for notifying students of important matters (cancelled class sessions, extensions, requested appointments, etc.) between class sessions. If students do not wish to use their Ambrose accounts, they will need to forward all messages from the Ambrose account to another personal account.

Registration

During the **Registration Revision Period** students may enter a course without permission, change the designation of any class from credit to audit and/or voluntary withdraw from a course without financial or academic penalty or record. Courses should be added or dropped on the student portal by the deadline date; please consult the List of Important Dates. After that date, the original status remains and the student is responsible for related fees.

Students intending to withdraw from a course after the Registration Revision Period must apply to the Office of the Registrar by submitting a "Request to Withdraw from a Course" form or by sending an email to the Registrar's Office by the **Withdrawal Deadline**; please consult the List of Important Dates on the my.ambrose.edu website. Students will not receive a tuition refund for courses from which they withdraw after the Registration Revision period. A grade of "W" will appear on their transcript.

Students wishing to withdraw from a course, but who fail to do so by the applicable date, will receive the grade earned in accordance with the course syllabus. A student obliged to withdraw from a course after the Withdrawal Deadline because of health or other reasons may apply to the Registrar for special consideration.

Exam Scheduling

Students, who find a conflict in their exam schedule must submit a Revised Examination Request form to the Registrar's Office by the deadline date; please consult the List of Important Dates. Requests will be considered for the following reasons only: 1) the scheduled final examination slot conflicts with another exam; 2) the student has three final exams within three consecutive exam time blocks; 3) the scheduled final exam slot conflicts with an exam at another institution; 4) extenuating circumstances. Travel is not considered a valid excuse for re-scheduling or missing a final exam.

Electronic Etiquette

Students are expected to treat their instructor, guest speakers, and fellow students with respect. It is disruptive to the learning goals of a course or seminar and disrespectful to fellow students and the instructor to use electronics for purposes unrelated to the course during a class session. Turn off all cell phones and other electronic devices during class. Laptops should be used for class-related purposes only. Do not use iPods, MP3 players, or headphones. Do not text, read, or send personal emails, go on Facebook or other social networks, search the internet, or play computer games during class. Some professors will not allow the use of any electronic devices in

class. The professor has the right to disallow the student to use a laptop in future lectures and/or to ask a student to withdraw from the session if s/he does not comply with this policy. Repeat offenders will be directed to the Dean. If you are expecting communication due to an emergency, please speak with the professor before the class begins.

Academic Policies

It is the responsibility of all students to become familiar with and adhere to academic policies as stated in the Academic Calendar. Personal information (information about an individual that may be used to identify that individual) may be required as part of taking this class. Any information collected will only be used and disclosed for the purpose for which the collection was intended. For further information contact the Privacy Compliance Officer at privacy@ambrose.edu.

Extensions

Although extensions to coursework in the semester are at the discretion of the instructor, students may not turn in coursework for evaluation after the last day of the scheduled final examination period unless they have received permission for a course Extension from the Registrar's Office. Requests for course extensions or alternative examination time must be submitted to the Registrar's Office by the deadline date; please consult the List of Important Dates. Course extensions are only granted for serious issues that arise "due to circumstances beyond the student's control."

Appeal of Grade

An appeal for change of grade on any course work must be made to the course instructor within one week of receiving notification of the grade. An appeal for change of final grade must be submitted to the Registrar's Office in writing and providing the basis for appeal within 30 days of receiving notification of the final grade, providing the basis for appeal. A review fee of \$50.00 must accompany the appeal. If the appeal is sustained, the fee will be refunded.

Academic Integrity

We are committed to fostering personal integrity and will not overlook breaches of integrity such as plagiarism and cheating. Academic dishonesty is taken seriously at Ambrose University as it undermines our academic standards and affects the integrity of each member of our learning community. Any attempt to obtain credit for academic work through fraudulent, deceptive, or dishonest means is academic dishonesty. Plagiarism involves presenting someone else's ideas, words, or work as one's own. Plagiarism is fraud and theft, but plagiarism can also occur by accident when a student fails or forgets to acknowledge to another person's ideas or words. Plagiarism and cheating can result in a failing grade for an assignment, for the course, or immediate dismissal from the university. Students are expected to be familiar with the policies in the current Academic Calendar that deal with plagiarism, cheating, and the penalties and procedures for dealing with these matters. All cases of academic dishonesty are reported to the Academic Dean and become part of the student's permanent record.

Mental Health Support

All of us need a support system. We encourage students to build mental health supports and to reach out when help is needed.

On Campus:

- Counselling Services: ambrose.edu/counselling
- Peer Supportive Listening: One-to-one support in Student Life office. Hours posted at ambrose.edu/wellness.
- For immediate crisis support, there are staff on campus who are trained in Suicide Intervention and Mental Health First Aid. See ambrose.edu/crisissupport for a list of staff members.

Off Campus:

- Distress Centre - 403-266-4357
- Sheldon Chumir Health Care Centre - 403-955-6200
- Emergency - 911

Sexual Violence Support

All staff, faculty, and Residence student leaders have received *Sexual Violence Response to Disclosure* training. We will support you and help you find the resources you need. There is a website with on and off campus supports – ambrose.edu/sexual-violence-response-and-awareness.

Off Campus:

- Clinic: Sheldon Chumir Health Centre - 403-955-6200
- Calgary Communities Against Sexual Abuse - 403-237-5888

Note: Students are strongly advised to retain this syllabus for their records.