

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY  
FACULTY OF HEALTH  
YORK UNIVERSITY  
HH/PSYC 3630 3.0M  
PSYCHOLOGY OF FAMILY  
WINTER, 2016  
COURSE INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Erin C. Ross

---

**Office:** 228 BSB  
**Office hours:** Wednesdays, 14:30-15:30 (drop in – no appointment necessary) OR other times by appointment (in person or by telephone)  
**Phone number:** 416-736-2100 x33287  
**FAX:** 416-736-5618  
**e-mail:** [ecross@yorku.ca](mailto:ecross@yorku.ca)

**Teaching Assistant 1:** Claire Wicks  
**e-mail:** [cwicks@yorku.ca](mailto:cwicks@yorku.ca)  
**Office:** BSB051

**Teaching Assistant 2:** Deborah Kanter  
**e-mail:** [dkanter@yorku.ca](mailto:dkanter@yorku.ca)  
**Office:** TEL5022G (TEL Building)

**Required texts:** Lamanna, M.A., Reidmann, A. & Stewart, S.D. (2015). *Marriages, families and relationships: Making choices in a diverse society* (12<sup>th</sup> ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.  
ISBN: 9781285736976

Previous editions of the textbook are not acceptable – make sure you have the 12<sup>th</sup> edition. You can purchase an e-book version.

Lecture materials posted on Moodle  
<https://moodle.yorku.ca/>

**Prerequisite** Introduction to Psychology (PSYC 1010 6.0) or equivalent with a minimum grade of C.

---

## 1. The Purpose of the Course

The psychology of family differs from many other courses offered in psychology. It combines theory-based with applied research to a much greater extent than other areas of psychology (except possibly social psychology), and there is more open debate in the literature about basic assumptions than you will find in other areas. As well, to some extent, it crosses into other academic disciplines, especially sociology. The purpose of this course is to survey the major approaches of the area, particularly as they have been applied to various topic areas (e.g., divorce, mate selection), and to explore basic assumptions made about family/families. In short, then, this course is designed to expose you to a variety of ways in which psychologists have thought about and researched families.

Learning objectives for this course:

- Identify social trends and processes in the arena of family life
- Evaluate the changes occurring in contemporary family life
- Identify research that explores the intersection of race, class, gender, and sexual orientation on family life
- Analyze the reciprocal relationships among family, work, school and leisure
- Examine societal issues and concerns such as family violence or child abuse and elder abuse as they relate to family functioning

## 2. Your Responsibilities

I will do all that I can to make this course an educational experience. I hope to be able to communicate why studying varied aspects of family is important. The course takes place in a 'largish' teaching environment and, as such, presents certain difficulties. First, there is a tendency for students to sit back and receive information and then recycle it for the examinations. Don't be afraid to ask questions or to ask for clarification or to ask me to repeat information. It's highly likely that you will not be the only person encountering difficulty. Second, don't accept everything that I say uncritically. Everyone has biases and you should not be afraid to question my assumptions. I will try as much as possible to make them explicit, but I encourage you to think about what I say in a critical fashion. Third, you may not capture audio or video or still images of me without my explicit permission. This includes audiotaping lectures, using a webcam to capture images of me lecturing or taking still photographs of me. Do note that in this course, you will have access to audio lecture capture which includes the audio component of the lecture along with images of the material presented on the lecture hall screen (though video clips and movie content not in the public domain may be deleted from the recordings – you will see only a blank screen). Lecture capture is available through Moodle. Be aware, though, that (1) these recordings occasionally fail and will not be available; if this happens, I will not make the material available in any other medium. (2) Once the course is finished, you will no longer have access to these files, so if you think you will need them, download them before the end of the course.

You are expected to abide by the York University Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities, available at <http://www.yorku.ca/oscr/pdfs/CodeofRightsandResponsibilities.pdf>. In class, I expect all cell phones to be placed in a non-ringing mode (vibrate or off). If your phone goes off

during lecture, I expect you to leave the lecture hall to answer it. If you are using a laptop during the lecture and you are using it for purposes other than note-taking, I may ask that you shut it off as it may disturb other students around you. Headphones attached to phones, computers, etc. are not to be worn in class, as the noise emanating from them may be disruptive to other students. Conversations that take place when I am lecturing are disruptive to me and to the students around you. I expect that this will not be a problem, but should it be, I will take action to deal with it.

### 3. My Responsibilities

My responsibilities lie in three areas. First, as course instructor, I will respond to your inquiries as quickly as possible. There are also teaching assistants for this course who will serve as a resource for you. I hold office hours weekly. See page 1 of the syllabus for this information. If you send an e-mail during my office hours, I will do my best to answer it during that time period. If you send an e-mail at other times, we endeavour to answer all e-mail within 24 hours on weekdays. An e-mail sent on the weekend is unlikely to be answered until the following Monday. I also set aside time at the beginning of every class to answer questions. Second, we will return graded material as quickly as possible. Marks will be posted on Moodle. If you wish to see your exam, you may do so during office hours. Third, I come to lectures prepared and enthusiastic. I hope to encourage you to think about the material and engage with it as fully as possible.

### 4. Evaluation

There will be two exams, each worth 50% of the total course mark. To pass the course, you must receive a total course grade of 50% or better. The dates on which exams occur in this course are listed on the attached schedule of events. Exams are multiple choice and short answer in nature and are 2 hours in duration. More specific information about the exams will be posted on Moodle – click on the *exam information* topic. When you come to the exams, you must present acceptable photo identification in order to be admitted – acceptable identification includes a York University identification card, a government issued card, such as a Health Card or Driver's Licence or a passport. **Please note** that there are chapters covered on each examination which will not be the topic of a lecture – students are responsible for this textbook material on their own, though I will gladly answer questions on the material in class.

**Grading:** The grading scheme for the course conforms to the 9-point grading system used in undergraduate programs at York (e.g., A+ = 9, A = 8, B+ = 7, C+ = 5, etc.). Assignments and tests will bear either a letter grade designation or a corresponding number grade (e.g. A+ = 90 to 100, A = 80 to 90, B+ = 75 to 79, etc.)

(For a full description of York grading system see the York University Undergraduate Calendar <http://www.registrar.yorku.ca/calendars/2015-2016/academic/grades/index.htm>)

### 5. Academic Honesty

I am reminding you that the Senate Policy on Academic Honesty will be strictly enforced in this course (Policy available at <http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/policies/document.php?document=69>). There is an academic integrity tutorial and quiz on the York University website – it reviews the Senate Policy on

Academic Honesty and provides examples of problems with academic honesty. You can get to this site by clicking on the following link:

[http://www.yorku.ca/tutorial/academic\\_integrity/](http://www.yorku.ca/tutorial/academic_integrity/)

I strongly advocate that you take this tutorial. I take all breaches of academic honesty very seriously and strongly support the Senate policy on such matters. Don't jeopardize your academic career by engaging in academic dishonesty.

## 6. Missing an Exam

**First and foremost, read the Psychology Department webpage on missed tests and exams, available at**

[http://www.yorku.ca/health/psyc/advising\\_missedtests.html](http://www.yorku.ca/health/psyc/advising_missedtests.html)

If you have a **very serious and fully documented** reason for being excused from an exam (e.g., death in the immediate family, formally documented visit to an emergency room or a condition that SERIOUSLY affects your ability to take the exam), you may take a make-up exam in lieu of the exam missed. You must contact me at least one day in advance of the exam and provide documentation in order to be permitted to take a make-up exam. In the case of an emergency, contact me as soon as possible. If you cannot reach me, a message can be left on my voice-mail, which records the date and time of your call. In order to write a deferred examination, you **MUST** follow the steps outlined below.

***If you are requesting a deferred examination for medical reasons, please read the following.***

► For a missed mid-term examination, you **MUST** include:

1. a statement by an attending physician which includes the following information:  
(taken verbatim from <http://psyc.info.yorku.ca/missed-tests-or-examinations/> )

- i. full name, mailing address, telephone number of the physician.
- ii. state the nature of the illness and its duration (i.e., specific dates covered), and
- iii. an indication of whether the illness and/or medication prescribed would have SERIOUSLY affected the student's ability to study and perform over the period in question.

**NOTE:** the physician's office may be contacted to verify that the forms were completed by the physician.

► For a missed final examination, you **MUST** include:

1. a statement by an attending physician which includes the following information:  
(taken verbatim from <http://psyc.info.yorku.ca/missed-tests-or-examinations/> )

- i. full name, mailing address, telephone number of the physician.
- ii. state the nature of the illness and its duration (i.e., specific dates covered), and

- iii. an indication of whether the illness and/or medication prescribed would have SERIOUSLY affected the student's ability to study and perform over the period in question.

**NOTE:** the physician's office may be contacted to verify that the forms were completed by the physician.

and

- 2. a completed Deferred Standing Agreement Form (available from the Registrar's Office at [http://www.registrar.yorku.ca/pdf/deferred\\_standing\\_agreement.pdf](http://www.registrar.yorku.ca/pdf/deferred_standing_agreement.pdf)).

I must sign the Registrar's Office Deferred Standing Agreement Form - you must obtain my signature in person during my office hours or you must complete it, scan it and email it to me for my signature. The Deferred Standing Agreement Form is sent to the Registrar's Office but no grade is submitted for you. Once your deferred examination is graded, I submit a grade to the Registrar's Office for you.

### **Important notes about deferred exams**

If you miss an exam for other reasons or cannot provide documentation, you will receive a grade of zero. If you miss the examination on the deferred midterm examination date for *whatever* reason, then you will write an exam on the date of the final exam that covers the whole course (i.e., worth 100% of your course grade). If you miss the deferred final examination for whatever reason, a grade of zero for the exam will be recorded for you and you must then petition your home faculty to be permitted to write the final examination. Deferred midterm examinations take place on a single scheduled date that will be determined during the semester. Deferred final examinations take place on a date set by the Department of Psychology. More information about deferred examinations will be made available on Moodle. Be aware that if you write the 100% deferred exam, you waive the right to have graded feedback worth at least 15% of your grade available to you by the drop date.

If you are requesting a deferred examination under the Religious Accommodation Guidelines, please be aware that you are required to give at least two weeks' notice of an examination conflict, so that accommodation can be made. Note that there is an [Examination Accommodation Form](#) required for final examinations. The Policy on Religious Observance is available by [clicking here](#).

### **There may be non-medical circumstances in which you will be permitted to write a deferred exam**

Tests/exams missed due to non-medical circumstances must be supported by appropriate documentation, e.g., death certificates, obituary notice, automobile accident reports, airline/bus ticket/receipt for emergency travel (with date of booking on ticket), etc.. Airline/train/bus ticket/receipts for emergency travel must indicate destination, departure, and return dates. This documentation must accompany the Psychology Department form noted above and, if the exam is a final exam, the Deferred Standing Agreement form.

Examination dates are in this course syllabus. You *know* that you will have your first exam on Feb 10, 2016 and that the final exam will be held in the exam period (April 6 – 20, 2016) so if you

have conflicting personal events scheduled at these times, drop the course now.

Be aware that the following are examples of reasons given by students in the past for requesting a deferred examination that are NOT considered to be legitimate (this is NOT an exhaustive list!).

- weddings
- feeling stressed
- family reunions
- coaching sports teams
- having one other examination within 24 hours of this one (see Registrar's Office regulations on examinations)
- studying so hard I made myself dizzy
- having to work
- mild colds
- holidays/vacations
- shift work
- not feeling prepared
- not having the course syllabus and not knowing when the exam was scheduled
- not being able to find the examination room
- losing my notes/textbook

For more information on deferred standing, see <http://www.registrar.yorku.ca/exams/deferred/>

## 7. Accommodation of Students With Disabilities

I am happy to accommodate students who write exams using the Alternate Examination Services. It's important that you have a clear understanding of the conditions under which I am willing to make these accommodations.

- a. Make sure you have reviewed the steps required for writing alternate examinations. Make sure you get forms filled in properly and in sufficient time to make the necessary accommodations. This means making sure you book your exams at least **3 weeks** in advance of the exam. I will NOT accommodate students who do not book exams in sufficient time, no matter the reason.
- b. If you miss your exam for what is described in this course outline as a legitimate reason, you must get in touch with me as soon as possible and follow the process described in the course outline in the section entitled "Missing an Examination". You must fill in and have me sign the Alternate Exam and Test Rescheduling Form, available at [Alternate Exam and Test Rescheduling Request form](#). If you do not complete the forms described in the course syllabus, no
- c. examination will be sent to the Alternate Examination Centre.  
If you do not have a legitimate reason for missing the test or examination, you will receive a grade of zero.
- d. If you have a conflict with tests or exams because of a need for additional time, you must make arrangements with me during my office hours or at class.
- e. If there is some problem with making arrangements, you must provide me with a contact name and e-mail address so I can verify this difficulty.
- f. You must arrange to write your examination at the same time as the rest of the class, whenever possible.
- g. I remind students to be familiar with the Senate Policy and attached Guidelines on Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities. It is available by clicking on the following link: <http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/policies/document.php?document=68>

## TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Date	Topic	Chapter(s) from Lamanna, Riedmann & Stewart
Jan. 6	Classes start – Introduction – Exploring Families	Chs. 1 - 2
Jan. 13	Our Gendered Identities	Ch. 3
Jan. 20	Choosing a Life Partner	Ch. 5
Jan. 27	Marriage	Chs. 6 - 7
Feb. 3	Marriage	Chs. 6 - 7
<b>Feb. 10</b>	<b>Midterm Examination</b>	
Feb. 13-19	Reading Week	
Feb. 24	Parenting	Ch. 8
Mar. 2	Work & Family	Ch. 10
Mar. 9	Communication in Relationships, Marriages & Families	Ch. 11
Mar. 16	Power and Violence in Marriages & Families	Ch. 12
Mar. 23	Divorce: Before & After	Ch. 14
Mar. 30	Remarriage & Stepfamilies	Ch. 15
<b>Apr. 6 – 20</b>	<b>Final Examination period</b>	

Midterm Examination covers: Chapters 1- 8 of Lamanna, Riedmann & Stewart and lecture material from Jan. 6 – Feb. 3

Final Examination covers: Chapters 9 - 16 of Lamanna, Riedmann & Stewart and lecture material From Feb. 24 – Mar. 30

**Yes, there are chapters on the exams that are not covered in lectures. Questions on these chapters will be based solely on material in the textbook.**

**Note the following important academic dates:**

Jan. 17, 2016 Last date to enrol in Winter Term courses without permission of the course instructor  
 Jan. 29, 2016 Last date to enrol in Winter Term courses with permission of the course instructor  
 Mar. 4, 2016 Last date to drop a Winter Term course without receiving a grade