





Sociology (SOCI) 216

Sociology of Families (Revision 1)

Status:

Replaced with new revision, see the [course listing](#)  for the current revision 

Delivery mode:

Individualized study online  with eText 

Credits:

3

Areas of study:

Arts or Social Science

Prerequisite:

None

Precluded:

SOCI 316

Challenge:

SOCI 216 has a challenge for credit option.

Faculty:

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences 

Overview

SOCI 216 explores the family as a social institution, its historical roots, its transformations, as well as the emergence and development of different family forms in the Canadian context from a critical sociological perspective. Through texts and films, the course also explores some of the key theoretical, ethical, and political debates that surround family forms in contemporary societies in light of feminist, 2SLGBTQI+, and Indigenous critiques. Topics that will be discussed include: Indigenous family forms in pre-colonial North America; the patriarchal family and its discontents; family relationships, parenting and social reproduction; the transformation of the family; the emergence of diverse forms of family in Canada; the condition of Indigenous, migrant, and refugee families, as well as the future of the family as a social institution in contemporary Canada.

Key authors that will be read in this course are Stephanie Coontz, Arlie R. Hochschild, Philippe Ariès, Patrizia Albanese, Charles Fourier, ME O'Brien, Kathi Weeks, Sophie A. Lewis, Lina Sunseri, and Vanessa Watts.

Outline



- Unit 1: What Is a Family? A Sociohistorical Perspective
- Unit 2: Indigenous Family Forms in Pre-Colonial North America (Turtle Island)
- Unit 3: The Patriarchal Family and Its Discontents (Keys to Understanding the Present)
- Unit 4: Family Forms, Including 2SLGBTQI+ Family Forms, and Family Policies in Canada—A Historical Perspective
- Unit 5: Family Formation, Intimacy, and Parenting
- Unit 6: Family Fragmentation (Divorce), Family Renewal, and Aging
- Unit 7: Families and Social Reproduction
- Unit 8: Indigenous Families Today
- Unit 9: Immigrant Families and Parenting at a Distance
- Unit 10: Societies Without Families and the Multiplication of Care—The 2SLGBTQI+, Feminist, and Anarchist Proposal
- Unit 11: The Future of the Family—Diverse Perspectives

Learning outcomes

After completing SOCI 216, students will be able to:

- explain the social origins and historical transformation of the family as a social institution,
- identify some of the family forms that Indigenous peoples in North America have had and how and why they have changed,
- use sociological theory to analyze the social processes, social relations, and social structures that shape families in contemporary societies,
- describe the emergence of diverse types of family in Canada, including 2SLGBTQI+ family forms, and some of the challenges that families face today,
- identify the social policies that the Canadian government has implemented to regulate and support families and family relations,
- identify and critically analyze the 2SLGBTQI+ and feminist critique of the family as a social institution, and
- identify some of the current social transformations shaping the future of the family.

Evaluation

To **receive credit**  for SOCI 216, you must complete and submit all of the assignments and write the final exam. You must achieve a grade of 50 percent or better on the final examination and an overall course composite grade of at least **D (50 percent)** . The weighting of the composite grade is as follows:

Activity	Weight
Reading Journal 1	10%
Film/Video/Podcast Analysis	20%


Activity	Weight
Reflective Essay: A Work Integrated Learning Activity	30%
Reading Journal 2	10%
Final Exam	30%
Total	100%

The **final examination** for this course must be requested in advance and written under the supervision of an AU-approved exam invigilator. Invigilators include either ProctorU or an approved in-person invigilation centre that can accommodate online exams. Students are responsible for payment of any invigilation fees. Information on exam request deadlines, invigilators, and other exam-related questions, can be found at the [Exams and grades](#) section of the Calendar.

To learn more about assignments and examinations, please refer to Athabasca University's [online Calendar](#).

Materials

Albanese, P. (Ed.). (2023). *Canadian families today: New perspectives* (5th ed.). Oxford University Press.  (eText)

Coontz, S. (1988). *The social origins of private life: A history of American families, 1600–1900*. Verso Books.  (Print)

eText

Registration in this course includes an electronic textbook. For more information on [electronic textbooks](#), please refer to our [eText Initiative site](#).

Other Material

All other course materials are available online through the course site and

include a Course Information manual, a Study Guide, and various readings and audiovisual materials.

Challenge for credit

Overview

The challenge for credit process allows you to demonstrate that you have acquired a command of the general subject matter, knowledge, intellectual and/or other skills that would normally be found in a university-level course.

Full information about **challenge for credit** [↗](#) can be found in the Undergraduate Calendar.

Evaluation

To **receive credit** [↗](#) for the SOCI 216 challenge registration, you must achieve a grade of at least **B (70 percent)** [📄](#) on the examination.



Challenge for credit course registration form

Important links

- › [Academic advising](#) [↗](#)
- › [Program planning](#) [↗](#)
- › [Request assistance](#) [↗](#)
- › [Support services](#) [↗](#)

Athabasca University reserves the right to amend course outlines occasionally and without notice. Courses offered by other delivery methods may vary from their individualized study counterparts.

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