Seminar Description:
This seminar provides a critical approach to the study of the relationships between individuals, families and the state. You will be invited to use feminist perspectives to think critically and thoughtfully about the intersecting relationships between the sociological institutions of the family and welfare state, and the gender dynamics imbedded within each of them. Throughout this course, we will focus primarily on the Canadian welfare state but draw cross-cultural comparisons to further elucidate key concepts (e.g. welfare regimes) and perspectives.

In this course we will read historical and contemporary feminist works on family life experiences. We will begin with a review of feminist theoretical approaches to conceptualizing families, gender and the state. In essence, we will learn to conceptualize gender relations within the contexts of other lines of difference and inequality such as class, disability, race, ethnicity, sexuality and age. We will then directly apply this theoretical knowledge to our exploration of the actual, everyday realities of family relations and how they intertwine with the state (via social policy). We will proceed to discuss, among other things, the gendered nature of domestic partnerships and the feminist interpretation of human reproduction, parenthood, power and conflicts in families and patterns of intergenerational relations.

Course Learning Objectives:
Knowledge:
At the end of the course students will be able to:
* Comprehend the similarities and differences amongst some of the major feminist perspectives.
* Historically contextualize and gender the structure of the welfare state and its relationship with family relations.
* Analyze the role of the welfare state in mitigating, exacerbating, or governing gender inequalities within families through social policy.

Course Requirements:

1) Seminar Participation (15%)
The course is designed to be a seminar in which students will actively participate in the exploration of issues raised by weekly topics. Each class session will involve discussion and presentation of core readings by students and the professor. In order for any discussion and group learning within the seminars to develop, you are expected to keep up with the readings. Discussions and presentations within the seminar are expected to be analytical in nature rather than opinion-based. “Analytical” means not only stating in one's own words what the author is saying, but also identifying underlying assumptions, showing the effect these assumptions have on the author's conclusions, and evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of the author's work. You may want to consider the following questions of the readings you complete in preparation for discussions and presentations in the seminar: Are concepts clearly defined and consistently presented? Is the evidence presented relevant to the arguments made? Is the work coherent or is it confusing and conflicting? What, if anything, is new in the author's work? You may also compare/contrast this author's work with others on the same issue.

2) Seminar Presentation and Discussion (25%)
All students will be required to lead one seminar presentations/discussions of approximately 1.5 hours. Students are required to present on the seminar topic based on suggested readings and additional outside readings. Students are expected to hand in a one page summary of their presentation/discussion to the professor. Please note that students will be asked to commit themselves to dates of presentations by September 11. This should be done by submitting a page with the topic heading, date of presentation, and one or two sentences describing the nature of your seminar (e.g. interactive, lecture format). Each topic must be approved in writing. Due to the large size of this class, please be advised that these dates will not be changed.

3) Three Tests (20x3=60%)
Three tests (20% each), two in class and one take home. The in-class tests will be based on the required readings and will take place on October 7 and on November 4. They will consist of short answers and/or multiple choice questions. In the take home test, students will be writing an essay. It will be given out on November 27 and is due on December 4 at noon.

Required Reading:

(CK) Custom Course Kit found in York University Bookstore
(R) On-reserve at Scott Library
(w) Full text articles found via York University Library website, e-resources search

Grades:
Your percentage out of 100 will be converted to a grade and a grade point average in accordance with York University’s grading policy

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<tr>
<td>F</td>
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Detailed Outline

1. Sep. 9: Introduction to the Course

PART 1: THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

2. Sep. 11: Conceptualizing Families

*PICK A PRESENTATION DATE


Additional Readings:


3. Sep. 16: Conceptualizing Gender


Additional Readings:

(w) Whitehead, Jaye Cee; Thomas, Jennifer; Forkner, Bradley; LaMonica, Dana. 2012. “Reluctant gatekeepers: 'Trans-positive' practitioners and the social construction of sex and gender” in Journal of Gender Studies. 21.4: 387-400.


4. Sep. 18: Conceptualizing the State


Additional Readings:
5. Sep. 23: Intersecting Family, Gender, and the State


Additional Readings:


Additional Readings:


PART 2: COUPLEHOOD

7. Sep. 30 : Couplehood Formation


Additional Readings:


8. Oct. 2 16: Same Sex Families


Additional Readings:

9. Oct. 7: IN-CLASS TEST (20%)

PART 3: PAID WORK

10. Oct. 9: Making a Living


Additional Readings:


*Additional Readings:*


**PART 4: UNPAID WORK**

**12. Oct. 16: Domestic Labour: Housework and Childcare**


*Additional Readings:*


*Additional Readings:*


*Additional Readings:*


15. **Oct. 28: Unpaid Work and the State**


**Additional Readings:**

16. **Oct. 30**: NO CLASS (CO-CURRICULAR DAY)

17. **Nov. 4: IN CLASS TEST (20%)**

**PART 5: REPRODUCTION, FAMILIES, AND THE STATE**

18. **Nov. 6:: Reproduction**


**Additional Readings:**


19. **Nov. 11: Mothering, Fathering, Parenting**


Additional Readings:


20. Nov. 13: *Grandparenting and Intergenerational Relations*


Additional Readings:


PART 6: CHALLENGES IN FAMILY LIFE

21. Nov. 18: *Family Violence and the State*


Additional Readings:


### PART 7: UNCOUPLING

#### 22. Nov. 20: Separation and Divorce and Consequences


*Additional Readings:*


Sandfield, Anna. 2006. “Talking Divorce: The Role of Divorce in Women's Constructions of Relationship Status.” *Feminism & Psychology*, 16 (2), 155-173. (18 pgs)

### PART 8: AGING

#### 23. Nov. 25: Gender and Aging


*Additional Readings:*


**24. Nov. 27: TAKE HOME EXAM (25% due on Dec. 4 at noon)**

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**IMPORTANT COURSE INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS**

**Academic Honesty and Integrity**

York students are required to maintain high standards of academic integrity and are subject to the Senate Policy on Academic Honesty ([http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/legislation/senate/acadhone.htm](http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/legislation/senate/acadhone.htm)).

Excerpt:

...*Academic honesty requires that persons do not falsely claim credit for the ideas, writing or other intellectual property of others, either by presenting such works as their own or through impersonation. Similarly, academic honesty requires that persons do not cheat (attempt to gain an improper advantage in an academic evaluation), nor attempt or actually alter, suppress, falsify or fabricate any research data or results, official academic record, application or document. Suspected breaches of academic honesty will be investigated and charges shall be laid if reasonable and probable grounds exist. A student who is charged with a breach of academic honesty shall be presumed innocent until, based upon clear and compelling evidence, a committee determines the student has violated the academic honesty standards of the university...*
There is also an academic integrity website with complete information about academic honesty. Students are expected to review the materials on the Academic Integrity website (http://www.yorku.ca/academicintegrity/students.htm).

**Access/Disability**
York provides services for students with disabilities (including physical, medical, learning and psychiatric disabilities) needing accommodation related to teaching and evaluation methods/materials.
It is the student's responsibility to register with disability services as early as possible to ensure that appropriate academic accommodation can be provided with advance notice. You are encouraged to schedule a time early in the term to meet with each professor to discuss your accommodation needs. Failure to make these arrangements may jeopardize your opportunity to receive academic accommodations.
Additional information is available at www.yorku.ca/disabilityservices or from disability service providers:
- **Office for Persons with Disabilities:** N108 Ross, 416-736-5140, www.yorku.ca/opd
- **Learning and Psychiatric Disabilities Programs - Counselling & Development Centre:** 130 BSB, 416-736-5297, www.yorku.ca/cdc
- **Atkinson students - Atkinson Counselling & Supervision Centre:** 114 Atkinson, 416-736-5225, www.yorku.ca/atkcsc
- **Glendon students - Glendon Counselling & Career Centre:** Glendon Hall 111, 416-487-6709, www.glendon.yorku.ca/counselling

**Ethics Review Process**
York students are subject to the York University Policy for the Ethics Review Process for Research Involving Human Participants. In particular, students proposing to undertake research involving human participants (e.g., interviewing the director of a company or government agency, having students complete a questionnaire, etc.) are required to submit an Application for Ethical Approval of Research Involving Human Participants at least one month before you plan to begin the research. If you are in doubt as to whether this requirement applies to you, contact your Course Director immediately.

**Religious Observance Accommodation**
York University is committed to respecting the religious beliefs and practices of all members of the community, and making accommodations for observances of special significance to adherents. Should any of the dates specified in this syllabus for an in-class test or examination pose such a conflict for you, contact the Course Director within the first three weeks of class. Similarly, should an assignment to be completed in a lab, practicum placement, workshop, etc., scheduled later in the term pose such a conflict, contact the Course director immediately.

Please note that to arrange an alternative date or time for an examination scheduled in the formal examination periods (December and April/May), students must complete an Examination Accommodation Form, which can be obtained from Student Client Services, Student Services Centre or online at http://www.registrar.yorku.ca/pdf/exam_accommodation.pdf
Student Conduct

Students and instructors are expected to maintain a professional relationship characterized by courtesy and mutual respect and to refrain from actions disruptive to such a relationship. Moreover, it is the responsibility of the instructor to maintain an appropriate academic atmosphere in the classroom, and the responsibility of the student to cooperate in that endeavor. Further, the instructor is the best person to decide, in the first instance, whether such an atmosphere is present in the class. A statement of the policy and procedures involving disruptive and/or harassing behaviour by students in academic situations is available on the York website http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/legislation/senate/harass.htm

Please note that this information is subject to periodic update. For the most current information, please go to the CCAS webpage (see Reports, Initiatives, Documents): http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/senate_cte_main_pages/ccas.htm.