



Family Studies 2265B (530): Midlife and the Elder Years
January - April 2019

Dr. Stephen Lin

Office hours: by appointment

Email: clin64@uwo.ca

Class time/room:

Mondays 6:30pm - 9:30pm / BR-203

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course investigates the midlife and elder stages of life, topics of great importance to Canadian society given the aging of the population. Areas considered may include psychological adjustment, social networks, career and family changes, health care, elder care, and adaptation to transition.

PREREQUISITE

Any Family Studies 1000-level course, or permission of instructor

COURSE OBJECTIVES AND COMPETENCIES:

- Students will critically apply core theoretical frameworks and concepts to social aspects of family in midlife and elder years (critical thinking level 2, inquiry and analysis level 3).
- Students will relate theoretical concepts and research to real-life transitions in mid and later life (critical thinking level 3, inquiry and analysis level 2).
- Students will learn how to use a multi-level perspective which relates the political and economic environment, structured social relations (e.g., age, gender, class), social institutions (e.g., work and family), interpersonal relationships (especially with family members) and individual experience to one another (critical thinking level 2, inquiry and analysis level 3).
- Students will critically interpret quantitative and qualitative data related to family ties and aging presented in lay and professional sources (critical thinking level 3 and problem solving level 3).
- Students will improve proficiency in oral communication and writing skills (critical thinking level 2, problem solving level 2, communication level 3, inquiry and analysis level 3).

READING

Connidis, I.A. & Barnett, Amanda. (2018). *Family Ties & Aging, 3rd ed.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. (ISBN: 978-1-41-299286-2)

**Additional readings will be provided on OWL.

METHODS OF INSTRUCTION

Teaching methods will include lectures and in-class discussions.

COURSE MANAGEMENT POLICY

The course involves a large commitment of student participation and reading on your own. You are advised to attend to every lecture and view every media presentation, as well as participate in class activities at various levels. Missed lectures and any material given in class are the responsibility of the student, not the professor. **There will NOT be any make-up examinations nor extra work for the purpose of improving grades.**

Late submission of an assignment by due date will result in .5 deduction of total weight of the assignment for each day beyond the deadline except when the instructor recognizes that there are legitimate and documented exceptional circumstances (e.g., illness, death in the family). However, all such documentation should go to academic advising and the instructor will be notified with academic accommodation given the student.

The policies governing requests for academic accommodation for course components worth 10% or more of the course grade are outlined in the attached Academic Policies and Regulations.

The written work will be evaluated on both of the contents and style. Your demonstrated ability to apply and integrate the conceptual materials learned from the course is one of the important aspects of evaluation. The other aspects centre on professional writing, including coherent, concise, comprehensive, spelling, grammar, punctuation, pagination, paragraphing, use of headings when necessary, precise citation and referencing.

Method of Evaluation

Theory Application Paper (February 6)	20%
In-Class Open-book Test (February 25)	25%
Final Exam (during December Exam Period)	25%
Community Research Project (Presentation: April 8/ Paper April 11)	30%

EVALUATION DETAILS

1. Theory Application Assignment (20%) – Wednesday, February 6

In this assignment, you are asked to submit a **4-page (of 12 point font, double spaced)** paper that demonstrates your full understanding of the main theories and concepts that family scholars use to analyze various family ties over the life course. The expectation of this assignment is listed as follows:

- clearly define the selective theories/perspectives and concepts in the context of family ties and aging (see lecture one and Chapter One in Connidis's text)
- demonstrate their relationship, that is, linking theories and concepts (e.g., interconnectedness or embeddedness) to show the complexity of studying family ties and aging theoretically and conceptually
- provide your brief reflection of how the theories and concepts you choose contribute to sociology in general

You can link theories and concepts while defining them at the same time if this approach strengthens your paper flow. **You do not need to conduct additional research for this paper. Simply cite textbook and/or lecture materials with any referencing style (e.g., APA or MLA). Please fully edit your paper** (e.g., spelling check, sentence structures) before your submission to the online dropbox available through OWL before **4:00pm, Wednesday February 6**

2. In-Class Open-Book Test (25%) – February 25

- This 2-hour in-class exam will cover course materials from **Jan 14 up to Feb 11**. You should use **lecture slides and notes** as your primary preparation materials. Readings can supplement your exam preparation.
- Exam format will be **multiple-choice** questions only.

3. Final Exam (25%) – During April Exam Period

- This 2-hour **non-cumulative** exam will cover course material after the midterm from **March 4 up to April 1**. You should use **lecture slides and notes** as your primary preparation materials. You can use the reading as supplement to your exam preparation.
- Exam format will be **multiple-choice plus short answer questions**.

4. Community Research Project (30%) – Presentation: April 8 / Paper: April 11

Students will be working as a group on a community field research project related to **mid and elder years**. Your main task is to come up with an interesting research topic from which your group attempts to develop a **researchable question**. Then, your group will collect information from:

- various departments of federal, provincial or municipal governments
- non-governmental organizations
- community centres
- libraries
- local community events
- mass and social media

Next, your group will analyze all the written or observational data in order to reach your findings. In this group research project, you must relate your analysis to key concepts and themes covered in this course. Your group will submit one group paper (**8 pages max., double-spaced, 12-inch font**) by email before **4:00pm, Wednesday April 10**

The structure of the research paper assignment is listed as follows:

- **Summarize** the chosen topic by highlighting key ideas, importance and purpose of your research and then propose your research question (up to 2 pages)
- **Analyze** the information you have gathered with relevant theories and concepts and explain how it helps your group to answer your research (up to 4 pages)
- **Conclude** your research by highlighting the key findings and suggestions for future research to improve your understanding of the topic (up to 2 pages)

****Please note that on Monday, April 8, each group will present the research topic, background information, theoretical frameworks and key finding (12-15 mins)**

Course Schedule & Readings

PART 1: INTRODUCTION & THEORETICAL ORIENTATION

January 14:

Introduction of Course Material, Assignment & Expectation
Theoretical Orientation

- Connidis & Barnett. Preface and Chapter 1: Older Persons in a Family Context.

PART 2: FAMILY TIES

January 21:

Overview of Family Ties over the Life Course & Conceptual/Theoretical Review

- Connidis & Barnett. Chapter 2: The Availability of Family Ties in Later Life.

January 28:

Intimate Ties & Partnerships

- Connidis & Barnett, Chapter 3: Intimate Ties in Later Life.
- Connidis & Barnett, Chapter 4: Long-Term Intimate Partnerships: Marriage and Same-Sex Unions.

February 4:

The Impact of Life Transitions on Intimate Ties

- Connidis & Barnett, Chapter 5: Transitions in Intimate Ties: Loss of a Long-Term Partner.

Transitions in Intimate Relationships

- Connidis, Chapter 7: New Opportunities for Intimacy in Later Life.

** Theory Application Paper Due by **4:00pm, Wednesday February 6** (Online Submission)

February 11:

Singlehood and Family Ties

- Connidis & Barnett, Chapter 6: Being Single in Later Life.

February 18:

- Reading Week (No class)

February 25:

- In-Class Test (25%)

PART 3: INTERGENERATIONAL RELATIONS

March 4:*The Complexity of Intergenerational Relations*

- Connidis & Barnett, Chapter 8: Exploring Intergenerational Relations.

Intergenerational Exchanges of Support

Connidis & Barnett, Chapter 9: Support Exchanges Between Older Parents and Adult Children.

March 11:*Childless People & Grandparents and Grandchildren*

- Connidis & Barnett, Chapter 10: Childless Older Persons.
- Connidis & Barnett, Chapter 11: Grandparents and Grandchildren.

March 18:*Divorce, Remarriage, Step Ties & Intergenerational Relations*

- Connidis & Barnett, Chapter 12: Partner Transitions, Stepties, and Intergenerational Relations.

PART 4: SIBLING TIES**March 25:***Sibling Ties & Exchanges of Support*

- Connidis & Barnett, Chapter 13: Sibling Ties in Middle and Later Life.
- Connidis & Barnett, Chapter 14: Life Transitions and Sibling Ties.

PART 5: SOCIAL ISOLATION IN OLD AGE, RESEARCH & POLICY**April 1:***Living Alone & Successful Aging*

- Supplemental reading:
Funk, L. (2015). Beyond Participation: the Social Inclusion of Older Adults. Oxford University Press. pp. 122-142.

Research & Policy

- Connidis & Barnett, Chapter 15: Research and Policy: Issues and Directions.

April 8:

Group Presentation Day (No Reading)

- Community Research Paper due on **Thursday, April 11 by 4:00pm**
(Email Submission Only: clin64@uwo.ca)

2018-19 BRESCIA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE ACADEMIC POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

1. POLICY REGARDING MAKEUP EXAMS AND EXTENSIONS OF DEADLINES

When a student requests academic accommodation (e.g., extension of a deadline, a makeup exam) for work representing 10% or more of the student's overall grade in the course, it is the responsibility of the student to provide acceptable documentation to support a medical or compassionate claim. All such requests for academic accommodation **must** be made through an Academic Advisor and include supporting documentation. Academic accommodation for illness will be granted only if the documentation indicates that the onset, duration and severity of the illness are such that the student could not reasonably be expected to complete her academic responsibilities. Minor ailments typically treated by over-the-counter medications will not normally be accommodated. Documentation shall be submitted as soon as possible to the student's Academic Advisor indicating the period of illness and when the student should be able to resume academic responsibilities. Students must submit their documentation along with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested no later than two business days after the date specified for resuming responsibilities. Appropriate academic accommodation will be determined by the Dean's Office in consultation with the student's instructor(s). Please note that personal commitments (e.g., vacation flight bookings, work schedule) which conflict with a scheduled test, exam or course requirement are **not** grounds for academic accommodation.

A UWO Student Medical Certificate (SMC) is **required** if a student is seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds. This documentation should be obtained at the time of the initial consultation with the physician/nurse practitioner or walk-in clinic. A SMC can be downloaded from: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf. The student must request documentation sufficient to demonstrate that her ability to meet academic responsibilities was seriously affected. Please note that under University Senate regulations documentation stating simply that the student "was seen for a medical reason" or "was ill" is **not** adequate to support a request for academic accommodation.

Whenever possible, requests for academic accommodation should be initiated in advance of due dates, examination dates, etc. Students must follow up with their professors and Academic Advisor in a timely manner.

The full policy on requesting accommodation due to illness can be viewed at:
<http://westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2017/pg117.html>

2. ACADEMIC CONCERNS

If you feel that you have a medical or personal problem that is interfering with your work, contact your instructor and Academic Advisor as soon as possible. Problems may then be documented and possible arrangements to assist you can be discussed at the time of occurrence rather than on a retroactive basis. Retroactive requests for academic accommodation on medical or compassionate grounds may not be considered.

If you think that you are too far behind to catch up or that your work load is not manageable, you should consult an Academic Advisor. If you consider reducing your workload by dropping one or more courses, this must be done by the appropriate deadlines (refer to the Registrar's website, <http://brescia.uwo.ca/academics/registrar-services/> or the list of official dates <http://westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2017/pg7.html>). You should consult with the course instructor and the Academic Advisor who can help you consider alternatives to dropping one or more courses. *Note that dropping a course may affect OSAP eligibility and/or Entrance Scholarship eligibility.*

The Dean may refuse permission to write the final examination in a course if the student has failed to maintain satisfactory academic standing throughout the year or for too frequent absence from the class or laboratory (<http://westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2017/pg130.html>)

3. ABSENCES

Short Absences: If you miss a class due to a minor illness or other problems, check your course outline for information regarding attendance requirements and make sure you are not missing a test or assignment. Cover any readings and arrange to borrow notes from a classmate. Contact the course instructor if you have any questions.

Extended Absences: If you have an extended absence, you should contact the course instructor and an Academic Advisor. Your course instructor and Academic Advisor can discuss ways for you to catch up on missed work and arrange academic accommodations, if appropriate.

4. POLICY ON CHEATING & ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf.

Students are responsible for understanding the nature of and avoiding the occurrence of plagiarism and other academic offences. Students are urged to read the section on Scholastic Offences in the Academic Calendar. Note that such offences include plagiarism, cheating on an examination, submitting false or fraudulent assignments or credentials, impersonating a candidate, or submitting for credit in any course without the knowledge and approval of the instructor to whom it is submitted, any academic work for which credit has previously been obtained or is being sought in another course in the University or elsewhere. Students are advised to consult the section on Academic Misconduct in the Western Academic Calendar.

If you are in doubt about whether what you are doing is inappropriate or not, consult your instructor, the Student Services Centre, or the Registrar. A claim that "you didn't know it was wrong" is not accepted as an excuse.

The penalties for a student guilty of a scholastic offence (including plagiarism) include refusal of a passing grade in the assignment, refusal of a passing grade in the course, suspension from the University, and expulsion from the University.

Plagiarism:

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence (see Scholastic Offence Policy in the Western Academic Calendar).

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

Computer-marked Tests/exams:

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating. Software currently in use to score computer-marked multiple-choice tests and exams performs a similarity review as part of standard exam analysis.

5. PROCEDURES FOR APPEALING ACADEMIC EVALUATIONS

All appeals of a grade must be directed first to the course instructor. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the course instructor, a written appeal signed by the student must be sent to the Department Chair. If the response of the department is considered unsatisfactory to the student, she may then submit a signed, written appeal to the Office of the Dean. Only after receiving a final decision from the Dean may a student appeal to the Senate Review Board Academic. A Guide to Appeals is available from the Ombudsperson's Office, or you can consult an Academic Advisor. Students are advised to consult the section on Student Academic Appeals under Academic Rights and Responsibilities in the Western Academic Calendar (<http://westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2017/pg112.html>).

Note that final course marks are not official until the Academic Dean has reviewed and signed the final grade report for the course. If course marks deviate from acceptable and appropriate standards, the Academic Dean may require grades to be adjusted to align them with accepted grading practices

(http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/exam/evaluation_undergrad.pdf and http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/exam/finalgrades.pdf).

6. PREREQUISITES

Unless you have either the prerequisites for a course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you will be removed from the course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisite(s).

7. SUPPORT

Support Services

The Brescia University College Registrar's website, with a link to Academic Advisors, is at <http://brescia.uwo.ca/academics/registrar-services/>. The website for the Student Development Centre at Western is <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>.

Mental Health and Wellness

Students may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to your learning, such as increased anxiety, feeling overwhelmed, feeling down or lost, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. Services are available to assist you with addressing these and other concerns you may be experiencing. You can learn more about mental health and wellness at Brescia at <http://brescia.uwo.ca/life/mental-health-wellness/>. Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental_Health@Western <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Sexual Violence

All members of the Brescia University College community have a right to work and study in an environment that is free from any form of sexual violence. Brescia University College recognizes that the prevention of, and response to, Sexual Violence is of particular importance in the university environment. Sexual Violence is strictly prohibited and unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Brescia is committed to preventing Sexual Violence and creating a safe space for anyone in the Brescia community who has experienced Sexual Violence.

If you or someone you know has experienced any form of Sexual Violence, you may access resources at <http://brescia.uwo.ca/life/sexual-violence/>.