

**BRESCIA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE**  
**Department of Sociology**  
**Sociology 0011B**  
**Understanding Society: Social Institutions and Social Change**  
**Winter 2023**

Course Director: Professor Julie Young

Lectures: Mondays 12:30pm-3:30pm

Office Hours: Mondays 3:30pm (in-person) or by appointment through Zoom

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**Course Description:**

In this course students will explore a range of topics studied by sociologists to better understand the social world and their place in it. After introducing students to the sociological perspectives and research methods, students will explore historic and current examples of social institutions in Canadian society. Students will explore the social dynamics in society and study collective behaviour undertaken by social movement organizations as they seek social change. The range of topics covered include sociological theory, research methods, families, education, religion, healthcare, mass media, aging, the economy and work, population, and urbanization

**BRESCIA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE INSTITUTION-LEVEL COMPETENCIES**

Brescia's overarching goals are to foster the development of leadership among our students and to provide an academically superior university education. The competencies articulated as central to a Brescia education provide to our students the tools they need to lead with wisdom, justice and compassion. As a university college we value academic excellence and the mastery of the scholarly knowledge in students' chosen areas of study.

1. **Communication:** The ability to exchange information and meaning across cultures, space and time through appropriate modes of communication. Includes oral, written, and interpersonal or group communication, as well as the ability to use current or innovative media.
2. **Critical Thinking:** The ability to engage in thinking characterized by the rational, informed, independent, and open-minded exploration of issues, ideas, and events before accepting or formulating a conclusion.
3. **Inquiry and Analysis:** The ability to reach informed decisions by breaking down complex issues, exploring evidence, and describing relationships among persons, things, or events.
4. **Problem Solving:** The ability to create and execute a strategy to answer a question or achieve a goal. Includes being able to anticipate the consequence of a potential solution, select a strategy among several alternatives, and decide when an acceptable outcome has been reached.
5. **Self Awareness and Development:** The ability to draw meaning, knowledge and value from honest and fair reflection and self-evaluation. Students are able to recognize their values and their impact on others, and make a commitment to personal growth.
6. **Social Awareness and Engagement:** The ability to respect and be open to diversity (e.g. cultural, religious, political) and social justice. Students take personal responsibility to actively engage in and contribute to creating positive change in local, regional, national, or global communities and societies.
7. **Valuing:** The ability to make decisions or choose actions based on the consistent application of moral principles and ethical codes. Students must also be able to understand the ideas informing one's beliefs and be accountable for their actions.

## Learning Outcomes and Brescia Competencies:

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- use a sociological imagination to understand the relationship between individual experience and societal reality. (Brescia Competencies: Critical Thinking, Valuing, Social Awareness & Engagement)
- comprehend how social institutions work, how they structure our lives, and how they influence our understanding of societies. (Brescia Competencies: Critical Thinking, Valuing, Communication, Social Awareness & Engagement).
- understand how globalization and environmental issues impact society and individuals. (Brescia Competencies: Critical Thinking, Communication, Valuing)
- learn how and why societies change. (Brescia Competencies: Critical Thinking, Valuing, Communication, Social Awareness & Engagement)

*Students may vary in their competency levels on these outcomes. They can expect to achieve these outcomes if they honour course policies, attend classes regularly, complete all assigned work in good faith and on time, and meet all other course expectations of them as students. (Linda Nilson, Teaching at its Best, 2010: 37).*

## Course Prerequisites:

Enrolment in the Preliminary Year Program. Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you will be removed from this 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 prerequisites

## Course Antirequisites

Sociology 0012

## Grading and Assignment Structure:

1. Test One .....	20%
2. Test Two.....	20%
3. Understanding Society Blog.....	20%
4. Class Contribution.....	10%
5. Commit Sociology Assignment (Group).....	30%

## Detailed Course Outline

*Students, please note that the following course outline is subject to revision. That is, throughout the term, circumstances may arise that will alter the ordering of the topics, the pace at which we move through the material and so on. It is **your responsibility to do all required readings, and to attend class.** If, for whatever reason, you are unable to attend class, please consult your colleagues in order to catch up on any administrative details, or course content that you may have missed.*

## Required Readings:

1. Steckley, John with Guy Letts. 2014. *Foundations of Sociology*. Oxford University Press: Don Mills, ON.
2. Additional readings may also be assigned. Students will be notified in class and on OWL.

## DETAILED OUTLINE OF GRADING AND ASSIGNMENT STRUCTURE

### **Class Contribution 10%**

Contribution by each and every student is a cornerstone of any effective learning experience. Active class involvement augments the learning experience, increases assimilation of material and stimulates the level of class discussion. The expectation is that you contribute not only for your own learning but to the learning of your classmates. The participation mark reflects attendance, evidence of preparation and participation in weekly readings and/or assignments. If you have difficulties with participating in class, please make an appointment with me to discuss – sooner rather than later.

The class contribution portion of your grade will be determined by your contribution to the learning of the class. The evaluation will be based not only on how frequently you speak in class, but more importantly, by the quality of what you say and how well you listen and respond to others. High-quality contributions include: starting a class discussion with sound analysis, synthesizing class discussions, summarizing and moving class discussions ahead, giving constructive criticisms or building on others' ideas, substantiating one's views persuasively and logically, responding to others' critiques with reasoned rebuttal, graceful acceptance of new ideas, presenting well thought-out action plans, volunteering for special role-playing or presentations, recalling and sharing relevant experiences, being respectful and non-judgmental towards your classmates' opinions. Respect for the course and each other are essential.

Unsatisfactory contributions include: being absent from class without excuse, being unprepared for class, offering poorly thought-out analysis or action plans, personally criticizing classmates, being close-minded, disrespectful, or otherwise disruptive. These behaviours will lead to negative contribution grades. While attendance at all sessions in this course is expected, circumstances may arise which make it impossible for you to attend, e.g. illness. As a professional courtesy you are expected to advise me in advance of your absence and provide an explanation via messaging through email. After missing three classes, you and I will meet to discuss how to ensure attendance at the remaining classes.

**Please note, each class will count equally toward a student's contribution grade, with each missed class receiving a grade of "0" unless academic accommodation has been granted (e. g. for family medical issues, personal medical issues, family bereavement, participation in University sports teams).**

### **Commit Sociology Assignment - 30%**

The Commit Sociology assignment is meant to provide students with real world experience and exposure to a social problem related to course material. Students (in groups of 2-5) will conduct an act of kindness within the community. Additional assignment instructions will be made available through OWL.

### **Understanding Society Blog – Contemporary Issues 20%**

Contribution by each and every student is a cornerstone of any effective learning experience. Active class involvement augments the learning experience, increases assimilation of material and stimulates the level of class discussion. The expectation is that you contribute not only for your own learning but to the learning of your classmates.

The aim of the blog is to create a space for student engagement (and to discuss positive social change) to think and co-create with your colleagues. Various contemporary issues will be explored on the blog. The blog is where you will post your responses to my posted statements. I will post a deadline along with each forum topic. You will have 2 weeks to complete your forums. It is not advisable to leave your responses until the end of the allotted time period. If you leave it until the last minute you might not be able to access the Internet (this happens more than you would think). ANY late responses will not be graded.

### **Test One and Test Two (20% per test) Total 40%**

Tests are not cumulative and will cover all course material, including lectures, assigned readings, class discussions, films, guest presenters, etc. They may include multiple choice, short answer questions, definitions and true/false questions. No electronic devices are permitted in exams. Students must complete this exam independently and not collaborate with peers.

## **COURSE-SPECIFIC POLICY STATEMENTS**

### **TEACHING METHODOLOGY AND EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENTS**

This course will be taught online. Each week, a series of powerpoint presentations, video presentations, reflection worksheets and blog posts will be uploaded. Students may complete this coursework at a time and location convenient to them but are encouraged to stay on pace with the course week-to-week. This course requires a much greater involvement of the student in class than does some subjects. Students will read the assigned readings and complete the assigned exercises in preparation for the class discussion. The blog will take the place of the traditional class discussion, and students are encouraged to respond to the professor's prompts as well as their student colleague's comments.

In this way, the instructor will act as discussion leader, with emphasis on students' active participation. The very nature of this discussion approach demands a high level of thoughtful contribution.

### **Submission of Assignments**

All due dates are firm and subject to a late penalty, except when the professor recognizes that there are legitimate and documented exceptional circumstances (e.g. illness, death in the family). For each day the assignment is late, the student will lose  $\frac{1}{2}$  (.5) of a mark (.5% of the final course grade). Except for exceptional circumstances such as those noted above, assignments submitted 7 days or more past the due date will not be accepted.

### **Grades**

Due to privacy regulations, I am unable to send marks or discuss issues regarding grades by email. Please see me during my office hours. Midterm exam grades will be posted to the OWL site when they become available and/ or communicated in person. Final exam grades will not be available until approved by the department. PLEASE NOTE: There will be NO extra work assigned for the purpose of improving grades. It is unfair to other students in the class who are not given the same opportunity. Also, I am unable to increase marks unless warranted. PLEASE DON'T ASK!

### **A Note Regarding Email, Appointments and Privacy**

Email is a useful tool for sharing news, setting up meetings or for a simple assignment clarification, but for more complex questions, a ZOOM or telephone (face to face) meeting is best. Please make an appointment using email (I prioritize email over OWL messaging) to discuss any personal, academic, group work or controversial issues in person, especially any concerns that you might have about your grades. I will check email and our course site on OWL Monday through Friday during office hours; you can expect a response within 48 hours during the work week. Over weekends and holidays I will not be checking email or OWL, so plan accordingly.

### **Appointments**

Students are welcome to meet with the professor before or after class, or via zoom or telephone by appointment. An Office Hours Zoom link will be made available through OWL.

### **Privacy**

To respect privacy laws, all grades will be distributed on the course site on OWL only. If a student wishes to discuss a grade, or review a test or paper, she must make an appointment with the professor to do so. To protect student privacy, the professor may only discuss grades with the student in question. Please do not share or compare your grades. The professor cannot share information about another student's grades, so discussions about comparison of grades between students will not be entertained.

## **2022-23 BRESCIA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE ACADEMIC POLICIES AND REGULATIONS**

### **1. POLICY REGARDING ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION**

The complete policy regarding Accommodation for Illness - Undergraduate Students can be found at [https://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page\\_135](https://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_135)

Students who have long-term or chronic medical conditions which may impede their ability to complete academic responsibilities should seek Academic Accommodation through Student Accessibility Services

([https://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page\\_10](https://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_10)).

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.

Students who experience an illness or extenuating circumstance sufficiently severe to temporarily render them unable to meet academic requirements may submit a request for academic consideration through the following routes:

1. For medical absences, submitting a **Student Medical Certificate (SMC)** signed by a licensed medical or mental health practitioner;
2. For non-medical absences, submitting **appropriate documentation** (e.g., obituary, police report, accident report, court order, etc.) to their Academic Advisor. Students are encouraged to contact their Academic Advisor to clarify what documentation is acceptable.

### **Request for Academic Consideration for a Medical Absence**

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 their academic responsibilities. Minor ailments typically treated by over-the-counter medications will not normally be accommodated.

The following conditions apply for students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds:

1. Students must submit their Student Medical Certificate (SMC) 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. An SMC can be downloaded from [https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf);
2. In cases where there might be an extended absence or serious issue, students should submit their documentation promptly and consult their Academic Advisor for advice during their recovery period;
3. Whenever possible, students who require academic accommodation should provide notification and documentation in advance of due dates, scheduled tests or examinations, and other academic requirements;
4. Students **must** communicate with their instructors **no later than 24 hours** after the end of the period covered by the SMC to clarify how they will fulfil the academic expectations they may have missed during the absence;
5. Appropriate academic accommodation will be determined by the Dean's Office/Academic Advisor in consultation with the course instructor(s). Academic accommodation may include extension of deadlines, waiver of attendance requirements, arranging Special Exams (make-ups), re-weighting course requirements, or granting late withdrawal without academic penalty.

## **2. ACADEMIC CONCERNS**

If you feel that you have a medical or personal challenge 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 are not normally considered.

If you think that you are too far behind to catch up or that your work load is not manageable, you should consult your Academic Advisor ([https://brescia.uwo.ca/enrolment\\_services/academic\\_advising/book\\_an\\_appointment.php](https://brescia.uwo.ca/enrolment_services/academic_advising/book_an_appointment.php)). If you consider reducing your workload by dropping one or more courses, this must be done by the appropriate deadlines; please contact your Academic Advisor or see the list of sessional dates in the Academic Calendar (<https://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/SessionalDates.cfm?SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=>).

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.*

### 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.

Please note that for asynchronous online courses, attendance or participation requirements may be different than for synchronous or in-person courses.

**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 and warranted.

It is important to note that the Academic 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 ([https://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=5&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page\\_64](https://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=5&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_64)).

### 4. SCHOLASTIC OFFENCES

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence at: [https://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page\\_20](https://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_20).

Students are responsible for understanding the nature of and avoiding the occurrence of plagiarism and other academic offences. 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 Scholastic Discipline for Undergraduate Students in the Academic Calendar.

If you are in doubt about whether what you are doing is inappropriate or not, consult your instructor, the Academic Dean's Office, 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.

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.

### **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 is to be sent to the School Chair. If the response of the Chair is considered unsatisfactory to the student, they may then submit a written appeal to the Office of the Dean. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the Dean, they may appeal to the Senate Review Board Academic (SRBA), if there are sufficient grounds for the appeal and if the matter falls within the jurisdiction of the SRBA. For information on academic appeals consult your Academic Advisor or see the Student Academic Appeals – Undergraduate in the Academic Calendar [https://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page\\_14](https://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_14).

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.

## **6. PREREQUISITES**

Unless you have either the prerequisites for a course or written Special Permission from the 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/>. Students can access supports through Brescia's Student Life Centre (<http://brescia.uwo.ca/life/student-life/>) and Learning Development & Success at Western (<https://www.uwo.ca/sdc/learning/>).



## **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 obtain information about how to obtain help for yourself or others through **Health & Wellness at Brescia**, [https://brescia.uwo.ca/student\\_life/health\\_and\\_wellness/index.php](https://brescia.uwo.ca/student_life/health_and_wellness/index.php) and **Health and Wellness at Western**, [http://uwo.ca/health/mental\\_wellbeing/index.html](http://uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/index.html).

## **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 [https://brescia.uwo.ca/safe\\_campus/sexual\\_violence/index.php](https://brescia.uwo.ca/safe_campus/sexual_violence/index.php).

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Portions of this document were taken from the Academic Calendar, the Handbook of Academic and Scholarship Policy, and the Academic Handbook of Senate Regulations. This document is a summary of relevant regulations and does not supersede the academic policies and regulations of the Senate of the University of Western Ontario.

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