

**Department of Family Relations and Applied Nutrition
University of Guelph**

**FRAN 6280 Theorizing in Family Relations and Human Development
Course Description – Spring 2015**

MACS 331

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1. Mon	April 13	2:30-5:30	6. Tues	June 9	11:30- 2:30
2. Wed	April 29	11:30- 2:30	7. Wed	June 17	11:30- 2:30
3. Tues	May 5	2:30-5:30	8. Wed	June 24	11:30- 2:30
4. Tues	May 12	11:30- 2:30	No Class week June 29		
5. Tues	May 19	11:30- 2:30	9. Mon	July 6	11:30- 2:30
No class week of May 25			10. Wed	July 8	11:30- 2:30
No class week of June 1			11. Mon	July 13	11:30- 2:30
			12. Wed	July 15	11:30- 2:30

Course Objectives:

This course concerns theorizing in the study of human development and family relationships. The term “theorizing” is used rather than “family theories” or “theories of human development” because we are interested in the activity of the social scientist as a consumer and producer of theory. The course focuses on three main objectives: to promote the basic skills of critically analyzing theory, using theory, and creating theory. An overriding objective is for the course is for participants to examine and articulate their own assumptions and stances regarding the process of knowledge construction. A second objective is to begin to develop the guts to theorize.

1. Critical Analysis. Here we look at major dimensions of theory including *epistemology, ontology*, as well as a *theoretically informed approach to methodology*. Essentially these constitute three different choices for researchers to theoretically justify their approach to a research endeavour or as their position as a researcher. It is impossible to treat all of these comprehensively because each is complex, ever changing and heavily contested in the sciences. Nevertheless, the course will provide an introduction to the ideas that are now at play in the literature and which point to future directions.

Positioning via epistemology: *Epistemology concerns a scientists beliefs about the nature of knowledge, the limits of knowledge and the process by which knowledge can be acquired.*

My choices are to be cursory regarding the epistemological categories considered during the previous 30 years (i.e. positivism, interpretivism, critical theory, postmodernism). These should be familiar from your qualitative methods and interdisciplinary perspectives courses. Instead we will focus on new emerging epistemologies such as relational epistemology.

Ontology, An ontological approach (what is the nature of the phenomenon) overlaps with but does not lead to the same conclusions as an epistemological approach (How and what can we know). For

one thing, ontology involves an interest in the nature of causality, and, as Aristotle pointed out there are a variety of ways for understanding causality (e.g. efficient, formal and final). Our approach to ontology begins by considering Pepper's World View metaphors of mechanism, organicism, and contextualism and then will consider emerging integrative approaches that attempt to transcend the either/or implications of Pepper's analysis. Dialectics will be discussed as an entry point to emerging integrative approaches such as, relationalism, critical realism and dynamic systems theory.

2. Using Theory. Traditionally, using theory was a matter of logical deduction and the generation of propositions for testing causal predictions. We emphasize a range of activities that focus on the interpretive processes of the researcher in gaining understanding of a phenomenon. During the past decade there has been a growing critique of methodology which narrowly equates science with a particular procedure or method (e.g. quantitative versus qualitative) without reference to the centrality of phenomena in scientific enquiry. We will examine some of these critiques and some proposed solutions. This will mean exploring different functions of theory in knowledge construction, the concept of the methodology cycle, and some of the justifications for mixed methods.

3. Constructing theory. Theorizing is a relatively unacknowledged aspect of the research process that makes use of the interpretive skills and creativity of the researcher. Here, there is little precedent.... because no one really teaches this stuff. Theory construction is regarded by the hypothetico deductive view of science as a mysterious process that science can test but not teach. However, theories are developed by people and several processes and strategies regarding this creative process have been described. One of these is *abduction*, the third mode of inference and a counterpart to induction and deduction. Abduction in particular is implicated in the process of generating novel ideas and hypotheses. The second tool is *metaphor*, which is presented as a semiotic mediating device. Most theoretical constructs at all levels of analysis have metaphoric roots and it is important to know the uses and limitations of these in theory construction. The third tool is *concept mapping and mind mapping* which are technologies for facilitating the processes of planning, analyzing ideas, generating ideas, and drawing connections between them. Participants in the course will be using concept-mapping software to organize and analyze the concepts presented in each week's readings.

Some Key Concepts in this course:

- Epistemology: Positivist, Interpretivist, Critical, Postmodern, Relational, New Materialism
- Ontology/ World Views: Mechanism Organicism, Contextualism, Relational Dynamic Systems (organismic/ contextual)
- Causality: Aristotles Four Causes, systemic causality
- Dialectics: Contextual Dialectics vs Organismic/Contextual Dialectics
- Inference: induction, deduction, abduction
- Phenomenon
- Methodological Cycle

Concept Mapping/Mind mapping Software

You will be required to obtain and use concept mapping and mind-mapping software, as you will be presenting concept maps as part of every session. There are many useful packages to choose from and I include some links to show you the variety available. They include commercial packages and freeware. In order to have a common ground we will be using INSPIRATION software. A one month free trial version can be downloaded.

Also I include some links regarding the use of mind mapping as a conceptual analysis and theorizing tool.

http://unimelb.academia.edu/MartinDavies/Papers/433992/Mind_Mapping_Concept_Mapping_Argument_Mapping_What_are_the_differences_and_Do_they_Matter

<http://www.slideshare.net/gofull/80263/59>

<http://dmc.umn.edu/activities/mindmap/>

http://www.stanford.edu/dept/SUSE/projects/ireport/articles/concept_maps/ConceptMapsOnlineLearningEnvironment.pdf

<http://www.slideshare.net/gofull/80263>

Evaluation:

The final grade for the course will be based on 3 components:

35 %	Routine seminar contribution and concept maps
25 %	Reflexive Statement: July 6 (1 mark per day after that)
10 %	Theorizing presentation
30 %	Theorizing paper: Fri. July 19 (1 mark per day after that)

Routine seminar contribution and concept maps - 35%

The grade for routine seminar contribution is designed to reflect the level of your performance and contribution to class discussion on a weekly basis. Although we recognize that students come to the class with a range of verbal propensities, we see the articulation of thoughts and arguments as an important skill to be developed as part of your academic program.

Evaluation will be based on two kinds of contributions.

1) *Contribution to class discussion*. This includes contribution of discussion points based on readings. Demonstration in class that the readings have been read, relevant

personal perspectives and experiences.

2) *Contribution of Concept Maps* These should be emailed to the instructor by **midnight before each class** in an electronic format and should include your analysis of concepts in the readings. Class discussions will emerge using each student's concept maps.

It is required that you submit a concept map for each week's readings, even if you cannot attend a particular class.

Submit your Concept Map in the following format Student Name Week #
e.g **Leon Kuczynski Week 2.isf**

Reflexive Statement - Theoretical Positioning - 25%

One of the aims of this course is to have participants think about their own identity as a social scientist. Throughout the course you will be challenged to articulate your thoughts and beliefs about how science works, and your practices, and ambitions as a social scientist.

The primary purpose of the reflexive theory statement is for you to become aware of your personal reactions to and interpretations of the readings and develop a personal stance on what you have learned. What specific ideas appeal or don't appeal to you. Consider where you have been and what new thoughts occur to you. What puzzles remain to be solved? What are the implications of your positioning for the type of research you would like to do?

The task is to be reflective and up front about what you actually believed to be true initially, identify specific contradictions, and to describe your processes of working through contradictions that arose during the course thus far and to begin to draw a roadmap for your future scientific practice.

I would like you to position yourself as a social scientist at this point in time, knowing that this is always subject to change. The reflexive statement should be attentive to how you are thinking in terms of preferred values, epistemologies, world views and role as a scientist with regard to the methodology cycle. You may use examples and issues from class or write about key problems or insights for you in this course. Use the first person "I" for this assignment. Talk about specific ideas in the articles you have read.

Be authoritative in citing specific ideas. This means accurately representing and providing citations for abstract concepts before interpreting them for your specific purpose. Describe why you are accepting or rejecting specific ideas. **About 10 pages double-spaced.**

Theorizing Presentation 10%

During the final weeks of this course we will be on Student's theorizing.

1) Choose a topic of interest that is important to the work that you do. Ideally this

may be related to your thesis research. Choose one key article for the class to read as background and distribute this to the class one week prior to your presentation. (be kind –no more that 15-20 pages).

- 2) Participants will lead a discussion of their theorizing work. This should include 1) a 20-minute presentation, 2) and 0-minute discussion. A theorizing exercise for the class based on the readings and presentation may be incorporated in the discussion.

The presentation may include the following:

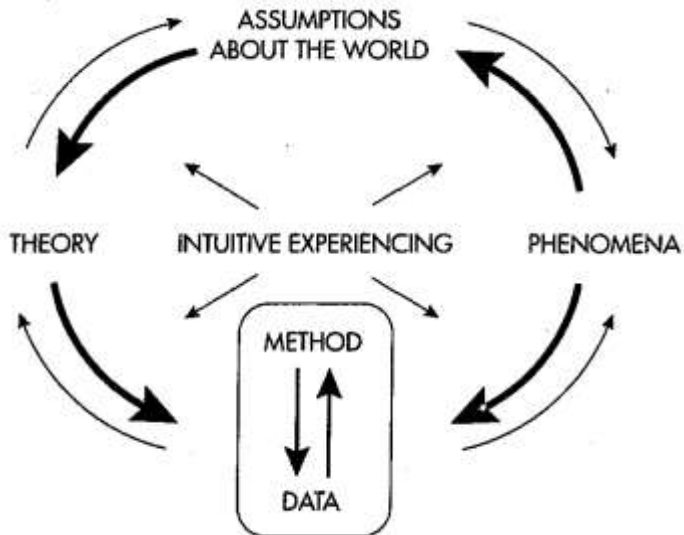
- The nature of the phenomenon you wish to study. What is the research question regarding this phenomenon that you are trying to answer or understand?
- Underlying epistemological, and ontological assumptions (World Views) and how these have shaped the enquiry
- Key theories concepts and how are they used (sensitizing? hypothesis testing? measurement?)
- What is your positioning for this particular piece of research in the methodology cycle?

Theorizing Paper (35%) Due July 19

Write a 10-12-page paper (APA format) that demonstrates your theorizing activity on your Thesis Topic You can incorporate feedback from the group for this paper.

A strong suggestion but not requirement is to use Valsiner's Methodology Cycle to organize your paper with the subheadings: Phenomenon, Assumptions about the World (Ontology); Theory, Method/Data.

Valsiner & Branco (1997) Methodology Cycle



Schedule of Classes: Dates, Topics and Readings

Week 1: Mon April 13 iTheory & Concept Mapping

White J.W. & Kline, D. M. (2007). *Family Theories*. Sage. Chapter 1: What is Theory?

Concept mapping.

Extra: Read for Fun! (RFF!)

Bengtson, V.L. Acock, A.C. Allen, K.R. Dilworth-Anderson, P, Klein, D.M. (2005). Theory and Theorizing in Family Research. In V. Bengtson, A. Acock, K. Allen, P. Dilworth-Anderson, & D. Klein (Eds.), *Sourcebook of Family Theories and Methods: An Interactive Approach*, (pp. 3-33) Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

Week 2: Wed April 29 Epistemology : Responses to Positivism and Normal Science

Crotty, M. (1998). *The foundation of social research: Meaning and perspective in the research process*. Sage. Ch.2 Positivism

Nelson W. Polsby (1998) Social Science and Scientific Change: A Note on Thomas S. Kuhn's Contribution *Annual Review of Political Science*, 1, 199-210

You Tube Video: Sisyphus Redeemed Thomas Kuhn on Normal Science & Paradigms (watch Lecture part 1 and part 2)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SurVpGvrzrE> Part1 & 2

Q is social science pre-paradigmatic?

Practical Theorizing Tip 1: Constructing Arguments: Read for discussion (Do not map)
<http://www.brandman.edu/files/attachments/How to Write an Essay using APA style 0.pdf>

Extra reading for fun.

Ch. 1. Crotty (1998) Introduction: The research process. (pp. 1-17)

White, J.W. (2005). *Advancing Family Theories*. Sage. Ch.3 Science and its Critics. P. 30-50

Thomas Kuhn 1970 *Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, pp. 1-135

Week 3: Tuesday May 5 –Theorizing as a Creative Process: Abduction, Metaphor, and intellectual craftsmanship

Mills, C.W. (1959), On intellectual craftsmanship. Appendix from *The sociological imagination*. NY: Oxford University Press.

Swedberg, R. (2012) Theorizing in sociology and social science: turning to the context of discovery. *Theoretical Sociology* 41:1-40

Guttman, B.S. (2004) The real method of scientific discovery: scientists don't sit around in their labs trying to establish generalizations. Instead they engage in mystery-solving essentially like that of detective work, and it often involves a creative, imaginative leap. *Skeptical Inquirer* 1/1/2004. **JUST READ**

Haig, B. D. (2005). An abductive theory of scientific method. *Psychological Methods*, 10, 371-388.

Kuczynski, L. Lollis, S. & Koguchi, T. (2003). Reconstructing common sense: metaphors of bidirectionality in parent-child relations (pp.421-438). In L. Kuczynski (Ed.) *Handbook of Dynamics in Parent-Child Relations*. Thousand Oaks CA: Sage. **FOCUS ON METAPHOR FOR MAPPING ..Just browse Parent-child content to get the idea.**

Practical Theorizing Tip 2: Authoritative writing: distinguishing: You/theory/empirical findings.

Extra readings for fun.

Clegg, J.W (2010). Uncertainty as a Fundamental Scientific Value. *Integr Psych Behav* (2010) 44:245–251 DOI 10.1007/s12124-010-9135-6

Valsiner, J. (1994). Uses of Common Sense and Ordinary Language in Psychology and Beyond: A co-constructionist perspective and its implications. In J. Siegfried (ed) *The Status of Common Sense in Psychology*. N.J.: Ablex

Kuczynski, L. & Daly, K. (2003). Qualitative methods as inductive (theory-generating) research: psychological and sociological approaches (pp. 373-392). In L Kuczynski (Ed.) *Handbook of Dynamics in Parent-Child Relations*. Thousand Oaks CA: Sage.

Thagard, P. (2005). Abductive inference: From philosophical analysis to neural mechanisms. In A.Feeney & E. Heit (Eds.), *Inductive reasoning: Cognitive, mathematical, and Neuroscientific approaches*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Week 4: Tuesday May 12 Ontologies/World Views
Part 1 Organicism & Mechanism

Goldhaber (2000). *Theories of Human Development: Integrative perspectives* (Mountain View, CA: Mayfield Publishing.

Prologue (p. 1-11) *JUST READ as intro do not map*

Chapter 2 How we are: Mechanistic World View

Chapter 3 Why we are: Organismic World View

Shweder, R. (1996). Quanta and Qualia: What is the "Object" of ethnographic method? In Jessor, R., Colby, A., Shweder, R. (Eds). (1996). *Ethnography and human development: Context and meaning in social inquiry*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Practical Theorizing Tip 3: Impress people with your knowledge of Aristotle's four causes.

See Goldhaber prologue. An expanded array of causal concepts are available at

<http://poli.haifa.ac.il/~levi/inference.html>

Week 5: Tuesday May 19 – Ontologies/World Views
Part 2 Contextualism & Postmodernism

Goldhaber (2000). *Theories of Human Development: Integrative perspectives* (Mountain View, CA: Mayfield Publishing.

Chapter 4. Prologue Part IV What we are: Contextualist World View

Chapter 15 Postmodern Perspectives

Chapter 16 Epilogue

Practical Theorizing Tip 4: Beware of Solipsism Read for discussion (Do not map)

Fay, B. (1996). Solipsism. Do you have to be one to know one? *In Contemporary Philosophy of Social Science*.

Integrative perspectives

Week 6: Tuesday June 9 The idea of Dialectics

1. Dialectics for Kids Explore this website. Also pick your favourite dialectics song.

<http://home.igc.org/~venceremos/index.htm>

2. Baxter, L. A., & Montgomery, B. M. (1996). Chapters 1 & 2. Relating: dialogues and dialectics. New York, NY, : Guilford Press.

3. Kuczynski, L., & De Mol, J. (2015). Social relational theory: dialectical models of transactions in parent-child relationships and socialization. In W. F. Overton & Peter C. M. Molenaar (Eds.). *Theory and Method*. Volume 1 of the *Handbook of Child Psychology and Developmental Science*. (7th ed.), Editor-in-Chief: Richard M. Lerner. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

Practical Theorizing Tip 5: TBA

Week 7: Wed June 17- 9:30-12 Dialectically based epistemologies Relational Epistemology & New Materialism

Overton, W. F. (2015). Processes, relations and Relational-Developmental-Systems. In W. F. Overton & P. C. M. Molenaar (Eds.). *Theory and Method*. Volume 1 of the *Handbook of child psychology and developmental science*. (pp. 9-62) (7th ed.), Editor-in-Chief: Richard M. Lerner. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley

Hekman, S. Constructing the ballast: An ontology for Feminism. p. 85- 118. In Alaimo, S., & Hekman, S. (Eds.). (2007). *Material feminisms*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press. Note 1 this is the third reading in this package. You are responsible only for Hekman. However the first chapter is useful for an introduction to the concerns of the new materialism.

Note 2. The main question to consider is what are the similarities and differences between the new materialism and relationalist ontology/epistemology of Overton? Crucially: does it share the same dialectical underpinnings?

Extra Readings for fun

McEvoy, P & Richards, D.(2006). A critical realist rationale for using a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods. *Journal of Research in Nursing*, 11, 66-78.

van der Tuin, I. & Dolphijn, R. (2010). The Transversality of New Materialism. *Women: A Cultural Review*, 21(2), 153-171. doi:10.1080/09574042.2010.488377

Overton, W. F. (2002). Life-span development: Concepts and issues. In W. F. Overton (Ed). *Cognition, biology, and methods across the lifespan*. Volume 1 of the *Handbook of life-span*

development. (pp. 1-29) Editor-in-chief: R. M. Lerner. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

Practical Theorizing Tip 6 TBA

Week 8: Wed June 24 Methodology Cycles, Researchers and Phenomena

Valsiner, J. (2000). Chapter 5 Developmental Methodology , Culture and Human Development, Thousand Oaks CA: Sage.

Rosenbaum, P.J. & Valsiner, J. (2011) The un-making of a method: From rating scales to the study of psychological processes. *Theory & Psychology*, 2(1) 47-65.

Toomela, A. (2007). Culture of science: strange history of the methodological thinking in psychology. *Integrative Psychological and Behavioral Science*, 41, 6–20.

Extra Readings for fun

Toomela. (2011). Travel Into a Fairy Land: A Critique of Modern Qualitative and Mixed Methods Psychologies *Integr Psych Behav* (2011) 45:21–47.

Toomela (2008). Variables in Psychology: A Critique of Quantitative Psychology. *Integr Psych Behav* (2008) 42:245–265 DOI 10.1007/s12124-008-9059-6

Valsiner, J. (2006). Dangerous Curves in knowledge construction in psychology: Fragmentation of Methodology. *Theory and Psychology*, 16, 597-612.

Practical Theorizing Tip 7 TBA

Week 9 : Mon July 6 Theorizing Mixed Methods Reflexive statement due

Tolan, P.T. & Nancy L. Deutsch, N.L. (2015) Mixed Methods in Developmental Science. In W. F. Overton & Peter C. M. Molenaar (Eds.). *Theory and Method. Volume 1 of the Handbook of Child Psychology and Developmental Science. (7th ed.)*, Editor-in-Chief: Richard M. Lerner. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley

Readings for Fun

Smedslund (2009). The Mismatch between Current Research Methods and the Nature of Psychological Phenomena: What Researchers Must Learn from Practitioners. *Theory & Psychology*, 19 (6): 778–794

Student Theorizing

Session 10 : Wed July 8 27 – 9:30-12:30 Presentation 1, 2, 3

Session 11 Mon July 13 -12:30
Session 12 Wed - July 15

Presentation 4, 5, 6
Presentatons 7, 8



Final paper due July 19 by email.

Standard Statements – Graduate Course Outlines

E-mail Communication

As per university regulations, all students are required to check their <uoguelph.ca> e-mail account regularly: e-mail is the official route of communication between the University and its students.

When You Cannot Meet a Course Requirement

When you find yourself unable to meet an in-course requirement because of illness or compassionate reasons, please advise the course in writing, with your name, id#, and e-mail contact. See the graduate calendar for information on regulations and procedures for Academic Consideration:

http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/current/genreg/sec_d0e1400.shtml

Drop Date

The last date to drop one-semester courses, without academic penalty, is as indicated in the graduate calendar. Two-semester courses must be dropped by the last day of the add period in the second semester. Refer to the Graduate Calendar for the schedule of dates:

<http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/current/sched/sched-dates-f10.shtml>

Academic Misconduct

The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and it is the responsibility of all members of the University community – faculty, staff, and students – to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring. University of Guelph students have the responsibility of abiding by the University's policy on academic misconduct regardless of their location of study; faculty, staff and students have the responsibility of supporting an environment that discourages misconduct. Students need to remain aware that instructors have access to and the right to use electronic and other means of detection. The Academic Misconduct Policy is detailed in the Graduate Calendar:

http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/current/genreg/sec_d0e1687.shtml

Recording of Materials

Presentations which are made in relation to course work—including lectures—cannot be recorded in any electronic media without the permission of the presenter, whether the instructor, a classmate or guest lecturer.

Resources

The Graduate Calendar is the source of information about the University of Guelph's procedures, policies and regulations which apply to graduate programs:

<http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/current/>

