

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

**FRAN 6280 Theorizing in Family Relations and Human Development (0.5 credits)
Course Description Fall 2021**

Instructor: Michèle Preyde, PhD
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Time and Location: MACS 331 Tues 4-7pm

Course Description: An examination of the meaning of **science** and **theory** in relation to the study of families and human development. Included is a discussion of the major social science paradigms including positivism, critical theory, social constructionism and post-modernity. This course is designed for doctoral students. (0.5 Credits)

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 is focused on four main objectives: to promote the basic skills of describing theories succinctly, evaluating theory, using theory, and extending, integrating or creating theory.

Course Format: The class is largely based on discussions that students contribute to the class based on the readings. Students are expected to share their scientific knowledge and raise questions through a collaborative learning environment.

1. Critical Analysis. The major dimensions of theory including epistemology and scientific methodology will be explored. It is impossible to study all of these concepts comprehensively because each is complex and ever changing. Nevertheless, the course will provide an introduction to these ideas.

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

The epistemological categories considered during the previous 30 years (i.e. positivism, interpretivism, critical theory, postmodernism) should be familiar from your research methods and interdisciplinary perspectives courses.

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).

2. Using Theory. Theories are developed to facilitate understanding of some phenomenon and may be formulated to describe, explain or predict phenomenon. Theories are tested, challenged, revised and extended through scientific activity. A range of activities are reviewed that are focused on gaining understanding of a phenomenon. This endeavour will mean exploring different functions of theory in knowledge construction and the concept of the cycle of inquiry.

3. Constructing theory. Theory construction is regarded by the hypothetico-deductive view that can be tested through science. However, theories are developed by people and several processes and strategies regarding this creative process have been described. One of these processes is *abduction*, the third mode of inference and a counterpart to induction and deduction. Abduction will be introduced.

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

25%	Routine seminar contribution; starting 2 nd class, preparation and posting of two questions weekly and submitting one paragraph weekly, leading and contributing to class discussion
10 %	Paper: Oct 19 (1 mark per day after that)
25 %	Theorizing presentation (20%) and abstract (5%) (November 23 or 30)
40 %	Theorizing Final Paper: December 3, 2021 (1 mark per day after that)

Routine seminar contribution 25%

The grade for routine seminar contribution is designed to reflect the quality of your contribution to class discussion on a weekly basis. Although it is recognized that students come to the class with a range of communication styles, the articulation of thoughts and critiques is an important skill to be developed as part of your academic program (10 seminars x 2.5% each, no mark for Weeks 1 and 12). Note: when you are presenting (Week 10 or 11), contribution will be based on your questions posed to the other presenters (i.e., you do not have to submit a paragraph and questions on the day of your class presentations).

Evaluation will be based on two kinds of contributions.

- 1) *Contribution to class discussion.* This contribution includes preparation of a paragraph based on readings that forms the basis of your contribution to the class discussion. Demonstration in class that the readings have been read and are based on relevant scientific or professional perspectives and experiences. For example, you may present a concept from the readings that you think is important and provide a rationale. Please email the paragraph to the instructor before class.
- 2) Creating discussion questions. These questions should be based on the readings and should be posted to the Discussion on courselink by **midnight the day before each class except the week you are presenting (Please do not duplicate questions; if someone has posted the question you would like to discuss, you must submit a different question)**. You may need to indicate the reading, page number and paragraph. Class discussions will be based on these questions. Be prepared to lead the discussion when your question is being discussed.

Theoretical Brief Paper 10% Due Oct 19

The purpose of this paper is to develop the writing and communication skills of presenting an

overview of the important developments of a theory of human development and describing how the theory has been revised or extended. Choose one of Attachment theory (Bowlby; Ainsworth etc.), ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner) or social cognitive theory (Bandura). The intent is that all three theories will be covered. You must choose a theory that is different than the theory or theories you will use as the basis for the theorizing presentation and final paper. Succinctly review the origin and early development (perhaps 3 references) and then locate a recent application or extension of the theory and critique this article. Please send the recent article to the instructor (and class members); there can be no duplicates in articles, and all three theories must be covered (i.e., first sent article secures choice; or first submitted, first allocated). Other details will be reviewed in class. Please submit the paper through Dropbox and Turnitin in Word (i.e., not PDF). Final due date Oct 19, about 4 pages double-spaced.

Theorizing Presentation 20% and abstract 5% Presented Nov 23 or 30

The purpose of this assignment is to practice evaluating a theory. Choose a theory other than one of the three used in the first assignment, apply evaluative criteria and prepare a presentation and abstract of your presentation. Submit the abstract to the instructor before class on the day of your presentation. These presentations will be scheduled during the final weeks of this course. Choose a topic of interest that is important to the work that you do. Choose one key article for the class to read as background and distribute this article to the class one week prior to your presentation. (Please be kind –no more than 15-20 pages). Participants will provide a 20-minute presentation, followed by a 10-minute discussion. A theorizing exercise for the class based on the readings and presentation may be incorporated in the discussion. Submit PPT to Dropbox (Turnitin) before your presentation.

Theorizing Paper (40%) Due December 3, 2021

For this final paper, write an eight to 10-page paper (APA format) in which you succinctly summarize a theory [or theories] and the empirical support for the theory, evaluate the theory and present preliminary theorizing activity. You may consider how the theory aligns with the major paradigms. Submit via CourseLink Dropbox and Turnitin in Word (i.e., not PDF) by December 6, 2021.

Learning Outcomes and Objectives:

1. Understand science and theory (Critical and Creative Thinking)
2. Describe the development of a theory (Literacy and Communication)
3. Understand evaluation and usage of theories
4. Understand research methodology and methods for theory development
5. Understand theory extension, integration and creation

Assessments related to Learning Outcomes

Course evaluation	Learning outcomes	Due date: Fall 2021	% Final
Paper	1,4,5	Oct 19	10%
Presentation	1-5	Nov 23 or 30	25%
Participation	1-5	Weeks 2 - 11	25%
Final paper	1-5	Dec 6	40%

Readings available in Course Reserve via Library. Readings may be added to enhance learning experience.

Recommended for later in the semester: 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

Schedule of Classes: Dates, Topics and Required Readings

Week 1: Introduction to theorizing and course overview

Week 2: Theory Introduction

Sears A & Cairns J. Chapter 1 An Interesting Idea, in Theory available online via U of G library

Sears A & Cairns J. Chapter 2 Theory Matters. In A Good Book, In Theory (Post-modernism, theoretical pluralism, pp 25 to 44)

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

Week 3 Science

Sears A & Cairns J. Chapter 3 But How do you Know. In A Good Book, In Theory, available online via U of G library

Chalmers A. Chapter 3 Experiment. What is This Thing Called Science? available online via U of G library

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

Week 4: Paradigms

Ryan G. Introduction to positivism, interpretivism and critical theory

Kivunja C . Understanding and Applying Research Paradigms in Educational Contexts. International Journal of Higher Education Vol. 6, No. 5; 2017

Moon et al. A guide to understanding social science. Conservation Biology

Erzin G, Gülöksüz S. The exposome paradigm to understand the environmental origins of mental disorders. Alpha Psychiatry. 2021;22(4):171-176.

Week 5 Presentations of Papers: Application in FRHD and Grounded theory

Tie YC et al. (2019) Grounded theory research: A design framework for novice researchers. Sage Open 7, 1-8.

Barker, DJP. The origins of the developmental origins theory. *Journal of Internal Medicine*, 2007, 261(5):412-417

Week 6 Science and theory

Kashima Y. Causal and meaning-based explanation chpt 3 pp 41-62. In B. Gawronski and GV Bodenhausen, *Theory and Explanation in Social Psychology*, The Guildford Press; NY, 2015

White JM Science and its critics chpt 3. In White *Advancing Family Theories* Sage, 2005.

Park, Y. S., Konge, L., & Artino, A. R., Jr (2020). The Positivism Paradigm of Research. *Academic medicine : journal of the Association of American Medical Colleges*, 95(5), 690–694.
<https://doi.org/10.1097/ACM.0000000000003093>

Jaccard J. and Jacoby J. *Theory Construction and Model-Building Skills Chapter 3 Science as an approach to understanding; especially Characteristics of a Good Theory*, page 31
<http://eprints.qums.ac.ir/788/1/Theory%20Construction%20and%20Model%20%20Building%20Skills.pdf> and available via Uof G library

Week 7 Theorizing

Markoskly B & Webster JR. Theory construction. Forthcoming. Blackwell Encyclopedia of Sociology

McDonald D & Scheberger S. *Scientific Inquiry: Theory construction A Primer*. Pro ISECON

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

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

Week 8 Evaluating Theories

Fletcher G. Evaluating Scientific Theories. *Psychological Inquiry*, Vol. 11, No. 1 (2000), pp. 29-31.

Redmond G "Theory Development and Evaluation" (2015). English Technical Reports and White Papers. 6. http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/engl_reports/6 not yet added to ares

Sears A & Cairns J. Chapter 2 Theory Matters. In *A Good Book, In Theory, Formal theories, Five characteristics* (pp 44 to 51).

White JM Functions and Types of Theories chpt 5 In White *Advancing Family Theories* Sage, 2005.

Week 9 Worldview and theory logic

Antley MW Toward a Metatheoretical Integration of Developmental Paradigms (also review mechanistic, organismic and context.)

Ludwig Relating traditional and academic ecological knowledge Biology and Philosophy

Oberauer, K., & Lewandowsky, S. Addressing the theory crisis in psychology. *Psychonomic Bulletin & Review* (2019) 26:1596–1618

Colombo, M., Bucher, L., & Sprenger, J. (2017). Determinants of Judgments of Explanatory Power: Credibility, Generality, and Statistical Relevance. *Frontiers in psychology*, 8, 1430.

<https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2017.01430>

Week 10 and 11 presentations

Week 12 Conclusions

Kajamaa, A., Mattick, K., & de la Croix, A. (2020). How to ... do mixed-methods research. *The clinical teacher*, 17(3), 267–271. <https://doi.org/10.1111/tct.13145>

Grant, C and Osanloo, A (2014) "Understanding, selecting, and integrating a theoretical framework in dissertation research: Creating the blueprint for your “house”. *Administrative Issues Journal*: Vol. 4 : Iss. 2 , Article 4.

Disclaimer:

Please note that the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic may necessitate a revision of the format of course offerings, changes in classroom protocols, and academic schedules. Any such changes will be announced via CourseLink and/or class email. This includes on-campus scheduling during the semester, mid-terms and final examination schedules. All University-wide decisions will be posted on the COVID-19 website (<https://news.uoguelph.ca/2019-novel-coronavirus-information/>) and circulated by email.

Illness:

Medical notes will not normally be required for singular instances of academic consideration, although students may be required to provide supporting documentation for multiple missed assessments or when involving a large part of a course (e.g., final exam or major assignment).

Safety Protocols:

For information on current safety protocols, follow these links: <https://news.uoguelph.ca/return-to-campuses/how-u-of-g-is-preparing-for-your-safe-return/>

<https://news.uoguelph.ca/return-to-campus/spaces/#ClassroomSpaces>

Please note, these guidelines may be updated as required in response to evolving University, Public Health or government directives.

Regulations

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

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

Please note: "Academic misconduct is behaviour that erodes the basis of mutual trust on which scholarly exchanges commonly rest, undermines the University's exercise of its responsibility to evaluate students' academic achievements, or restricts the University's ability to accomplish its learning objectives."

https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/current/genreg/sec_d0e2632.shtml

Standard Statements

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 instructor (or designated person, such as a teaching assistant) in writing, with your name, id#, and e-mail contact. See the graduate calendar for information on regulations and procedures for Academic Consideration.

Drop Date

Courses that are one semester long must be dropped by the end of the last day of classes; two-semester courses must be dropped by the last day of classes in the second semester. The regulations and procedures for Dropping Courses are available in the Graduate Calendar.

Copies of out-of-class assignments

Please retain paper and/or other reliable back-up copies of all out-of-class assignments: you may be asked to resubmit work at any time.

Accessibility

The University promotes the full participation of students who experience disabilities in their academic programs. To that end, the provision of academic accommodation is a shared responsibility between the University and the student.

When accommodations are needed, the student is required to first register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS). Documentation to substantiate the existence of a disability is required; however, interim accommodations may be possible while that process is underway.

Accommodations are available for both permanent and temporary disabilities. It should be noted that common illnesses such as a cold or the flu do not constitute a disability.

Use of the SAS Exam Centre requires students to book their exams at least 7 days in advance, and not later than the 40th Class Day.

Additional information can be located here: www.uoguelph.ca/sas

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.

Please note: Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for a finding of guilt. Hurried or careless submission of assignments does not excuse students from responsibility for verifying the academic integrity of their work before submitting it. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor.

The Academic Misconduct Policy is detailed in the Graduate Calendar.

Recording of Materials

Presentations which are made in relation to course work—including lectures—cannot be recorded or copied without the permission of the presenter, whether the instructor, a classmate or guest lecturer. Material recorded with permission is restricted to use for that course unless further permission is granted.

Resources

The Academic Calendars are the source of information about the University of Guelph's procedures, policies and regulations which apply to undergraduate, graduate and diploma programs.

Graduate Program

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.

Submitting Assignments

In this course, your instructor will be using Turnitin, integrated with the CourseLink Dropbox tool, to detect possible plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration or copying as part of the ongoing efforts to maintain academic integrity at the University of Guelph.

All submitted assignments will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. Use of the Turnitin.com service is subject to the Usage Policy posted on the Turnitin.com site.

A major benefit of using Turnitin is that students will be able to educate and empower themselves in preventing academic misconduct. In this course, you may screen your own assignments through Turnitin as many times as you wish before the due date. You will be able to see and print reports that show you exactly where you have properly and improperly referenced the outside sources and materials in your assignment.

Extra Reading for Fun.

The Emerging Theoretical Framework of Life Course Health Development 2017
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK543722/>

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

Korman, J., & Khemlani, S. (2020). Explanatory completeness. *Acta psychologica*, 209, 103139.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.actpsy.2020.103139>

Wojtowicz, Z., & DeDeo, S. (2020). From Probability to Consilience: How Explanatory Values Implement Bayesian Reasoning. *Trends in cognitive sciences*, 24(12), 981–993. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tics.2020.09.013>

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

Flynn SV & Korcuska JS. (2018) Grounded Theory Research Design: An Investigation into Practices and Procedures, *Counseling Outcome Research and Evaluation*, 9:2, 102-116

Goldkuhl et al (2010). Adding Theoretical Grounding to Grounded Theory: Toward Multi-Grounded Theory. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 9(2), 187-205.

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.

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.

Lerner RM, Callina KS. Relational developmental systems theories and the ecological validity of

experimental designs. *Human Development* 2013;56:372–380

Overton, W. F. (2015). Processes, relations and Relational-Developmental-Systems. In W. F. Overton & P. C. M. Molenaar (Eds.). *Theory and Method*. NJ; Wiley.

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.

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

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.

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

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.

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

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.

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

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

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

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

Bell, NJ. (2019). Relational Developmental Systems and Family Research: Considering Qualitative Application. *Journal of Family Theory & Review* 11: 230–242

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.

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

Mind mapping as a conceptual analysis and theorizing tool that may be of interest to you.
http://www.stanford.edu/dept/SUSE/projects/ireport/articles/concept_maps/ConceptMapsOnlineLearningEnvironment.pdf