



**The University of Western Ontario**  
**Department of Sociology**  
**SOCIOLOGY 3346F-200**  
**Sociology of Mental Health**  
**Fall 2025**

**Delivery Method – Blended**

**Instructor: Dr. A. Willson**  
**Email: willson@uwo.ca**

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***This is a DRAFT copy only. Please see the course site for the final version.***

**Course Description:** This course offers an overview of the ways a sociological perspective informs our understanding of mental health. It explores various definitions, theories, and forms of mental illness, our responses to mental illness, and how social factors affect mental disorder. We will examine social inequalities in mental health and resources important for mental health over the life course. A special emphasis will be placed on understanding how Sociological research related to mental health can help improve the lives of individuals living with mental disorders.

**Prerequisite(s):** 1.0 from Sociology courses at the 1000 level, and third or fourth year standing in a module in Criminology, Criminal Justice, or Sociology.

Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may 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.

**Anti-requisite(s):** [Sociology 3385F/G](#), if taken at Brescia in 2014-15.

**Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes:**

- Understand, evaluate, critique, and apply the key theoretical and conceptual frameworks used in the Sociology of Mental Health
- Identify, explain, and engage with the key themes and debates in the Sociology of Mental Health
- Develop and apply critical writing skills related to the Sociology of Mental Health
- Write a paper that clearly utilizes class concepts and makes an evidence-based, sociological argument related to the Sociology of Mental Health

**Course Material:**

There is no textbook for this course; all required readings are available electronically in Brightspace. Technical requirements for the course: stable internet connection, computer with working microphone and webcam.

## **Communication:**

Students are responsible for checking the course OWL Brightspace site (<https://westernu.brightspace.com/d2l/login>) on a regular basis for news and updates. This is the primary method by which information will be disseminated to all students in the class. The professor will also email course information using the email address provided in OWL Brightspace.

## **Course Schedule and Readings:**

The reading list and weekly schedule is available on the course Brightspace site

## **Method of Evaluation:**

The evaluation methods described in the course outline are essential requirements for the course.

Assignment	Percentage	Due Date
Midterm	35%	October 27, 2025, 9:30 a.m. <b>LOCATION: IN CLASSROOM</b>
Final Paper	30%	December 8, 2025, 11:59 p.m.
Final Exam	35%	TBA: Scheduled by the Office of the Registrar during the final exam period

### ***Midterm Exam***

The exam will consist of multiple-choice questions covering the lectures, films, and reading assignments. You are responsible for all the material in the assigned readings even if this material is not covered in class. The exam will be administered **IN THE CLASSROOM** and is 2 hours in length. No aids or electronic devices will be allowed during examinations.

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.

\*Instructors are permitted to designate one assessment per course per term as requiring supporting documentation to receive academic consideration. For this course the Midterm Exam has been designated as requiring supporting documentation.

### ***Final Exam***

The exam will consist of multiple-choice questions covering the lectures, films, and reading assignments. You are responsible for all the material in the assigned readings even if this material is not covered in class. The exam will be administered **IN A CLASSROOM** and is 2 hours in length. No aids or electronic devices will be allowed during examinations. 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.

### ***Final Paper***

Students will analyze real-world problems and policy applications related to mental health in Canada using theories and concepts from course material and additional academic research. Detailed instructions will be provided in class. Minimum word count: 2,500 words. Due December 8, 2025, 11:59 p.m. The assignment will be submitted in the OWL Brightspace course site, including Turnitin.com for plagiarism checking.

Please note that because the submission deadline for this assessment, December 8, 2025, 11:59 p.m. includes flexibility in the form of 3 grace days, the instructor reserves the right to deny academic consideration for assignments which are submitted following the end of the period of flexibility. Students are expected to submit the assignment by the deadline listed. Should illness or extenuating circumstances arise, or if students have accommodation for flexible deadlines through Accessible Education, students are permitted to submit their assignment up to 72 hours past the deadline without academic penalty. Should students submit their assignment beyond 72 hours past the deadline, a late penalty of 5% per day will be subtracted from the assessed grade. Assignments submitted after the grace period will receive no written feedback. As flexible deadlines are used in this assignment, requests for academic consideration will not be granted.

### **Student Absences:**

If you are unable to meet a course requirement due to illness or other serious circumstances, please follow the [Academic Consideration Policy](#) regarding student absence requests and flexible deadlines.

Students with academic consideration for an examination will either be provided a make-up examination date or will have their grade re-weighted to the final (i.e. 100% cumulative final), at Professor Willson's discretion.

### **Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI):**

***Students are expected to write their essays in their own words.*** Students are permitted to use AI tools only for information gathering and as a starting point for exploring a topic. Students are **not permitted to include AI generated text in their essays and present it as their own writing**. In-text citations are needed to indicate the source of any information or statements that are not common knowledge. Reference lists need to be complete and accurate, and the referenced items need to be locatable. Written assignments must reflect the student's own thoughts and independent written work.

Emerging research suggests that AI is reshaping our ability to think and the way we process information and make decisions, often diminishing our reliance on our own cognitive abilities. In addition, the use of AI introduces an increased risk of misinformation, including errors, outdated information, or biased responses, as well as reduced diversity in thought that risks overlooking marginalized voices.

- Retain control of your work and develop your critical thinking skills, which are a key part of a university education. Do not use AI as a crutch or as an outsourcing of your brain.
- Critically evaluate the obtained information, exercise independent thinking, and engage in original research to synthesize and develop their own ideas, arguments and perspectives.

- Appropriately attribute all sources of information to avoid plagiarism.
- Written assignments should reflect the student's own thoughts and independent written work.

**Electronic Devices:**

Electronic devices are not permitted during examinations. This includes smart watches.

**Copyright:**

Students may not record or distribute any class activity, including conversations during office hours, without written permission from the instructor, except as necessary as part of approved accommodations for students with disabilities.

**Academic 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 the following website: [https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_undergrad.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf)

Students must write their assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea 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 scholastic 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 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 (<https://www.turnitin.com/>).

Students are expected to retain all research notes, rough drafts, essay outlines, and other materials used in preparing assignments. In the unlikely event of concerns being raised about the authenticity of any assignment, your instructor may ask you to produce these materials; an inability to do so may weigh heavily against you.

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.

**Copyright:** Students may not record or distribute any class activity, including conversations during office hours, without written permission from the instructor, except as necessary as part of approved accommodations for students with disabilities. Any approved recordings may only be used for the student's own private use.

**Absence from Course Commitments:** Students must familiarize themselves with the [Policy on Academic Consideration](#) – Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs [https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/academic\\_consideration\\_Sep24.pdf](https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration_Sep24.pdf)

Students missing course work for medical, compassionate or extenuating circumstances can request academic consideration by completing a request using the Student Absence Portal (SAP) [https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/academic\\_considerations/index.html](https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/academic_considerations/index.html) . Students are permitted one academic consideration request per course per term without supporting documentation. Note that supporting documentation is always required for academic consideration requests for examinations scheduled by the office of the registrar (e.g. December and April exams) and for practical laboratory and performance tests typically scheduled during the last week of the term. Students should also note that the instructor may designate one assessment per course per term that requires supporting documentation. This designated assessment is described in the course outline. Supporting documentation for academic considerations for absences due to illness must include the completed Western Student Medical Certificate (SMC) <https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/pdfs/student-medical-certificate.pdf> or, where that is not possible, equivalent documentation by a health care practitioner. Students must request academic consideration as soon as possible and no later than 48 hours after the missed assessment.

Once the request and supporting documentation have been received and reviewed, appropriate academic consideration, if granted, shall be determined by the instructor in consultation with the academic advisor, in a manner consistent with the course outline. Students with an approved absence from an in-class test or exam will be required to write a makeup exam, unless otherwise specified in the course outline. The course instructor or teaching assistant(s) may not be available to respond to questions during the makeup text/exam. Students should be aware that the make-up test/exam will not necessarily be in the same format, be of the same duration, or cover the same material as the original test/exam.

**Note:** missed work can *only* be excused through one of the mechanisms above. Being asked not to attend an in-person course requirement due to potential COVID-19 symptoms is **not** sufficient on its own. Students should check the Western website to see what directives for Covid are to be followed. Western has been and will continue to follow directives established by the Middlesex-London Health Unit. That directive will state whether students should or should not come to campus/class and any other requirements (e.g., masks are mandatory). Please check on your own and do not email the instructor, the Department Undergraduate Advisor/Coordinator or the Faculty Academic Counselling Office.

Students who fail to write a make-up test or special examination will receive a grade of zero on that assessment. No other make-up opportunities will be provided unless further academic consideration is granted by the student's Home Faculty Academic Counselling office.

**Religious Accommodation:** Students should review the policy for Accommodation for Religious Holidays [https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/accommodation\\_religious.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_religious.pdf). Where a student will be unable to write examinations and term tests due to a conflicting religious holiday, they should inform their instructors as soon as possible but not later than two weeks prior to writing the examination/term test. In the case of conflict with a midterm test, students should inform their instructor as soon as possible but not later than one week prior to the midterm.

**Contingency plan for an in-person class pivoting to 100% online learning:** In the event of a COVID-19 resurgence or University approved emergency during the course that necessitates the course delivery moving away from face-to-face interaction, affected course content will be delivered entirely online, either synchronously (i.e., at the times indicated in the timetable) or asynchronously (e.g., posted on OWL Brightspace for students to view at their convenience). The grading scheme will **not** change. Any remaining assessments will also be conducted online as determined by the course instructor.

**Code of Student Conduct:** It is the responsibility of every student to read the Code and familiarize him or herself with its contents. The Code is available at [http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/code\\_of\\_conduct.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/code_of_conduct.pdf). Sanctions for non-compliance range from a warning or reprimand to expulsion from the University.

**Student Responsibility:** Students in a degree program must select courses in accordance with the published requirements. Students are responsible for ensuring that their selection of courses is appropriate and accurately recorded, that all course prerequisites have been successfully completed, and

that they are aware of any antirequisite course(s) they may have taken. Students must familiarize themselves with the Student Responsibility for Course Selection policy [https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/general/academic\\_counselling.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/general/academic_counselling.pdf) and the Registration and Progression policy [https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/registration\\_progression\\_grad/registration\\_progression.pdf](https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/registration_progression_grad/registration_progression.pdf). Students are responsible for the successful completion of the Graduation Requirements for their degree program [https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/registration\\_progression\\_grad/graduation.pdf](https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/registration_progression_grad/graduation.pdf).

## **Support Services:**

Office of the Registrar Services <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>

[Faculty Academic Advising](#) - Please visit your Home Faculty Academic advising webpage for information regarding adding/dropping courses, important dates, academic considerations for absences, appeals, exam conflicts, and many other academic related matters [https://registrar.uwo.ca/faculty\\_academic\\_counselling.html](https://registrar.uwo.ca/faculty_academic_counselling.html).

[USC services](#) offers information about student the health/dental plan, Bus Pass, food support services, Peer support Centre etc <http://westernusc.ca/services/>.

[Mental health](#) – 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.

[Health & Wellness Services](#) – Registered part-time and full-time students can book a physical health appointment at <https://www.uwo.ca/health/shs/index.html>. Additional on-campus services are also available <https://www.uwo.ca/health/shs/services/index.html>.

[Accessible Education](#) provides supports and services to students with disabilities at Western, in all programs and faculties. Students with disabilities or accessibility challenges should work with Accessible Education (formerly SSD) [http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessible\\_education/index.html](http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessible_education/index.html), which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing.

[Gender-Based and Sexual Violence](#) – Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence (GBSV) and providing compassionate support to anyone who is going through or has gone through these traumatic events. If you are experiencing or have experience GBSV (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at the following website: [http://uwo.ca/health/student\\_support/survivor\\_support/get-help.html](http://uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html)

[Western Libraries](#) – Visit the many library locations on campus. Western Libraries provide access to material in physical and digital formats <https://www.lib.uwo.ca/catalogue/index.html>. Research support is available <https://www.lib.uwo.ca/research/index.html>.

[Writing support](#) – Online writing resources, writing support and writing modules are available <https://writing.uwo.ca/undergrads/>

**Bookstore:** Search for Textbook availability and cost <https://bookstore.uwo.ca/textbook-search>