

Sociology 196H1F – L0101

Stress and Health in Young Adulthood

Fall 2023

University of Toronto | Department of Sociology
Tuesdays 3:10pm - 5:00pm

Course Information

Instructor	Dr. Cameron Herman (he/him) <i>You can call me Professor Herman or Dr. Herman</i>
Instructor Email	cameron.herman@utoronto.ca I respond to emails on weekdays between 10am and 5pm. Normally, you can expect a reply from me within 24 hours.
Student Hours	Tuesdays 1:00pm - 2:00pm, Or by appointment In person or virtually at https://utoronto.zoom.us/j/3801988708
Teaching Assistant	Ms. Brigid Burke (they/them) PhD Candidate, Department of Sociology
TA email	b.burke@mail.utoronto.ca

Course Description

This seminar is designed to provide first-year students with an in-depth understanding of the critical period of young adulthood and its implications for health and well-being. Throughout the course, students will read and discuss scholarly articles related to the various changes and transitions which young adults experience, including education, work, and relationships. The seminar will also explore the impact of stressors such as food insecurity and social isolation on health and well-being outcomes during this period.

In each class, students will work collaboratively via group discussions, writing exercises and experiential activities to explore and understand how stress, rooted in social systems, shape the experiences of young adults and how this group navigates these phenomena. Additionally, we will explore collective action as an approach to mitigating or eliminating stress's deleterious effects on young adults' well-being.

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

There are two categories of learning objectives for this course: Content-based outcomes (1-5) and Skills-based outcomes (6-9). By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Identify and describe the milestones commonly associated with adulthood.
2. Explain sociological perspectives on stress and well-being.
3. Describe how young adults from various backgrounds experience and navigate stressful conditions.
4. Identify and evaluate collective action's capacity to address stress in the lives of young adults.
5. Use sociological perspectives to interpret young adults' experiences with stress and health.
6. Work collaboratively in a small group environment
7. Utilize reflection as a tool for critical engagement and self-assessment.
8. Formulate and implement a logical plan to answer a sociological question about stress in the lives of young adults.
9. Communicate their knowledge and understanding of stress in the lives of young adults in multiple modalities (e.g., written, oral, creative).

COURSE TEXT AND MATERIALS

All course content will be available in links and pdfs on the course webpage on Quercus. In this course, students will engage with ideas from a variety of sources including scholarly articles, popular media, podcasts, and other forms.

COURSE MANAGEMENT

The course syllabus, course content, course assignments, course schedule, and gradebook can be found on our course website via Quercus, at <https://q.utoronto.ca/courses/314457>.

STUDENT ASSESSMENT

Class Participation – 10%

Learning in a collaborative pursuit. Active participation in the course is one of the most important ways to learn. Thus, you will be assessed on your engagement in the course. Participation comes in a variety of forms, but in general, an engaged student comes to class prepared (i.e., completed the readings), is ready to listen attentively to peers and the instructor, contribute regularly to classroom activities and discussions, submit work in a timely manner, engage with one another respectfully, and reach out to instructor and/or TA as questions arise or if you fall behind in the course. Other participation activities may include online discussion boards and in-class writing prompts. If you anticipate any barriers to your full participation in the course, I encourage you to contact me as early as possible to discuss strategies for navigating course requirements.

Reading Quizzes – 25%

Students will complete nine (9) online reading quizzes on Quercus. Reading Quizzes are designed to enhance students' comprehension of course material and strengthen their ability to interpret social scientific data and thought. The lowest reading quiz score will be dropped from your grade. Reading Quizzes open on Fridays at 10am and are due Mondays by 11:59pm.

Critical Reflection Papers – 30%, (15% each)

To promote critical engagement with course materials and facilitate critical thinking, students will submit a minimum of two reflection papers throughout the semester. Rather than providing a summary of the ideas, your reflection papers should critically engage with ideas in the course materials.

Reflection papers for any given reading must be completed prior to the seminar time that the reading is assigned. Students should submit to the assignment folder on Quercus prior to the course start time (e.g., a reflection paper for October 10 needs to be submitted to the online folder by 3:00pm on October 10). The two highest CRP scores will comprise your score for this component of your grade. Due dates for each CRP submission window are below:

CRP 1 due by: Sept 26

CRP 2 due by: Oct 24

CRP 3 due by: Nov 21

Creative Group Project – 35%

The Creative Group Project is the cumulative assessment of the course. Students will *work collaboratively* to develop an original project that demonstrates your collective learning throughout this course. Students will work in groups of 4-5 members to develop an original project exploring a theme or topic examining central themes of the course. Students will develop and submit a project proposal outlining the topic, guiding question(s) and format (e.g. audiovisual, Zine, works of art, pamphlet, short film, live performance, podcast, etc.) of the project to the instructor. The instructor will consult with each group to ensure the feasibility of the proposed project and its relevance to the course.

Benchmark exercises Group Project will be scaffolded throughout the second half of the semester to provide groups with checkpoints for developing their project. We will utilize class time for groups to update their peers and the instructor on their project's development and receive feedback. Each group will present their project to the class in the final week of the semester. Note that any missed presentation cannot be rescheduled. More information will be provided in Week 7.

Midterms and Finals

In lieu of these summative tests, students will submit written reflections on their learning experience in the course. Dr. Herman will provide detailed instructions in weeks 6 and 11.

Grading Scale:

Grades in this course will be based on points earned on the assessments described above. See the table below for a summary.

Assessment	Percent of Grade
Participation	10%
Reading Quizzes (x8)	25%
Critical Reflection Papers (x2)	30%
Creative Group Project	35%
Total	100%

Grades in this course will follow the university's [Undergraduate Grading Scale](#):

UofT Grading Scale		
90-100% = A+	85-89% = A	80-84% = A-
77-79% = B+	73-76% = B	70-72% = B-
67-69% = C+	63-66% = C	60-62% = C-
57-59% = D+	53-56% = D	50 – 52% = D-
	49% or below = F	

COURSE POLICIES

Email Communication Policy

Students can email Dr. Herman or Ms. Burke using their official University of Toronto email address. Please **include SOC196 in the subject line** to help me identify your emails in my inbox. As stated above, I respond to emails on weekdays between 10am and 5pm. Normally, you can expect a reply from me within 24 hours.

Attendance Policy

The activities we do during class are essential to your learning in this course. You should make every reasonable effort to attend all class meetings and to arrive on time. However, I recognize that illness, university obligations, religious observances, personal emergencies, and other circumstances may cause you to arrive after the class start time or prevent you from attending class entirely.

Flexibility into the attendance requirement students will have two (2) approved absences, no questions asked.

Excessive absences, defined as more than two (2) absences in a semester, will result in the reduction of your final grade by three (3) percentage points for each additional absence.

Attendance will be recorded at each lecture via sign-in sheet. An attendance record will also be maintained on Quercus.

I have the following expectations for attendance:

- Students will arrive on time for each class session.
- Students will contact me promptly if they anticipate a late arrival or early departure from class.

If you anticipate any issue with your attendance, please contact me so we can work together to plan a course of action to support your learning.

On Illness:

If you become ill and it affects your ability to do your academic work, consult me right away. Normally, I will ask you for documentation in support of your specific medical circumstances. This documentation can be an Absence Declaration (via ACORN) or the University's Verification of Student Illness or Injury (VOI) form. The VOI indicates the impact and severity of the illness, while protecting your privacy about the details of the nature of the illness. If you cannot submit a VOI due to limits on terms of use, you can submit a different form (like a letter from a doctor), as long as it is an original document, and it contains the same information as the VOI (including dates, academic impact, practitioner's signature, phone and registration number). For more information on the VOI, please see <http://www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca>. For information on the Absence Declaration Tool for A&S students, please see <https://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/absence>. If you get a concussion, break your hand, or suffer some other acute injury, you should register with Accessibility Services as soon as possible.

Religious Observances

The University provides reasonable accommodation for the needs of students who observe religious holy days other than those already accommodated by ordinary scheduling and statutory holidays. Students have a responsibility to alert members of the teaching staff in a

timely fashion to upcoming religious observances and anticipated absences and instructors will make every reasonable effort to avoid scheduling tests, examinations, or other compulsory activities at these times.

Please reach out to me as early as possible to communicate any anticipated absences related to religious observances, and to discuss any possible related implications for course work. See the [website of the Office of the Vice-Provost, Students](#) to read more about the University's policy on accommodations for religious observances.

Late Assignment Policy

Assignments are due promptly at the date and time designated in this syllabus. All assignments will be submitted to an assignment folder on Quercus unless otherwise instructed. Late submissions will not be accepted.

Free 48-hour extension (one time use)

Each student has one 48-hour extension to use in this course. This can be used on individual assignments only (i.e., critical reflection papers, reading quizzes). Should the need arise, students should email the course instructor and TA prior to the due date to indicate you will use your 48-hour pass and the name of the assignment. No additional information is needed.

Institutional Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

The University of Toronto is committed to equity, human rights, and respect for diversity. All members of the learning environment in this course should strive to create an atmosphere of mutual respect where all members of our community can express themselves, engage with each other, and respect one another's differences. U of T does not condone discrimination or harassment against any persons or communities.

Accommodation Policies

Disability Accommodations

The University provides academic accommodation for students with disabilities in accordance with the terms of the Ontario Human Rights Code. This occurs through a collaborative process that acknowledges a collective obligation to develop an accessible learning environment that both meets the needs of students and preserves the essential academic requirements of the University's courses and programs.

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. If you have a disability that may require accommodations, please feel free to reach out to me and the [Accessibility Services on the St. George campus](#).

Academic Integrity Policy

Academic Integrity is essential to the University of Toronto. All suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be investigated following procedures outlined in the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters. If you have questions or concerns about what constitutes appropriate academic behaviour or appropriate research and citation methods, please reach out to me. Note that you are expected to seek out additional information on academic integrity from me or from other institutional resources (for example, the [University of Toronto website on Academic Integrity](#)).

Plagiarism Policy

In this course, students are expected to create original works that, when applicable, appropriately credit the scholarship and ideas of others when this work informs their own. Failing to credit the work of others, even inadvertently, or pass others' work off as your own constitutes a form of plagiarism.

The University of Toronto utilizes a plagiarism detection tool (Ouriginal) to curtail this practice. Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to the University's plagiarism detection tool for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the tool's reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of this tool are described on the Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation web site (<https://uoft.me/pdt-faq>).

Students not wishing their assignment to be submitted through Ouriginal will not be assessed unless a student instead provides, along with their work, sufficient secondary material (e.g., reading notes, outlines of the paper, rough drafts of the final draft, etc.) to establish that the paper they submit is truly their own.

Use of Generative AI Not Permitted in this course

Artificial Intelligence programs are becoming ubiquitous in our everyday lives and increasingly so in educational spaces. Yet, for the purposes of this course, use of generative artificial intelligence tools or applications to complete learning exercises and student assessments outlined in this syllabus is prohibited unless explicitly stated otherwise by the course instructor. This course policy is designed to promote your learning and intellectual development and to help you reach course learning outcomes.

Technology in the Classroom Policy

Laptops, tablets, and cell phones can be useful tools in the learning process. I encourage you to be intentional about the ways you use these tools to enhance your learning practice. At various points in the course, we may use them to support/facilitate our learning exercises. Other times, I may ask you to put them away to provide your undivided attention to the task at hand. If your

use of technology becomes a persistent distraction for you or your classmates, I may ask you to speak with me individually to resolve the issue. Should the issue persist, I may ask you to refrain from using these devices in class for the remainder of the semester.

Student Support Services at University of Toronto

As we will discuss this semester, young adults may experience stress in a variety of ways. Please utilize the support services available to you on campus. If you need assistance identifying resources, please reach out to me and we can work together to identify services to address your needs.

Need help with your writing?

Arts & Science Writing Centres will offer a mix of in-person and online appointments in 2023-24, with an asynchronous option at some centres. Students can find information about the offerings of specific college writing centres at <http://writing.utoronto.ca/writing-centres/arts-and-science>. Students should visit each individual centre's site for information on how to make an appointment.

More than 60 advice files on all aspects of academic writing are available from <http://advice.writing.utoronto.ca>. Students benefit from your recommendation of specific material relevant to your course and assignments. Printable PDF versions are listed at <http://advice.writing.utoronto.ca/student-pdfs>.

Experiencing Food Insecurity?

Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing food on a regular basis and believes this may affect their performance in this or other courses is urged to contact the University of Toronto Student Union (UTSU) Food Bank at (416) 978-4911 and/or book an appointment at the website <https://www.utsu.ca/food-bank/>.

You can find additional resources for food access at Food Bank and Community Food Programs <https://www.torontocentralhealthline.ca/listservices.aspx?id=10572>.

Family Care Responsibilities

The University of Toronto strives to provide a family-friendly environment. You may wish to inform me if you are a student with family caretaking responsibilities (e.g., for children, older family members or otherwise). If you are a student parent or have family responsibilities, you also may wish to visit the Family Care Office website at familycare.utoronto.ca.

If these responsibilities present a challenge with your participation in the course or completing of course work, please contact me and we will work together to determine the best course of action.

COURSE SCHEDULE

This course is divided into 4 units and guided by questions we will explore through the course content. Prior to each class session, you are expected to the assigned content for that day, including scholarly articles, web pages, news articles, essays and media (e.g., podcasts, videos).

Unit	Class Session	Content	Assessments
<i>Introduction</i>	September 12	Read Syllabus	Discussion Board - Introductions
<i>Defining Concepts: What is Young Adulthood, anyway?</i>	September 19	<p>Read: Mitchell and Lennox. 2020. "You gotta be able to pay your own way: Canadian News Media Discourse and Young Adults' Subjectivities of Successful Adulting"</p> <p>Read: Clark, Warren. 2014. Statistics Canada. "Delayed Transitions of Young Adults"</p> <p>Watch: "Why does it take so long to grow up now?" Jeffrey Jensen Arnett TEDxPSU. 2015.</p> <p>Read: The Real Reason Young Adults Seem Slow to 'Grow Up' - The Atlantic</p>	Reading Quiz #1
<i>Defining Concepts: What is Stress, Sociologically speaking?</i>	September 26	<p>Read: Carr and Umberson 2013. "The Social Psychology of Stress, Health and Coping" p 465-472</p> <p>Read: Ansou 2017. "The Sociological Study of Stress." European Journal of Mental Health 01:53-72.</p>	Reading Quiz #2 Critical Reflection Paper #1
<i>Navigating Institutions: Stressing about Education</i>	October 3	<p>Listen: "Intro to Sociology of Education" <i>The Social Breakdown</i> podcast.</p> <p>Read: Int'l students in</p>	Reading Quiz #3

		Canadian universities suffer psychological stress amid pandemic: study	
<i>Navigating Institutions: How does the labour market impact stress?</i>	October 10	Read: Taylor & Krahn, 2013. Living through our children: exploring the education and career 'choices' of racialized immigrant youth in Canada , Journal of Youth Studies, 16:8, 1000-1021. Read: Chapter 2: Youth employment in Canada	Reading Quiz #4
<i>Accessing Material Needs: How does food access impact stress?</i>	October 17	Read: Wilson et al. 2021. " Exploring Indigenous Undergraduate Students' Experiences within Urban and Institutional Food Environments ." <i>Sustainability</i> , 13, 10268. Listen: " Culture and Systems: An Intro to Food Systems " <i>The Social Breakdown</i> podcast. Watch: <i>Food for the rest of us</i> [Streaming video]. Portland, OR: Collective Eye Films. Retrieved September 1, 2023 from https://docuseek2-com.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/ce-ffru	Reading Quiz #5 Discussion Board
<i>Accessing Material Needs: How does housing impact stress?</i>	October 24	Read: Choi and Ramaj. 2023. Canadian young adults who live alone are more likely to struggle with unaffordable housing, study finds The Conversation, March 26. Read: Ross Gay 2022. "We Kin (The Garden: The Third Incitement) p 28-42 in <i>Inciting Joy</i>	Reading Quiz #6 Critical Reflection Paper #2 Midterm course evaluation + self reflection
<i>Creative Project Launch</i>	October 31	TBD	TBD

Nov 6 - 10: Reading Week, No Classes

<i>Interpersonal Relationships: How does friendship impact stress?</i>	November 14	Read: " Overcoming Loneliness and Finding Friends " p. 38-57. Hill and Redding. 2021 CM2: TBD	Reading Quiz #7
<i>Interpersonal Relationships: How does dating impact stress?</i>	November 21	Read: " Overcoming Loneliness and Finding Friends " p 57-72. Hill and Redding. 2021 CM2: TBD	Reading Quiz #8 Critical Reflection Paper #3
<i>Final Thoughts: What did we learn about stress in the lives of young adults?</i>	November 28	Read: " Ending Adolescence and Embracing Adulthood " p. 183-189. Hill and Redding. 2021.	Reading Quiz #9
<i>Presentations</i>	December 5		End of course evaluation + self-reflection Submit Final Project Components by Dec 7