

**Lakehead University**  
**Department of Women's Studies**

**WOME5101 YDE – Theory and Method in Women's Studies**  
**Fall 2024 (Methods) - Winter 2025 (Theory)**

“One of the main goals of feminist research projects is to support social justice and social transformation; these projects seek to study and to redress the many inequities and social injustices that continue to undermine and even destroy the lives of women and their families. Researchers look at patterns and trends within the population of all women, and they draw conclusions based on the varied range of women’s unique circumstances. They are frequently concerned with the intersections of gender with other identity standpoints, such as sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, class, or nationality. Feminist researchers have unique angles of theoretical perspectives that they use to assess women’s status within society and to formulate particular questions that might not otherwise be tackled by the hegemonic ideas that reinforce the existing system of gender inequality”.

-Sharlene Nagy Hesse-Biber  
Feminist Research Practice: A Primer

**Instructor:** Fall: Dr. Jen Chisholm, Winter: Dr. Lori Chambers

**Instruction:** Wednesdays, 2:30-5:30pm  
Online (Zoom link can be found on course D2L page)

**Office:** Ryan Building, Rm 2011 (Thunder Bay Campus)

**Office hours: In- person OR Virtual – Mondays, 1-3pm**

PLEASE NOTE: My in-person office hour location is subject to current public health guidelines, and may be converted to virtual at any time. I will always communicate any changes to office hours with students via email.

**Virtual Office Hours:**

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://lakeheadu.zoom.us/j/93866968617?pwd=4GYGOO7puRq9FdgpXEfDuETZlDdRU.1>

Meeting ID: 938 6696 8617

Passcode: 587866

I encourage you to log on, or come and see me if you have any questions or concerns, about course material, assignments, topics or discussions.\*

**Email:** [jen.chisholm@lakeheadu.ca](mailto:jen.chisholm@lakeheadu.ca)

**Methods Course Description:**

This section (Fall 2022) of the course will review feminist research methodologies from a variety of disciplinary traditions. We will explore feminist perspectives on research as a process and a product, and the potential of feminist research for transformation and social change. Examples from the disciplinary range of our GWS specialization will provide the foundation for our weekly discussions. The objectives this semester are to provide students with a foundational understanding of the principles guiding contemporary feminist methodology, and to enhance students’ skills and confidence in conducting research through practical research exercises and reflective class discussions.

**Required Course Materials:**

*Feminist Research Practice: A Primer*, Edited by Sharlene Nagy Hesse-Biber

*Research as Resistance: Revisiting Critical, Indigenous, and Anti-Oppressive Approaches, 2nd Edition*, Edited by Susan Strega and Leslie Brown

Both course texts can be found through the Lakehead University Bookstore (including digital copies upon request).

All other course readings will be posted on D2L.

**Learner Outcomes:**

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- a. Articulate an advanced understanding of feminist theories and their application across a range of disciplines
- b. Demonstrate an enhanced ability to engage in Feminist methods and methodology
- c. Critically assess and articulate the limitations and strengths of existing feminist theories and methodologies
- d. Demonstrate an enhanced ability to connect feminist theory to other theories related to oppressive structures and power relations and to achieve an advanced understanding of intersectionality

**Assignments:**

Participation	10% (evaluated weekly throughout term)
TCPS2 Certificate and Reflection	10% (DUE: October 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 2024)
Find the Method Assignment	10% (DUE: October 30 <sup>th</sup> , 2024)
Find the Method Assignments	20% (2 x 10%, DUE: November 27 <sup>th</sup> , 2024)
OR	
Research Proposal	20% (DUE: December 4 <sup>th</sup> , 2024)

Note: This term is worth 50% of your grade for WOME5101

Note: All assignments should be submitted online through the course D2L site.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION AND RESOURCES**

### **Class Structure**

Our class will meet online via Zoom, weekly on Wednesdays between 2:30pm and 5:30pm.

This graduate seminar requires active, weekly participation and engagement with course concepts and with each other. We will follow a process called circle pedagogy to guide our discussions. Circle pedagogy is based on Indigenous educational approaches, which allows each member of the class time and space of their own to share thoughts, questions and perspectives on course readings and material. Since we cannot sit in a circle together physically, we will create a virtual circle, using a weekly speakers list, which will be communicated to you at the beginning of each class, as well as posted in the Zoom chat.

After one round of sharing, we will take a break. After the break we will go around the circle once more, where students will have the opportunity to share follow up thoughts or questions based on the first round of discussions. You are encouraged to take notes as your classmates speak, and follow up on points raised by others.

Time permitting, we will end the class with an open discussion period for any last thoughts or contributions.

I am always happy to see your faces on video during our class discussions. Seeing each other can help us build connection and community. However, keeping your camera on is not a requirement. I recognize that students have differential access to reliable internet, and various levels of comfort with being on camera. I ask that you connect your video when speaking and use your microphone/audio.

### **Lessons from the Pandemic**

This has been an especially challenging time, with many of us struggling with the transition to online learning. I recognize that some of you might be juggling working and learning from home, as well as helping children, siblings or others in your family complete their own schooling. This can be very challenging, and we can't always anticipate what might come up. Your best practice for success is to be honest with yourself about what you need and what you can handle, and then to reach out and communicate with Dr. Chisholm. More than anything, I want you to learn, and be successful in this course, so I am open to working with you to find the best path for success. Below is a list of available (free) resources for students who would benefit from more sustained support or accommodations.

### **Resources Available to Students:**

Student Success Centre: Additional help regarding academic matters can be found at the Student Success Centre located in SC 0008 or phone 343-8018 or online at - <http://academicadvising.lakeheadu.ca/>

Student Accessibility Services: For assistance with accommodations for a disability, please visit Student Accessibility Services located in SC 0003 or phone 343-8047 or online at - <http://learningassistance.lakeheadu.ca/>.

Some students may benefit from receiving academic accommodation, due to a disability (physical, learning or otherwise), illness or disruption. Please reach out to Student Accessibility Services and speak with an advisor. Your SAS advisor will work with you to develop a plan, which will then be communicated to Dr. Chisholm. You need not disclose any personal or medical information to Dr. Chisholm, or any of your professors. SAS will work with you to maintain privacy and confidentiality.

Everyone has the right to an accessible education, and all approved accommodations will be honoured, no questions asked.

Student Health and Counselling Centre: For help with personal and/or medical issues, please visit the Student Health and Counselling Centre located in the University Centre 1007 (across from Security) or phone 343-8361 or online at - <http://healthservices.lakeheadu.ca/>.

Office of Human Rights and Equity: For students experiencing sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), discrimination or who feel their rights have been violated. Feel free to connect with the OHRE in person, via email or by phone. <https://www.lakeheadu.ca/faculty-and-staff/departments/services/human-rights-and-equity>

## **GENERAL COURSE GUIDELINES**

### **Email Etiquette:**

All correspondence should be polite, respectful and professional. Email inquiries must include:

- a salutation, (i.e. “hello”, “dear”, “To”, etc.)
- a detailed question, or polite request
- a signature (i.e. your name).

*Emails that do not follow this format will not be answered.*

Every effort will be made to respond to emails within 72 hours (excluding weekends). If you have not received a response after 72 hours, please send a polite reminder as sometimes emails can get lost in the shuffle!

I will answer emails during working hours (typically 8am -5pm). I do not check emails in the evenings or on weekends – if you have sent me an email during off hours, please be mindful that I will not see it until the next workday. I encourage you all to find time in your schedule to “log off” from email and allow yourself space to relax.

### **Submitting Assignments:**

All assignments must be submitted electronically, under the “Assignment” tab on our course D2L site. Each assignment will have its own designated folder and students are asked to submit in the appropriate folder. The best format to submit your assignments is as a .doc (Word) or .pdf file.

You should receive confirmation that your assignment has successfully uploaded. If you do not receive confirmation, it is a sign that something may have gone wrong with the submission. If this happens, please try again to submit, or contact Dr. Chisholm to ensure that your assignment properly uploaded. Improper uploading will not be accepted as an excuse for late papers.

#### Late Policy:

Assignments received after the due date (where the student does **not** have an approved accommodation or extension) will be **penalized 5% per day**. Requests for extensions **MUST** be made prior to the due date and will **ONLY** be given in extenuating circumstances and may require approval through Student Accessibility Services.

Extensions will not be granted where good time management skills could have avoided the problem; i.e. extensions will not be granted for students who have a number of assignments due at the same time during the semester or for students who have decided to take an overload of classes this semester.

#### Style and grammar:

Marks are not directly deducted for poor writing style and grammar. However, you simply cannot achieve a good grade if the paper is difficult to read and the argument difficult to discern. It is essential to proofread.

#### Referencing:

Assignments must be **entirely your own work**. If the exact words or phrases of another author are used they must be in quotation marks with an accompanying citation (reference). Material that is paraphrased – that is, an idea from another author but put into your own words – must also be accompanied by a properly formatted citation.

Please use appropriate style (either MLA, APA or Chicago) in a consistent manner throughout the paper. Because Gender and Women's Studies is an interdisciplinary subject, MLA, APA and Chicago are all acceptable citation styles for papers in this course. Ensure you are consistent with one citation style throughout.

References are essential and have four purposes: (1) they indicate the source of the "quotations," (2) acknowledge the interpretations and ideas of others, (3) provide authority for facts which might be challenged or result from the research of others, and (4) point to other sources or interpretations of the same topic. In general, references acknowledge the use of another person's ideas and are essential in avoiding plagiarism. Failure to provide adequate references constitutes plagiarism.

#### Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty:

Plagiarism is a serious academic offence. Presenting an idea, words or an exact phrase of another author as your own work constitutes plagiarism. All students are required to know what constitutes plagiarism and how to avoid it.

If you have questions about what constitutes plagiarism you can consult the Lakehead University calendar available online:

<http://calendar.lakeheadu.ca/current/contents/regulations/univeregsIXacdishon.html>

All cases of plagiarism will be dealt with in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures approved by Senate and the Board of Governors. Other instances of Academic Dishonesty, including but not limited to double submission, purchasing of assignments (either online or from another student on campus), or copying of assignments will also be dealt with in accordance with the University regulations on Academic Dishonesty. Students may obtain a copy of the “Code of Student Behaviour and Disciplinary Procedures” from the Office of the Registrar for more information.

### Use of Chat GPT and AI

Please do your own work. Your ideas and contributions are valuable. See each assignment as an opportunity to build your writing and analysis skills. In this course, you are being assessed on your ability to understand and integrate knowledge with your own experiences, and to communicate this understanding in writing. AI does not have this capability. You are not expected to be perfect, you are expected to be engaged. Using Chat GPT/AI is a form of disengagement and is easily detectable when used for the assignments in this course.

Using Chat GPT or AI to write or construct papers and assignments constitutes academic dishonesty under the Student Code of Conduct. Students found to have been using Chat GPT or AI will receive a grade of zero on the assignment, without an opportunity to rewrite.

## **ASSIGNMENT INSTRUCTIONS**

### **Participation (10%, evaluated throughout term)**

Students should come to class with all materials read and notes taken in order to be prepared to contribute to class discussion through questions, comments, and respectful attention. In particular, you should come to each class prepared to spark discussion with a substantive reflection or observation about at least one of the readings. Some discussion questions and prompts will be posted on D2L under the “Content” tab for each week. These questions are meant to guide your reading of the required materials, and/or for you to think critically about afterwards. You should come to class prepared to answer or engage with the questions posted, and offer your own thoughts, insights and questions in relation to the readings or topic for each week.

It is essential to engage with the text and ideas presented in the readings, especially when you are drawing connections to your own experiences. Make sure to articulate these connections, rather than letting personal experience stand on its own. Students who do not engage with the texts will not receive full marks for participation.

We all benefit from lively, engaged discussion. Using a circle pedagogy, every student will have a chance to speak, and listen to the reflections of your classmates.

### **TCPS2 Certificate and Reflection (10%, DUE October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2024)**

Students will complete the newly updated modules required for the TCPS 2 Core (Course on Research Ethics), provided through the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans. Follow the link provided on D2L, completing all 9 modules and taking the quiz. Upon completion, you will receive a Certificate of Completion.

Each student will submit their TCPS 2 Certificate (downloadable upon completion) and a 1 page reflection on the TCPS2 training course. Your reflection should be guided by the following questions:

What did you learn?

How does it relate to course material/discussion thus far?

Why are Research Ethics especially important for Feminist/Anti-Oppressive research?

Was there anything you felt was missing from the modules?

### **Find the Method Assignment (10%, DUE October 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024)**

For this assignment, students will conduct a library search, using the Lakehead University Library database, to identify three (3) journal articles in which the researchers employ feminist research methods. You will then choose one (1) of these articles, and answer a series of questions about the method used. Students are provided with a worksheet to complete, which contains the following questions:

Describe the method(s) used for the research, including a brief description and summary of main findings.

What were the components of the research? (i.e. sample size, participants, texts, recruitment, etc.)

How did the author justify their use of the chosen method(s)?

What made the research feminist? Describe what actions or considerations the researcher(s) took to situate the research as feminist.

This assignment is designed to help you identify feminist research methods, and explore how they are used to produce feminist, anti-oppressive scholarship. Prior to the due date, students will receive an in-class tutorial from our Gender and Women's Studies librarian, Gisella Scalese, designed to teach you how to search for appropriate scholarly journal articles for this assignment.

### **Final Assignment (20%)**

Students may choose ONE of the following options to complete for their final assignment of the term:

Find the Method Assignment (2 x 10%, DUE November 27<sup>th</sup>, 2024)

For this option, students will complete two (2) more “Find the Method” assignment worksheets, using two different feminist research methods. The assignment requirements are the same as above.

This option is good for students who are new to research methods, are not sure they want to continue doing research, and/or would benefit from the practice of close reading.

OR

### Research Proposal (20%, DUE December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024)

Students will prepare a draft research proposal, in which you detail a chosen research method. Proposals can be tailored to each students’ MA project, or propose a fictional or “dream” research project. A typical research proposal will include: an introduction, literature review, explanation of research methods, potential challenges or limitations of the research, conclusion.

For this assignment, students should focus on the “research methods” section of the proposal, taking care to describe your proposed research method, how you plan to conduct the research, and any limitations of the chosen method. Students should cite scholars who write about research methods and methodologies used for their study. Proposals should be approx. 8-10 pages in length.

This option is good for students who are completing a research project or thesis as part of their MA work, or students who wish to gain experience proposing a research project. This is an essential skill for many jobs that require a MA degree.

## **WEEKLY READING SCHEDULE**

### **Week 1 - Wednesday, September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024: What is Feminist Research?**

Feminist Research Practice: Chapter 1: A Re-Invitation to Feminist Research

### **Week 2 - Wednesday, September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024: Feminist Empiricism and Standpoint Theory**

Feminist Research Practice: Chapter 2: Feminist Empiricism and Standpoint Theory: Approaches to Understanding the Social World

Research As Resistance: Chapter 3: Situating Anti-Oppressive Theories within Critical and Difference-Centered Perspectives.

### **Week 3 - Wednesday, September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024: Feminist Postmodernism, Poststructuralism and Critical Theory**

Feminist Research Practice: Chapter 3: Feminist Postmodernism, Poststructuralism and Critical Theory

Research As Resistance: Chapter 1: Becoming an Anti-Oppressive Researcher

**Week 4 - Wednesday, September 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024: Ethics and Feminist Research**

Feminist Research Practice: Chapter 4: Ethics and Feminist Research

Research As Resistance: Chapter 2: Emerging from the Margins: Indigenous Methodologies.

**Week 5 – Wednesday October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2024: Feminist Ethnography  
TCPS 2 Certificate and Reflection DUE**

Feminist Research Practice: Chapter 5: What Is Feminist Ethnography?

Research as Resistance: Chapter 10: Researching the Resurgence: Insurgent Research and Community-Engaged Methodologies in 21<sup>st</sup>-Century Academic Inquiry.

**Week 6 - Wednesday October 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024: Feminist Community Action Research**

Feminist Research Practice: Chapter 6: Feminist Practice of Action and Community Research

Research As Resistance: Chapter 4: Our Community Action Research Project: A Blueprint for Resistance.

**Wednesday October 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024: - READING WEEK - NO CLASS**

**Week 7 - Wednesday October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2024: Narrative and Storytelling**

Research As Resistance: Chapter 6: Narrative Research and Resistance: A Cautionary Tale.

Research As Resistance: Chapter 7: Honouring the Oral Traditions of the Ta't Mustimuxw (Ancestors) through Storytelling.

**Week 8 - Wednesday October 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024: Literary, Textual and Discourse Analysis  
Find the Method Assignment DUE**

Feminist Research Practice: Chapter 9: Feminist Media Research

Research as Resistance: Chapter 9: “On the Footsteps of Foucault”: Doing Foucauldian Discourse Analysis in Social Justice Research

**Week 9 – Wednesday, November 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024: Feminist Survey Research**

Feminist Research Practice: Chapter 10: Feminist Survey Research

**Week 10 - Wednesday, November 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024: Feminist Interviewing and Relational Practice**

Feminist Research Practice: Chapter 7: Feminist Approaches to In-Depth Interviewing

Feminist Research Practice: Chapter 8: The Practice of Feminist Focus Groups

**Week 11 - Wednesday, November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024: : Feminist Policy and Program Analysis**

Feminist Research Practice: Chapter 11: The Feminist Practice of Program Evaluation

**Week 12 - Wednesday, November 27<sup>th</sup>, 2024: Feminist Research in Review  
Find the Method Assignment Option DUE**

Feminist Research Practice: Chapter 12: Feminist Approaches to Mixed Methods Research

Feminist Research Practice: Chapter 13: Conclusion: Putting Together Your Research Project

**Wednesday, December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024: NO CLASS  
Research Proposal DUE**

Looking forward to a great term together!