

**The University of Western Ontario  
London Canada  
Department of Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies**

**GSWS 9459: Professional Development**

Details in this syllabus may change with sufficient notice to the class.

Professor: Laura Cayen  
E-mail: [lcayen2@uwo.ca](mailto:lcayen2@uwo.ca)

Class: Wednesdays 10:30-1:30  
Room: TBA

Office Hours: Tues 12:30-1:30, Weds 1:30-2:30, and by appointment. Check syllabus in OWL for any weekly changes to office hours.

Office Location: Lawson Hall XXXX plus option to meet by phone or zoom

Phone: 519-661-2111 x 82794

Zoom link for Office Hours: [LINK](#)

Password: GSWS

### **Course description**

This course is intended to assist graduate students in Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies with their professional development. The emphasis will be on developing practical skills for being successful as a graduate student, including developing pedagogical skills as a teaching assistant, literature reviews, grant writing, cv development, abstract writing and submission, knowledge mobilization, and the peer-review process for publishing in journals and edited collections. The course also highlights opportunities for alt-academic and non-academic career skill development.

### **Learning Objectives**

This course will prepare students to:

- Develop professional skills in research, teaching, and service
- Prepare for non-academic careers via an industry project or case study
- Contribute to a learning community and collaborative departmental culture
- Situate their experiences in the context of the intersecting roles and relationships of a (gendered, racialized and/or otherwise othered) student, teacher, researcher, disciplinary colleague, grant seeker, worker, and citizen.
- Assess and negotiate the competing demands and functions of the university as a neoliberal institution undergoing processes of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion and decolonization

## Assignments

Over the course of the term, you will demonstrate a record of performance in teaching, research, and service.\*

### Teaching

- Course outline (Oct 21; time provided in-class on Oct. 15)
- Teaching philosophy or lesson plan (Oct 28; time provided in-class on Oct 22)

### Research

- Lit review (5-6 pages plus completed strategy worksheet, Oct 29; start Sep 17 and complete on your own time)
- Knowledge mobilization product (Dec 3; start Oct 29 and complete on your own time)
- Industry project/case study (Nov 12; start Oct 1 and complete in small groups on your own time)

### Service

- Show up every week (not enough on its own to pass), including to GSWS and campus events outside of the class
- Contribute to the ‘committee’ and learning community, including through weekly discussion of readings and weekly in-class activities:
  - Building your term/program schedule (Sep 10)
  - Research question and lit review strategy (Sep 17)
  - Grant outline (Sep 24)
  - GSWS/campus event reflection (anytime!)
    - Attend any GSWS/campus/TRC event over the course of the term. Bring a short reflection on your experience to class to spark discussion.
  - Knowledge mobilization plan (Nov 4)
  - Networking workshop from Career Education at Western (Nov 26)

All assignments are required and need to be submitted and considered satisfactory in order to earn a Pass in the course.

\*Visit [UWOFA's Collective Agreement](#) with Western University to see how Teaching, Research, and Service are considered in academic promotion and tenure: ‘Promotion, Tenure, and Continuing Status’, p. 281.

### **Class Structure**

Most classes each week will start with an open call for contributions and participation: what are your reflections on the readings? How are you applying the lessons from academic texts to your plans for non-academic work? What workshops, speaker series, or community events have you attended on campus? How are you adapting guidelines for ‘success’ in a PhD program to your commitments to fight against the neoliberal, colonial, ableist, etc. institution of higher education?

What's going on with students in your tutorial or in your relationship with your supervisor that you'd like to talk out with your peers?

Following this call, we will move on to guided discussion of the texts, skill instruction, dedicated time to develop your written and oral deliverables for each week, and end with a class debrief about next steps. You are expected to come to class each week with all materials read, notes taken, ready to contribute to discussion (this means making an effort to initiate points for discussion, offering curious and constructive questions to the contributions of others, and listening respectfully and without distraction).

This is a required course and thus your attendance is required to complete in-class activities and contribute to a community of practice around professional development. If you will be absent, you should e-mail me as a courtesy to let me know and plan to complete and submit the week's activity on your own time using support and guidance from the syllabus, readings, and a classmate. Class time is your time to complete the work in a collegial and supported environment: make use of your peers and the professor to make what you are doing in your degree as relevant to your own needs as possible.

## Readings

There is no textbook to purchase; texts and articles are available online via OWL and the Course Readings portal through Western Libraries.