

**Department of Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies  
WESTERN UNIVERSITY**

**GSWS 2220E:  
FEMINIST THEORY & PRACTICE FOR CHANGE (2025-26)**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

How have feminists working across diverse approaches changed the ways we see, read, and think? Against what traditions have they resisted, and in what new directions do their works lead us? What are the relationships between feminist analyses, artistic/imaginative production, research methodologies and tabulations, the politics (even *violence*?) of representation, and ... *our gendered material realities*? How does theory inform practice, and vice versa? What are the ethical implications – and responsibilities – of feminist writing, innovation, research, and action?

This course studies feminist engagements with the (de)construction of historically raced, classed, and gendered/sexed subjectivities, and works with a diverse range of theoretical approaches in interdisciplinary and intersectional contexts. Together we will explore how the practices of producing knowledge have real-life effects. We will attend to the ways feminist in(ter)ventions at once resist, expand, and explode conventional approaches and ways of knowing, being, and doing. Ultimately, we examine the implications of feminist analyses and methods – with a focus on ever-creative feminist resistance and innovation for social transformation.

**INSTRUCTORS:**

**1<sup>st</sup> TERM**

Instructor: Dr. Lauren Auger                      lauger3@uwo.ca                      Office hours: TBA

**2<sup>nd</sup> TERM**

Instructor: Dr. K.J. (Kim) Verwaayen      [kjverwaa@uwo.ca](mailto:kjverwaa@uwo.ca)                      Office hours: TBA

**EVALUATION BREAKDOWN**

**ALL YEAR**

Participation	(5% each term)	10%
---------------	----------------	-----

**TERM 1**

Self/Reflection 1	(3 pages)	5%
Application Essay 1	(5-6 pages)	15%

Mid-Term Exam	(2-3 hours*; short answer + long answer or essay; 3h given)	25% TBA; Dec. exam
---------------	---	--------------------

**TERM 2**

Self/Reflection 2	(3 pages)	5%
Application Essay 2	(5-6 pages)	15%
Final Exam	(2-3 hours*; short answer + long answer or essay; 3h given)	25% TBA; April exam

**REQUIRED TEXTS:**

All course readings will be posted on OWL Brightspace – visit <https://westernu.brightspace.com/>

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES:**

Building on introductory courses in Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies, work in GSWS 2220E should enable students to:

- ❖ Understand and demonstrate the relationship between theory and practice, particularly in feminist work;
- ❖ Learn how feminist theory and practice are shaped by the intersecting axes of race, class, sexuality, gender, and (dis)ability, and to apply intersectional approaches;
- ❖ Recognize and critically assess some of the major feminist approaches and debates across research, theory, and practice;
- ❖ Assess, both personally and analytically, the implications of feminist theory and practice in relation to our gendered material and everyday realities;
- ❖ Trace and critique how historical, political, and social factors impact the development of feminist theory, research practice, and culture as resistance;
- ❖ Improve oral and written communication;
- ❖ Augment proficiency in critical thinking, research, and analytical skills.

**LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

UWO sits on the traditional lands of the Anishinaabeg, Haudenosaunee, Lenape and Attawandaron peoples “who have longstanding relationships to the region of southwestern Ontario and the City of London. In close proximity to Western, there are 3 local First Nations communities: the Chippewas of the Thames First Nation, Oneida Nation of the Thames, and Munsee Delaware Nation. In the region of southwestern Ontario, there are 9 First Nations and a growing Indigenous urban population”

(<http://indigenous.uwo.ca/universitywide/Indigenous%20Strat%20Plan%20-%20Draft%20V9.pdf>). It is vital to acknowledge Indigenous communities as the first and longest-standing stewards of Turtle Island. We know that anticolonial and decolonial work requires ongoing effort.

(What Land Acknowledgements *mean* and *do* will be part of our discussion in class.)

## STATEMENT ON GENDER-BASED AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE

“Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced gender-based or sexual violence (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts, [here](#). To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, click: [support@uwo.ca](mailto:support@uwo.ca)” – Western statement on GBSV

## SUPPORT / SERVICES

We often deal with difficult topics in GSWS, and material can be triggering. If you’re struggling, please see that “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” – <http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/exam/courseoutlines.pdf>.

Please also consider the Post-Secondary Student Helpline as a resource: 1-866-925-5454, or, if in immediate crisis, 911 (but please note that *police* may be first responders -?!) or Telehealth Ontario at 1-866-797-0000 for support.

There will also be a health supports tab (“Trigger Support”) with further resources on our Owl home page. It is really, really important for you to reach out if you’re struggling. Remember that there is a lot of help/support here at Western, and we can assist in directing you to (further) resources if you’re not sure from the above. There is a list of more services after the “Course Policies” section in this outline.

## ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTION

### Weekly Participation (10% of final grade) (5% per term)

This class involves student engagement in the learning process through active contributions to discussions and respectful listening in class. It is crucial to note that good participation is not the same as attendance alone. Students will be evaluated based on the quality and regularity of their contributions to class discussions.

**But Please Note:** We may at times have to cut discussion short during class to move ahead with other material. If you feel you haven’t been able to fully share your participation in any given week for this or other reasons, please feel welcome to email the term-assigned course TA your contributions **within 24h of the relevant lecture**. These contributions can be considered toward your participation mark.

### Self / Reflections (One each in Term 1 & 2): Worth 5% Each Term;

(3 pages each, not including Works Cited/References page, double spaced, 12-pt Times New Roman font) These assignments are the same in terms 1 & 2, but apply respectively to each specific term’s content:

Term 1: Flexible submission period (Monday, September 29-Monday, October 6)

Term 2: Flexible submission period (Monday, February 2 -Monday, February 9)

More details on this assignment will be available on the Owl site on or before the first day of class.

**Application Essay Education Plan: Term 1; Worth 15%** (5-6 pages, double spaced, Times New Roman font) not including Works Cited/References page) - Flexible submission deadline (Monday, November 17 – Monday November 24):

More details on this assignment will be available on the Owl site on or before the first day of class.

**Application Essay: Term 2; Worth 15%** (5-6 pages, double spaced, not including Works Cited/References page; 12-pt Times New Roman font) - Flexible submission deadline (**Monday, March 9 - Monday March 16**):

More details on this assignment will be available on the Owl site on or before the first day of class.

### **Term 1 & 2 Exams; Worth 25% Each**

Both exams in GSWS 2220E are based on the content for each specific term. They will be held in the Dec. and April exam periods, respectively. \*The questions for each exam should only take students about 2 hours to complete (but \*note that each exam is scheduled for 3h to allow time for planning, thought, and review). Format: each exam will consist of 2 sections: Part A - Short Answer and Part B - Longer Answer or an Essay.

*An exam format will be given in each term closer to the time.*

## **COURSE POLICIES**

### **Course Prerequisites**

GSWS 1020E, or 1.0 course from GSWS 1021F/G, GSWS 1022F/G, GSWS 1023F/G, GSWS 1024F/G. “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.”

– UWO policy statement for outlines

### **Learning Environments and Email Policies**

Participants enrolled in this class are expected to complete the required course readings, attend all class sessions, respectfully contribute to classroom activities and discussions, and complete course assignments on time. **You must use your Western (@uwo.ca) email address** when contacting us (instructors and/or TAs). We will try to reply to emails within twenty-four hours during working hours in the work week. Please do not expect an immediate response. **Put the course code GSWS 2220E in the subject line of the email.** Be as specific as possible with your questions. Specific questions receive specific answers. Substantive queries might be better addressed during office hours and/or in person.

### **Technological Requirements**

You will need access to a computer with excellent internet connection, as course content, announcements, and updates are primarily delivered via the course OWL site (<https://westernu.brightspace.com/>). Please visit the site regularly.

If you need assistance with the OWL site, check the [OWL Brightspace Help](#) page, and/or call Western Technology Services Helpdesk: 519-661-3800 or ext. 83800.

Note: while you can use electronics such as computers and smartphones for your learning, we ask that you be respectful and refrain from using your electronics for outside activity during class. Please have your telephones set to silent. Our learning environments should be respectful spaces. Note further: **You cannot use aids/devices** (other than as established in writing formally from your AE counsellor) **during GSWS 2220E exams, “including electronic devices of any kind (e.g. calculators, cell phones and smart watches).”** – UWO policy statement for outlines

## And Re: ChatGPT / AI

“ChatGPT and its various analogues are not ‘research help’ nor are they ‘grammar checkers.’ They produce text based on a predictive model as to what word is most likely to come next. When asked to cite ‘research,’ they have no capacity to do actual research, so they invent articles and books. You may find yourself citing a work whose author and title are complete fictions; more often, the AI attributes its imaginary research paper to a real scholar, but not necessarily one who even works in the area. Using a Generative AI app may seem like an easy way to manage your time or to simplify your workload, but if you use it without acknowledging that you are doing so, you are cheating. You are also depriving yourself of the value of education, since by using ChatGPT you are not building your own skills in critical thinking, research, or communication, all of which are areas of significant interest to potential employers. In brief, if you use a Generative AI app to help with your assignment, you **must** identify every part of your assignment that you did not write yourself. Anything else is a violation of academic integrity and subject to all the same penalties as more traditional types of plagiarism. If ChatGPT use is suspected, you may be asked to show your rough work, to answer questions about your sources and your research process, and to explain your argument orally”

– Original emphasis; 2025 GSWS Dept Handbook wording on ChatGPT

**Please don’t rush your work – and do not cheat!**

**NOTE: You cannot submit assignments in GSWS 2220E completed for other courses.**

### Submitting Work, and Academic Consideration:

Students should visit and become familiar with the Policy on Academic Consideration ( Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs) at [https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/academic\\_consideration\\_Sep24.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration_Sep24.pdf). Please note the student absence portal reporting/request tool for temporary absences is located here: [https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/academic\\_considerations/index.html](https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/academic_considerations/index.html); the site explains requirements and allowances in relation to missing course components due to extenuating circumstances.

Note that “This policy does not apply to requests for academic consideration submitted for **attempted or completed work**, whether online or in person. The policy also does not apply to students experiencing longer-term impacts on their academic responsibilities. These students should consult: [Accessible Education](#). **For procedures on how to submit Academic Consideration requests**, please see the information posted on the Office of the Registrar’s webpage:

<https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/academicconsiderations/>” – UWO policy statement for outlines

### Flexible submission deadline statement - Self-Reflection Papers (Terms 1 and 2) and Application Essays (Terms 1 and 2)

“When a student receives academic considerations or academic accommodations which overlap with the built-in flexibility of the assessment, the longest period of accommodation will determine the deadline. The built-in flexibility of the assessment should not be taken to extend any considerations or accommodations” – UWO policy statement for outlines

And yet....“Please note that because the submission deadline for these assessments already includes flexibility in the form of a submission period, the instructor reserves the right to deny academic consideration for assignments which are submitted following the end of the period of flexibility”

– UWO policy statement for outlines

### Late Penalty

You are expected to submit each written assignment to Turnitin (via Owl Brightspace) by the deadline indicated. "Should extenuating circumstances arise, students do not need to request Academic Consideration and they are permitted to submit their assignment **during the flexible assignment deadline** without a late penalty. Should students submit their assessment beyond the **flexible assignment deadline**, a late penalty ... will be applied." – UWO policy statement for outlines

In GSWS 2220E, the late penalty after the flex deadline is **2% per day**.

### Exams:

"Supporting documentation is **always** required for academic consideration requests for examinations scheduled by the office of the registrar (e.g. **December and April exams**). Please note that if you miss an exam in GSWS 2220E you are required to have permission from the Dean of your Faculty (in consultation with the instructor and Department Chair) to write a makeup exam (called a "Special Examination"). "Permission to write a Special Examination may be given on the basis of compassionate or medical grounds with appropriate supporting documents. To provide an opportunity for students to recover from the circumstances resulting in a Special Examination, the University has implemented Special Examinations dates. These dates as well as other important information about examinations and academic standing can be found [here](#)."

-- Arts and Humanities Associate Dean-Academic Direction for Instructors, 2025

Anyone who misses multiple exams within an exam period especially should see the 2025-26 Academic Calendar ([Special Examinations](#)),

Students granted a Special Exam sitting in GSWS 2220E from their Dean should note the following:

- **Make-Up Mid-Term: January 2026 (exact time and location TBD)**
- **Make-Up Final Exam: May 2026 (exact time, day, location TBD)**

**More information about missed coursework (verbatim from UWO Senate Policy – UWO policy statements for outlines):**

"All requests for Academic Consideration must be made within 48 hours after the assessment date or submission deadline.

All academic consideration requests must include supporting documentation; however, recognizing that formal documentation may not be available in some extenuating circumstances, the policy allows students to make one Academic Consideration request **without supporting documentation** in this course." (**Again: please note this exemption does not apply to Term 1 or Term 2 exams in 2220E**)

### Policy on Accommodation for Religious Holidays

You can review the [policy for Accommodation for Religious Holidays](#): "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"

– UWO policy statement for outlines

### Academic Accommodation and Accessible Education



“Academic Accommodation is ‘a means of adjusting the academic activities associated with a course or program of student in order to permit students with disabilities to participate in those activities at the University and to fulfill the essential requirements of a course or program’

<https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academicpolicies/appeals/Academic%20Accommodationdisabilities.pdf>.

Students with disabilities are encouraged to register with **Accessible Education** at the earliest opportunity. ‘Accessible Education plays a central role in Western's efforts to ensure that its academic programs are accessible for all students’ <http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessibleeducation/index.html>”

— Arts and Humanities Associate Dean-Academic Direction for Instructors, 2024

### **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:

<http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academicpolicies/appeals/scholasticdisciplineundergrad.pdf>”

– UWO policy statement for outlines

### **Turnitin**

“All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted 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 licencing agreement currently between the University and Turnitin.com”

– <https://elearningtoolkit.uwo.ca/tools/TurnItIn.html>

### **Plagiarism**

Plagiarism constitutes a serious academic offense. “Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage of text 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 academic offense (see Scholastic Offense Policy in the Western Academic Calendar). Plagiarism checking: The University of Western Ontario uses software for plagiarism checking. Students may be required to submit their work in electronic form for plagiarism checking” – UWO policy statement for outlines

If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism, please contact your TA and/or instructor. *See the statement on use of Chat GPT/AI earlier in this outline.*

**Again, you cannot submit assignments in GSWS 2220E completed for other courses.**

### **Grade Concerns:**

Please review the Gender, Sexuality, and Women’s Studies grading criteria at the end of the Support Services section below. If you have questions about comments or your grade on an assignment, please re-review the criteria in relation to the assignment requirements and your marker’s feedback **prior to** requesting a meeting for discussion. If then you still have questions about your grade, please directly contact the person (Professor or TA) who marked your assignment to schedule a meeting. This requires you wait a minimum of 24 hours after receiving your grade for such a request.

## **SUPPORT SERVICES**

All information in quotation marks below comes verbatim from UWO statements for course outlines:

### **“Academic Advising**

Your Home Faculty's Academic Advising Office will support or refer whenever you have an issue that is affecting your studies, including information on adding/dropping courses, academic considerations for absences, appeals, exam conflicts, and many other academic related matters. Do not hesitate to reach out to them if you are struggling and unsure where to go for help. Contact info for all Faculties is here:

<https://registrar.uwo.ca/facultyacademiccounselling.html>

### **Mental Health Support**

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western (<https://uwo.ca/health/>) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

### **Gender-Based and Sexual Violence**

[We think this info on GBSV (and on mental health support, as above) is so important it's worth repeating in our outline.]

Western University [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 experienced GBSV (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at the following website: <https://www.uwo.ca/health/studentsupport/survivorsupport/get-help.html>. To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact [support@uwo.ca](mailto:support@uwo.ca).

### **Learning Development and Success**

Counsellors at the Learning Development and Success Centre <https://learning.uwo.ca> are ready to help you improve your learning skills. They offer presentations on strategies for improving time management, multiple-choice exam preparation/writing, textbook reading, and more. Individual support is offered throughout the Fall/Winter terms in the drop-in Learning Help Centre, and year-round through individual counselling.

### **USC**

Additional student-run support services are offered by the USC, <https://westernusc.ca/services/>."