WS 9565A Feminist Theory and Method in Arts and Humanities
Fall 2015 / Pennee
Lawson Hall 2205 (unless notified otherwise)
Thursdays 9:30am to 12:30pm, beginning September 10th, 2015
Preliminary Course Information

Instructor:
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The official course outline will be available via the OWL course site not later than the first day of class (Thursday September 10th, 9:30am to 12:30pm in Lawson Hall 2205). Students registered in the course will receive notification through the OWL email distribution list.

Course Objectives:
This iteration of the course has been designed to engage you in both applied and reflective research processes, through facilitated hands-on development of information literacy and search skills alongside study of and reflection on theory and methodology, all in a supportive and interactive research seminar environment.

The course will:
- integrate co-instruction with Western Libraries’ academic Research and Instructional librarians and archivists in basic and advanced search methods and research
- cultivate of an understanding (through direct experience) of research as an iterative and exploratory but also disciplined and organized process
- explore selected readings in disciplinary methods
- engage us in reflection on our own methods, assumptions, and positionings
- facilitate the development of individual research projects (for example, for a single course during the same term of study, for a conference paper or article, or for early stages of thesis or other major research project work for your degree studies) with assignments specific to this development
- develop a cohort or community of researcher-colleagues through shared weekly course activities such as in-class discussion and peer feedback on work in progress

Required and Recommended Reading:
There is no textbook for this course, but there are readings that will be used to study and discuss theorizing and practicing feminist scholarship: readings (available under Fair Dealing and Education Exception Copyright regulations) and bibliographic information by which to locate on-line readings (accessible by licensed use through Western Libraries on-line Catalogue) will be available in the Resources section of the OWL course site.

These readings are limited in number and length in order to provide depth of study and engagement of theory and method in the selected readings, while allowing time for on-going research, reading, and analysis of resources found through searches by each student on a topic of their choice.

Methods of Assessment:
You will have the opportunity to develop a draft research proposal (10%), an analytical annotated bibliography of the 5 best sources by which you are developing your research topic/question (25%), and a final research proposal (30%). These three phases of your research process will constitute the substantive written evidence of your research productivity, and as such are the most weighted modes of assessments for the course.

You will have the opportunity to present orally in class an analysis of one source from your annotated bibliography-in-progress, for its particular significance to the development of your research topic/question. A peer will provide feedback on and assess your presentation, and you will reciprocate for a peer’s presentation. You will be graded by the instructor/s for your presentation (10%) as well as for your assessment and feedback on a peer’s presentation (10%). By these means, you will have an opportunity to practice as a contributing member of a scholarly community. You will be an informed colleague to a peer’s research process as well as advancing your own learning about research methods through your informed engagement with a peer’s work in progress.

Finally, the completion of a variety of applied exercises and reflection pieces (15%) will round out the assessment of your development and accomplishments as a scholarly researcher in this feminist theory and method course. These components of your course work will derive principally from a mix of required and (your choice of a minimum number of) recommended module activities in a newly-developed on-line course entitled S2S (Student to Scholar/Academic Literacies and Research Skills). S2S is being developed for Ontario graduate students in the social sciences, but it contains material that is relevant and easily transferable to research processes in other disciplines. And Women’s Studies research is by necessity cross-disciplinary work!

Between these written, oral, on-line, and in-class applied and reflective engagements in doing research on a topic of each student’s choice, WS 9565A will immerse you in feminist theorizing and feminist methodology in instructor-facilitated ways and in organic ways determined by your research needs. The modes of assessment will be cumulative and integrated, while allowing for the iterative nature of the research process and feedback along the way. (You will also learn how to use citation management tools to organize your research findings as you conduct your searches and to simplify the creation of bibliographies for your research needs in future.)

The fall 2015 iteration of WS 9565A has been co-developed by faculty member Donna Palmateer Pennee (English; WSFR Affiliate Member) and academic Research and Instructional Librarians Marg Sloan, Colleen Burgess, and Melanie Mills. The co-developers are also co-instructors for the course, though not all librarian co-instructors will be able to attend all classes. The faculty member, as the instructor-of-record responsible for the course, will attend all classes. Office hours will be posted to OWL by the first day of classes, as well as the weekly schedule.*

* Please note that from time to time, we may need to adjust the schedule in consultation with all class members in relation to the pace of learning and workload. At no time, however, would such adjustment require you to complete or submit work earlier than originally scheduled. Note as well that some in-class activities and readings for later weeks of our schedule may be “tba” in the original posting of the schedule, but these tba items will not alter the modes or weights of assessment identified above. (All readings will be of article or book-chapter length only.)