

**The University of Western Ontario  
London Canada  
Department of Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies  
GSWS 2252F: Digital Patriarchy: Gender, Social Media, and AI**

**Term:** Fall 2025

**Instructor:** Peyton Campbell

**Email:** pcampb26@uwo.ca

**Date and Time:** TBA

**Location:** TBA

**Office Hours:** TBA

The department would like to recognize that we are located on the traditional land of the Anishinaabeg, Haudenosaunee, Lenape and Attawandaron peoples.

**Course Description:** This course explores the interconnected relationship between patriarchy, white supremacy, digital technologies, and cyberspace. Employing critical feminist and culture studies theories, students will explore the obscured contributions of women and people of colour to the history of digital technologies, the role of misogyny and racism in shaping online spaces, the rise of online extremism, and ongoing efforts to utilize digital technology and online spaces to dismantle legal and social equality. Students will also explore how feminists have and continue to use digital technologies to shape online (and offline) culture and challenge patriarchy, white supremacy, and gendered oppression.

### **Course Objectives**

*By the end of this course, students will:*

1. Investigate the impact of patriarchy, colonialism, and white supremacy in shaping digital technologies and online cultures
2. Analyze the proliferation of racist, misogynistic, and antifeminist online communities and their impact on laws, policy, and popular culture
3. Identify the contributions of women and people of colour to digital technologies and online communities
4. Understand how feminists have utilized digital technologies and online spaces to engage in feminist activism
5. Critically assess the benefits and drawbacks of using digital technologies to achieve feminist goals

### **Evaluations**

1. Participation (15%)
2. Feminist Activism Creative Project (25%)
3. Feminist Activism presentation (10%)
4. Annotated Bibliography (15%)

## 5. Final Paper (35%)

### **Modules**

1. The Gendering of Technology
2. Patriarchy Online
3. Feminized Labour and Anti-Feminist Practice
4. Feminism Goes Digital

### ***Participation***

Students are expected to arrive to class having completed all required readings and prepared to engage in group discussion and class activities. Participation marks will be divided between attendance and active engagement during class time.

### ***Feminist Activism Creative Project***

Students will create their own example of digital feminist activism that addresses an aspect of digital patriarchy. Students may choose to create a social media post, an infographic, a blogpost, an online video, digital art, or something else entirely. Students will then write a formal response outlining their creative project, what issue(s) or aspect of patriarchy it seeks to address, how it does so, and why it took the form it did.

### ***Digital Feminist Activism Presentation***

Working in pairs students will locate an example of historical or ongoing digital feminist activism not discussed in class. They can choose an online campaign, digital art/artist, an activist group, or something else. On the last day of class students will present their chosen example to the class. Presentations should be no more than 10 minutes in length. Each pair must present a different example, so students should select and inform the instructor of their chosen example as early as possible. All groups must have emailed the instructor their selected example by week 10 of the course.

### ***Annotated Bibliography and Proposal***

Students will submit a proposal for their final paper that includes an annotated bibliography. In no more than 1-page, students will explain their proposal for the final essay. Students must identify how their proposed essay engages with what they have learned in the course. Annotated bibliographies will begin on the page directly following the proposal and must include one course reading and at least three scholarly sources from outside the course.

### ***Research Essay***

Students will write a research essay that engages with the themes, concepts, and/or critiques they have explored throughout the course. Essays must have a clear thesis statement that is supported with evidence. MLA or APA citations.

### **Course Materials**

There are no required textbooks for this course. All readings will be available through the Western Libraries Online Catalogue (Omni) or posted to Brightspace.

## **Course Policies**

### **Assignment Submission**

All assignments must be submitted on Brightspace as a word document (.docx) with any extra materials (videos, pictures, etc.) either included at the end of the word document or attached as a separate file. Students are expected to follow proper formatting for all assignments, including 12-point Times New Roman font, 2.54cm margins, etc. Students may use APA or MLA citation and paper formatting.

The file name of assignments will be as follows: Lastname, Firstname – GSWS 2252F Assignment. For example: Campbell, Peyton – GSWS 2252F Final Essay.

### **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, here:

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

The instructor reserves the right to use plagiarism checking software like TURNITIN.

### **Brightspace**

All course material will be posted to Brightspace: <https://westernu.brightspace.com/>.

If students need assistance with Brightspace, they can seek support on the [OWL Brightspace Help](#) page, or the [Western Technology Services Helpdesk](#) online or by phone at 519-661-3800 or ext. 83800 for technical support.

Students are responsible for checking Brightspace regularly for news and updates. This is the primary method by which information will be shared with students.

### **Email Policy**

Please allow 48 hours for the Instructor to respond to emails. Emails sent anytime after 8pm or on weekends will likely not receive a response until at least the following workday. Students are expected to email their instructor professionally and should include “GSWS 4462G” in the email subject heading.

Students are asked to wait 24 hours after receiving marks back before emailing the instructor about their mark.

### **Electronic Devices**

Electronic devices are permitted during class time for course related activities only. The instructor reserves the right to restrict the use of electronic devices at any time.

### **Late Policy**

Students are expected to submit each of their written assignments by the deadline listed. Should extenuating circumstances arise, students are permitted a 72-hour grace period for which they will receive no late mark penalty. Students are encouraged to reach out to the instructor to request extensions that will

go beyond this grace period. After 72 hours, assignments will be penalized 1% per day that the assignment is not submitted to the instructor.

### **Academic Accommodations**

Academic Accommodations are “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 may seek formal disability accommodations through Accessible Education:

[https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/Academic%20Accommodation\\_disabilities.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/Academic%20Accommodation_disabilities.pdf)

In recognition that not all disabilities are medically diagnosed and not all needs for accommodations fit within a disability framework, students are encouraged to reach out to the instructor to discuss any accommodations that would be beneficial to them and which do not violate Western policy.

### **Academic Considerations**

“Academic consideration gives students consistent, fair, and academically appropriate consideration when unable to complete a course-related component due to extenuating circumstances. Extenuating circumstances are personal circumstances beyond the student's control that have a substantial but temporary impact on the student's ability to meet essential academic requirements.”

Students should consult Western’s [Policy on Academic Consideration](#) and the [Registrar’s Office information on the Student Absence Portal](#).

Students must be present on the final day of class for their Feminist Activism presentation. ***If a student is unable to attend they must let the instructor know as soon as possible to arrange for an alternative presentation format.***

### **Participation**

Students are encouraged to attend every class, and should notify the instructor if they will be unable to attend. Students are permitted one undocumented absence per course without impacting their participation mark.

### **Generative Artificial Intelligence Policy**

Students are not permitted to use generative AI programs to write, in whole or in part, any of their assignments for this course. Students may seek special permission from the instructor to use AI in specific circumstances, but this must be approved by the instructor prior to use. If a student uses AI to write any part of their assignment without disclosing that they have done so, they have committed academic dishonesty and may face repercussions.

If AI use is suspected, the instructor may ask for research notes, rough drafts, essay outlines, and other materials used in preparing assignments. **Students are expected to retain these materials until after final grades have been entered.** In the unlikely event of concerns being raised about the authenticity of

any assignment, students may be asked to produce these materials; an inability to do so may weigh heavily against them.

Please see Western's official policy on AI for more information: <https://ai.uwo.ca/Guidance/Policy.html>

Students should also be aware of the environmental costs of using AI: <https://oecd.ai/en/wonk/understand-environmental-costs>

## **Student Supports**

### **Gender-based and Sexual Violence Support**

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).

***This course will include required readings and in-class discussion of gender-based and sexual violence.*** If you have questions about course content please reach out to the instructor.

### **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.

### **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/>.

### **Western University Student Code of Conduct**

Students are required to abide by the [Student Code of Conduct](#) policies, [anti-harassment and non-discrimination](#) policies, and policies on [gender-based and sexual violence](#) in the classroom as well as within virtual spaces.