

GENDRST 701
Doing Research in Feminist and Gender Studies
McMaster University
2016-2017

Thursdays, every other week, 1:30-4:30pm Fall Term, **2:30-5:30pm Winter Term**

Location, Fall Term: TSH 321

Location, Winter Term: TSH 530

Instructor: Dr. Amber Dean

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Office Hours: Tuesdays, 12:30-2:30pm or by appointment

Course Description:

This course is a feminist/anti-racist/decolonial/queer exploration of research methods. In it, we will read literature and meet with scholars, from McMaster and elsewhere, who challenge the assumptions and procedures of knowledge production, truth claims, and social change agendas. We will address some of the central concerns of feminist, anti-racist, decolonial and queer research across a range of disciplines, including both formative and more contemporary scholarly work. We will also explore the intersections among methodology and theory; in fact, some of the material we read falls into both or neither of these categories.

The course incorporates some of the events that make up the GSFR Research Symposium; some of the guest lecturers we invite to speak for the program will also come to our class. In addition, two or three McMaster researchers with widely divergent research programs, methodologies and disciplinary/interdisciplinary approaches will come to class to share their approach to research.

The course runs both fall and winter semesters and meets, generally speaking, bi-weekly. Some research symposium events fall outside of our Thursday afternoon meeting time; you are still required to attend these events unless you have a direct conflict with another course or TA assignment.

Course Objectives:

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

1. Familiarity with a number of key foundational, and some more contemporary, works and approaches in feminist methodology
2. Problematizing the idea of feminist methodology. Is there such a thing? How do foundational texts relate to work on critical race, decolonial, and queer methodologies?
3. Critical examination of these texts and methodologies, including how they engage with such issues as intersectionality, inclusiveness, etc.
4. Ability to ground theory/methodology in “real world” examples or case studies
5. Ability to think and write about methodologies in relation to one another
6. Ability to determine the key concepts of a reading, and to facilitate discussion that elaborates/reflects on these concepts.

7. Application of a number of methodologies: we will conduct interviews, complete the MREB ethics protocol, make a critical reading of a text, etc. These will be small-scale assignments, but they will allow you to test out a methodological approach rather than just reading about it.
8. Development of oral communication skills, especially the ability to engage in critical dialogue about intellectual issues
9. Development of listening skills

Required Texts:

All assigned readings for our course are available electronically in “Avenue to Learn,” McMaster’s online learning management system. For instructions on accessing Avenue to Learn, please see below. Readings selected by guest speakers may only be posted one week in advance of their visit to the class.

Assignments and Evaluation Scheme:

Facilitating discussion of an assigned reading	15%
Seminar participation and attendance at Research Symposium Events	15%
Written assignments (5 x 10% each)	50%
Final presentation	20%

NB: For each of the above assignments, please see the detailed handout available in Avenue

McMaster’s Statement on Academic Integrity:

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity. Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: “Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty”), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, located at <http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity>

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

- 1) Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which other credit has been obtained.
- 2) Improper collaboration in group work.
- 3) Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

Avenue to Learn:

In this course we will be using ‘Avenue to Learn’ (the online learning management system at McMaster). Students should be aware that when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will

be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

I will use 'Avenue to Learn' to distribute additional information about course assignments and expectations, so you should make a point of accessing it frequently (at least twice per week) in order to keep up-to-date with our course. Any announcements about changes to assigned readings, office hours, or class cancellations will also be made through Avenue. Students who are unfamiliar with the 'Avenue to Learn' system should familiarize themselves with the system as soon as possible; if you have any questions please seek immediate assistance by seeing me during office hours, or review the online tips and help available on the McMaster 'Avenue to Learn' webpage.

How to Access Avenue to Learn:

Step One: Make Sure You Are in the Avenue Database

- If you are officially registered in the course (and have paid your fees), you will be automatically enrolled in the Avenue database. Go to Step Two.
- If you are not registered in the course or have not paid your fees, you will not be able to access the course on Avenue and you must remedy that situation. Then, wait until the Avenue database is updated. These updates are supposed to occur daily overnight, but there may be some delays at the beginning of the year. Also, if you register in the course during the first or second week of classes, wait two days; if you still can't access the course in Avenue please contact your instructor.

Step Two: Login to Avenue

- Go to the website: <http://avenue.mcmaster.ca/index.html>
- Log in. Your user ID is your MAC ID -- eg: if your email id is: janed@mcmaster.ca; then your User ID is: janed. Your Avenue password is the same as your MAC ID password.
- If you do not have a MAC ID or you haven't activated yours yet, you will need to do so. To do this, go to http://www.mcmaster.ca/uts/email_accounts/macid.html and follow the online instructions.

Step Three: Choose GSFR 700 under "My Courses"

- From your personalized course listings, click on GSFR 700 under 2012 Fall (T1). You are now inside the Avenue site for our course!

Do I need new software?

All you need to access Avenue is an internet browser. It is possible, though unlikely, that you will have to update your browser or change some of your "pop up" settings. If you have any problems viewing the site, go to the Avenue login page and click on "Browser Check"

eSupport for Avenue

You can access eSupport from the main Avenue site. Go to the login page; click "Support" on the lefthand frame, then click on the "eSupport" hyperlink. Click "I am a student," and you will have access to quick help, video tutorials, manual references, and more

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF SEMINAR TOPICS & READINGS¹ TERM II

Jan 5th	Welcome Back / Term Overview / Discussion & Workshopping of IRP topics / Overview of IRP proposal process
Jan 19th	Feminist Approaches to Ethnography/Oral History/Interviews Required readings: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Judy Stacey, “Can there be a feminist ethnography?” <i>Women's Studies International Forum</i>, 11 (1988): 21-27. 2) Joan Sangster, “Telling Our Stories: Feminist Debates and the Use of Oral History.” <i>Women's History Review</i> 3.1 (March 1994): 5-28. 3) Eli Clare, “The Politics of Story.” Notes from a lecture at McMaster, September 2015.
Feb 2nd	Feminist Collaboration Required readings: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Carol J. Singley and Elizabeth Sweeney, “In League With Each Other: The Theory and Practice of Feminist Collaboration,” <i>Common Ground: Feminist Collaboration in the Academy</i>. Elizabeth Peck and Joanne Mink, eds. SUNY Press, 1997. 2) Koni Benson and Richa Nagar, “Collaboration as Resistance? Reconsidering the Process, Products, and Possibilities of Feminist Oral History and Ethnography,” <i>Gender, Place and Culture</i> 13/5 (October 2006): 581-92. 3) Dorothy Christian and Victoria Freeman, “The History of a Friendship, or Some Thoughts on Becoming Allies.” In <i>Alliances: Re/Envisioning Indigenous/Non-Indigenous Relationships</i>. Lynne Davis, ed. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010.
Feb 9th	Written Assignment #4 (Interview) Due – Upload to Avenue Dropbox
Feb 16th *Joint 701/707 class	Activist Scholarship Required readings: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Catherine M. Orr. “Activism.” In <i>Rethinking Women's and Gender Studies</i>, Catherine M. Orr, Ann Braithwaite, and Diane Lichtenstein, eds. New York: Routledge, 2012: 85-101. 2) Julia Sudbury and Margo Okazawa-Rey, “Introduction: Activist Scholarship and the Neoliberal University after 9/11.” In <i>Activist Scholarship: Antiracism, Feminism, and Social Change</i>. Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers, 2009: 1-14. 3) Si Transken. “Feminist Research/ers, Longitudinal Multilocationality, Money: How Many Ways Can This Hurt?” In <i>Corridor Talk: Canadian Feminist Scholars Share Stories of Research Partnerships</i>. Rachel Berman, ed. Toronto: Inanna Publications, 2014: 194-220.

¹ At certain points in the course it may make good sense to modify the schedule of seminar topics and readings. The instructor reserves the right to modify elements of the course and will notify students accordingly.

Mar 2nd	<p>Guest Speaker Janice Acoose (Locations TBA) Public Talk 1:30-2:30pm Lunch and Grad Seminar 3:00-4:30pm Required readings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Janice Acoose, “Knowing Relations is Knowing Oneself,” <i>Windspeaker</i>, Vol. 11, No. 24, 1994: 4. 2) Janice Acoose, <i>Iskwewak – Kah’ Yaw Ni Wahkomakanak: Neither Indian Princesses nor Easy Squaws</i>. 2nd Edition. Toronto: Women’s Press, 2016. [excerpts]
Mar 9th	<p>Written Assignment #5 (Collaborative Writing) Due – Upload to Avenue Dropbox</p>
Mar 16th	<p>GSFR PhD Diploma Student Research Panel (Location TBA)</p>
Mar 30th	<p>Final Presentations</p>