



Lakehead
UNIVERSITY

Social Justice
Studies

Graduate Program Handbook

Master of Arts Degree

Lakehead University, Thunder Bay and Orillia Campuses, ON, Canada

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Introduction

Thank you for your interest in the Graduate Program (MA) in Social Justice Studies (SJS) at Lakehead University. The program is offered on both the Thunder Bay and Orillia campuses. This handbook serves as a guide to help prospective and enrolled students successfully navigate the SJS program and the rules and regulations laid out by the Faculty of Graduate Studies and the Research Office at Lakehead University.

For application information, please use the Faculty of Graduate Studies [webpage](#).

The SJS [website](#) contains up-to-date information on program changes, course offerings, and other news. If you find inconsistencies between the handbook and the website, please bring them to the attention of the Program Facilitator, and those inconsistencies will be resolved. This handbook is a living document and subject to change.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss any aspect of the SJS program, please contact:

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For further information about programs, research, academics, forms and procedures, be sure to visit the [Faculty of Graduate Studies](#) website.

Questions about graduate studies at Lakehead can be directed to the Graduate Office located on the Thunder Bay campus in CASES (FB 2010) or by phone at (807) 343-8785.

Lakehead offers a number of [Indigenous Initiatives](#).

International students should visit [Lakehead International](#) to learn about studying and living in Thunder Bay, Orillia, or Canada more generally.

Mission Statement for the Social Justice Studies Program

“The intellectual project of decolonization has to set out ways to proceed through a colonizing world. It needs a radical compassion that reaches out, that seeks collaboration, and that is open to possibilities that can only be imagined as other things fall into place”

-Linda Tuhiwai Smith

The program is firmly grounded in critical theory and community-based research that reflects both a politicized praxis in teaching and a transformative approach to research and knowledge as tools for social change and advocacy. Engaging with social justice means actively working towards eradicating settler colonialism, structural inequalities and violences, gender inequality, white supremacy and racism, homophobia, transphobia, poverty, and more; this program is committed to helping students do just that through social learning.

The program is offered through the Thunder Bay and Orillia campuses. As small campuses in small cities, both locations are ideally situated to offer students hands-on opportunities in community-based engagement through participation in local grassroots movements and organizations. We encourage our students to be actively engaged and to know that they can make a difference for the better. In order to serve students on both campuses, course delivery is a mix of face-to-face classes, online classes (Zoom and asynchronous), and telepresence classes delivered from a classroom in either Thunder Bay or Orillia. Please talk with the program facilitator about the course delivery options if you have concerns.

Located within the territories of the Anishinaabe peoples and the Three Fires Confederacy, Lakehead University's MA in Social Justice Studies (SJS) is an interdisciplinary graduate program housed in the **Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities**. SJS delivers a transformative education by asking students to think critically about the values, cultural assumptions, and actions that maintain the current economic, political, and social structures that shape our day-to-day lives. Our program empowers students with the practical skills and theoretical knowledge necessary to challenge the informal and formal configurations of power and oppression within local, national, and global contexts.

Social Justice Studies Learning Outcomes

Watch for learning outcomes listed on your syllabi. The required courses (Social Justice Theory (5030), Research and Research Methodologies in Social Justice (5090), GWS Theory and Research WOME 5101) will be trying to help you achieve many of these outcomes, but your electives will focus on one or two of the outcomes, and your stream selection will help you achieve specific outcomes.

- (a) To understand the social, historical and cultural bases of poverty and social barriers in relation to sexism, racism, ethnocentrism, ageism, ableism, classism, heterosexism and other prejudicial attitudes and practices;
- (b) to understand the historical and ongoing impacts of settler colonialism, imperialism, and white supremacy in local, national, and global contexts
- (c) To critically evaluate existing literature in social justice-related research fields and to demonstrate a systematic understanding of this knowledge;
- (d) To conduct independent research and show competence in the research process of a specific area within the field of social justice studies;
- (e) To understand the advocacy process;
- (f) To critique social policy;
- (g) To communicate ideas, issues and conclusions clearly and effectively;
- (h) To recognize the complexity of knowledge and the challenges inherent in the achievement of social justice;
- (i) To understand and employ social justice in creative work and social activism.

Getting started: preparation and application

1. Familiarize yourself with the program and faculty.

- Keep reading the Handbook to learn about the program and visit the website for additional information.
- Visit the [SJS Supervisor Faculty webpage](#) and contact faculty members who teach and research in areas of interest to you if you have specific questions.
- Be sure to see what kind of [projects previous students](#) have undertaken.
- For students with undergraduate degrees in English and Sociology, consider earning an MA degree from the appropriate department but add the SJS specialization:
 - [English](#)
 - [Sociology](#)
- Contact the Program Facilitator to talk about your interests in the program.
- Explore scholarships and other funding opportunities [see below] that you can apply for both as you enter the program and as you continue your studies into the second year.

2. Prepare your application.

The program asks you to answer three application questions, submit your transcripts and English language tests for those students who do not speak English as their first language or have not been attending higher education delivered in English. You will need to ask for two references; one academic reference and one professional reference is acceptable. The three application prompts are:

1. **Your preparation for the program.** How have your schooling and /or lived experiences prepared you for the SJS Program at Lakehead? Please reference relevant coursework, relevant scholars you have read or studied with, specific papers or projects you have completed, specific work or volunteer experiences relevant to social justice studies, and specific personal

- life experiences that have prepared and motivated you to pursue an MA in Social Justice Studies.
2. **Your goals while enrolled in the program.** What are your research, creative, practicum and/or course interests (address one or two, not all)? What specific learning goals do you have for your time in the program? How might you use your time in the program to deepen your engagement with social justice efforts locally or globally?
 3. **Your goals for post-graduation, whether professional, personal, and community-minded.** How will an MA in SJS contribute to your next steps? That could mean your next educational step, your professional or career development, your civic participation goals, and/or your personal goals.

For admission to the Gender and Women's Studies (GWS) Specialization, students must complete the additional section within the application portal.

3. Submit all your application materials by February 1 for a fall semester start. The Program will begin reviewing applications on or close to February 1, so please submit all your application materials by or before that date. Be sure that those writing letters of reference have submitted their evaluation. You will receive notification of the admissions committee's decision from the Faculty of Graduate Studies; you will be asked to accept or decline your offer. Please read all correspondence from FGS carefully and follow their instructions.

International students, it is particularly important to meet the February 1 deadline because the program is only able to offer a Graduate Assistantship to the top international applicant who submits by February 1.

If you miss the deadline, applications will be accepted until the program meets its acceptance goals for the academic year. Applications are likely to close by the end of April. Those considering applications after February 1 should contact the Program Facilitator before submitting materials. Late applicants may not be eligible for assistantships, and course registration typically opens in late June.

The program does not offer a winter intake.

You've been accepted: now what?

1. Ask more questions! We know you have been holding back the nitty-gritty questions like "What courses should I take?" "Who is my advisor?" "What course will I be a Graduate Assistant for?" Now is the time to ask any questions you might have. You will be asked to commit to the program in your letter of offer, so be sure you have all the information you need to make this decision.
2. The most frequently asked questions are "What is an FCE?" and "Why is the program only 4.0 FCEs?" FCE stands for "full course equivalent." A course that is only one semester is worth .5 FCE; a full-year course, including a course that bridges spring and summer, is worth 1.0 FCE.

Graduate classes often have significantly higher reading and writing expectations than undergraduate classes, so taking only one class per semester is considered full-time, but two courses per term is recommended for timely completion of the program. Graduate Assistants work 10 hours a week on top of the 20-30 hours a week that go into coursework. The year-long options like Research Project, Creative Project, and Practicum are time-consuming undertakings worth 1.0 FCE.

3. Consult the “Important Dates” section of the handbook so you can find information like when you can sign up for classes, when you should be on campus for orientation, when classes start, etc..
4. Consult the [University Calendar](#) to become familiar with Lakehead University’s rules and regulations.

The Calendar is the definitive reference for any Lakehead University regulations and should be consulted if you have questions about University regulations or policies. The Graduate Coordinator or the Administrative Assistant can assist you in clarifying Lakehead University regulations and policies that are relevant to your program of study, but students need to familiarize themselves with the regulations and policies.

See the policies and regulations section below for more information.

Registration and Full-Time Status

SJS is officially a two-year program (six terms), but most students can complete their studies in four or five terms. A few students complete in three terms or semesters.

- Three terms: students willing to take 1.5 FCE in two of the three semesters. Students are typically in the coursework or practicum stream.
- Four terms: used by students who earn 1.0 FCE per semester. Students are typically in the coursework or practicum stream.
- Five terms: typically used by students completing research or creative projects.
- Six terms: sometimes a student will need the sixth term to complete a project.

The program does not have a part-time option. As long as a student is enrolled in one course, they are considered full-time. The program does not offer a flextime option.

SJS is officially offered on both campuses as of Fall 2025. Course delivery is best described as “mixed methods,” but Thunder Bay students will typically have a few more face-to-face classes available to them, and Orillia students will likely take

more Zoom or Web-based classes than Thunder Bay students. The program uses five delivery methods.

1. **Seminars** are typically face-to-face classes held on one campus, but not the other. A seminar course will be discussion-based and frequently student-led. F2F seminars tend to be offered in Thunder Bay, but F2F seminars will be offered in Orillia as student numbers on that campus increase.
2. **Lecture** classes tend to be a little less discussion-based than seminars, and students may not be asked to take the lead as often, but at the graduate level, the difference between a seminar-style class and lecture-based class might be small.
3. **Video Conferencing:** students meet in the video conference classroom on each campus; the instructor will be in one of the classrooms. These are considered in-person classes and students must be able to get to the classroom.
4. **Zoom:** the course is delivered via Zoom at a designated time. These courses tend to function like online seminars.
5. **Web-based:** the course is delivered asynchronously (at your own pace). You may be asked to meet with other students for group work.

SJS is not officially an online degree, but a domestic student can complete 4.0 FCEs via Zoom or Web-based courses if they plan accordingly and consult with the Program Facilitator. International students must complete 50% of their coursework face-to-face.

Students are expected to be enrolled full-time throughout their studies, and they must complete all the program requirements to graduate.

Students are required to be **registered and pay tuition** for all three terms in a calendar year. Over the spring/summer semesters, students **must** register in the appropriate placeholder course (i.e. coursework, practicum, research or creative project). Students **may** also take a course or two; students may **complete** their creative / research project or practicum. The practicum is offered during the spring-summer semester.

The only exception to being enrolled full-time is if a student requests a [leave of absence](#). Staying enrolled allows continuous access to the library and other university services. See Policies and Regulations below. **Students will be billed for tuition in all three semesters**, even if a student only chooses a placeholder course.

Choosing Your Program Stream

SJS offers four program streams:

1. Coursework
2. Research project (this is not a thesis)
3. Creative project
4. Practicum

All students are initially admitted to the program's coursework stream. Students are encouraged to begin discussing their stream interests with the Program Facilitator and faculty members as soon as possible. Students are asked to identify their intended stream and rationale by the end of their first semester via the [Stream Selection](#) form. This form is internal to the program; in order to make a stream selection official with the university, students must submit a [Change of Program](#) form. All students can make one change without being charged the \$50 change fee.

To enter into the research project or creative project stream, students must have an average of 80%, must not have any incompletes on their transcript, and must have their supervisor and tentative project approved by the SJS Academic Review Committee (ARC). To complete the practicum, students must average 75%, must not have any incompletes on their transcript, and must have their placement location approved by the Academic Review Committee. Regardless of which stream a student pursues, they must complete 4.0 FCEs to graduate.

The research/creative projects and practicums are worth 1 FCE. Therefore, students will also need to take 3 FCE of coursework to complete the 4 FCEs required to graduate.

SJS Streams and Course Requirements

All students, except for those students pursuing the GWS Specialization (please see the Specialization in GWS for further details), must complete *SJS 5030: Theories of Social Justice* and *SJS 5090: Research Methods and Methodologies in Social Justice* during the first year of study regardless of the program stream they pursue. The program requires students to complete a total of 4 FCEs.

SJS STREAMS	Course Work	Research Project	Creative Project	Practicum
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Required courses	5030 SJS Theory (.5). F or W term. 5090 SJS Research Methods (.5). F or W term.	5090 SJS Research Methods (.5) F or W term. 5030 SJS Theory (.5). F or W term.	5090 SJS Research Methods (.5) F or W term. 5030 SJS Theory (.5). F or W term.	5030 SJS Theory (.5). F or W term. 5090 SJS Research Methods (.5). F or W term.
Unique to stream	N/A	SOCJ-5800 / 9800 (1.0) 2 nd year	SOCJ-5821/ 9821 (1.0) 2 nd year	SOCJ-5601/ 9601 (1.0) spring/ summer or 2 nd year.
Electives	3.0 FCEs	2.0 FCEs	2.0 FCEs	2.0 FCEs
Totals	4.0 FCEs	4.0 FCEs	4.0 FCEs	4.0 FCEs

During the first spring/summer semester, students will register in the placeholder courses for creative and research projects, or the placeholder for practicum. Students will be provided with a change of mark at the end of the project/practicum, and the mark will be assigned to the 5000 course relevant to their stream.

Many LU Graduate Courses are cross-listed with Social Justice Studies, but the schedule for offering these courses is unpredictable. The program offers 5011 (Special Topics) frequently, and students can take 5011 multiple times.

Social Justice Studies will typically offer four special topics courses per year, and will potentially offer cross-listed courses with departments in Social Sciences and Humanities.

Working with the SJS Program Facilitator, students can request to enrol in courses that are not offered by SJS nor cross-listed, but enrollment will be constrained by the other program's capacity and needs. Students often take courses in Education or Health Sciences. Electives must come from the 5000-level courses being offered.

Coursework stream

In addition to completing the core SJS courses (5030 and 5090), students will take an additional 3.0 FCEs (or six half-credit courses). This stream works well for students who are working full-time, students who enjoy coursework on a wide range of topics, and students who might not excel with the open-ended nature of a research project or creative project.

Students are automatically enrolled in the coursework stream, therefore students in this stream do not need to find an advisor, write a proposal, or change streams. Students in this stream are encouraged to think of the Program Facilitator as their stream facilitator.

Research project stream

To enter into the research project stream, students must have an average of 80% or higher, must not have any incompletes on their transcript, and must have their supervisor and tentative project approved by the SJS Academic Review Committee (ARC).

In addition to the core SJS courses (5030 and 5090) taken in the first year of the program and the placeholder course SOCJ-9800: Research Project, students will complete a further 2.0 FCE (four half-credit courses) of coursework.

For the research project, students will produce an original research paper. The research project requires a sustained and detailed analysis of a specific body of literature within Social Justice Studies and an exploration of a question or problem in the field. The project will be marked by the supervisor and a second faculty member and assigned a final grade.

Some students may come to the program because they have been recruited by a faculty member who will be their research supervisor. However, students wishing to do a research project who do not have a supervisor at the start of the program will work with the Program Facilitator to find a faculty member affiliated with the Social Justice Studies Program who is willing to supervise their project and submit the Supervisor Approval Form to the Academic Review Committee for approval. The project proposal must be submitted to and approved by the SJS Academic Review Committee (see the important date section for deadlines).

No student is guaranteed a path to graduation via the research stream. Students must earn an 80% average, they must find a willing supervisor, they must develop a successful proposal, and they must complete their work on time. Students can always complete the program via the coursework option if needed.

Students must identify a possible supervisor from the list of faculty affiliated with Social Justice Studies, complete the initial stream selection form, the supervisor

approval form, and the Graduate School Change of Program form. All are linked below:

- Social Justice Studies [approved faculty supervisors](#).
- Initial [stream selection form](#). Complete by the end of November, first semester.
- [Supervisor Approval Form](#). Complete by February 15, second semester.
- Change of Program [Form](#). Completed by May 1, second semester.
- [Project Proposal Form](#). Complete by June 1, Sept. 15, or Jan. 15th. Students should follow the [Guide to Research and Creative Projects](#).
- [Project Evaluation Form](#). Complete at the end of the project.
- Please submit a digital copy of your final work to admin.socialjustice@lakeheadu.ca for program evaluation and record keeping.

Students enrolled in the GWS specialization will produce a research project that addresses issues relevant to both GWS and social justice. Please see the GWS guidelines below.

Creative project stream

To enter the creative project stream, students must have an average of 80% or higher, must not have any incompletes on their transcript, and must have their supervisor and tentative project approved by the SJS Academic Review Committee (ARC).

In addition to the core SJS courses (5030 and 5090) and SOCJ-5821: Creative Project, students will complete 2.0 FCE (four half-credit courses) of coursework.

For the creative project, students will produce a creative work (broadly defined) using one of the following mediums: visual arts, music or non-academic/creative writing or other creative work. Projects can be participatory and community-based. The creative project must be a substantial, unified, and original work that addresses issues of social justice and activism and engages with critical praxis. Creative projects must demonstrate advanced skill in one of the following mediums: visual arts, music or non-academic/creative writing or other creative work and a command of relevant genre conventions. To be successful, a creative project must be recognized by the supervisor and second reader as a fully-fledged contribution to the aesthetic forms in which it participates.

Students will also write a 20-page artist statement/report that situates the project in relation to the existing body of contemporary creative work. It must explain and justify the poetics of the project and how the form of the project functions to serve creative and/or critical ends. The work will be marked by the supervisor and a second faculty member and assigned a final grade. Because of the small size of the arts programs at Lakehead, faculty from other universities, and/or professional experts from the community may be used to evaluate a student's work.

Students will work with the Program Facilitator to find a faculty member affiliated with the Social Justice Studies Program who is willing to supervise their project and submit the Supervisor Approval Form to the Social Justice Studies Academic Review Committee for approval. The project proposal must be submitted to and approved by the ARC (see the important date section for deadlines). Creative project proposals should be accompanied by a portfolio of relevant, recent creative work.

Students must choose supervisors from the list of faculty affiliated with Social Justice Studies, complete the initial stream selection form, the facilitator agreement form, and the Graduate School Change of Program form. All are linked below:

- Social Justice Studies [approved faculty supervisors](#).
- Initial [stream selection form](#). Complete by the end of November, first semester.
- [Supervisor Approval Form](#). Complete by February 15, second semester.
- Change of Program [Form](#). Completed by May 1, second semester.
- [Project Proposal Form](#). Complete by June 1, Sept. 15, or Jan. 15th. Students should follow the [Guide to Research and Creative Projects](#).
- [Project Evaluation Form](#). Complete at the end of the project.
- Please submit a digital copy of your final work to admin.socialjustice@lakeheadu.ca for program evaluation and record keeping.

Students enrolled in the GWS specialization will produce a creative work that addresses issues relevant to both GWS and SJS.

Practicum stream:

In addition to the core SJS courses (5030 and 5090) and SOCJ-5601: Practicum, students will complete 2.0 FCE (four half-credit courses) of coursework.

For the practicum, students are expected to complete 200 hours of placement plus class time. Unlike an on-the-job training internship, the project carried out during the practicum will combine class-based knowledge, practical research skills, and reflection to apply them in the field. The placement will be with an agency or non-profit organization engaged in social justice work and will be arranged collaboratively with the student, agency, Program Facilitator and the instructor for SOCJ-5601. The project to be completed during the practicum will be outlined in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the agency or non-profit organization.

Students considering the Practicum Stream are encouraged to get to know local agencies early in their program. Conduct site visits, get to know program directors, and ideally volunteer at the organization to develop familiarity with the staff and operations. Students might be able to indicate interest in the stream by November of their first year and continue to work towards a placement throughout the spring

and summer. The MOU will ideally be written and signed off on by all stakeholders before the start of the fall semester.

In addition to the required coursework, the student will keep a log describing the work conducted during the placement. The log will also include a list of hours worked and be submitted to the course supervisor every week. The work of the practicum will be completed in the second year of study. Although the norm will be that students will complete 10 hours of work a week, some flexibility will be allowed to enhance the usefulness of the practicum for participating organizations and accommodate class time. Potential partners include Faye Peterson House, Kinna-aweya Legal Clinic, the Northwestern Ontario Women's Centre, and others.

Not all practicums need to have a faculty supervisor, but many faculty have connections with local nonprofits, so they can provide guidance, research opportunities, and mentoring. Students should try to identify supervisors from the list of faculty affiliated with Social Justice Studies, complete the initial stream selection form, the facilitator agreement form, and the Graduate School Change of Program form. All are linked below. Practicum students should also consult the Practicum Handbook and familiarize themselves with the Memorandum of Understanding used to formalize relationships with host organizations.

- Social Justice Studies [approved faculty supervisors](#).
- Initial [stream selection form](#). Complete by the end of November, first semester.
- [Supervisor Approval Form](#). Complete by February 15, second semester.
- Change of Program [Form](#). Completed by May 1, second semester.
- [Practicum Handbook](#)
- [Relationship Agreement](#)
- Please submit a digital copy of your final report to admin.socialjustice@lakeheadu.ca for program evaluation and record keeping.

Students in the GWS Specialization will complete the practicum in an organization that supports feminist and social justice practices.

Specialization in Gender and Women's Studies (GWS)

The GWS Specialization allows students to engage in interdisciplinary work focused on gender.

In the first year of their program, all students in the GWS Specialization must complete WOME 5101: *Theory and Methods in Gender and Women's Studies* and SOCJ 5030: *Theories of Social Justice* (regardless of the stream they intend to pursue).

GWS Spec.	Course Work	Research Project	Creative Project	Practicum
Required Courses	SJS 5030 Theory (.5) Fall WOME 5101 Theory and Methods (1.0)	SJS 5030 Theory (.5) Fall WOME 5101 Theory and Methods (1.0)	SJS 5030 Theory (.5) Fall WOME 5101 Theory and Methods (1.0)	SJS 5030 Theory (.5) Fall WOME 5101 Theory and Methods (1.0)
Unique to stream	N/A	SocJ-5800 (1.0)	SocJ-5821 (1.0)	SOCJ-5601 (1.0)
Electives	2.5 FCEs. Coursework should allow for feminist and/or gender analysis or methods.	1.5 FCEs. Coursework should allow for feminist and/or gender analysis or methods.	1.5 FCEs. Coursework should allow for feminist and/or gender analysis or methods.	1.5 FCEs. Coursework should allow for feminist and/or gender analysis or methods.
Totals	4.0 FCEs	4.0 FCEs	4.0 FCEs	4.0 FCEs

NOTE: Students enrolled in the GWS specializations are not required to take SOCJ 5090: Research Methods and Methodologies in Social Justice, but they may choose this course as an elective.

Coursework stream:

Students in the GWS Specialization must take the GWS Core Course (WOME 5101) worth 1 FCE and an additional 3 FCEs in Social Justice Studies (including SOCJ 5030). **Two of the major papers written for these graduate course(s) must be focused on a subject related to GWS. One-page proposals must be approved by a Social Justice-based GWS subcommittee no later than six weeks into the term(s).**

Students are automatically enrolled in the coursework stream, but by the end of their first semester, all students are encouraged to choose supervisors. Students who wish to remain in the coursework stream do not need to find an advisor, write a proposal, or change streams. Students in this stream are encouraged to think of the Program Facilitator as their stream facilitator.

Research project stream:

To enter into the research project stream, students must have an average of 80% or higher, must not have any incompletes on their transcript, and must have their supervisor and tentative project approved by the SJS Academic Review Committee (ARC).

Students in the GWS specialization must take the GWS Core Course or WOME 5101 (1 FCE) and the Social Justice Studies Core Course 5030 (0.5 FCE), take an additional 1.5 FCEs in Social Justice Studies, and write a research project (1.0 FCE) on a subject related to both Social Justice Studies and GWS, for a total of 4 FCEs. The Research Project must incorporate feminist scholarship. The proposed topic must be approved by representatives of both the primary Program and the GWS Graduate Committee. If deemed appropriate, there may be joint supervision by a member of the student's academic unit and a person named by the GWS Graduate Committee.

Students in the GWS Specialization have a specific list of facilitators they need to choose from. Students also need to complete the initial stream selection form, the facilitator agreement form, and the Graduate School Change of Program form. All are linked below:

- GWS [Core Supervisors](#) (note those who are also SJS Supervisors)
- Initial [stream selection form](#). Complete by end of November, first semester.
- [Supervisor Approval Form](#). Complete by February 15, second semester.
- Change of Program [Form](#). Completed by May 1, second semester.
- [Project Proposal Form](#). Complete by June 1, Sept. 15, or Jan. 15th. Students should follow the [Guide to Research and Creative Projects](#).
- [Project Evaluation Form](#). Complete at the end of the project.
- Please submit a digital copy of your final work to [SJS-SocialJusticeStudies Admin Assistant](#) for program evaluation and record keeping.

Creative project stream:

To complete the creative project stream, students must have an average of 80% or higher, must not have any incompletes on their transcript, and must have their supervisor and tentative project approved by the SJS Academic Review Committee (ARC).

Students in the GWS Specialization must take the GWS Core Course (WOME 5101) for 1 FCE and the Social Justice Studies Core Course 5030 (0.5 FCE), take an additional 1.5 FCEs in Social Justice Studies, and undertake a Creative Project (1.0 FCE) of relevance to both Social Justice and GWS.

Because of the small size of the arts programs at Lakehead, faculty from other universities, and/or professional experts from the community may be used to evaluate a student's work.

Students in the GWS Specialization have a specific list of facilitators they need to choose from. Students also need to complete the initial stream selection form, the facilitator agreement form, and the Graduate School Change of Program form. All are linked below:

- GWS [Core Supervisors](#) (note those who are also SJS Supervisors)
- Initial [stream selection form](#). Complete by the end of November, first semester.
- [Supervisor Approval Form](#). Complete by February 15, second semester.
- Change of Program [Form](#). Completed by May 1, second semester.
- [Project Proposal Form](#). Complete by June 1, Sept. 15, or Jan. 15th. Students should follow the [Guide to Research and Creative Projects](#).
- [Project Evaluation Form](#). Complete at the end of the project.
- Please submit a digital copy of your final work to [SJS-SocialJusticeStudies Admin Assistant](#) for program evaluation and record keeping.

Practicum stream:

Students in the GWS Specialization must take WOME 5101 (1.0 FCE), SOCJ 5030 (0.5 FCE), SOCJ 5601 (1.0), and an additional 1.5 FCE (three half-credit courses). For the practicum, students are expected to complete 200 hours in the placement plus class time. Unlike an internship which focuses primarily on on-the-job training, the project carried out during the practicum will combine class-based knowledge, practical research skills and reflection on how to apply them in the field. The placement will take place at an approved agency or non-profit organization relevant to GWS and engaged in social justice work. Placement can be found by students or chosen from the approved list. They will be arranged by the Program Facilitator for SJS and the instructor for SOCJ 5601 in cooperation with the student and the Graduate Coordinator of GWS. The project to be completed during the practicum will be outlined in a MOU with the agency or non-profit organization.

In addition to the required coursework, the student will keep a log describing the work conducted during the placement. The log will also include a list of hours worked and be submitted to the Practicum Instructor every week. The work of the practicum will be completed in the second year of study. Although the norm will be that students will complete 4 -10 hours of work a week, some flexibility will be allowed to enhance the usefulness of the practicum for participating organizations and accommodate class time. Potential partners include Faye Peterson House, Kinna-aweya Legal Clinic, Northwestern Ontario Women's Centre, and others.

Not all practicums need to have a faculty supervisor, but many faculty have connections with local nonprofits, so they can provide guidance, research

opportunities, and mentoring. Students should try to identify supervisors from the list of faculty affiliated with GWS and Social Justice Studies, complete the initial stream selection form, the supervisor approval form, and the Graduate School Change of Program form. All are linked below. Practicum students should also consult the Practicum Handbook and familiarize themselves with the Memorandum of Understanding used to formalize relationships with host organizations.

- GWS [Core Supervisors](#) (note those who are also SJS Supervisors)
- Initial [stream selection form](#). Complete by end of November, first semester.
- [Supervisor Approval Form](#). Complete by February 15, second semester.
- Change of Program [Form](#). Completed by May 1, second semester.
- [Practicum Handbook](#)
- [Relationship Agreement](#)
- Please submit a digital copy of your final report to admin.socialjustice@lakeheadu.ca for program evaluation and record keeping.

Additional information relevant to the program

Switching Streams / Withdrawing from the Program

Students may change streams during their program. Please consult with the Program Facilitator whenever you are considering making a significant change within your program.

Students will need to fill out a “[Graduate Request for Change/Withdrawal](#)” form. This form is to be used by graduate students who would like to change their program route/option or would like to officially withdraw from their graduate program. The form can be accessed online (link above) or through MyPortal under Forms - select Graduate Program Change/Withdrawal. Only students with Lakehead credentials (ID and password) will be able to access MyPortal.

The form says that a \$50 fee will be charged for a change of program, but please write in the textbox: “A change of program is part of the SJS program and the fee should not be applied.”

Choosing a Supervisor

In consultation with the Program Facilitator, students choose a supervisor for the research and creative projects, but students are also encouraged to choose a supervisor who can support their practicums or coursework. When selecting a supervisor, choose someone who conducts research and/or teaches in your area of specialization or interest, and is a member of the [SJS graduate faculty](#). If you are in the GWS Specialization, you must choose someone who is both a member of SJS and a member of the [Core Graduate Faculty of Gender and Women's Studies](#)

You can talk to several professors about the possibility of supervising your project to see whether or not they would be a good fit, and will feel comfortable supervising your particular area of interest. Understand that professors may be unable to supervise you if a) they are going on leave, b) they are currently supervising multiple graduate students, or c) they do not feel that their expertise is the best fit for the proposed project.

You can switch supervisors during your degree but please talk to your supervisor and the Program Facilitator to see if this is the right choice.

Once the person in question has agreed to supervise you, please fill out the [Supervisor Approval Form](#).

Research Ethics

Conducting research with people and communities, especially when working with vulnerable and marginalized communities, requires that researchers conduct themselves in accordance with the rules and guidelines established under the Tri-Council Policy Statement regarding Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans, 2010 (TCPS2).

Students must complete the online Ethics Training [TCPS2](#)

Upon completing the tutorial, students will receive a PDF copy of a TCPS2 certificate. Please save it. You will need to submit a copy of this certificate when you make a research ethics application to Lakehead University's Research Ethics Board (REB).

Before conducting any research with people and communities, students must work with their supervisor to complete, submit, and have approved a research ethics proposal to Lakehead's REB. Students may not submit proposals on their own.

Research ethics applications can be found at [Lakehead Research and Innovation](#) website.

Further Information:

- Lakehead University's [Ethics and Integrity](#) guides (Guidelines and Policy and includes Procedures for Investigating Misconduct)
- Lakehead University's Research Ethics and Administration Officer, Sue Wright, can be contacted at susan.wright@lakeheadu.ca or [\(807\) 343-8010](tel:8073438010) Ext. 8283.
- A complete list of [Research Services Staff](#).

Application to Graduate

Students must apply to graduate. Application forms are available through My Portal; students will receive email reminders.

Grading System and Related Issues

Grading Scale

Course standings in the graduate programs will be reported as follows:

Letter Grade	minimum %	maximum %
A+	90	100%
A	80	89%
B	70	79%
C	60	69%
Fail	1	59%
F	Academic Dishonesty	0
INC	Incomplete	

Incomplete Grades

An incomplete grade, at the discretion of the instructor and in consultation with the student, may be assigned to a course when the instructor believes that the student has not yet completed all the requirements of the course for a valid reason. In such cases, when a percentage grade would normally be assigned to the course, the instructor must also assign a numeric grade for work completed to the point of submission, unless stipulated in the course syllabus that a student will be deemed to have failed the course if a particular component had not been completed, in which case the student would be assigned a failing grade expressed as a portion of the entire course mark. Incomplete grades will not be included in the calculation of the student's average.

The instructor is obliged to set the due date for the additional work to permit submission of the revised grade to the Registrar's Office by the dates listed below:

Fall term grades: June 1st (or May 1st if the student plans to convocate in the Spring)

Winter term grades: September 1st

Summer term grades: January 1st or November 1st

To clear an incomplete grade, the student must complete the outstanding work and a *Change of Grade* form from the instructor must be received in the Registrar's Office by the appropriate date (above). Grades that are not cleared by the appropriate date will be converted to the numeric grade assigned (students who have not completed the required component needed to pass the course will

receive the failing grade) and at that point will be included in the student's average. Pass/Fail courses with a grade of INC will be converted to F.

MINIMUM SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC STANDING

To qualify for graduation, graduate students must achieve a minimum 70% overall average with no more than one full course equivalent graded 60-69%.

Grades of 60-69% in excess of the maximum allowed and failed grades of 50-59% must be resolved.

The combination of repeated or replaced courses must not exceed one full course equivalent. A course may only be repeated or replaced once.

Minimum satisfactory academic standing will be assessed at the completion of each term.

Grades of 60-69%

- a maximum of one full course equivalent with a grade of 60-69% may be accepted towards a graduate program
- grades of 60-69% above the allowed maximum must be cleared by repeating the course; at the discretion of the Graduate Coordinator who will notify Registrarial Services, an elective course with a grade of 60-69% may be replaced with a different graduate level course
- failure to meet minimum satisfactory academic standing after repeating or replacing a course will result in a student being removed from their graduate program.

Grades of 50-59%

- a grade of 50-59% in a course counted towards a graduate degree is considered a failure
- a grade of 50-59% must be cleared by repeating the course; at the discretion of the Graduate Coordinator who will notify Registrarial Services, an elective course with a grade of 50-59% may be replaced with a different graduate level course
- failure to meet minimum satisfactory academic standing after repeating or replacing a course will result in a student being removed from their graduate program.

Grades of 49% and below

- grades of 49% and below may not be repeated nor replaced

- grades of 49% and below are unacceptable in a graduate program and will result in a graduate student being removed from their graduate program

Graduate students who have exercised the opportunities above and remain unable to meet minimum satisfactory academic standing will be removed from their graduate program. For information on readmission refer to Graduate Admission-Readmission Regulations.

Reappraisal

If you would like a grade appeal, please refer to the [Student Reappraisal and Appeals Policy \(Pdf\)](#) for detailed information.

Academic Integrity

The Social Justice Studies program, in accordance with University regulations, maintains a strict policy regarding academic integrity. Rules and penalties for infractions are outlined in the [Student Code of Conduct--Academic Integrity](#). A detailed PDF with the policy can be found [here](#).

Policies and Regulations

Leaves of Absence

A leave of absence can be granted for maternal/paternal/parental leaves, for health reasons, on compassionate grounds, or to allow a student to gain practical experience. Leaves of absence must be supported by details and external supporting documentation. Leaves of absence must be requested prior to the leave (i.e. they are not retroactive).

A student is eligible for a maximum of three Leaves of Absence in addition to an unlimited number of Maternal/Parental leaves, provided that no single Maternal/Parental Leave extends beyond three consecutive terms. If additional time away is required (more than the three-term limit), the student is advised to withdraw from the program and apply for re-admission at a time more suitable for completion.

The [leave of absence](#) can be found on the Graduate Office Forms webpage.

Time Extensions

A Time Extension in a graduate program will be granted for exceptional circumstances on a per-term basis, for up to three terms. Recommendations for the first term beyond the allowed Period of Study require approval by the

Department, which then sends notice along with the recommendation, including reasons, to the Faculty of Graduate Studies.

Recommendations for the second term and for the final term must be sent to the Faculty of Graduate Studies Council for consideration and final approval.

A graduate student who does not complete the required courses and/or research and creative project or practicum within the prescribed periods of study and does not receive an approved [Time Extension](#) is considered to have failed the program and must withdraw.

Meeting/Work Spaces

There is space reserved for graduate students in the Chancellor Paterson Library: the Graduate Reading Room on the 4th Floor (LI 4016). For access, students must request a key at the Library Circulation Desk.

The Graduate Student Lounge, located in CASES (technically known as FB 2002), is open to all Lakehead University graduate students.

In consultation with work supervisors and departments, students have been assigned a specific space for meeting with students and performing work as required under GA assignments. On the Thunder Bay Campus, rooms BB0029D and SN 2005L are designated GA offices. GA space in Orillia is TBD.

University Regulations

Students should familiarize themselves with the general [University regulations](#).

Harassment and Discrimination Policy

Lakehead University has established a comprehensive [policy on harassment and discrimination](#), including sexual harassment. This document is available from the Office of Human Resources. Students who have concerns may consult with the Program Facilitator for SJS, the Dean of Graduate Studies, the Director of the Office for Human Rights and Equity, or arrange an appointment with an officer in Human Resources.

Lakehead University's Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedures document can be found here:

<https://www.lakeheadu.ca/about/policies-procedures/policies/list/node/51593>

Scholarships and Bursaries

Details for awards and bursaries for Lakehead students can be found at [MyAwards](#). Watch for email communication reminding you to apply.

SSHRC and OGS provide the most extensive support for students (approximately \$27,000 per year and \$15,000 per year, respectively) – **all eligible students are strongly encouraged to apply**. Please consult with the Program Facilitator regarding applications and funding possibilities.

In order to be eligible for SSHRC and OGS students must hold an 80 average or more during their last two years of studies.

[MITACS.CA](#) funds a variety of research and innovation projects, including research collaborations with not-for-profit organizations.

Important Dates

Please refer to the current [Lakehead University Calendar](#) for dates for registration and withdrawal from courses, and for the application to graduate deadline. The University operates on a July 1-June 30 calendar.

Late June: registration for graduate courses opens. The exact date varies from year to year. Watch for announcements via email and work with the Program Facilitator on course selection.

Late August: all students working on projects over the summer must submit the final version to their supervisor and second reader.

Graduate Assistantships for the year are assigned. Meet with your GA supervisor ASAP.

The week before classes start is Orientation Week:

1. For international students, organized by Lakehead International.
2. For all new Social Justice Studies students, arranged by the program.
3. Graduate Assistant orientation organized by the Faculty of Graduate Studies.

Tuesday after Labour Day: The first day of classes each fall semester.

Sept. 15. ARC Proposal Submission. Second-year students planning a research or creative project can submit their proposal to the Academic Review Committee. First-year students can submit in January or June.

Early September: submit GA Statement of Work form (filled out with the instructor to whom the GA is assigned) to graduate coordinator.

At the start of each year (or semester), GA supervisors and students must complete the [GA Assignment of Work](#) Form.

At the end of each year (or semester), GA supervisors and students must complete the [Performance Review](#) Form.

Early September: SJS Faculty and students meet and greet. The exact date is announced each year. Orillia and Thunder Bay events arranged separately.

Late September or early October: scholarship workshop for SSHRC, OGS scholarship. Students applying to PhD programs will have a mid-October deadline for SSHRC PhD scholarships.

Mid-October: Thanksgiving Monday and fall reading week: no classes. SSHRC Doctoral Fellowship applications are due.

October 15: The deadline for re-submitting research or creative project proposals that were submitted Sept. 15.

Early November: last day to drop fall courses.

End November: First-year students should be in discussion with a potential supervisor regarding their projects/practicums. Complete the [Program Stream Selection Form](#).

Late November / Early December: prospective students may start applying for the following fall semester via the [FGS Application Portal](#).

Early December: OGS scholarship application due for those applying to or continuing in Master's programs.

Early December: SSHRC scholarship applications are due for those applying to or continuing in Master's programs. SSHRC PhD Deadlines were mid-October.

Mid-December: all students working on projects over the Fall term must submit the final version to their supervisor and second reader.

Early January: classes resume; date varies from year to year. Consult the academic calendar.

January 15: Proposal Submission. This is one of three dates students may submit their research or creative project proposal to the Academic Review Committee.

February 1: Prospective students should submit application materials by this date to be considered during the first review of applicants.

February 15: Students in their first year should submit supervisor approval forms. Students who submit research or creative project proposals should submit revisions if requested.

Mid-February: Family Day and week-long Winter Study Break.

Mid-April: Research Day. Research and Creative Projects shared with the program. Practicum students share experiences with organizations. Dates vary.

Mid-April (final semester of program): all students working on projects over the Winter term must submit the final version to their supervisor and the second reader to graduate.

May-August: most common time to complete a practicum.

May 1: Submit the Program Change form if moving out of the coursework stream. Register in the appropriate placeholder section to retain full-time status over the spring and summer sessions.

June 1: Proposal Submission. This is one of three dates students may submit their research or creative project proposal to the Academic Review Committee.

June 30: Submit revisions to research or creative stream proposals if revisions were requested.

Note: students completing projects will also have timelines that are set up in consultation with their supervisors. Keeping up with this timeline is crucial in terms of successfully completing your program.

Appendix A: Forms

Tuition fees: Applicants can calculate their [costs here](#).

Most Faculty of Graduate Studies forms can be found [here](#).

- Change in registration.

- Graduate request for program change.
- Graduate request for program withdrawal.
- [Leave of Absence Requests](#)
- [Time Extension Requests](#)
- [Application to Graduate & Convocation Fees](#)

The SJS Program currently supports a Research Project, not a fully developed Master's thesis, but the guidelines for completing a thesis can be informative. Master's Thesis [information](#).

Social Justice Specific forms.

- GA [Assignment of Work](#) form.
- GA Performance Review [form](#).
- SJS Stream Selection [Form](#).
- SJS Program [Proposal Form](#)
- SJS Program [Supervisor Approval Form](#).
- SJS Research and Creative Project [Guide](#).

Appendix B: MA in English with SJS Specialization

All students in the specialization will be required to complete English 5770 (Advanced Scholarly Methods) and Social Justice 5030 (Theories of Social Justice) and select one of the options listed below:

Coursework: 2 FCEs in English at the graduate level and 1 FCE in Social Justice Studies at the graduate level.

Research Project: 2 FCEs in English at the graduate level and a research project (10,000 words, 1 FCE) on a subject related to both English and Social Justice Studies.

Creative Project: 2 FCEs in English at the graduate level and a creative project (10,000 words or the equivalent, 1 FCE) of relevance to both English and Social Justice Studies.

As is the case with our existing programs, with permission of the English Graduate Coordinator, students may take up to 1 FCE in graduate courses from other disciplines and/or courses at the fourth-year level.

See the [Graduate Social Justice Studies program](#).

Note:

It is possible for a student to change from one MA program to the other provided that he/she secures the approval of the Graduate Studies Committee.

Appendix C: MA in Sociology with a Specialization in Social Justice Studies.

The Social Justice Studies specialization enables students to conduct original research on social justice issues by drawing on the disciplinary tools provided by Sociology. Students may investigate any topic relevant to social justice studies, by utilizing appropriate theoretical frameworks and research methodologies from Sociology. While a strong foundation in Sociology is emphasized, interdisciplinary work, public engagement, and community activism are also encouraged where appropriate.

For additional information on the Interdisciplinary Graduate Specialization in Social Justice Studies, please review the MA Sociology (Social Justice Studies) [Thesis Calendar Regulations](#). Please note that students will first be accepted to Sociology, and if accepted, will be reviewed by the Social Justice Studies Committee.