



Department of Gender and Women's Studies
e: lchambe2@lakeheadu.ca

March 11, 2026

RE: application of Dr. Bailey Gerrits for adjunct status in the Department of Gender and Women's Studies
Dr. Balfour:

I strongly support the application of Dr. Bailey Gerrits for adjunct status in the Department of Gender and Women's Studies. Dr. Gerrits is an exceptional young teacher-scholar whose research interests align well with those of our department. She will contribute to research and teaching in the program without cost to the university. She brings with her research funds that will be made available to support students.

I have had the pleasure of knowing Dr. Gerrits since the fall of 2015 when she spent a term completing field work in Thunder Bay during her doctoral studies. She quickly became part of our Gender and Women's Studies community and presented her research to our lunch and learn series. I was very impressed by the depth of her engagement with her research and the importance of her findings. Her presentations were exceptionally clear, well organized, and persuasive.

As a result of the connections forged during her time at Lakehead, since 2017, Dr. Gerrits, Dr. Nadia Verrelli and I have completed two articles on intimate partner violence, court decisions, and media. The first of these papers, which traced change over time in print media coverage of *R. v. Ryan*, details the increasing influence of men's rights advocates and YouTube on media discourse about violence. The second tracked changing media coverage of all Supreme Court of Canada cases regarding defences for women who kill, or attempt to kill, abusive spouses. During the preparation of these papers, I learned new methodologies in coding and quantitative research from Dr. Gerrits.

We have continued our collaboration. The three of us all taught courses in the fall of 2024 entitled Gender-Based Violence. We spent much of the summer before the term co-developing a common curriculum (with minor differences based on very diverse class sizes, levels, and areas of expertise). Each week we met and discussed how various teaching methods and materials were received by students and helping each other to debrief after intense teaching sessions about very difficult materials. This not only helped us all to survive the term teaching emotionally challenging materials (and dealing with diverse student responses to such materials) but also to re-think aspects of the course as we worked through it, exchanging ideas about presentation, assignments, and required materials that will be used to improve the course in the future. This type of collaborative teaching is unusual, but potentially transformative. We learned a great deal from one another. Perhaps more importantly, the support we provided to one another represented a

feminist ethic of care in action. We recorded all our discussions and analyzed our own discourse. We presented our findings at Congress in 2025 and the resulting paper is currently under review with *Atlantis*. This exercise provides considerable insight into Dr. Gerrits' ability to collaborate, to think in innovative ways about curriculum and pedagogy, and to act as a teacher-scholar, interested not only in WHAT we are teaching, but also HOW we teach.

As is illustrated in her CV, Dr. Gerrits is a very productive and accomplished young scholar. She was a Trudeau Scholar and the recipient of a Banting Postdoctoral Fellowship and is currently a tenure track research chair at St. F.X. She has published 14 articles and 3 book chapters and has another article currently under review. Her publications include both solo-authored articles and collaborative projects. She works well with others and is successful as an independent academic. It is of particular note that her most recent article is the result of collaboration with an undergraduate student who completed a fourth-year project with Dr. Gerrits. Collaboration with early-stage students takes a lot of work. Dr. Gerrits is to be congratulated for making this effort.

Dr. Gerrits is currently completing a manuscript, provisionally titled *Who's Responsible: Explaining How Canadian News Covers Domestic Violence*. This will be an expanded and revised version of her doctoral thesis. This project uses both quantitative content and qualitative discourse analyses to review 823 Canadian newspaper stories published from 2014 to 2016, as well as in-depth interviews with over 120 journalists, police communications officials, and anti-violence advocates. She found that police strongly influence how journalists view 'facts' and determine the newsworthiness of domestic violence stories. She has a contract for this book with UBC Press, delivery 2026. The book will make very important contributions to both academic debates and public understanding of intimate partner violence and the media. It should be noted that completion of this project was delayed, not by any disinterest or lack of effort, but by a medical leave related to pregnancy complications, followed by two parental leaves.

Dr. Gerrits also has a plan for her next book which will examine and critique federal political speeches, the development of key anti-violence policies since the 1970s, and the perspectives of individuals and groups who may have influenced such policies. She will employ the lens of anti-carceral feminism in this study. The project is funded by SSHRC. Money will be available to support promising undergraduate and graduate students in the Department of Gender and Women's Studies through research fellowships.

Dr. Gerrits is interested in participating in our department in a myriad of ways. She would like to supervise graduate students, attend our lunch and learn series, provide guest lectures in appropriate classes, and collaborate with members of the department in research projects. She will generously share her SSHRC funding with appropriate students. She is already well acquainted with all members of our department and will be presenting her current work at our Feminisms in the North event on April 9, for which she will travel to Thunder Bay.

Perhaps most importantly, despite her many accomplishments, Dr. Gerrits is completely humble and easy-going, amenable to criticism, and hard-working. She is an academic star in the making, but she does not have star attitude. She is friendly and generous, and it is always a pleasure to work with her. She will be a very welcome addition to the department as an adjunct and will contribute strongly to the university without cost to the institution.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ron Chambers". The signature is written in black ink on a white background.

hon' Charles