

SOCIAL PRACTICE AND TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGE

The PhD in Social Practice and Transformational Change operates at the intersection of rigorous, transformative scholarship that cuts across conventional disciplinary boundaries. Notable areas of strength among the core faculty include community engaged scholarship, disability studies, feminist and gender studies, Indigenous studies, global studies, and teaching and learning.

Administrative Staff

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Graduate Faculty

This list may include Regular Graduate Faculty, Associated Graduate Faculty and/or Graduate Faculty from other universities.

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BA Toronto, MA, PhD Dalhousie - Professor
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Satsuki Kawano

BA Keio, MA Minnesota, PhD Pittsburgh - Professor
Graduate Faculty

Belinda Leach

BA Carleton, MA, PhD Toronto - Retired Faculty, Sociology, University of Guelph

Associated Graduate Faculty

Leah Levac

BA Acadia, MA, PhD New Brunswick - Associate Professor
Graduate Faculty

Saara Liinamaa

BA Victoria, MA, PhD York - Associate Professor
Graduate Faculty

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Graduate Faculty

Mavis Morton

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Graduate Faculty

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BA, PhD Guelph, MA Waterloo - Associate Professor
Graduate Faculty

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B.Sc. Witwatersrand, B.H.Sc, PhD Adelaide - Professor
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Deborah Stienstra

BA Alberta, MA, PhD York - Professor
Graduate Faculty

Renée Sylvain

BA Wilfrid Laurier, MA, PhD Toronto - Associate Professor
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Kimberley Wilson

B.A.Sc. Guelph, MSW Toronto, PhD Guelph - Associate Professor
Graduate Faculty

PhD Program

Admission Requirements

Applicants to the PhD program should have a recognized course or thesis-based master's degree with a minimum average of at least 78% average in their postgraduate studies. Applicants who have not completed a masters' degree but have considerable relevant professional experience outside the academy may be considered for direct entry into the doctoral program. Applicants must submit a statement of their research interests including evidence of experience in their chosen research field. It is essential that applicants contact potential advisors in the department prior to submission of an application. Students are admitted in September. The program office should be consulted for admission deadlines.

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of the PhD in Social Practice and Transformational Change, graduates will have demonstrated the capacity to:

1. Critically and creatively reflect on and deconstruct foundational theories, concepts, and systems of social practice
2. Reconceptualize the transdisciplinary nature of social practice and social practice constructs
3. Collaborate with a variety of audiences in ethical research that intentionally bridges the theory-policy-practice divide
4. Develop and analyze social change processes and the factors leading to robust, sustained and transformational change
5. Employ transdisciplinary training to develop as engaged teachers and learners, researchers, professionals and citizens
6. Demonstrate collaborative and relational skills
7. Mobilize knowledge appropriate to and valued by multiple audiences
8. Engage with and work across knowledge systems and historical contexts while working from within one's particular knowledge system
9. Enhance respectful intercultural dialogues through empathetic, active listening and acting in supporting roles

Engage with forms of policy, structures and interventions to make transformational change

Program Requirements

The objective of the PhD in Social Practice and Transformational Change is to build competency in research, practice (as a specific kind of professional activity) and engagement across these areas:

1. the critical theorization of social practice and its relationship to policy, programs and service delivery and to transformational change;
2. the design and implementation of practice-based research projects and research-based practices; and
3. the development of principled, ethical and sustainable frameworks for collaborative, community-engaged initiatives.

The PhD in Social Practice is comprised of 1.5 credits of coursework, a qualifying examination (QE), a thesis and participation on the Community of Practice. Individual students may elect to take courses offered as part of other University of Guelph programs that are relevant to their research interests and development, as determined by students and their advisory committees.

Required Courses

Code	Title	Credits
SOPR*6000	Social Practice and Transformational Change	0.50
SOPR*6100	Research and Social Practice	0.50
SOPR*6200	Methodologies Lab	0.50

Qualifying Exam

The purpose of the Qualifying Exam is to provide an opportunity for students to immerse themselves in theoretical and applied material that pertains to and/or can inform their field of inquiry. Working with their committee, students will determine what they wish to explore, what material¹ is significant, and how this can help them to deepen their practice. This experience is intended as an opportunity for growth through a rigorous review of the field as they define it and as it has been theorized and practiced by others. It is expected that a student will engage with both Social Practice and Transformational Change as contested and evolving areas of scholarship and will explore what they mean in the context of the student's particular field of inquiry.

The QE involves four components:

- a. a letter, addressed to the Program Director and signed by all members of the advisory committee, evaluating the student's research performance to date and the student's potential as a researcher;
- b. a 2-5 page QE proposal approved by the student's advisory committee that sets out the material to be covered, how it will be presented to the QE examining committee, and a timeline for completion of all components;
- c. the critical presentation of the material covered in the form agreed to in the QE proposal; and
- d. an oral examination.

The QE is evaluated as pass or fail. The student passes the QE if no more than one member of the QE committee votes unsatisfactory. An abstention is considered an unsatisfactory vote. If the QE has been deemed by examiners as a fail, the QE committee will provide clear feedback to the student through the advisor on the quality issues that need to be addressed in a second examination no later than six months from the failed attempt. Failure of the QE oral the second time constitutes a recommendation to the Board of Graduate Studies that the student be required to withdraw.

¹ In this context, 'material' could include but is not limited to traditional and non-traditional academic sources, written, visual and/or other media, oral or written testimony.

Collaborative Specializations

International Development Studies

The PhD in Social Practice and Transformational Change participates in the collaborative specialization in International Development Studies (IDS). Consult the International Development Studies (<https://calendar.uoguelph.ca/graduate-calendar/collaborative-specializations/international-development-studies/>) listing for a detailed description of the requirements of the collaborative specialization.

Sexualities, Genders and Bodies

The Social Practice and Transformational Change program participates in the collaborative specialization in Sexualities, Genders and Bodies.

Doctoral students wishing to undertake thesis research with an emphasis on sexualities, genders and bodies are eligible to apply to register concurrently in Social Practice and Transformational Change and the collaborative specialization. Students should consult the Sexualities, Gender and Bodies (<https://calendar.uoguelph.ca/graduate-calendar/collaborative-specializations/sexualities-genders-and-bodies/>) listing for more information.

Courses

SOPR*6000 Social Practice and Transformational Change Fall and Winter [0.50]

Students engage with key theories of social practice, ethical community engagement, ways of knowing, reflexivity and change processes, social praxis and orientation, and the role of policy in social change, from inter- and transdisciplinary perspectives.

Restriction(s): Restricted to Social Practice students

Department(s): Dean's Office, College of Social and Applied Human Sciences

Location(s): Guelph

SOPR*6100 Research and Social Practice Fall and Winter [0.50]

Students build upon core concepts explored in SOPR*6000 (Social Practice and Transformational Change) moving beyond analysis and discussion of scholarly contributions, into engagement activities working with or as practitioners on externally identified questions and community needs.

Prerequisite(s): SOPR*6000

Restriction(s): Restricted to Social Practice students

Department(s): Dean's Office, College of Social and Applied Human Sciences

Location(s): Guelph

SOPR*6200 Methodologies Lab Fall and Winter Reg Required [0.50]

Students treat methodology as critical research design connected to epistemology and ontology, investigating what counts as knowledge, as data and scholarship, the role of the researcher, issues of representation, and the implications of these for research.

Restriction(s): Restricted to Social Practice students

Department(s): Dean's Office, College of Social and Applied Human Sciences

Location(s): Guelph