



The University of Western Ontario

**SOCIOLOGY GRADUATE PROGRAM
PhD Professional Development Seminar
2024-2025**

**Select Thursdays
12:30-1:30pm
SSC 5235**

Professor Yoko Yoshida

Office Hours: Wednesdays, 11:00am-1:00pm
Department of Sociology, Office: SSC 5409
Email: yyoshid@uwo.ca

Course Description

Being a graduate student can be thought of as the entry-level job for a wide range of academic and non-academic positions. In this way, graduate school aims to help students develop a set of transferrable skills that can be applied to these future settings. The purpose of this professionalization seminar is to acquaint you with the structure, procedures, and expectations of our department's graduate program, as well as to familiarize you with the norms of the profession more broadly.

We will meet approximately every two weeks during the Fall 2024 and Winter 2025 terms. Specific dates and topics are listed in the schedule below.

Expectations

The professionalization seminar is a required milestone of the PhD program, and we encourage our MA students to participate as well. Students are expected to (1) attend the scheduled meetings and (2) attend talks given through the department's colloquium series, job talks, and other events.

Attendance

For students in the new PhD cohort (entering 2024-2025), you are expected to come to each of the professionalization seminar sessions in the schedule below, in addition to department seminars, talks, and events. To complete this required milestone, students will need to attend a minimum of 80% of the sessions during their first year in the program. Attendance will be taken at each seminar.

For students in prior PhD cohorts, you can attend as many sessions as you need to complete the milestone under the old policy (for cohorts entering 2022-23 or earlier, attendance at 8 professionalization seminar sessions over the course of your first 3 years in the program was required). You are also encouraged to attend any and all sessions that are of interest to you.

MA students are welcome to attend sessions they think will be helpful to them or on topics that they find interesting. The schedule below flags sessions that may be especially relevant to MA students. Additionally, in the winter term, I will set up sessions specifically focused on your MRPs; these will satisfy the MA Sociological Research Practicum milestone. More details to come.

Going to Talks and Other Professional Development Activities

In addition to the professionalization seminar, graduate students are expected to become active citizens in our department's intellectual community. This means, in part, attending the wide array of research talks and other seminars put on by our department and others in the Faculty of Social Science. Seeing faculty members and fellow graduate students present their research is a core part of how we learn to think and talk about our own work. These opportunities include, but are not limited to:

- The Sociology Colloquium Series (the department invites about 3 faculty from other universities to present their work each term; generally held on Fridays at 11:00am)
- The Balakrishnan Lecture (the department hosts a distinguished researcher; this year's lecture will be on Friday November 1, 3-4pm, and will feature Zachary Zimmer from Mount Vincent University)
- Doctoral Dissertation Proposal Presentations (see your fellow PhD students present on their proposed dissertation projects; held twice a year)
- Job talks by faculty candidates
- Present a working paper at the Sociology Graduate Student Association's (SGSA) conference in the spring

Materials

Many of the seminars are accompanied by a required reading from Dr. Jessica Calarco's phenomenal book, *A Field Guide to Grad School: Uncovering the Hidden Curriculum*. While you are welcome to [purchase](#) a copy of her book, you can also access a free online version through Western's Library.

Course Schedule

	Date	Topic	Readings	Audience
<i>Fall Term</i>				
1	Sept. 12	Applying for External Funding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - When are the deadlines? - How do you prepare an application? - From whom, about what, when should you get feedback? 	Calarco, 6	PhD MA
2	Sept. 19	Program Timeline and Priorities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What should you be focusing on, when? - What courses should you take? - What should you be doing during your summers? - How long should the program take? - When should you start the job search? 	Calarco, 5	PhD
3	Oct. 3	Assistantships: Research and Teaching <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What can you expect from an assistantship? - What are your obligations? - What are some tips for balancing your assistantship work with working through your degree? 	<i>None</i>	PhD MA
4	Oct. 24	Work-Life Balance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How do you manage all that's required of you in academia? - How do you set limits? - What can you do to avoid burning out? - Is there software that can help you be more efficient? - How can you organize all of your notes, data, etc.? 	Calarco, 12	PhD MA
5	Nov. 7	Building Your Team <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How do you choose your supervisor? - What's the role of your supervisor? - What's the role of committee members? - How do you negotiate expectations? 	Calarco, 2	PhD
6	Nov. 28	Tips and Tricks for Academic Writing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How do you structure your "writing days"? 	Calarco, 4	PhD MA

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - When should you get feedback on written work, and from whom? - How are journal articles different from course papers? - How do you co-author a paper? With whom? 		
<i>Winter Term</i>				
7	Jan. 9	Publishing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What does the academic journal article publishing process look like? - How do you decide if, when, and where to send a paper for review? - What happens when you submit an article for review? - How do you revise a manuscript? - How do you deal with rejection? 	Calarco, 8	PhD MA
8	Jan. 23	Presenting Your Work <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Why are conferences useful? - Which conferences should you go to, and when? - How do you fund going to a conference? 	Calarco, 9, 10	PhD MA
9	Feb. 6	Comprehensive Exams <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are they? - What are they for? - What areas can you take an exam in? - How should you prepare for an area exam? - What happens if you fail an exam? 	<i>None</i>	PhD
10	Mar. 6	Doing a Dissertation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Why do a dissertation? - Should you write a “book” or “three article” dissertation? - What does a dissertation proposal look like? - How do you go about preparing a proposal? - What does the dissertation exam or defense involve? 	<i>None</i>	PhD
11	Mar. 20	Career Prospects	Calarco, 11	PhD

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">- What are the different kinds of job opportunities available <i>in</i> academia?- What opportunities are there <i>outside</i> of academia?- How can a website and social media help promote yourself?- What do typical job application packets look like?		
--	--	---	--	--