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Supporting student growth at the heart of Graduate Mentorship Award for Dr. Suzanne Lenon

Sociology professor Dr. Suzanne Lenon sets high expectations for her graduate students and then equips them with the skills and confidence they need in their professional lives. She challenges her students to examine their own biases, perceptions and ideologies, creating space for new conclusions, and she does so in a way that makes students feel safe, supported and inspired to take risks in their learning.

For her unwavering commitment to student growth, and her support of students wherever they are in their academic journey, Lenon has been named the winner of the University of Lethbridge School of Graduate Studies Graduate Mentorship Award. She will be recognized at [2026 Spring Convocation](#), Ceremony III, on Friday, May 29, 9 a.m. in the Co-op Centre for Sport & Wellness gymnasium.



Dr. Suzanne Lenon

Dr. Suzanne Lenon, a Professor of Sociology and Women & Gender Studies and Centre for Feminist Research Affiliate, has supervised seven graduate students from diverse disciplines, served on 22 graduate supervisory committees, and supervised numerous applied and independent studies students. These experiences have given her keen insight into the needs of graduate students. Her mentorship style is based on trust, respect and dialogue. She communicates her high expectations, especially for intellectual rigour, at the beginning of their program. Lenon meets with her students regularly to help them develop their thesis projects, provides them with detailed feedback, and supports them in scholarship and grant applications. She works to create opportunities and connections for her students, advising on conferences and workshops to attend, professional development activities, research projects and abstract writing. Lenon also fosters camaraderie among her students by hosting a monthly Grad Group Gathering.

She supports students where they are at, allowing her to provide individualized guidance through considerate collaboration and consultation. She's direct and clear in her critiques, giving

wise and caring counsel in a way that allows students to arrive at decisions that are right for them.

Lenon began her post-secondary education in Women's Studies and Development Studies at the University of Calgary. After earning an undergraduate degree, she completed a master's in Development Studies at Carleton University and a doctorate in Sociology and Equity Studies at OISE/University of Toronto. She took several years off between degrees to work with non-profit organizations in anti-poverty/economic justice research, public education for a women's addiction centre and public education and crisis counselling at a sexual assault centre. These experiences were foundational for Lenon, cementing her commitment to the study of law, race, gender and sexuality. She joined ULEthbridge as an Assistant Professor in the Women & Gender Studies program in 2008.

The indirect path she took to her PhD informs her approach to graduate supervision. Lenon values the unique relationships she has with her students, encouraging them to become as theoretically sophisticated as they are able, regardless of their career stage or discipline.

Students deeply respect Lenon and express their gratitude for her mentorship and contributions to their success. Her clarity, dedication and rigorous analysis help them become independent thinkers and professionals with high standards.

Lenon's colleagues also respect her skills as a mentor. They recognize how she inspires and encourages students to broaden their thinking and critically engage with materials, questions, theories and lived experiences.

To view online: <https://www.ulethbridge.ca/unews/article/supporting-student-growth-heart-graduate-mentorship-award-dr-suzanne-lenon>

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Our University's Blackfoot name is Iniskim, meaning Sacred Buffalo Stone. The University is located in traditional Blackfoot Confederacy territory. We honour the Blackfoot people and their traditional ways of knowing in caring for this land, as well as all Indigenous Peoples who have helped shape and continue to strengthen our University community.