

Diversifying the Curriculum Funding Blog: Understanding Violence 2025/2026

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I received Diversifying the Curriculum funding in 2025/26 to pay for a Guest Lecturer from the [Centre for Hate Studies](#) on the PGT Criminology course unit CRIM70552 Understanding Violence. The Centre for Hate Studies, hosted by Leicester University, 'shapes policy and practice by enabling professionals across different sectors to engage with diverse communities, to support victims and to tackle hate. Driven by a desire to effect lasting change within disadvantaged communities, the Centre for Hate Studies places co-creation with marginalised victims at the heart of its research design, analysis and recommendations, thereby making the 'hard-to-reach' much more reachable'.

The course *Understanding Violence* adopts a case study approach through which students explore various forms of violence, including femicide, domestic violence and abuse, filial violence, online harms, modern slavery, and hate crimes. The course focuses on the links between how forms of violence are defined, counted, understood and responded to, and a crucial theme running through the course is intersectionality, requiring students to develop an informed and critical understanding of how people's experiences of violence, as both victims and offenders, are shaped by intersecting social identities including gender, ethnicity, sexuality, disability and social-economic status. The assessment for this course is a Policy Briefing, in which students focus on one form of violence and produce a report outlining the nature and importance of the problem, existing evidence on the form of violence and how it is understood, the limitations or current responses, and making recommendations for policy to effectively address the issue.

The guest lecturer, Emily Wertans, works at the Centre for Hate Studies as a researcher and has extensive experience of writing policy briefing papers and manifestos. In her workshop, she explored with the students the multiple forms of harm and violence experienced by people as a result of their perceived personal characteristics, including ethnicity, disability, gender identity and sexuality, and also presented findings from her doctoral research on the experiences of homeless people. This content was very powerful (including a video in which victims of hate crime shared their experiences) and highly relevant to the course. Emily also spent part of the workshop discussing the purpose and style of policy reports, and brought with her hard copies of a manifesto and a policy briefing paper published by the Centre for Hate Studies for every student. This was incredibly helpful to the students at a point of the course when they were all beginning to think about their assessment and how to construct, present and narrate a policy-focused briefing paper.

Incorporating Emily's workshop into the course was highly valuable, both from a topic and content focus – exploring the experiences of violence of a range of diverse and marginalised individuals – and also providing students with a first hand insight into the purpose and production of policy briefing papers addressing harm experienced by

diverse people. This enabled students to understand the importance, purpose and approach to writing policy briefing papers.

Although no formal evaluation was conducted, the students were highly engaged in Emily's workshop and commented that they found it very interesting, powerful and helpful. The manifesto and policy briefing papers that Emily gave the students were valuable in their assessment preparations, and the standard of assessments produced by students was exceptionally high this year.