

# “Learning-Where-You-Live” Courses:

## Proposal for a university-level approval process

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VICE PROVOST FOR UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION AND THE  
LWYL REVIEW COMMITTEE

# Learning-where-you-live (LWYL) courses

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- Introduced in 2013 to enhance intellectual content of programming in residential halls without increasing academic stress
- Designed to eliminate formal barriers of traditional classroom:

One credit,  
S/U

Small size  
( $< \sim 15$ )

Meet over  
dinner

- Foster sense of home and belonging, active participation, and sustained interaction between faculty and students;
- Encourage students to explore topics they might not otherwise study;
- Promote idea that intellectual exchange and exploration are core values of Cornell education.

# Examples

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## Seeing Science in Action

Too often science is taught as a collection of static facts in a book, whereas science professionals think of science as a creative and collaborative process for discovery. In this course, you will learn about and see cutting-edge research in modern laboratories through a program that first brings three different Cornell faculty members to talk about their research, followed by the class spending a day shadowing Ph.D. students and post-docs in each faculty member's lab, and concluding with the class reading a journal paper from each lab. The class will also include discussion of careers in scientific research and the public policies that support and benefit from science.

**North Campus. Fall** ([BME 1110](#)) 1 credit, Wednesdays, 7:30–9pm, Donlon Faculty-in-Residence apartment. Taught by Chris Schaffer, Biomedical Engineering and Donlon Faculty-in-Residence.

## Wonder Women

Students, faculty members, and invited guests will discuss the art of leadership and how women in leadership roles have managed the opportunities and challenges they have encountered. The sessions, held in the instructors' North Campus faculty-in-residence apartments, will feature prominent women from different professions and walks of life (e.g., politicians, artists, writers, scientists, spiritual leaders, business owners, and entrepreneurs). Speakers will share their stories in an informal way, opening up faculty-facilitated discussions about gender, leadership, accomplishment, work-life balance, and mentorship. These talks may be interspersed with or complemented by reading and discussing parts of recent books about women and leadership.

**North Campus. Fall** ([DSOC 1120](#), [ASRC 1120](#), [COMM 1120](#)) 1 credit, Wednesdays, 7:30–8:30pm, North Campus Faculty-in-Residence apartments. Taught by Lori Leonard, Development Sociology and Mews Faculty-in-Residence (FIR); Noliwe Rooks, Africana Studies and Townhouses FIR; and Dawn Schrader, Communication and Court-Kay-Bauer FIR.

# Examples

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## Cook Community Engagement: Bridging Self, Community, and World

This interdisciplinary course serves as a gateway for engagement in the Alice Cook House community. As such, one of the primary purposes of the class is to introduce and expose you to the varied opportunities for engagement using speakers from the Cornell, Ithaca, and global communities and also across social, environmental, and natural sciences, engineering, arts, and humanities. Spaces (both physical and digital) will be provided for students to engage in informal discussions with Cornell faculty members, other invited speakers, and each other. The goal is to provide a platform for critical thinking and reflection within and beyond the boundaries of one's own discipline(s).

**West Campus. Fall** ([NTRES 4940-Lec 001](#)) 1 credit, Wednesdays, 7–8pm, House Professor-Dean apartment. Taught by Shorna Allred, Natural Resources and Alice Cook House Professor-Dean. This course is targeted at residents of Alice Cook House (including the Language House) on West Campus but is open to anyone.

# What students have to say about LWYL\*

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- My LWYL professor.. .
  - Cares about me as a person (97%)
  - Increased my excitement about learning (99%)
  - Served as a mentor to me (84%)
- Participating in my LWYL course...
  - Helped me feel more a part of Cornell (82%)
  - Made me feel more comfortable about interacting with other faculty (88%)
  - Allowed me to explore a topic I would not have otherwise explored (97%)
- Due to participation in LWYL course, I already have or am likely to choose future classes based on interest and/or curiosity (89%)
- I know my LWYL professor better than any other professors from this year (74%)
- I would recommend the LWYL course to other students (99%)

# What's the problem?

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- LWYL courses are taught by:
  - Faculty-in-Residence (North) and House Professor Deans (West), as part of their programmatic responsibilities
  - Faculty fellows interested in low-stakes opportunities to engage in innovative pedagogy and formats, explore new ideas, team-teach across disciplines
- Yet...
  - Courses are reviewed and approved by faculty members' home college and given departmental course codes even though content differs widely from subject matter of the departments; misalignment is confusing for faculty and their departments
  - Misalignment makes courses difficult for students to find
    - Becoming POWERFUL: Providing Opportunities for Women's Empowerment and Resilience for Upskilled Leadership (CHEME 4900)
    - Fascinating Figures (ENGRG 1305)
    - Bridging Difference (MUSIC 1503)
    - The Pursuit of Excellence and Well-Being (simultaneously!) (CRP 3899-103)

# Proposed Solution

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- To decrease administrative impediments for faculty and increase visibility of courses to students, create a university-wide process:
  - University-wide curriculum committee to review and approve proposed LWYL courses (composed of faculty who have/have not taught LWYL courses, an academic associate dean, Carpenter or Weiss award recipient, OVPUE)
  - Shared university-wide subject code (e.g., UNI-LWYL)
- Departments/colleges would maintain authority over whether to give faculty teaching credit for LWYL courses
- It would be up to faculty and their departments whether to cross-list a UNI-LWYL course with the department (subject to college curriculum review)