

# **Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology**

## **SPEAKER SERIES**

### **PhD Proposal Presentation**

#### ***Gender and Entrepreneurial mentorship programs: a feminist, economic anthropological study in Atlantic Canada***

Janet Music

This research explores the ways entrepreneurial identities and experiences may be gendered by examining mentorship programs within the Canadian agri-business start-up community. Drawing on feminist anthropology, the project asks if and how mentorship programs shape gendered entrepreneurial identities and access to resources and networks in an industry that has traditionally been male-dominated industry and influenced by Western neoliberal capitalist ideology. Critical economic anthropology demonstrates that as a concept, entrepreneurship, in many Western contexts, is entangled with neoliberal capitalist ideas about risk-taking and constrains local economic activity under the guise of innovation. Using multi-sited participant observation and narrative analysis, the project will detail the perspectives and experiences of mentors and mentees inside these organized entrepreneurial support networks and assess whether such initiatives benefit women (and non-binary, gender diverse participants), are relatively neutral, or contribute to systemic inequities. The analysis of semi structured interviews and participant observation will contribute to feminist and economic anthropology discussions about the cultural construction of entrepreneurship and the function of mentorship as a means of neoliberal labour discipline or empowerment.

**Monday, May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025**

**In person: Rowe #3089, 9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.**

**All Welcome!**