

Vegan-related Health Advice

Director of Studies: Dr Chris Till: c.till@leedsbeckett.ac.uk

This project aims to explore the ways vegan-related health advice and messaging have been articulated, disseminated, and received.

The supervisor is keen to refine and develop the research methods with a successful candidate, but these might include discourse analysis (e.g. publications and media messaging from governmental, third sector, activist and lobby groups, industrial and retail organisations, health and dietetics practitioners), qualitative interviews and quantitative surveys (with key stakeholders and audiences), and social media topic modelling and network analysis.

This will be one the first analyses of its kind conducted on this topic representing an original intervention which has potential for significant academic impact. There is little systematic understanding of how the role of non-human animals is being framed in health contexts from a non-anthropocentric perspective.

This intervention will have significance for vegan studies, animal studies and the sociology of health and illness.

Imagining Outer Space Futures

Director of Studies: Dr Katherine Harrison: k.m.harrison@leedsbeckett.ac.uk

In 2026, the Artemis II lunar mission, SpaceX's flotation on the stock market, and the launch of Amazon's Leo satellite internet service underscore that a second Space Age – the 'NewSpace' Age – has well and truly begun. Yet, the dominant imagination of the possibilities of outer space for human (and non-human) futures remains entrenched in twentieth-century neocolonial frontier logics of expansionism and extractivism, poorly concealed behind hackneyed narratives of 'for all mankind'. This project invites critical interrogations of the limitations of the current dominant imaginations of outer space futures, offering an opportunity to consider the myriad contexts in which they function, their effects, and the potentials for alternative, democratic, sustainable imaginations of who and what space might be for. Potential topics include critical analyses of:

- Contemporary or historical science-fiction texts and media (literature, film, television, games, immersive experiences)
- Corporate or state space agencies' discursive constructions of future outer space environments, endeavours or habitations
- Public communication of outer space via, for example, museums, exhibitions, festivals, social media
- Alternative conceptions of outer space, e.g., Afrofuturist imaginations in popular culture
- Non-European imaginations of outer space, e.g. Chinese, Russian, Latin American or African
- Artistic mediations of outer space or representations of specific outer space activities, events or phenomena
- Original data relating to people's opinions or hopes about outer space futures.

Climate Mobility and Security in West Africa

Director of Studies: Dr Olayinka Ajala: o.ajala@leedsbeckett.ac.uk

This PhD project will examine the evolving relationships between climate stress, mobility, and security in West Africa (or East Africa), integrating environmental change with political and socio-economic dynamics. Led by Dr Olayinka Ajala, the project invites a student interested in exploring how climate variability reshapes resource competition, contributes to shifting conflict actors, including emerging neo-pastoralist groups and produces new patterns of displacement and human vulnerability. The research will analyse how mobility generated by climate impacts affects social cohesion, governance responses, and intergroup relations in receiving communities. It will also investigate the role of local knowledge systems, community-based resource management, and indigenous conflict-resolution mechanisms in fostering environmental peacebuilding. Finally, the project will situate these local dynamics within wider national, regional, and international climate-security interventions, assessing how states and organisations interpret and respond to emerging risks. This interdisciplinary PhD is well-suited to students interested in climate security, peacebuilding, and African governance.

Transcultural Criminal Justice

Director of Studies: Dr Emek Zeyrek-Rios: e.y.zeyrek@leedsbeckett.ac.uk

The project is led by Dr Emek Zeyrek-Rios, who would be interested in supervising students in areas related to violence, vulnerability, and investigative decision-making within criminal justice contexts. One strand focuses on developing a data-driven, transcultural framework for understanding maternal filicide, using primary and secondary data to produce a multilayered classification with implications for prevention, rehabilitation, and investigative decision-making. A second area examines neurodiversity and female offending, exploring how neurodivergent traits interact with other risk factors, how they are managed within criminal justice systems, and how more effective, evidence-based approaches to intervention and prevention can be developed. A third area focuses on ethical and effective investigative interviewing, examining how practices can be adapted across cultural contexts and for vulnerable populations within policing and judicial processes.