

## Nick Garside

### Faculty of Human and Social Science

I first met Nick Garside in 2012 when he and I were tasked with co-developing two of the four courses that would comprise the Foundations core program, offered at Laurier's Brantford campus between 2013 and 2024. As contract faculty, we were given the unique opportunity to help shape the core education of thousands of Laurier undergraduate students, and I was delighted to find in Nick a dedicated, enthusiastic, and insightful colleague with what I take to be the greatest gift a teacher can bring to their profession: enormous faith in students' ability to think.

While others were tasked with giving students a foundation in humanities and social science research literacy, Nick and I were tasked with teaching students the fundamentals of modern and contemporary critical thinking, from Enlightenment political philosophy and foundations of science to post-colonial theory and climate change research. This was no easy task, but Nick rose to the challenge. His specialties in ecological and environmental thought, anarchist critique and bottom-up power, and the critical theory of the Frankfurt school made BF190 and BF199 sing.

Nick taught BF190 throughout Foundations' lifespan, and as his teaching reviews attest, students found him enormously helpful, approachable, and knowledgeable – an indispensable part of their early post-secondary education. It is with great fondness that I remember waiting outside of his classroom to teach by own BF sections and hearing him passionately encourage his students to think critically, ask difficult questions, and think of themselves as responsible engaged citizens of the world.

In 2019, Nick and I co-published *Life Examined* with our Foundations colleague Jonathan Lavery – a textbook that combined the material from BF190 and BF199 with Dr. Lavery's extensive knowledge of classical philosophy, contextualizing those texts in the framework of critical inquiry that was the guiding spirit of the Foundations program. This well-regarded work stands as testament to the Foundations experiment, and I can only hope that it will continue to inspire and inform students and educators well beyond the bounds of the Laurier community.

Nick's service to Wilfrid Laurier University as an institution has been exemplary, but his service to his students and to the wider world through them has been more so. Although the Foundations program has been shuttered, students who took those courses continue to approach me to tell me how useful they found them and to grieve their loss, and I know how essential Nick was in giving them that experience.

For my own part, the fact that for ten years I got to teach Foucault and Marcuse to thousands of first year students across dozens of programs is one of my proudest achievements in life, and I will be forever grateful to Nick for his role in making that possible.

Thanks Nick,

Submitted by : Charles Wells