



UNIVERSITY OF  
CALGARY

FACULTY OF ARTS  
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY  
WOMEN'S STUDIES PROGRAM

**WMST 405 S01**  
**Seminar in Feminist Praxis**  
**Fall Term 2016**

**Course Outline**

**Meetings: Mondays 14:00-16:45 in SA 247.**

**Instructor:** Joe Kadi

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**Office Hours:** Mondays 12:30-1:30, or by appointment

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

In praxis, theory and practice come together to create informed, conscious and self-conscious action. In this seminar, we will investigate key parts of the history of feminist activism, and examine the links and gaps between feminist theories and feminist practices. In addition, students will have opportunities to explore their own feminist social change work.

Students will engage in some form of feminist practice; each student will choose a practicum that seems most likely to work for them. Students will spend a minimum of 2 hours a week on their practicum.

Because we are a small group and will be meeting only once a week, it is imperative that all students keep up with the readings and make every effort to attend all classes.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

- \*understand the broad ranges of issues feminists were/are concerned about
- \*consider the relevance of feminism in today's world
- \*understand the meaning of praxis, differentiate between theory and action, strengthen our abilities to assess social change work in respectful, clear ways
- \*appreciate the importance of social change work/feminist activism
- \*connect with feminists past and present
- \*deepen our critical/holistic thinking skills
- \*work to establish a vibrant learning community based on respect and support.

## TEXTBOOKS AND ASSIGNED READINGS

Ten Thousand Roses: The Making of a Feminist Revolution, by Judy Rebick.

Exile and Pride: Disability, Queerness, and Liberation, by Eli Clare.

Trumpet, by Jackie Kay.

These are available at the U of C bookstore.

## ASSIGNMENTS AND EVALUATION

\*A two-part assignment on the Participatory Classroom, for a total of 20%.

\*Discussion questions on the reading for the day, four of these seven questions will be handed in; the four questions handed in will be graded, with each worth 5% for a total of 20%.

\*The Alignment Experiment, 30%.

\*Final exam, 30%.

\*A two-part assignment geared toward building a participatory classroom, worth 20%. Each part of the assignment involves writing a 2 to 3 page double-spaced paper focusing on issues of attendance and participation. In the second paper, the issue of depth of learning will also be addressed. The first part of the assignment, the Overview, is due September 19, at the beginning of class. In this paper, the student will set out their plan for their level of attendance and participation. Considering that this is a participatory classroom, and that the success of a participatory classroom depends on each individual, this assignment will provide the chance for students to set out their intentions for the term. In the second part of the assignment, which is due November 28, at the beginning of class, students will begin by assigning themselves a grade that they believe accurately reflects their attendance, participation and depth of learning. They will explain their rationale for this grade by explaining how they have conducted themselves throughout the semester, in terms of attendance, participation, and depth of learning, and they will also refer to the first paper (intentions and goals set in the first paper will help them frame the second paper). The student's assessment will be considered in light of the instructor's observations, and the instructor will have final say concerning the grade. Due dates are **September 19** and **November 28**, at the beginning of class. Make sure you read Guidelines for the Participatory Classroom Assignment, on our D2L site.

This assignment will help students clarify their role in the participatory classroom, and it will help them clarify why they have chosen to take this course, in terms of considering questions such as: What are your desired learning outcomes? What do you think will be challenging? What issues interest you? For the first part of this assignment, the syllabus, course outline, and initial readings will help provide clarity about these learning outcomes. For the second part of the assignment, students will refer to key scholars and texts that have informed their work through the term.

\*Discussion questions are due at the beginning of class on **3 October, 17 October, 24 October, 31 October, 7 November, 14 November, and 21 November**. These questions

will be used to form the basis of our work on the reading for the day. On four of those seven days, your discussion questions will be collected, and a letter grade, worth 5% of your overall grade, will be given. The dates for the collection will not be announced: the assumption is that students will put the same amount of work into each week's question, and thus it will not matter whether the question is collected.

A seminar class provides a rare opportunity to meet with a group of like-minded scholars and work/talk through issues and materials of interest. Preparing discussion questions ahead of time helps facilitate in-depth discussions. Questions will be accompanied by a paragraph in which students set out preliminary responses to the question. Questions may specifically refer to ideas/theories/history outlined in the text, or relate to thoughts/questions connected to the text and the practicum. Each question will have a direct connection with our course material.

Each student will be allowed to submit one discussion question over email, if they are absent from class on that day. The email must be sent before class begins on the day in question. Students will not be allowed to submit other discussion questions over email. This means that if you are absent for more than one class, and if the professor collects discussion questions on that day, you will receive an F on that day's discussion question.

\*The Alignment Experiment, worth 30%, due **24 October**. This assignment allows students to choose and engage in an exercise of self-awareness, connected with our course material. Because we will be engaging in in-depth discussions about feminists' ability to align their beliefs (theories) with their actions in the world, moving from that to analyzing our personal alignment will be a simple matter. Realizing ways in which our beliefs are not aligned with our actions will be a first step in choosing a 7 to 10 day set of activities that will allow us to move toward alignment. After completing this set of activities, students will write a paper analyzing their learnings and insights. This critical reflection paper will be 6 to 8 pages long, and will include a minimum of seven citations to our course material. A careful reading of the document entitled Guidelines for the Alignment Experiment will be necessary.

\*Final exam, worth 30%, due at the beginning of class on **5 December**. This will be handed out and discussed one week before.

**It is the student's responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment.**

Note: Please hand in your essays directly to your instructor. If it is not possible to do so, a drop box is available in the Philosophy Department, 12<sup>th</sup> floor of Social Sciences. You will see the instructor's name on one of the boxes. These boxes are emptied every day at 4 p.m., and whatever is inside the box is then stamped with the date.

#### **REGISTRAR-SCHEDULED FINAL EXAM**

There will not be a Registrar-Scheduled final exam in this course.

**GRADING SCALE**

A+	96 – 100%	C+	65 – 69.99%
A	90 – 95.99%	C	60 – 64.99%
A -	85 – 89.99%	C -	54 – 59.99%
B+	80 – 84.99%	D+	53 – 54.99%
B	75 – 79.99%	D	50 – 52.99%
B -	70 – 74.99%	F	0 – 49.99%

**LATE ASSIGNMENTS**

For example: Assignments submitted after the deadline will be penalized with the loss of a letter grade (e.g.: A- to B+) for each day that they are late.

**About the Women's Studies Program**

This course may be counted toward a Women's Studies degree. The Women's Studies Program offers Major, Minor, and Honours undergraduate degrees. Housed in the Department of Philosophy, the program is dedicated to offering students a feminist social justice classroom where we can bravely explore issues relating to gender and sexual equity and diversity from many perspectives. For more information, contact the program coordinator ([wmstprog@ucalgary.ca](mailto:wmstprog@ucalgary.ca)) and check out our website: <https://arts.ucalgary.ca/womens-studies>.

The University of Calgary has a number of student clubs and campus centres dedicated to issues of gender and sexual equity and diversity. Here are links to their Facebook sites (please note that the instructors are often members of social media sites):

[Consent Awareness and Sexual Education Club](#)

[Queers on Campus](#)

[Q: The SU Centre for Gender and Sexual Diversity](#)

[Women in Leadership Club](#)

[Women's Resource Centre](#)

[Women's Studies and Feminism Club](#)

**Content Warning:**

Some of the materials and topics in this class will include explicit content (violence; sexuality; profanity; blasphemous, objectionable or illegal conduct). If you feel any materials may cause you distress or severe discomfort, you are encouraged to speak with the professor and/or to take measures to ensure that you feel braver in the classroom. You will not be exempt from any assigned work but we will work together to accommodate your concerns.

This class respects difference and diversity while welcoming thoughtful, critical debate and discussion. No one person's right to their beliefs may supersede another person's right to security and dignity.

When in a classroom dedicated to social justice education, conflict will happen. That is part of a healthy, dynamic, questioning space of learning and discovery. You are encouraged to hold onto your own personal beliefs, but recognize that there will be differences of opinion and experience, and a university classroom holds high standards of research, evidence, and analytical proof.

Students need to listen attentively and critically to the evidence provided in class lectures, readings, discussions, and other materials.

If you feel that you need more support than can be provided by the classroom or the instructor, you are encouraged to take advantage of some of these resources:

**SU Wellness Centre**

(<http://www.ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/> 403-210-9355 / 403-266-4357)

**Calgary Communities Against Sexual Abuse Hotline**

(<http://www.calgarycasa.com/> 403-237-5888)

**Alberta Mental Health Hotline**

(<http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/services.asp?pid=saf&rid=1019446> 1-877-303-2642)

Trained peer supporters are also available on campus through:

**Women's Resource Centre**

(<https://www.ucalgary.ca/women/> 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, MacEwen Centre, in The Loft)

**Q Centre for Gender and Sexual Diversity**

(<https://www.su.ucalgary.ca/programs-services/student-services/the-q-centre/> 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Mac Hall, near The Den).

If you have a serious concern about the instructor's conduct, you may speak in full confidence to either the Women's Studies Coordinator ([wmstprog@ucalgary.ca](mailto:wmstprog@ucalgary.ca)) or the Head of the Department of Philosophy ([phildept@ucalgary.ca](mailto:phildept@ucalgary.ca)) Please note, Women's Studies is a program that is administered by the Department of Philosophy.

## BRAVER SPACE GUIDELINES

“Braver Space” principles recognize that everyone brings different resiliencies and capacities to a group setting. We must all bring our personal bravery into the classroom space, and be mindful of what that means specifically to us. This does not mean sharing or participating in a way that violates personal boundaries (yours or another person’s), nor cajoling others into participating in ways that are not conducive to their personal bravery. Rather, it means being respectful, self-aware, and mindful of the classroom dynamic and your place in it. Some guidelines are provided below.

Do not make assumptions about other people’s identities and life experiences. That includes but is not limited to race, gender, sexuality, physical ability, mental and emotional well being, age, citizenship status, and reproductivity.

Recognize that language is a powerful tool in social justice education. It also changes as new issues and greater clarity develop. Therefore, if you need to correct language use, do so respectfully; and if you are corrected, accept that correction respectfully.

Make an effort to speak from the position of “I” (not the generalized “you” or “people”) and to clarify any statements you make, using verifiable evidence and experience. Making a sweeping judgment on a class or group of people is not acceptable.

Address people without assuming their gender. Some ways to do this:

- Don’t refer to groups as guys, ladies, women, men, etc.,
- Refer to individuals whose gender has not been disclosed to you in gender-neutral ways such as “the person who said...”

Address people using the gender pronouns they have indicated for themselves. Offer your gender pronouns to others to make it a braver space to talk about gender pronouns. Some gender pronouns include, but are not limited to:

- they/them/theirs
- she/her/hers
- ze/hir/hirs
- he/him/his
- ey/em/eirs

Provide discrete and succinct content warnings if you will be talking about topics that may be traumatic for some and the content is not already apparent. Examples of such topics could include abuse, violence, addiction, suicide, mental health, transphobia/homophobia/other forms of discriminatory behaviours. An example of wording could be, “Please note that there will be (x) content in my discussion.”

Respect your own and others' physical, mental, and emotional boundaries. Please speak up in a respectful way if you are uncomfortable, seek support if you want/need it, and engage in self-care as required and/or desired.

## SCHEDULE OF LECTURES AND READINGS

This will be handed out the first day of classes.

### Academic Honesty

Cheating or plagiarism on any assignment or examination is regarded as an extremely serious academic offence, the penalty for which may be an F on the assignment, an F in the course, academic probation, or requirement to withdraw from the University. See the relevant sections on 'Academic Misconduct' in the current University Calendar. Intellectual honesty requires that your work include adequate referencing to sources. Plagiarism occurs when you do not acknowledge or correctly reference your sources. If you have questions about correct referencing, consult your instructor.

### Academic Accommodation

Students seeking an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services; SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. For additional information on support services and accommodations for students with disabilities, visit <http://www.ucalgary.ca/access/>. Students who require an accommodation in relation to their coursework based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing to their instructor. The full policy on student accommodations is available at [http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy\\_0.pdf](http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy_0.pdf)

### D2L Help

Desire2Learn is the University of Calgary's online learning management system. Go to <http://www.ucalgary.ca/it/services/d2l> for help.

### Student Advising and Information Resources

- General Academic Concerns and Program Planning— Have a question but not sure where to start? The Arts Students' Centre is your information resource for everything in the Faculty of Arts. Drop in at SS102, call 403-220-3580, or email [ascarts@ucalgary.ca](mailto:ascarts@ucalgary.ca). Advisors in the ASC can also provide assistance and advice in planning your program through to graduation. Visit the Faculty of Arts website at <https://arts.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate> for detailed information on common academic concerns.
- **Advice on Women's Studies Courses** - You may find answers to your more specific questions about a degree in WMST in the University Calgary <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/arts-4-66.html> or contact the 2015-16 Coordinator of the WMST Program, Dr. Rebecca Sullivan [rsulliva@ucalgary.ca](mailto:rsulliva@ucalgary.ca)
- **Registration Overload/Prereq Waivers** – If you are seeking to register in a WMST course that is full or to get permission to waive the prereqs for a course, email the instructor of the course.

### Protection of Privacy

The University of Calgary is under the jurisdiction of the provincial Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act. The Department of Philosophy ensures the student's right to privacy by requiring all graded assignments be returned to the student directly from the instructor or teaching assistant.

### Safewalk

Call 403-220-5333 (24/7/365) for a Safewalk volunteer to accompany you safely to your destination on campus including parking lots, housing, and the LRT station or use a Campus Help Phone.