

# Women's Studies 301.05 – 01

## Gender and Popular Culture

### “Pornography”

**January 5 - 9 / 9:00 – 5:00 / SA124A**

**Instructor:** Rebecca Sullivan  
**Office:** SS1142  
**Phone:** 403-220-3397  
**Online:** rsullivan@ucalgary.ca / @profras  
**Office hours:** Tuesdays, 12:30 – 2:00, *effective January 13th*

Please note that the professor is not available to meet with students before or after class during Block Week. I can, however, be reached by e-mail, including over the holidays, and will endeavor to reply promptly.

***Urgent Note: Due to unexpected circumstances, the professor will be out of town on Friday, January 9<sup>th</sup>. There will be two screenings in class that day, followed by a final online test that students can take anywhere they are comfortable.***

#### **Course description:**

This course explores debates about pornography with an emphasis on feminist, ethical porn practices and politics. It uses this controversial subject matter to critically investigate the definitions and discourses of heteronormativity, gender and sexual politics, public space and private choice, sexual citizenship, and other important issues affecting feminist theorizing and praxis.

Students will be exposed to explicit pornographic material daily. Some of this material could be deemed disturbing or offensive, as it will include graphic sexual content and may also include scenes of graphic violence, substance abuse, or other potentially objectionable activities. However, given the subject matter of this course, there will be no exemptions from any aspect of the course requirements. If you feel that any of the course materials are causing you distress or severe discomfort, you are encouraged to speak with the professor and/or to take appropriate measures to ensure that you feel safe within 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 supercede another person's right to security and dignity. If you feel that you need more support than can be provided by the classroom or the professor, you are encouraged to take advantage of some of these resources:

**SU Wellness Centre** (403-210-9355 / 403-266-4357)  
**Calgary Communities Against Sexual Abuse Hotline** (403-237-5888)  
**Alberta Mental Health Hotline** (1-877-303-2642)

Trained peer supporters are also available through the Women's Resource Centre (4<sup>th</sup> Floor, MacEwen Centre, in The Loft), and the Q Centre for Gender and Sexual Diversity (2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Mac Hall, near The Den).

Students are expected to attend all lectures and to participate fully in class discussions and assignments. Laptops and tablets are welcome, however all communication devices (telephone, SMS, etc.) must be turned off. Use of these devices in a manner that is deemed disruptive, abusive, or disrespectful to the class is strictly prohibited and may result in loss of the privilege to use the device in class.

Safer space guidelines for this classroom are included at the end of this syllabus. Everyone in this class is expected to follow a strict code of conduct including:

1. respectful, measured and thoughtful discussion
2. respectful understanding of sexual, gender, racial and other forms of social inequalities
3. respectful use of explicit language and imagery
4. respect for all sexual orientations and consensual sexual acts
5. respect for other points of view

Responsibility for fulfilling the requirements for all aspects of the course resides with the student. The professor will not give out lecture notes, repeat information, nor provide replacement copies of material that was provided during regular class hours. The course includes a combination of individual assignments, group work, lectures, screenings, readings, and online tests.

A D2L portal has been set up for this course which allows for group correspondence, course announcements, assignment submissions, and other forms of communication. Students are expected to check D2L before the course for any last minute changes or cancellations.

Students are expected to arrive to class on time and prepared to work. The class begins promptly at 9:00 AM every morning. Because it is winter and therefore road conditions can be very poor, students are expected to check weather and road condition reports in advance so they can make proper arrangements to arrive on campus on time.

This is an intensive course with a demanding schedule. Students are strongly encouraged to clear their calendar for the week so that the course is their priority. This isn't a requirement, but it is a recommendation with your best interests at heart.

Plagiarism, defined as using any source whatsoever without clearly documenting it, is a serious academic offense. Consequences include failure on the assignment, failure in the course and possible suspension or expulsion from the university. Please refer to the following information and make sure you are familiar with the statement on plagiarism provided at the end of the syllabus.

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k-2-1.html>

### **Texts and readings:**

All readings are available online through D2L. Students are strongly encouraged to read as much in advance of the course as possible, and to take summary notes for reference. The days in the course will be long and intense, with daily assignments relating to the day's topics that will require additional independent research. In general, there will be approximately 60 pages of reading per day (sometimes more, maybe sometimes less).

### **Assignments and Evaluation:**

<b>Thought Piece</b>	<b>Monday, January 5<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>15%</b>
<b>Group Research</b>	<b>Mon - Thurs (afternoons)</b>	<b>10% X 4</b>
<b>Group Surveys</b>	<b>Mon – Thurs</b>	<b>Required to receive your group research grade</b>
<b>Online Test</b>	<b>Friday, January 9<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>Final essay</b>	<b>Monday, January 12<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>20%</b>

### ***Thought Piece (15%)***

On the first day of class, you will be given a question and expected to write a thoughtful, intellectually informed response in the first hour. Thus, you are once again encouraged to do advance reading and research for this course so that you can draw upon that work to formulate your response.

A thought piece is meant to be a thought-provoking and speculative work that consists chiefly of background material and personal opinion and analysis. It is neither a rant nor a personal journal entry. Rather, ideas and opinions still require some grounding to indicate that you have considered the consequences of your position and recognize its potential for further exploration.

You may write the piece in longhand, using your own pen and paper, or use your own portable word processing device. You will have exactly one hour to write your piece. There are no length requirements, however you are expected to be thorough, detailed and precise in your writing. If you are writing in longhand, your writing must be clearly legible and the pages clearly numbered. At the end of the hour, those writing in longhand will submit directly to the professor. Those writing on a digital device will submit electronically through D2L's Digital Dropbox in the appropriate folder. Your submission must be time-stamped no later than 10:10 AM. Submissions date stamped any later will automatically receive a grade of 0.

Refer to the essay grading rubric, available on Blackboard in the Course Documents section, to understand expectation for all writing assignments.

### ***Group Research (4 X 10 = 40%)***

Monday through Thursday, as the final section of each class, will be given over to group research projects. Each day has its own assignment, briefly outlined here and subject to some modification according to how the day's lecture and discussion evolves. Students are expected to come to class prepared to contribute fully. This means research in advance. If you are not prepared nor ready to give your fullest attention to the group project, you will receive a lower grade from your collaborators or be asked to leave the group and receive a zero.

In every case, the group has a wide range of options about their final submitted work. It can be in the form of a chart, table, infographic or pictogram, an essay, brief, backgrounder, précis, or executive summary. In general, it's recommended that your final work be no more than two pages long and/or 1000 words maximum. Only one assignment per group can be submitted and will be graded.

You **MUST** include the names of all team members clearly (first and last names) on the submitted work. Failure to include the names means that ALL members will receive a zero for the assignment.

All group research work is to be submitted to D2L through Digital Dropbox in the appropriate folder. While you will have as much as 2 hours everyday to work in class and you are encouraged to complete the work in that time, you have until 8PM that evening to submit your final version.

### ***Group Research Project Topics***

#### **Monday (Porn Wars)**

Take a look at the debates about pornography in the Canadian feminist movement during the eighties by reading through and discussing articles on the subject from Broadside Magazine (<http://www.broadsidefeminist.com/index.php/table-of-contents/violence-against-women>). Prepare a summary document on key issues, dates, events, or legal cases regarding pornography in Canada. It can be a timeline of important dates/events, a legal brief, a comparative chart of different opinions, profiles of key leaders in the debate, a précis of government legislation, etc. It is up to your group to decide how to organize your thoughts and provide some concise insight into one key aspect of the Porn Wars.

#### **Tuesday (Performance)**

Review the blogs of some major feminist queer porn performers today. Possible bloggers include (but are not limited to) Jiz Lee, Courtney Trouble, Ms Naughty, and Maggie Mayhem. Seek out a piece that discusses practices of ethical porn performance and the requirements of the craft. Review your selection with the others in the group and together develop criteria on what constitutes an ethical porn performance and performer.

#### **Wednesday (Technology)**

Compare porn hubs developed strictly for commercial reasons with those that have an ethical, feminist, and/or queer commitment. Commercial porn hubs can include Pornhub, X Hamster, YouPorn, and RedTube. Ethical/feminist/queer networks include the Troublefilms.com web network, freedomporn.org or Pinklabel.tv. Select one commercial hub and one ethical hub and develop a set of criteria that distinguishes the two business models.

## **Thursday (Labour)**

In 2012, Los Angeles County introduced Measure B, requiring condom use on all porn production sets. The state of California followed up with AB1576, to make the requirement state-wide. The state bill eventually was placed “on suspense,” meaning indefinitely on hold, in August 2014. Prepare some background notes on the debate, discuss with your group and develop a position statement on mandatory condom use in porn production.

### ***Group Surveys***

After every group assignment is submitted, you must respond to a brief, 3-question survey about the shared responsibilities of your group. If you do not submit a survey by midnight on the day of the assignment, you will receive a grade of zero on the assignment.

### ***Online Test (25%)***

The online test will be made available on Friday, January 9<sup>th</sup> from 11AM until 5PM. You will have 2 hours to complete the test. There is a timer visible in the online test environment, but you should also have your own timer handy. There will be a substantial grade penalty (including “zero”) if you go over time. The test is only available through D2L and therefore requires a strong, reliable Internet connection. To ensure no technological problems, students must turn off all pop-ups, and open any windows they might want to refer to prior to commencing the quiz. If you’re not 100% positive that what you have is up to the task, go to the TFDL or a computer lab on campus. The test will be on all the materials from class: readings, lectures, screenings, and group research topics.

### ***Final Essay (25%)***

On the final day of class, you will receive an essay question. Students will be expected to undertake independent research of their own and incorporate readings and other materials from the course to answer this question. Write a sound, scholarly response in essay format. Your final submission should be between 4-5 pages (@ 2000 words) and follow the scholarly format outlined in the Essay Grading Rubric. More details and requirements will be circulated with the essay question.

The final essay is due Monday, January 12<sup>th</sup> by midnight.

### **Policy for Late or Incomplete Assignments**

Unless otherwise noted, late assignments will not be accepted without prior approval of the professor and will receive a grade of zero.

If you miss more than two assignments, you may fail the course.

If you receive a failing grade on more than two assignments, you may fail the course.

If you do not participate in at least two group research projects, you may fail the course.

It is the student’s responsibility to keep a copy of all their assignments in case they are lost or reported as not submitted.

### **Grading system:**

This course uses a combination of letter and number grades, according to the chart below. The university’s Undergraduate Grading System is available here: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/f-2.html>. In most cases where the final letter grade for the course is less than 1% from the next higher grade, the professor will round-up.

Percentage	Letter	Usually Graded	Point
90 + %	A+	95	4.0
85 – 89 %	A	87	4.0
80 – 84 %	A–	82	3.7
77 – 79 %	B+	78	3.3
74 – 76 %	B	75	3.0
70 – 73 %	B–	72	2.7
67 – 69 %	C+	68	2.3
64 – 66 %	C	65	2.0
60 – 63 %	C–	62	1.7
55 – 59 %	D+	57	1.3
50 – 54 %	D	52	1.0
0 – 49 %	F	0	0

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#### **Writing support:**

The Student Success Centre offers both online and workshop writing support for U of C students.

**<http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>**

#### **Academic regulations and schedules:**

Consult the Calendar for course information, university and faculty regulations, dates, deadlines and schedules, student, faculty and university rights and responsibilities. The homepage for the University Calendar is

**<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/index.htm>**

**Guidelines on e-mail Etiquette:** **<https://www.ucalgary.ca/it/help/articles/email/etiquette>**

#### **Academic Accommodation:**

It is the students' responsibility to request academic accommodations. If you are a student with a documented disability who may require academic accommodations and have not registered with Student Accessibility Services, please contact them at 403-220-6019. Students who have not registered with Student Accessibility Services are not eligible for formal academic accommodations. More information about academic accommodations can be found at **[www.ucalgary.ca/access](http://www.ucalgary.ca/access)**.

**Emergency Evacuation/Assembly Points:** **<http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>**;

**Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act:** **<http://www.ucalgary.ca/legalservices/foip/>**

#### **“Safewalk” Program:**

Campus Security will escort individuals day or night: call 220-5333 for assistance. Use any campus phone, emergency phone or the yellow phone located at most parking lot pay booths.

**<http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/safewalk/>**

## **Faculty of Arts Program Advising and Student Information Resources:**

Have a question, but not sure where to start? The Faculty of Arts Program Information Centre (PIC) is your information resource for everything in Arts! Drop in at SS102, call us at 403-220-3580 or email us at [picarts@ucalgary.ca](mailto:picarts@ucalgary.ca). You can also visit the Faculty of Arts website at <http://arts.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate> which has detailed information on common academic concerns.

For program planning and advice, contact the Program Information Centre at 403-220-3580 or [artsads@ucalgary.ca](mailto:artsads@ucalgary.ca). For registration (add/drop/swap), paying fees and assistance with your Student Centre, contact Enrolment Services at (403) 210-ROCK [7625] or visit them at the MacKimmie Library Block.

## **Contact for Students Union Representatives for the Faculty of Arts:**

[arts1@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts1@su.ucalgary.ca), [arts2@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts2@su.ucalgary.ca), [arts3@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts3@su.ucalgary.ca), [arts4@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts4@su.ucalgary.ca)

**Contact for Students Ombudsman's Office:** <http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds>

**The University of Calgary has a number of student clubs and other resources dedicated to issues of gender and sexual equity. Here are links to their Facebook sites (please note that the professor is a member of all these 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](#)

## **Plagiarism**

Using any source whatsoever without clearly documenting it is a serious academic offense. Consequences include failure on the assignment, failure in the course and possible suspension or expulsion from the university. Please refer to the following information and make sure you are familiar with the statement below on plagiarism.

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k-2-1.html>

The University Calendar states:

1. Plagiarism - Essentially plagiarism involves submitting or presenting work in a course as if it were the student's own work done expressly for that particular course when, in fact, it is not. Most commonly plagiarism exists when:
  - (a) the work submitted or presented was done, in whole or in part, by an individual other than the one submitting or presenting the work (this includes having another impersonate the student or otherwise substituting the work of another for one's own in an examination or test),
  - (b) parts of the work are taken from another source without reference to the original author,
  - (c) the whole work (e.g., an essay) is copied from another source, and/or,
  - (d) a student submits or presents work in one course which has also been submitted in another course (although it may be completely original with that student) without the knowledge of or prior agreement of the instructor involved.

While it is recognized that scholarly work often involves reference to the ideas, data and conclusions of other scholars, intellectual honesty requires that such references be explicitly and clearly noted.

Plagiarism occurs when direct quotations are taken from a source without specific acknowledgement, or when original ideas or data from the source are not acknowledged. Citing your sources in a bibliography is not enough, because a bibliography does not establish which parts of a student's work are taken from other sources. MLA (Modern Language Association)

documentation or other recognized forms of citation must be used for this purpose. Advice on adequate documentation can be found at the following web sites:

<http://www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/>

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>

## **Safer Space Guidelines**

In the interest of making this a safer space for sharing ideas about gender and sexual diversity, please consider the following in your interactions with other participants:

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 safer space to talk about gender pronouns. Ways to talk about your pronouns include, but are not limited to:

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

Don't assume that others have the same experiences, identities, or histories as you. Question your assumptions and be open to having others question them too. Practice respectful listening and respectful communication.

Some additional identities/assumptions to consider are racial identity, ethnic identity, immigrant status, citizenship status, sex assigned at birth, mental health situation, accessibility needs (or lack thereof), and formal education status. Not all such identity markers are visible or obvious, so try as best as you can to not assume.

Provide discrete and succinct content/trigger 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.