

Women's Studies (WMST) 405 – Lecture 01
Seminar in Feminist Praxis
Fall 2013
Monday 1400 – 1650

Instructor: Dr. Fiona Nelson
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Office Hours: Wednesdays 1400-1600
Or by appointment

Additional Information:

Course materials, grades, and a discussion board will be available on Blackboard. Go to: <http://blackboard.ucalgary.ca/webapps/login>

Course Description:

In “praxis,” theory and practice come together to create informed, conscious and self-conscious action. In this seminar, students will have opportunities to explore how their own feminist convictions might manifest themselves in terms of activism. At the same time, we will investigate the Canadian history of feminist activism and examine the links between feminist theoretical formulations and feminist practices.

Students will be asked to engage in some form of feminist practice, but it is up to you to decide what this means for you. Don't worry, we will talk about this in the seminar. As a rough guide, I would suggest about 4 – 8 hours per month should be spent on your activist projects. Any less than this would probably be too little to allow full engagement in the feminist project. More than this might be burdensome, but that is up to you.

For the most part, in-class time will be spent discussing assigned readings and reflecting on activist experiences. Because we are a small group and will be meeting only once a week, it is imperative that you keep up with the readings and make every effort to attend all classes. Late arrivals and early leavings are very disruptive with small groups. I would thus ask that if you arrive after the door is closed, you wait until the midpoint break to join the class. Likewise, if you will need to leave early, please do so at the midpoint.

Objectives of the Course:

The main objective of the course is to help students clarify the ways in which you can actively “do” feminism. You might also have experiences that could help in finding later employment in feminist or human services sectors, if that is your goal.

We will also examine and generate, at least tentative, answers to questions such as the following:

- What is the feminist movement? Does it still exist?
- What counts as feminist activism? Who gets to decide?
- Do feminists have obligations simply by virtue of being feminist?
- How do we weigh/decide between local and global foci and efforts? Can we work locally for global change? Who decides the needs/directions of global action/change?
- What is/should be the role of Women’s Studies programs in terms of feminism and feminist praxis?

Computer and Internet Use:

Face-to-face, engaged, interaction is the key feature of a seminar course. Additionally, there will be no lecture during which one needs to take notes. Students are thus requested *not* to use their computers in this class unless specifically requested to do so.

Required Books:

Marsden, Lorna. 2012. *Canadian Women and the Struggle for Equality*. Ontario: Oxford University Press.

Rebick, Judy. 2005. *Ten Thousand Roses: The Making of a Feminist Revolution*. Canada: Penguin Canada.

Neigh, Scott. 2012. *Gender and Sexuality: Canadian History Through the Stories of Activists*. Halifax and Winnipeg: Fernwood Publishing.

Whitmore, Elizabeth, Maureen G. Wilson and Avery Calhoun. 2011. *Activism That Works*. Halifax and Winnipeg: Fernwood Publishing.

Assignments and Evaluation:

Discussion Questions (4 x 3%)	12%
Journal Entries/Responses to Readings (4 x 5%)	20%
Midterm Assignment and Presentation	30%
Final Paper and Presentation	30%
Participation	8%

About the Discussion Questions:

Due: In class, September 16th, September 30th, October 28th, November 18th,

A seminar class is a fabulous, and rare, opportunity to meet with a group of like-minded scholars and work/talk through issues and materials of interest. We will have two class sessions to discuss each book on the reading list. On the first class of discussion for each book, you are being asked to bring one topic/question that has occurred to you while completing the reading, which you would like the seminar group to discuss. You should state your topic or question in one sentence and then write a paragraph with your preliminary response to your own question/topic, or with a very brief discussion of why you think this topic needs to be discussed. So, each of these assignments will be a one-sentence statement of your topic or question followed by a one-paragraph (about half a page) preliminary discussion. Seminar discussions on these days will be structured around these topics/questions.

It would be meaningless to submit a topic/question without being present to discuss it, or to submit one late. A missed submission will thus result in a loss of the 3% grade.

About the Journal Entries/Responses to Readings:

Due: In class, September 23rd, October 7th, November 4th, November 25th

The journal entries are your critical responses to some aspects of the assigned readings. These will be brief, about two pages. Do not attempt to summarize the reading(s) and do not engage with more than one main idea or argument. What is important here is that for each entry you identify one thing that captured/stimulated you in the readings. This might be a point/insight you loved, something you hated, something that you need to think through more fully etc. For your journal entry, grapple critically with that "thing." This will be explained more fully in class. The journal must address the book that is being discussed the day the journal is submitted. People will be asked to discuss their journals in class, so keep this in mind when choosing your topic/approach. *Late journals will not be accepted.*

About the Midterm Assignment And Presentation:

Due: In class, October 21st

This will be a 6-8 page paper that you will present/discuss in class. The paper will ask you to reflect critically on your praxis experiences, on class readings to this point, and on a journal article relevant to the topic of feminist praxis. The assignment and a list of possible articles will be distributed in class on September 30th. You may choose an article from this list or you may find a different article (which should be approved by me). The requirements for this paper will be discussed in greater detail in class. The paper is worth 30%.

About the Final Paper and Presentation:

Due: In class, December 2nd

This will be your opportunity to tie together your practical experiences through the semester and the theoretical, conceptual and historical material we have examined in class. Essentially, it will be your final report about your feminist activism. Further details will be discussed in class.

The paper should be 12-16 pages, double-spaced. The paper will be worth 30%.

About the Participation Grade:

All students are encouraged and expected to participate in the class discussions; the ability to articulate one's position and discuss it with others is a vital academic skill to develop. Likewise, people are asked to be mindful of how much they are contributing and try not to dominate class discussions; being able to listen is also a very important skill. Seminar courses depend fundamentally on the quality of class discussion. It is thus vital that you attend class and that you come prepared to discuss the readings.

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

*There will be NO registrar-scheduled final examination.

****Regardless of your grades on the other components, you cannot pass this course without submitting both the midterm paper and the final paper.***

Deferrals:

If at all possible you must provide *advance* notice to the instructor if you are unable to pass in an assignment or essay on time. All requests for deferral of a course component due to health reasons must be accompanied by written documentation as outlined in the University Calendar and should be obtained while the student has the physical or emotional problem rather than after recovery. Deferrals will be allowed in the following circumstances: illness, domestic affliction or religious conviction. Travel arrangements and misreading of the syllabus are not valid reasons for requesting a deferral. Deferrals will not be granted if it is determined that just cause is not shown by the student. Assignments submitted after the deadline, without documentation or my approval, may be penalized with the loss of a grade (e.g.: A- to B+) for each day late.

Please note that requests to defer term work past the end of a term go through the Undergraduate Programs Office (UPO) and must be processed by the deadlines that are established in the U of C Calendar. You can find the form you need online:

Deferred Term Work Form:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/files/registrar/defTW.pdf>

You must submit this deferral form to the Faculty of Arts Associate Dean (Students) through the Program Information Centre: SS110 (first floor social sciences). Only the Associate Dean approves requests for deferrals which extend beyond the end of a term. Instructors are not involved in such decisions. To make an appointment with the Associate Dean, phone (403) 220-3580.

Handing in papers outside of class, return of final papers, and release of final grades:

1. When students are unable to submit papers in class, they should make arrangements to hand in their papers directly to the instructor. Under no circumstances may papers/assignments be placed on or under the professor's door.
2. Term work will be returned in class. Students who want their final papers returned by mail must attach a stamped, self-addressed envelope with the paper. Otherwise, final papers will be available for pick-up only during the professor's office hours at the beginning of the next term.
3. Final grades are not posted publicly. They are available only online.

The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) legislation disallows the practice of having students retrieve assignments from a public place, e.g., outside an instructor's office or the Department main office. Written assignments must be returned to students individually, during class, or during the instructor's office hours; if a student is unable to pick up her/his assignment s/he may provide the instructor with a stamped, self-addressed envelope to be used for the return of the assignment.

Academic Accommodation: If you are a student with a disability who may require academic accommodation, it is your responsibility to register with the Student Accessibility Services (220-8237) and discuss your needs with your instructor no later than fourteen (14) days after the start of the course. For further information, please see <http://www.ucalgary.ca/access/>

Academic Misconduct:

Plagiarism, cheating and other academic misconduct are regarded as serious academic offences. Students are advised to consult the University Calendar which presents a Statement of Intellectual Honesty and definitions and penalties associated with cheating, plagiarism, and other academic misconduct.

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 possibly suspension or expulsion from the university.

You must document not only direct quotations but also paraphrases and ideas where they appear in your text. A reference list at the end is insufficient by itself. Readers must be able to tell exactly where your words and ideas end and other people's words and ideas begin. This includes assignments submitted in non-traditional formats such as Web pages or visual media, and material taken from such sources.

Please consult your instructor or the Writing Support Centre (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>) if you have any questions regarding how to document sources.

Writing Skills Statement

All written assignments will be assessed at least partly on writing skills. Writing skills include not only surface correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc) but also general clarity and organization. Research papers must be properly documented. If you need help with your writing, you may use the Writing Support Centre. Visit the website for more details: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>

"SAFEWALK" Program -- 220-5333

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 booths.

Grading System

The following grading system will be used:

	Grading Scale
A+	96-100
A	90-95.99
A -	85-89.99
B+	80-84.99
B	75-79.99
B-	70-74.99
C+	65-69.99
C	60-64.99
C-	55-59.99
D+	53-54.99
D	50-52.99
F	0-49

Ethics

Whenever you perform research with human participants (i.e. surveys, interviews, observation) as part of your university studies, you are responsible for following university research ethics guidelines. Your instructor must review and approve of your research plans and supervise your research. For more information about your research ethics responsibilities, see the U of C Research Ethics "Information for Applicants," sections 3.0 to 9.0, inclusive:

http://www.ucalgary.ca/UofC/research/html/ethics/info_undergrad.html

There will be no requirement of conducting human-subject research in this course.

Emergency evacuations:

In the case of fire or other emergency evacuation of this classroom/lab, please proceed to the assembly point by *[check link to find assembly point for your building:*

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/node/75>]

Students' Union:

Students' Union contacts can be found at:

<http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/home/contact.html>

Student Representation

There are now four Arts reps because of the amalgamation, with the email addresses being arts1@su.ucalgary.ca, arts2@su.ucalgary.ca, arts3@su.ucalgary.ca, and arts4@su.ucalgary.ca. Please contact if you have questions related to Students Union matters, events, or concerns.

For your student ombudsman, please see

<http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/services/student-services/student-rights.html>

Faculty of Arts Program Advising and Student Information Resources

- Have a question, but not sure where to start? The new Faculty of Arts Program Information Centre (PIC) is your information resource for everything in Arts! Drop in at SS110, call us at 403-220-3580 or email us at artsads@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 Student Success Centre (formerly the Undergraduate programs Office) at (403) 220-5881 or visit them on the 4th Floor of MacEwan Student Centre.
- 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.

Schedule of Lectures and Readings

The following are the dates by which indicated readings should be completed:

September 9 th :	No Readings
September 16 th :	Marsden: pp vii - 131
September 23 rd :	Marsden: pp 132 – 261
September 30 th :	Rebick: pp xi - 124
October 7 th :	Rebick: pp 126 - 257
October 14 th :	THANKSGIVING – NO CLASS
October 21 st :	Midterm Assignment Presentations – No Readings
October 28 th :	Neigh: pp 1 - 96
November 4 th :	Neigh: pp 97 – 185
November 11 th :	READING DAY - NO CLASS
November 18 th :	Whitmore, Wilson & Calhoun: pp 1 - 79
November 25 th :	Whitmore, Wilson & Calhoun: pp 80-161
December 2 nd :	Final Presentations – No Readings