



UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY
FACULTY OF ARTS
Department of Philosophy

WMST405-S01
Praxis Seminar
Fall Term 2018 Course Outline
Lectures: T/R 9:30 a.m. to 10:45 a.m., SA 245

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Office Hours: Tuesdays 11:00 to 12:00 or by appointment. **WMST Open Forum Thursdays 11:00 to 12:00, Common Area, Philosophy Department, 12th floor of Social Science.**

Course Description:

Praxis is the term used to describe the coming together of theory and practice to create informed, conscious and self-conscious action. In this seminar, we will investigate key concepts of activism, and examine the links and gaps between theories and practices. This will be done through our course work, and through the practicum aspect of the course. Examples from feminist, queer, trans and other social justice movements will be explored.

Students will engage in some form of social change work; each student will participate in a practicum, and spend a minimum of 15 hours through the term at their practicum site. This is in addition to the weekly class meeting.

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

A further explanation of the practicum: Each student, with the help of the instructor, will be placed within an appropriate organization that has been approved by the instructor. This will typically be in place by Week 2. The social change organization may be based at University of Calgary, or in the wider Calgary community. The student will be doing this work with the intent of: understanding themselves in relation to a social change organization; understanding social change and praxis more fully; understanding the inner workings of a social change organization. Students will take the time to explore the practice and culture of the organization, their social media presence, their basic policies and structures, and their vision statement.

Key to understanding an organization is engaging in critical self-reflection of what you learn about the difficult work of daily social change. Remember that a critical analysis is not about criticizing and tearing down an organization; students want to arrive at a holistic and empathetic analysis that situates the learner at the centre. Each student will keep in mind that they are there to learn, observe, and pay attention, not to tell staff-people how to conduct themselves. Each student will leave the practicum with an insider, detailed view of praxis, and the skill of being able to sensitively comprehend some of the inner workings of a social change organization.

The practicum experience will allow students to reflect on these questions: What does this organization do, and where am I in this process? What are my feminist principles and how do I see them operating during this experience? How am I better able to understand the concept of praxis through my work with this organization? How do I integrate my values into this social change work? Where do I see resiliency within this organization? Are the staff people cultivating a culture of 'calling in,' rather than 'calling out'?

How hard it is to bring ideals to fruition; what are the everyday challenges involved in this process? Where do I see the everyday challenges in the life of an organization and where do I see them in my own life?

Further Considerations: Some students may already be connected with a social change organization. It may seem, upon first glance, that that is the organization to choose for the practicum. However, it will be important for any student connected with an organization to consider these questions: Do you already have an established relationship with the group? If yes, will you be able to perceive organizational dynamics and challenges clearly? If yes, is your friendship or social network reliant on this organization; how complicated might that be when attempting to immerse yourself in a deep learning experience? If yes, are you already involved in a leadership or volunteer position that might impede your ability to learn as much as possible; will you be able to stand back and observe all dynamics?

Keep in mind that the instructor will have final say over each student's practicum.

Prerequisites: 3 units, 0.5 full course equivalent, in Women's Studies courses.

Course Learning Outcomes:

- *understand the broad ranges of issues feminists were/are concerned about
- *consider the relevance of feminism/social justice 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 activists 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.

These are available at the U of C bookstore.

Other readings for the course will be posted on the D2L site.

Assignments and Evaluation:

***Student Agreement**, completed on D2L, by September 11, 8 p.m. Students will carefully read the Student Agreement, which will be found under the 'Quiz' section of D2L. Please note it will not be graded as a quiz; it is listed there because of the versatility of the 'Quiz' section. The agreement consists of a series of Y/N questions. If a student answers 'No' for any question, the student must email the instructor with an explanation; the instructor will then determine if the reasoning is valid.

***Participatory Classroom**, a two-part assignment. Participation Pact is available in the 'Quiz' section of D2L; it will be completed by September 11, 8 p.m. The Participatory Classroom assessment, a short essay, will be posted in the D2L Dropbox by November 29, 11:59 p.m. If Participation Pact is not completed by the deadline, students will not be able to hand in the second part of the assignment they will receive 0/F on the assignment. Worth 15% of the grade.

***Discussion questions** on the reading for the day. Due dates are Sept. 18, Sept. 25, Oct. 2, Oct. 9, Oct. 23, Oct. 30, Nov. 20. 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% of the grade.

***The Alignment Experiment**, due October 11, worth 20%.

***Presentation**, November 6 and 8, worth 15%.

***Final paper**, December 11, worth 30%.

*Participatory classroom, a two-part assignment geared toward building a participatory classroom. The first part of the assignment will be done online, through the D2L 'quiz' section, and is due **September 11**, 8 p.m. For the second part of the assignment, due **November 29**, 11:59 p.m., in the Dropbox, students will write a 2 to 3 page double-spaced paper focusing on issues of attendance, participation, and depth of learning. 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 consider what they have contributed to creating a vibrant learning atmosphere. Students will begin by assigning themselves a grade that they believe accurately reflects their participation and depth of learning. They will explain their rationale for this grade by explaining how they have conducted themselves throughout the semester. The student's assessment will be considered in light of the instructor's observations, and the instructor will have final say concerning the grade. Make sure you read Guidelines for the Participatory Classroom Assignment, on our D2L site. This assignment is worth a total of 15%.

*Hard copies of discussion questions are due at the beginning of class on **Sept. 18, Sept. 25, Oct. 2, Oct. 9, Oct. 23, Oct. 30, Nov. 20**. These questions will be used to form the basis of our work on the reading for the day. On four of those days, your discussion questions will be collected, and a letter grade, worth 5% of your overall grade, for a total of 20%, 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 20%, due 11:59 p.m., **October 11**, Drop-box, D2L. 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.

*Presentation, worth 15%, happening on **November 6 and 8**. During this 5-minute presentation, students will discuss what they are learning through their practicum. It will begin with a thesis statement that situates issues, analyses, and questions about that student's organization; a strong thesis statement is key to a strong presentation. It will NOT be a description of the social change organization; instead, it will be a summary that provides insight into the student's ability to focus on relevant issues within the organization and analyze them in relation to our course material. Here is an example of a possible thesis statement: *Calgary Communities Against Sexual Abuse provides important lessons on framing and building advocacy work from the perspectives of people who have survived sexual abuse.*

Students will be graded on the strength of the thesis statement, the depth of critical/holistic thinking about the thesis statement, the clarity of the presentation, and the ability to include themselves in the analysis. Students who talk for less than 5 minutes will lose points; all students will be cut off at the 5-minute mark. Powerpoint presentations are not allowed; this is a 5-minute talk. Given that some students may have anxiety about these presentations, students can simply read their talk, and not attempt to memorize it.

*Final paper, worth 30%, due at 11:59 p.m., Drop-box, D2L site, **December 11**. This 20 page self-reflection, double-spaced paper will focus on the practicum, with numerous (at least 10) connections made to our course readings and class discussions. It will be helpful, in preparation for this essay, for students to keep detailed notes through the term, as to what they are beginning to understand about social change, praxis, and personal values/insights.

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

IMPORTANT PROGRAM, DEPARTMENTAL, FACULTY AND UNIVERSITY INFORMATION:

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: 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) 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:

- [Consent Awareness and Sexual Education Club](#)
- [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/> 4th 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/> 2nd 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) or the Head of the Department of Philosophy (phildept@ucalgary.ca) Please note, Women's Studies is a program that is administered by the Department of Philosophy.

Treaty Acknowledgement:

The University of Calgary, located in the heart of Southern Alberta, both acknowledges and pays tribute to the traditional territories of the peoples of Treaty 7, which includes the Blackfoot Confederacy (comprised of the Siksika, the Piikuni, and the Kainai) as well as the Tsuut'ina and the Stoney Nakoda (including Chiniki, Bearspaw, and Wesley First Nations). The University of Calgary is situated on land adjacent to where the Bow River meets the Elbow River. The University recognizes the traditional Blackfoot name of this place, Moh'kíns'tsis, now known as the City of Calgary. The University recognizes that the City of Calgary is also home to Region III of the Métis Nation of Alberta. By virtue of the signing

of Treaty 7, in 1877, the university recognizes that we are all treaty people. The City of Calgary is home to a culturally diverse community. Together, we share this land, strive to live together, learn together, walk together, and grow together “in a good way.” *ii’ taa’ poh’ to’ p*

Student Agreement and Other Important Matters:

Students are expected to carefully read the Student Agreement, and abide by it, after our first class. The Student Agreement explains important issues having to do with creating a respectful environment, ensuring confidentiality, setting up a distraction-free classroom, and so forth. If a student has concerns about the Student Agreement and needs to speak to the instructor in order to negotiate a modified agreement, this must be discussed in person. Otherwise, all students will be expected to follow the guidelines stated in the Agreement.

Responsibility for attending and 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, and readings.

Use of recording technologies in class is prohibited.

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, and their email, regularly.

Students are expected to arrive to class on time and prepared to work.

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>

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 wellbeing, 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.

IMPORTANT DEPARTMENTAL, FACULTY AND UNIVERSITY INFORMATION

Academic Honesty

Cheating or plagiarism on any assignment or examination is regarded as an extremely serious academic offense, the penalty for which will be an F on the assignment or an F in the course, and possibly a disciplinary sanction such as probation, suspension, or expulsion. See the relevant section K.5 on 'Academic Misconduct' in the current University Calendar <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k-5.html>.

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

The student accommodation policy can be found at: ucalgary.ca/access/accommodations/policy.

Students needing an Accommodation because of a disability or medical condition should communicate this need to Student Accessibility Services in accordance with the Procedure for Accommodations for Students with Disabilities <http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy.pdf>.

Students needing an Accommodation based on a Protected Ground other than Disability, should communicate this need, preferably in writing, to their instructor.

D2L Help

Desire2Learn is UCalgary's online learning management system. Important information and communications about this course may be posted on D2L. Go to <https://ucalgary.service-now.com/it> for help.

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 . 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/advising> 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 Women's Studies at the University Calgary at <https://arts.ucalgary.ca/womens-studies> or contact the Coordinator of the WMST Program, Joe Kadi at jkadi@ucalgary.ca.

Writing

This course will include written assignments. All written assignments (including, although to a lesser extent, written exam responses) 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. Students are also encouraged to use Writing Support Services and other Student Success Centre Services, located on the 3rd floor of the Taylor Family Digital Library. Writing Support Services assist with a variety of assignments, from essays to lab reports. Students can book 30-minute one-on-one appointments online, sign up for 15- minute drop-in appointments, and register for a variety of writing workshops. For more information on this and other Student Success Centre services, please visit www.ucalgary.ca/ssc .

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.

Internet and Electronic Communication Devices

The instructor reserves the right to establish course policies regarding the use of devices such as laptops, tablets, and smartbooks. If allowed, these devices must be used exclusively for instructional purposes and must not cause disruption to the instructor or to fellow students. Cell phones and paging devices should be set to silent mode during lectures. Audio or video recording of lectures is not permitted without the written permission of the instructor. Students violating this policy are subject to discipline under the University of Calgary's Non-Academic Misconduct policy

Emergency Evacuation:

In case of an emergency evacuation during class, students must gather at the designated assembly point nearest to the classroom. The list of assembly points is found at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints> . Please check this website and note the nearest assembly point for this course.

Other Helpful Contacts

- Safewalk and Campus Security: 403-220-5333.
- Faculty of Arts Student Representatives: 403-220-6552, arts1@su.ucalgary.ca , arts2@su.ucalgary.ca , arts3@su.ucalgary.ca , arts4@su.ucalgary.ca
- Student Union: <https://www.su.ucalgary.ca/>; 403-220-6551.
- Student Ombudsman: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds>
- Campus Mental Health Strategy: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/mentalhealth/>