



**FACULTY OF ARTS
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY
WOMEN'S STUDIES PROGRAM**

**WMST 405 S01
Praxis Seminar
Fall Term 2017**

Course Outline

Meetings: Mondays 18:00-20:45 in SA 129.

Instructor: Joe Kadi

Office: Social Sciences, Room 1206

Email: jkadi@ucalgary.ca

Office Hours: Monday 3 to 4:30, Tuesday 11 to 12:30.

PREREQUISITE: 3 UNITS (0.5 FULL-COURSE EQUIVALENT) IN WOMEN'S STUDIES COURSES.

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 choose a practicum that seems most likely to work for them. Students will 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 will find their own practicum, within an appropriate organization that has been approved by the instructor. This will be in place by Week 2, or, under special circumstances and with instructor permission, by Week 3. This organization will be focused on social change work. It 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 assessing an organization is engaging in critical self-reflection of what you learnt 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, not to tell staff-people

how to conduct themselves. Each student will leave the practicum with an insider, detailed view of praxis. Each student will leave the practicum with 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?

Guidelines for students selecting an organization to shadow: It will be important for each student to begin searching for an appropriate organization once they have registered for the course. Some students may already be connected with an organization. It may seem, upon first glance, that that is the organization to choose for the practicum. However, it will be important for you to make sure you choose a practicum that will allow you to do your best scholarly work and critical thinking. Here are some questions to consider, when pondering which organization to work with: 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?

Each student will be responsible for submitting a written application to the course instructor that describes the organization they have chosen for the practicum, and explains why this organization is likely to provide a positive learning experience for them. If the student wishes to do a practicum with an organization they already have a connection with, they must discuss the issues noted in the previous paragraph. In addition, students must include their supervisor's name, position, and contact information. (They will inform their supervisor that the course instructor will be contacting them about the practicum.)

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.

These are available at the U of C bookstore.

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

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, 20%.

*Presentation, 10%.

*Final paper, 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 18, 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 27, 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 18** and **November 27**, 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 **25 September, 2 October, 23 October, 30 October, 6 November, 20 November**. 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, 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 **6 November or 20 November**. 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 10%, happening on **16 October**. 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 the beginning of class on **4 December**. This 25 to 30 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.

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, 12th 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) 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/> 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.

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.

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 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

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 ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy.

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/undergraduate> for detailed information on common academic concerns

Advice on Philosophy Courses

You may find answers to your more specific questions about a philosophy degree on the Department of Philosophy's website <http://phil.ucalgary.ca>, or contact one of Philosophy's Undergraduate Advisors. Jeremy Fantl (jfantl@ucalgary.ca), Allen Habib (anhabib@ucalgary.ca), Megan Delehanty (mdelehan@ucalgary.ca).

Registration Overload/Prereq Waivers

If you are seeking to register in a Philosophy course that is full or to get permission to waive the prereqs for a course, email the Department Manager, Tram Nguyen (tram.nguyen1@ucalgary.ca). Include the specific course information and your UCID number in your request.

Writing

This course will include written assignments. Faculty policy directs that 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 Ombudsman: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds>