

UWO - Department of Women's Studies and Feminist Research

WS1024F - Introduction to Equity, Diversity and Human Rights

January to April 2018

draft outline

Instructor: Erica Lawson **Where:** Spencer Engineering Bldg. 2100
Office: Lawson Hall 3234 **When:** Tuesdays, 1:30 – 3:30 pm; one-hour tutorial
Contact: (519) 661-2111 ext. 86941 **Office hours:** Tues 10:30-11:30 am; Thurs 10-11am
elawso3@uwo.ca

Description:

This introductory course surveys theory and practice in the fields of equity, diversity, and human rights. The course addresses how equity, diversity, and human rights policies and practices respond to social inequality, social difference, and unequal relations of power; as well, we will consider arguments about multiculturalism as a strategy to promote social inclusion. Towards these goals, we will take up readings about these issues from schools of thought such as: anti-racism, feminism and gender studies, sexuality, disability, education, and legal studies. In doing so, the course examines some of the following questions: How are equity, diversity and human rights shaped by political and state interests? What are (some of) the limits and possibilities of institutionalized, liberal approaches to equity and diversity? How are these approaches challenged? What does it mean to have “human rights?” And how, and by whom, are these rights contested? In addition to learning through our course readings, lectures, discussions, documentaries, and assignments, we will pay attention to media stories, human rights organizations, as well as to protests by equity-seeking groups to see how they approach the issues addressed in this course.

Course objectives:

- Address how equity, diversity, and human rights are inter-related
- Exposure to theories, practices, and debates in these areas
- Awareness of key human rights organizations and their mandates
- Familiarity with equity, diversity, and human rights policies
- Awareness of activism in relation to these specific social justice issues
- Knowledge of the progress made, and the challenges presented in these areas

Learning Outcomes:

- Good knowledge about the meanings of “equity,” “diversity,” and “human rights”
- Good understanding of the debates and different schools of thought in equity, diversity and human rights
- Good knowledge of how these issues are taken up in local and global contexts
- Familiarity with how feminist scholarship, in particular, address these issues
- Read theory closely and critically
- Improved research and writing skills through appropriate assignments and constructive feedback

Women's Studies Grading Criteria (see WSFR Handbook for details)

- A+ (90 to 100) – Excellent work
- A (80 and up) - Superior work
- B (70 to 79) Good work, meeting all requirements, and eminently satisfactory
- C (60 and up) – Competent work, meeting requirements
- D (50 to 59) – Fair work, minimally acceptable
- F (49 and down) – Assignment does not apply to course; basic requirements are unmet; plagiarism)

Assignments and Evaluation:

- Participation – 10%
- Reading response paper – 20%
- Proposal for research paper – 10%
- Research paper – 30%
- Final exam – 30%

Participation (10%): Students are required to complete weekly readings and come to class prepared to participate in discussions, including raising questions that demonstrate knowledge of articles. Please note that we will take attendance in class and in tutorial.

Reading response (20%): Four double-spaced pages. Students are required to submit a short, critical response to a reading of choice. Select the readings that you wish to write on and inform the instructor no later than week two. You can write on any paper that has not been discussed in class. Please upload your paper to turnitin before you come to class and submit a hard copy at the beginning of the class.

Tips for Writing a Critical Response

A reading response (or position paper) is a reflective engagement with one or two compelling ideas that you encounter in an article of your choice. It is not an exercise in summarizing a reading. Try to choose a reading that raises issues that are of interest to you. You are required to address the reading thoughtfully, making connections to course materials and previous class discussions. That is, try to create a dialogue with other articles/ideas. For example, you could address themes by the author by noting the differences/similarities between their work and someone else's that we've read. A strong critical reflection paper makes reference to key themes and arguments that are central to the course.

Proposal for Research Paper (10%): Two to three double spaced pages including references. This is the first stage of your final research paper. The purpose of the proposal is to provide you with an opportunity to **a)** choose a topic, **b)** explain and discuss your choice, and **c)** using at least one article from our reading list, identify and explain the themes that you plan to use for the assignment. You are also required to select three additional articles – of which two must be scholarly – not listed in the course, for your research paper. This means that you must summarize a total of four, carefully selected sources for the research paper, and use the proposal to explain your choice.

Choose a non-profit agency or a business with a diversity and equity policy (see list of policies posted on OWL for your interest – or you can find one that suits you). Take a look at the key principles and commitments made in this policy. Write a six to seven-page analytical paper about the policy. Questions to consider: What is the agency's/business's approach to diversity and equity in relation to select themes in our readings? How might the scholar(s) whose work we've read (as well as additional sources you've chosen) dialogue with the policy to highlight its limitations and/or possibilities for advancing equity and diversity?

OR

Write a six to seven-page essay on a pressing human rights issue: What is the issue or problem? Why is it a violation of human rights? How might the scholar(s) whose work we've read (as well as additional sources you've chosen) dialogue with your central thesis to help advance your arguments?

Note: All assignments will be marked according to how well you follow the instructions; clarity of thought; organization of ideas, and proper referencing of sources.

Final Exam: (30%)

Prerequisites:

“Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.” (<http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/exam/courseoutlines.pdf>).

Prerequisites:

Support Services:

“Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.” <http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/exam/courseoutlines.pdf>. Remember that there is a lot of help/support here at Western, and the TAs and I can help direct you to the resources if you're not sure from the above.

Submitting Assignments: Please hand in hard copies of all written assignments in WS 1024F; you are also required to submit electronic copies of all written assignments (excluding tests/exams) to Turnitin.com through the course Owl Sakai links. Here's the statement on use of Turnitin from the University:

“All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licencing agreement currently between the University and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>.)” (<http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/exam/courseoutlines.pdf>)

Deadlines are registered as the date/time these assignments are due to Turnitin, and late penalties are assessed based on the submission time to the turnitin site – so please don't forget to load your paper to Turnitin

on time! Again, we need hard copies to mark, so assignments not handed in during class must be deposited in the WS essay drop box, located outside the WSFR Main Office doors, Lawson Hall 3260.

Essays not submitted to Turnitin will receive grades converted to 0. You cannot submit assignments in WS 1024F prepared for other courses.

Academic Offences:

“Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:

<http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholoff.pdf>

<http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/exam/courseoutlines.pdf>.

Note for Students with Disabilities: Please contact poliscie@uwo.ca if you require any information in plain text format, or if any other accommodation can make the course material and/or physical space accessible to you.

Late & Missed Assignments:

Regarding the University’s medical policy, UWO Senate requires that “Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department. For UWO Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness

see: <http://www.westerncalendar.u4999wo.ca/2011/pg117.html> and

(<https://studentservices.uwo.ca/secure/index.cfm>).”

(See also http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf

and the Student Medical Certificate (SMC) at <http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/medicalform.pdf>).

Requests for accommodation must be made as soon as possible and, according to A&H requirements, no later than within 28 days from the missed assignment.

Please note that where medical/compassionate accommodation does not apply, we will deduct the standard penalty of 2% per day for work submitted late, unless you have made arrangements with your instructor *in person* prior to the deadline.

Attendance in classes: UWO Senate stipulates that “Students whose absences from classes and/or tutorials are deemed excessive by the instructor can be debarred from writing the final exam in the course, according to the procedures established under “Examinations/Attendance” in the 2009 *Western Academic Calendar* (<http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/operations/proofing/academiccalendar2011.pdf>).”

Scholastic Offences: “Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following website: <http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2009/pg113.html>.”

Plagiarism: “Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offense (see the ‘Scholastic Offense Policy’ in the Western Academic Calendar). Plagiarism checking: The University of Western Ontario uses software for plagiarism checking. Students may be required to submit their written work in electronic form for plagiarism checking.”

--- U.W.O. Senate statement on plagiarism

Electronic devices in tests and exams: No electronic devices are permitted during tests and exams.

Owl: Use of Owl is necessary for successful completion of this course. This includes accessing readings as required in the course outline, downloading instructions and guidelines for assignments, receiving course announcements and submitting assignments to Turnitin.com.

Contact Info: My office hours are posted on page one of this syllabus. Please do not wait until the week before assignments are due to ask for help. Written messages can be left for me in my mailbox in the Department of Women's Studies main office, LWH 3260. You are welcome to email, but should always put the course number into the subject line, and use your UWO email address; emails not so identified may automatically be screened out as spam. I will respond within forty-eight hours. If you are unable to email, you can leave a message for me at 519-661-2111 ext. 86941.

Please note that this syllabus is subject to revision at the Instructor's discretion.