COURSE OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES

This course is designed as a gender and public policy “solutions lab”. The goals of this course are to use a comparative politics and comparative public policy lens to critically examine some of the inequalities faced by women, girls, and LGBTQ+ people, and to reflect on the role that political institutions and public policies play in both creating and overcoming gender-based inequality.

Some of the most intractable policy challenges around the globe centre around gender.

The World Bank gender data portal notes that on a number of dimensions of gender inequality — including economic structures and access to resources; education; health and related services; public life and decision-making; and human rights – women are still disadvantaged in relation to men; while data are scarcer, racialized women, as well as lesbian, trans, and other gender sexual minority (GSM) groups face even more disadvantages compared to both white men and women. There are vastly different human rights regimes around the world and constitutional provisions that permit discrimination on the basis of gender, sex, sexuality, and sexual orientation. In those countries where women have advanced on measures of economic equality, they may remain underrepresented in political office and other political institutions.

What makes these problems intractable is that gender inequality is multidimensional. Inequality manifests on the basis of multiple aspects of identity and in multiple structures, institutions, and organizations. Issues of intersectionality – of gender, sexuality and sexual orientation, class, race, indigeneity, religion, ethno-nation group so on – along with global power imbalances between North and South, political regimes and welfare state traditions,
and culture and normative dimensions make gender inequality in all its aspects challenging to solve. Drawing on a variety of political science and other social science research, the first part of the course focuses on examining various aspects of gender-based inequality; the second part critically examines some contemporary policy solutions. Canada, at points, provides an anchor point for comparative discussion but, as much as possible, the comparative lens is used to critically reflect on the varieties of lived experiences (and thus positions of advantage and disadvantage) of women, girls, and racialized and LGBTQ+ people around the world.

By the end of this course students will:

- Gain a broader and deeper understanding of the role that gender plays in politics and policy-making in comparative cross-national context
- Apply political science theory and analysis to understand the multiple aspects of gender inequality (such as comparative analysis; intersectional analysis; structural and institutional analysis)
- Develop critical analytic skills and techniques to analyze policies and reflect on possible policy solutions using multiple lens.

Please note that the course material includes challenging topics and course material that some students may find disturbing and/or traumatizing or may evoke strong emotional reactions. Recognizing that we all come at this material from different perspectives and lived experiences, I encourage the cultivation of an atmosphere of mutual respect and sensitivity throughout the course.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND LEARNING

Your final grade will be determined by your performance in these areas:

1. Reading journal (10%)
2. Discussion posts (5%)
3. Class participation (15%)
4. Midterm test (30%) OCTOBER 25 (first hour of class)
5. Final essay proposal and draft bibliography (10%) DUE November 15, 2018
6. Final essay (30%) DUE Wednesday December 5, 2018

This course is designed to be an introductory course on gender, politics, and public policy. It cannot cover everything related to these topics in 12 two-hour classes, over 13 weeks (note that there is no class during the fall Reading Week); we can merely scratch the surface on these issues. I hope students are inspired to go beyond the course material and continue their learning well beyond this 12-week introductory course. To that end, in addition to the required weekly readings, the syllabus lists a number of additional (non-mandatory) readings and other resources, should you want to explore a topic in further depth and that may be helpful in writing the final essay.
All the readings are readily available via the University of Toronto online library system or as otherwise indicated. Links are provided to electronic copies of journal articles and book chapters. In the event a link does not work, simply googling the title should provide access to readings (sign into the library with a UTOR id if using a computer off campus).

The **required readings** provide the foundation for the learning in the course. They comprise a mix of academic journal articles and book chapters as well some high quality journalism. Students should complete all the required readings before class, reading closely and with a critical eye, and should be prepared to discuss and analyze the major concepts and issues raised in the material in class.

1. **Reading journal (10%)**:

In order to help you keep up with the readings and practice reading critically, you will keep a reading journal over the course of the term. The reading journal entries are designed to help you learn to map the arguments in the required readings, which will also help you develop your own arguments and analyses.

Each reading journal entry is a **maximum** of 250 words (anything longer will be marked as 0) and it includes the following:
1. Thesis of the reading (1-2 sentences)
2. Description of 1-2 arguments made in support of the thesis (1-2 sentences each).
3. Description of the evidence that supports the arguments (1-2 sentences each).
4. A criticism of or question about the reading (1-2 sentences)

You must complete **5 (FIVE)** journal entries over the course of the term (max 1 per week; weeks 2-12). When there is more than one reading for the week you may choose one of the readings to do the journal on (PLEASE NOTE: you are still responsible for reading the material that you do not include in your journal). Journal entries must be uploaded to Quercus **before** the start of lecture for the week or they will not be accepted.

The reading journals are primarily for you to practice reading like a social scientist and to help you keep up on your reading over the course of the term. **THESE ARE EASY MARKS TO ACHIEVE.** Keeping up like this and having a summary of the term’s reading will help you significantly on preparing for exams. Each entry in the journal is worth 2% and will receive a grade as follows:

2 = excellent; journal entry is complete and done with some thought.
1 = fair; journal entry is complete but appears rushed with only some thought in evidence.
0 = journal entry is incomplete, late, or shows no thought.

2. **Discussion posts (5%)**

This class will use the Discussion function on Quercus to encourage students to share news stories, reports, data, and so on related to the course themes. **Five (5) times in the**
Students are required to post either: a story from a reputable newspaper (including online newspaper); a recently released government or non-governmental organization/international organization report; new data repository; newsworthy video; or relevant social media thread. THESE ARE EASY MARKS TO ACHIEVE: each posting earns one (1) point. Irrelevant posts or those from disreputable websites and sources earn 0. This assignment allows us to contribute collectively to knowledge accumulation and to keep up with current events related to gender, politics, and public policy.

The University of Toronto library services has a number of links re: how to evaluate news sources e.g. “How do I spot fake news?” https://onesearch.library.utoronto.ca/faq/how-do-i-spot-fake-news; and W. Brock MacDonald’s “Researching Using the Internet”: http://advice.writing.utoronto.ca/researching/research-using-internet/

3. Class participation (15%)

Students are expected to attend every class, and actively participate in class discussions. Active participation involves 1) preparing for each class in advance by doing the readings, taking notes, and formulating questions; 2) bringing course materials (readings, notebooks) with you to class; 3) actively listening to class discussion; 4) sharing your own insights; 5) posing questions, raising weaknesses in an argument, or drawing connections between concepts; 6) seeking the opinion of others or drawing others into discussion; 7) participating in in-class work (e.g. one minute essays). I take notes on these aspects of your class participation and engagement, and record your grade accordingly. If participation in class discussions is difficult for you, you must come see me during my office hours.

Please note that I am committed to creating and fostering a positive learning environment based on open communication, mutual respect, and inclusion. In this course, each voice in the classroom has something of value to contribute. I thus encourage in all forms of course communication, both within and outside the classroom, to respect the different experiences, beliefs and values expressed by fellow students, faculty members, any guest speakers, and the graduate teaching assistant.

I also encourage students to observe some basic rules of etiquette in the classroom, such as arriving on time, avoiding the use of electronic devices other than for note taking, and so on.

Please let me know if the name on the official course registration list does not for any reason match the name by which you would like to be addressed. If you have pronouns by which you would like to be addressed, please let me know.

4. Take Home/In Class Midterm Exam (30%)

For this assignment, students will prepare three (3) 5-6 paragraph argumentative essays in response to questions that will be handed out a few weeks before the mid-term. These essays will serve as the study guide. For each essay, you must advance an argument that directly addresses the questions. This argument must be clear and coherent and supported
by evidence from at least three (3) course texts per question. You may not use the exact same readings for each question. Each article or chapter counts as 1 reading. You must paraphrase and directly quote the readings. The essay must be organized and demonstrate university-level writing. Then, on the day of the mid-term, students MUST submit their study guides at the beginning of class and write TWO of the three essays without notes or readings at their disposal (just like a normal in-class exam). You will not know in advance which 2 questions I will pick for you to respond to in class. I will not grade the content of study guides, only that you submitted them. Failure to submit the study guide results in a 10% deduction from your exam grade. I will only evaluate the content of the in-class essays.

5. **Final essay proposal and tentative bibliography (10%)**

6. **Final essay (30%)**

The final essay builds on the learning you have done over the course of the semester to critically examine a particular aspect of gender equality in more depth.

The topic of the final essay is as follows:

Choose ONE policy challenge that relates to gender inequality and the range of policy solutions that have been proposed to deal with the challenge. How, and how well does the policy solutions address the problem that you have identified?

The final essay should conform to the learning goals of the course: that is, it must theoretically grounded in the core themes of the course; engage with the conceptual and analytic material; be explicitly comparative; and be policy oriented.

The final essay is comprised of two components: a one-page (double-spaced) proposal and draft bibliography, due November 15, 2018 (11:59 pm); and the final essay, due December 5, 2018 (11:59 pm). The final essay should be between 10-12 double spaced pages, use 12-point font, with 1 inch margins and include page numbers. Please submit your assignments in Word to Quercus.

The proposal must contain the following components:

- A title for your essay
- A statement of your research topic (that is, what problem, and tentatively, what solution(s))
- A tentative thesis statement (that is, your position or answer to the essay question), with some reference to the jurisdictions you are thinking of including
- A brief description of the theories and the approaches you will draw on to advance your argument
- A brief description of the sources of evidence you will use to make your argument
• A draft bibliography in addition to the one-page proposal of possible sources (academic articles, books, government reports, data sets)

The final essay MUST contain the following components:

• Clear identification of the policy challenge as well as a clear rationale for the choice (e.g. some might choose to focus on a problem that is easily addressed and thus the rationale is this is “low hanging fruit”; others might focus on a policy challenge because it has proven to be intractable).

• A clear statement about scope of the policy challenge, backed up with empirical evidence (is this a global challenge; pertinent to only some countries, regions; highly localized)

• A clear articulation of the social as well as political institutional context, that is, which levels/branches of governance are responsible (international; national; regional; local; legislative; executive; judicial; non-governmental), which civil society organizations, and so on.

• A clear statement of the range of policy solutions that have been proposed, and the criteria you use to assess the effectiveness and appropriateness of the policy solutions.

Some helpful tips:

State the thesis clearly at the outset of your essay, and use the remainder of your essay to present evidence that supports this thesis. Your thesis and the evidence that you provide should be logical, persuasive, and well-reasoned.

Write the paper in your own words. Do not rely on lengthy quotations, closely paraphrased passages, or a series of pasted-together quotes from several sources. Instead, synthesize the arguments that others make into a single central thesis of your own creation.

Cite sources using a consistently applied citation system. Be sure to including specific page references when drawing on authors’ specific arguments.

Include a bibliography that lists all of the sources you have used in your essay.

Proofread your essay. It should be free of grammatical and typographical errors.

Include a title, your name and your student number at the top of your essay or on a separate cover page.
Schedule of Readings

**Week 1 - September 6 - Introduction: situating the policy challenge(s) in global context and using various metrics**

Read the syllabus plus:


Melling, Louise. 2018. “12 Things Other Countries Have Done to Promote Gender Equity.” American Civil Liberties Union (13 August). Online: [https://www.aclu.org/blog/womens-rights/12-things-other-countries-have-done-promote-gender-equity](https://www.aclu.org/blog/womens-rights/12-things-other-countries-have-done-promote-gender-equity) (online)

ONE. 2018. “Can You Spot the Real Sexist Laws?” Quiz. Online: [https://sexistlaws.one.org/?source=homepage&utm_source=homepage&hootPostID=4a8d6a170d3b043c96c5d9d91166c45f](https://sexistlaws.one.org/?source=homepage&utm_source=homepage&hootPostID=4a8d6a170d3b043c96c5d9d91166c45f) (online)

**Additional data resources (online):**


*WORLD Policy Analysis Center (laws and social policies around the globe):* [https://www.worldpolicycenter.org/](https://www.worldpolicycenter.org/)
Week 2 - September 13 – Theorizing gender inequality – identity, intersectionality, and the complexities of different lived experiences


Additional resources:


Week 3 - September 20 – Economic and structural barriers to gender equality: poverty, access to education, health care, and related services


Additional resources:


Week 4 - September 27 –Political violence, conflict, and variation in human rights regimes


Additional resources:


Week 5 – October 4 –How do politics and political leadership affect gender equality [GUEST LECTURE]


Additional Resources:


Week 6 – October 11 – Economic and labour market challenges: global wage gaps, occupation segregation, workplace harassment, employment discrimination, and work/family life


Additional resources:


**Week 7 – October 18 - New frontiers in employment: the digital economy, the gig economy, and precarity in employment**


**Additional Resources:**


CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF POLICY SOLUTIONS

Week 8 – October 25 - The Role of IOs and transnational policy actors/advocates

NOTE: MID-TERM IN THE FIRST HOUR OF CLASS


Additional Resources:


Week 9 – November 1 – Political regimes, welfare states and social provision


**Additional resources:**


**READING WEEK – November 8 – NO CLASS**

**Week 10 – November 15 – Quotas and other mechanisms to achieve greater diversity in elected office and administration** ESSAY PROPOSALS DUE


Additional Resources:

Equal Voice Canada (online https://www.equalvoice.ca/ )


Week 11 – November 22 - Nudges, gender-based budgeting and other elements of policy design


Additional resources:


Week 12 – November 29 – Courts, litigation, and alliances with other civil society actors


Additional resources:


COURSE POLICIES
**Communication**

I encourage students to speak with me about the course and assignments during my office hours, or by appointment, if you cannot make the weekly office hours. Please email me to set up an alternative time. I check my email regularly during working hours (weekdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.) and I will try my best to respond within 24 hours during this time period. Response times will be longer on evenings and weekends. If you have questions on the material covered in the course, please come to my office hours or set up an appointment with me as it is difficult to answer via email any substantive questions on material covered in lectures and readings.

It is important for all students to use a valid UTOR email address for communication. This course uses Quercus but occasionally important course information may also be sent via email. Note that other email addresses (e.g. gmail) can end up in spam. It is your responsibility to log on to Quercus regularly and obtain relevant information for the course. Login is via the U of T Portal which is accessible via the University of Toronto home page.

**Assistance and accommodation**

The University of Toronto is committed to supporting student accessibility and overall student well-being. Many resources exist on campus to help students who are in need of assistance for a number of reasons. Those resources include but are not limited to: accessibility services, health and counseling services, writing centres, and peer mentoring systems. The University also is committed to providing allowances for religious observances.

If you have a accessibility consideration that may require accommodation, please contact Accessibility Services as soon as possible. The Accessibility Services office is located at 455 Spadina Ave, 4th Floor, Suite 400 (next to the camps bookstore). In addition to drop in services Accessibility Services staff can be contacted via email at accessibility.services@utoronto.ca and phone at (416) 978-8060.

A few (i.e. not exhaustive) links to additional resources include:
- [http://healthandwellness.utoronto.ca/](http://healthandwellness.utoronto.ca/)
- [http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/writing-centres/arts-and-science](http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/writing-centres/arts-and-science)
- [http://uoft.me/religiousaccommodation](http://uoft.me/religiousaccommodation)

**Academic accommodation for illness, personal emergency, and religious observance**

In the event that you miss an assignment deadline because of illness, personal emergency, or religious observance, you must inform me as soon as possible in advance of the assignment deadline. Extensions for written work or make-ups for missed assignments will only be granted in exceptional circumstances and at the instructor’s discretion and must be accompanied by valid documentation. In fairness to other students, extensions will not be granted after the assignment due date. If you do miss an assignment deadline, your grade
for this component will be reduced by 3 per cent per day, including weekends. Late assignments will not be accepted after 7 days.

Students are strongly advised to keep rough and draft work and hard copies of their assignments. These should be kept until the marked assignments have been returned and grades have been posted on ACORN.

**Grade appeals**

I and the graduate teaching assistant are happy to discuss evaluation criteria on any assignment as well as strategies for improvement, in person, during office hours. If you judge a received grade to be inaccurate (with respect to the grading guidelines outlined by the Faculty of Arts & Sciences and the assignment instructions given) and would like your assignment to be re-graded, you may appeal the assigned grade. The process by which to appeal the grade is to submit in writing (via email within one week of receiving the graded assignment to the person who graded the assignment) a paragraph explaining the basis of the appeal, as well as the original graded assignment. Please note decisions on appeals are ultimately at the instructor’s discretion. Once an appeal is submitted, the entire assignment (and not specific questions/parts) will be examined. Please note that your grade may go down, go up or remain unchanged after this process.

**Academic integrity**

To help you understand the University of Toronto’s rules and decision-making structures regarding plagiarism and other matters related to academic integrity, please go to [https://www.academicintegrity.utoronto.ca/](https://www.academicintegrity.utoronto.ca/) which links to The Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters. As this link explains, plagiarism and other academic offences: “are in direct opposition to the University’s mission to foster internationally significant research and excellent programs—a mission that can be realized only if members of the University appropriately acknowledge sources of information and ideas, present independent work on assignments and examinations, and complete and submit group projects in accordance with the standards of the discipline being studied.”

Examples of academic offences include (but are not limited to):

- Representing someone else’s work or words as your own
- Falsifying documents such as a medical note
- Purchasing an essay or other assignment
- Submitting someone else’s work – in whole or in part - as your own
- Submitting the same assignment in more than one course (without permission)
- Making up sources or facts for an essay or report.

Plagiarism – presenting others’ thoughts, ideas, or other material without properly acknowledging the source - is a serious academic office and will be dealt with accordingly. If you are unclear about what constitutes plagiarism or how to properly acknowledge
sources, please read this helpful document written by Margaret Proctor: http://advice.writing.utoronto.ca/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize/

If you have questions on these matters, please ask me or the graduate teaching assistant in the course. It is the responsibility of each student to be able to demonstrate the originality of their work.

**In this course, we use turnitin.com for submission of assignments**

Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to Turnitin.com for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the university’s use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com web site.