

**University of Guelph**  
**Women, Justice and Public Policy**  
**POLS\*4100\*02/6180\*02 Fall 2021**  
**Instructor: Deborah Stienstra**

**Time:** 11:30 am – 2:20 pm, Mondays

**Email:** [Deborah.stienstra@uoguelph.ca](mailto:Deborah.stienstra@uoguelph.ca)

**Location:** online

**Phone:** (519) 824-4120 x54553

**Office Hours:** 2:30 -3:30 pm Mondays on-line  
or by appointment

**Zoom link** for class: <https://zoom.us/j/95570529517>

Meeting ID: 955 7052 9517

Passcode: 186980

**Course description:**

How do policies developed in the context of neoliberalism and these turbulent times affect the lives of diverse women and gender equality? How do women organize themselves, respond and resist in these contexts? Using the framework of intersectionality, this course will explore specific policy areas, including economic, environmental, social and criminal justice policies, primarily in Canada. Participants will engage in comparisons with other global Northern and global Southern countries and will consider global and transnational patterns and implications of neoliberalism and feminist organizing.

**Readings and Textbook:**

Required text: MacDonald, Fiona and Alexandra Dobrowolsky, eds. *Turbulent Times, Transformational Possibilities? Gender and Politics Today and Tomorrow*. University of Toronto Press, 2020. Paperback ISBN 9781487588328, also available as an eBook in the library collection.

Additional required readings are on the Course Link website.

**Course requirements:**

1. **Class participation** (15%): This is a seminar class and requires all students to come prepared, having completed the readings, and participate in class discussions. If you are unable to attend class, please let me know.

Evaluation: Your class participation grade will be determined on the basis of:

- a) Your self-evaluation using the posted criteria and uploaded to Dropbox no later than December 6, 2021 (5%);
- b) My tracking of your regular participation and quality of contributions to synchronous class discussions and activities, including those led by other members of the class. Quality is assessed by demonstrated evidence of having completed readings, thought

- about the implications, linked to other course readings or discussions; and engaged effectively with other points of view, including those of other members of the class. (5%)
- c) Your regular contributions to on-line and asynchronous discussions and activities, including those led by other class members. This is assessed by both quantity (regular participation with notice when unable to attend or participate) and quality of engagement (as described in b). (5%)

2. **Class leadership** (20%): Each class member will work with at least two others to introduce one or two examples of the implications of the topic discussed that week using the stories of real women, and a series of questions or exercise to stimulate class discussion. Each group is responsible for roughly 1.5 hours of class time, generally Part 2 of the on-line class. This includes facilitation of any discussion or exercise.

Your group should circulate a one-page summary of links to the example(s) and questions to all class members no later than the Sunday before the class (except for Dec 3 class where it should be submitted by Thursday Dec 2). At least one week prior to the class, the group will meet with the professor to discuss their ideas and the professor's expectations. Each of the group members will submit the materials shared in class, as well as their individual self-reflections on their work as a group via Dropbox no later than December 6, 2021.

Evaluation: Your class leadership grade will be determined by:

- a) Your individual self-reflection on how well your group did its work, including how you worked together as a team (questions will be posted to assist with this), and the submission of your groups' materials. NOTE: this is separate from your self-evaluation of class participation. I cannot evaluate any group member until I receive ALL evaluations from group members. (7.5%)
  - b) Attending meeting with me at least one week prior to class (2.5%);
  - c) Circulating one-page summary to entire class no later than Sunday before class (2.5%);
  - d) My assessment of the quality of your examples, questions/exercise, and facilitation based on demonstrated evidence of the link between class topic and real-life examples; effectiveness of facilitation of discussion questions (making sure all class members have a chance to speak, keeping discussion going); effectiveness of discussion/exercise (did it keep class engaged, was it on topic, did it help to explain or expand issues from the readings); and time management (did the group have a plan and back-up plan for how to use the class time and keep to their plan or implement the back-up plan if surprises happened?) (7.5%)
3. **Reading reflections** (10% each x 3 = 30%): You will submit, via Dropbox, your reflections on the readings for three weeks of the course – your choice of which weeks, except you cannot submit for the week you lead. You may submit more than three and I will include only the three highest grades in your final grade. Every student has one 'free' late paper which can be submitted, with no questions asked and no penalties, not later than the following Monday's class.

**Undergraduate students:** The reflections should be not more than 3 pages (750 words), typed, double-spaced, and should include your critical commentary and/or personal reflections on all the required readings. An excellent reflection paper will weave together the key arguments and reflections around a common theme. All papers should follow the guidelines in the Political Science [Writing Guide](#), and include introduction, thesis statement, body of essay, conclusions and references. Each paper is due by noon the day after the class the readings are discussed.

**Graduate students:** Reflection papers should include all the required readings. The paper should be no more than 4 pages (1000 words) typed, double-spaced, and should include your critical commentary and/or personal reflections on the readings. An excellent reflection paper will weave together the key arguments and reflections around a common theme. All papers should follow the guidelines in the Political Science [Writing Guide](#), and include introduction, thesis statement, body of essay, conclusions and references. Each paper is due by noon the day after the class the readings are discussed.

**Evaluation:** Each reading reflection (each worth a total of 10%) will be evaluated on:

- a) Organization and writing of paper – clear thesis statement, introduction, conclusion, developed arguments that link to thesis statement, complete sentences, limited spelling or grammar errors, references (3%)
  - b) Quality of arguments – identify common theme from readings, demonstrate understanding, analysis and critical evaluation of readings (3.5%)
  - c) Quality of reflections and critique – develop, articulate and integrate compelling and thoughtful reflections drawn from personal life, other parts of life or readings. Illustrate the capacity to link and apply what you learned from the readings to other aspects of life. (3.5%)
4. **Final project** (35%): Focusing on one area of public policy, you will examine the intersectional impacts on one particular group of women and develop a non-academic knowledge product to share your research. There are four steps to this project.

**Step 1:** We will workshop your topics and ideas about the final project in class on November 1 and each student will submit their public policy area, group of women, format and audience for review on PEAR website.

**Step 2:** Each student will participate in the workshopping class and provide feedback to others and review one other person's idea and provide feedback no later through the PEAR website no later than November 8.

**Step 3:** Students will submit a first draft for review not later than November 22, 2021. Each student will review and provide constructive feedback on one other student's draft. Peer review comments are due by November 29, 2021.

**Step 4:** Students will submit a final draft in the Course Link Dropbox no later than December 13, 2021.

**Undergraduate students:** While you may draw on the course readings, you will need to identify and use additional sources, including both academic and community literature. You will present your findings in a plain language fact sheet, blogpost or policy brief. Each of these is short, not more than 1500 words, and requires clear language appropriate to the audience. Examples of these different formats, as well as guidelines for each, will be given in class. The goal of this project is to present your research to audiences other than academic audiences and use appropriate formats. All projects are due December 13, 2021.

**Graduate students:** Create a plain language fact sheet or toolkit for community groups or develop a policy brief for government policy makers. The length of the formats vary, with factsheets and policy briefs about 1500 words, and other formats appropriate to the audience. While you may draw on the course readings, you will need to identify and use additional sources, including both academic and community literature. The goal of this project is to present your research to audiences and use appropriate formats. All projects are due December 13, 2021.

**Evaluation:** Your final project will be evaluated on:

- a) Step 1: Workshopping class and idea submission: Identifies public policy area, group of women, format and audience for your project and contributes feedback for classmates (3.5%)
- b) Step 2: Participation in workshopping class and contribution of one peer review with constructive feedback of another student's idea on PEAR website (3.5 %)
- c) Step 3: Submission of draft (3.5 %)
- d) Step 3: Review of another student's draft and providing constructive feedback on PEAR website (3.5%)
- e) Step 4: Submit final project (21%)
  - a. Quality of research: Gathers, reviews, critically evaluates and interprets information related to project area; identify gaps and relevance to project; (7%)
  - b. Quality of content: translates research into plain language appropriate to target audience; organizes materials effectively; uses visual materials effectively and appropriately to audience (7%)
  - c. Quality of format: Creates creative and meaningful format, appropriate for audience, to effectively share information gathered; accesses and uses format templates ethically and legally; ensures presentation is accessible to audience (7%)

## **Important Information**

### **Compassion in COVID times:**

We are all trying our best. You are trying your best to learn, to be present and to complete your work. I'm trying my best to teach, to be present and to do my work. Being in the middle of pandemic means that, even more than usual, our daily, ordinary lives bump up against what we are trying to do here in this class. You may experience anxiety, frustration, fear, grief, illness, stress, loss of income, loss of a job, loss of childcare, loss of family and friends amid many other things. You may be asked to do more, provide more support, learn more new things, cope with more, reply to more. Many of us experience similar things, including me. We can't change the situation we are in, but what we can do is to keep in touch and try our best. Try your best to meet deadlines, show up for class prepared, and when you can't, let me know and we'll see how to adjust things. I'll try my best to get your assignments graded within one week of submission, to be prepared for class, and when I can't, I'll let you know. Please remember that we are all humans in the middle of a pandemic, just trying to do our best. Let's be kind to each other, give each other some slack, and keep in touch about how we are doing and what we need.

### **Department of Political Science Writing Guide**

The Department of Political Science [Writing Guide](#) sets out basic rules for academic writing and all students taking political science courses are required to be familiar with and follow these instructions for their written assignments.

### **Accessibility**

The University of Guelph is committed to creating a barrier-free environment. Providing services for students is a shared responsibility among students, faculty, and administrators. This relationship is based on respect of individual rights, the dignity of the individual and the University community's shared commitment to an open and supportive learning environment. Students requiring service or accommodation, whether due to an identified, ongoing disability or a short-term disability should contact Student Accessibility Services as soon as possible. For more information, telephone 519-824-4120 ext. 56208 or email [csd@uoguelph.ca](mailto:csd@uoguelph.ca) or refer to the [SAS website](#).

### **E-mail Communication**

As per university regulations, all students are required to check their [uoguelph.ca](http://uoguelph.ca) e-mail account regularly. E-mail is the official route of communication between the University and its students.

### **When You Cannot Meet a Course Requirement**

When you find yourself unable to meet an in-course requirement because of illness or compassionate reasons, please advise the course instructor in writing, with your name, id#, and

e-mail contact. See the Undergraduate Calendar section on [Academic Consideration](#) or the [Graduate Calendar](#).

### Illness

Medical notes will not normally be required for singular instances of academic consideration, although students may be required to provide supporting documentation for multiple missed assessments or when involving a large part of a course (e.g.. final exam or major assignment).

### COVID Safety protocols

For information on current safety protocols, follow these links: <https://news.uoguelph.ca/return-to-campus/how-u-of-g-is-preparing-for-your-safe-return/> or <https://news.uoguelph.ca/return-to-campus/spaces/#ClassroomSpaces>

Please note, these guidelines may be updated as required in response to evolving University, Public Health or government directives

### Drop Date

The last date to drop one-semester courses, without academic penalty, is Friday December 3, 2021. For regulations and procedures for Dropping Courses, see the [Undergraduate Calendar](#).

### Copies of out-of-class assignments

Keep paper and/or other reliable back-up copies of all out-of-class assignments: you may be asked to resubmit work at any time.

### Academic Misconduct

The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and it is the responsibility of all members of the University community – faculty, staff, and students to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring. University of Guelph students have the responsibility of abiding by the University's policy on academic misconduct regardless of their location of study; faculty, staff and students have the responsibility of supporting an environment that discourages misconduct. Students need to remain aware that instructors have access to and the right to use electronic and other means of detection.

Please note: Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for a finding of guilt. Hurried or careless submission of assignments does not excuse students from responsibility for verifying the academic integrity of their work before submitting it. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor. The [Academic Misconduct Policy](#) is detailed in the Undergraduate Calendar and [Graduate Calendar](#).

### Recording of Materials

Presentations which are made in relation to course work—including lectures—cannot be recorded or copied without the permission of the presenter, whether the instructor, a classmate or guest lecturer. Material recorded with permission is restricted to use for that course unless further permission is granted.

### Resources

The Academic Calendars are the source of information about the University of Guelph's procedures, policies and regulations which apply to undergraduate, graduate and diploma programs is detailed in the Undergraduate Calendar.

## Topics and Readings:

September 13

Part 1: **Introductions and Course Overview**

Part 2: **Women, Justice and Public Policy in these Turbulent Times**

Required reading:

- MacDonald and Dobrowolsky, "Introduction", pp. 1 – 20.

September 20

Part 1: **What is Intersectionality?**

Video:

[https://www.ted.com/talks/kimberle\\_crenshaw\\_the\\_urgency\\_of\\_intersectionality](https://www.ted.com/talks/kimberle_crenshaw_the_urgency_of_intersectionality)

Part 2: **Using intersectionality in public policy**

Required readings:

- Hill Collins, Patricia and Sirma Bilge. "What is Intersectionality" in *Intersectionality*. Polity Press, 2016, pp. 11-31.
- Manuel, Tiffany. "How does one live a good life? Assessing the state of intersectionality in public policy" in O. Hankivsky, J.S. Jordan-Zachery (eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Intersectionality in Public Policy*. Palgrave Macmillan US, 2019, pp. 31-58.

September 27: **Indigenous approaches**

Required readings:

- Starblanket, G. "Transforming the Gender Divide? Deconstructing Femininity and Masculinity in Indigenous Politics" in MacDonald and Dobrowolsky, Chapter 5, pp. 121-140.
- Olsen, T.A. "This Word is (Not?) Very Exciting: Considering Intersectionality in Indigenous Studies" *Nora: Nordic Journal of Feminist and Gender Research* 26 (3), 2018, pp. 182-196.

October 4: **Feminism, neo-liberalism and public policy in Canada**

Required readings:

- Dobrowolsky, A. "A Diverse, Feminist "Open Door" Canada? Trudeau-Styled Equality, Liberalisms and Feminisms" in MacDonald and Dobrowolsky, Chapter 1, pp. 23 – 48.
- Paterson, S. and F. Scala. "Feminist Government or Governance Feminism: Exploring Feminist Policy Analysis in the Trudeau Era" in MacDonald and Dobrowolsky, Chapter 2, pp. 49 – 67.
- Jane Jenson. "Social investment, poverty and lone parents" in Sheila Shaver, ed. *Handbook on Gender and Social Policy*. Edgar Elgar, 2018, pp. 197-214.

Part 2: Student-led

October 11: **Thanksgiving --- NO CLASS**

October 18: **Women, intersectionality and COVID-19**

Required readings:

- Wenham, C. et al. "Women are most affected by pandemics – lessons from past outbreaks" *Nature*, July 8, 2020.

- Gao, G, and L. Sai. “Opposing the toxic apartheid: The painted veil of COVID-19 pandemic, race and racism” *Gender, Work and Organization*, Aug 2020.
- United Nations. “Policy Brief: A Disability-Inclusive Response to COVID-19” May 2020.

Part 2: Student-led

Oct 25: **Childcare**

Required readings:

- Johal, Sunil and Thomas Granofsky, *Growing Pains: Childcare in Canada*. Mowat Centre for Policy Innovation, 2015.
- Wallace, Rebecca and Elizabeth Goodyear-Grant. “News Coverage of Childcare During COVID-19: Where are Women and Gender?” *Politics and Gender*, August 2020.
- Prentice, Susan. “High Stakes: The ‘Investable’ Child and the Economic Reframing of Childcare.” *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 34, no. 3 (2009): 687–710.

Part 2: Student-led

November 1: **Workshopping our final projects**

November 8: **Employment**

Required readings:

- Stienstra, Deborah. “DisAbling Women and Girls in Austere Times.” *Atlantis: Critical Studies in Gender, Culture & Social Justice* 38, no. 1 (2017): 154–167.
- Irving, Dan. “Gender Transition and Job In/Security: Trans\* Un/Der/Employment Experiences and Labour Anxieties in Post-Fordist Society.” *Atlantis: Critical Studies in Gender, Culture & Social Justice* 38, no. 1 (2017): 168–178.

Part 2: Student-led

November 15: **Violence against women**

Required readings:

- Mahony, Tina Hotton, Joanna Jacob and Heather Hobson. *Women and the Criminal Justice System*. Statistics Canada, 2017, pp. 1-24.
- Cotter, Adam. *Violent Victimization of women with disabilities, 2014*. Statistics Canada, 2018, pp. 1-20.
- Paterson, Stephanie. “‘Resistors,’ ‘Helpless Victims,’ and ‘Willing Participants’: The Construction of Women’s Resistance in Canadian Anti-Violence Policy.” *Social Politics: International Studies in Gender, State & Society* 17, no. 2 (2010): 159–84. <https://doi.org/10.1093/sp/jxq001>.

Part 2: Student-led

November 22: **Law, courts and criminal justice**

Required readings:

- Craig, Elaine. "Feminism, Public Dialogue and Sexual Assault Law in MacDonald and Dobrowolsky, Chapter 4, pp. 100 – 120.
- Minaker, Joanne. "Appreciating Ashley: Learning About and From the Life and Death of Ashley Smith through Feminist Pedagogy" *Canadian Journal of Law and Society*. 32 (2), 2017, pp. 291-306.

Part 2: Student-led

November 29: **Environmental Justice**

Required readings:

- Altamirano-Jimenez, Isabel. "Free Mining, Body Land and the Reproduction of Indigenous Life" in MacDonald and Dobrowolsky, Chapter 7, pp. 159 – 176.
- Wiebe, Sarah Marie. "Refusing Extraction: Environmental Reproductive Justice across the Pacific" in MacDonald and Dobrowolsky, Chapter 13, pp. 281- 303.

Part 2: Student-led

Friday Dec 3: **Intersectional Politics and Practices**

Required readings:

- Thompson, Debra. "The Intersectional Politics of Black Lives Matter" in MacDonald and Dobrowolsky, Chapter 11, pp. 240 -257.
- Small, Tamara A. "The Promises and Perils of Hashtag Feminism" in MacDonald and Dobrowolsky, Chapter 8, pp. 177-198.

Part 2: Student-led