GSWS 800-5: TOOLKIT FOR GSWS RESEARCH

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Office hours: TBA  
Lecture: Fridays 10:30 – 15:20; RCB 7105

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
This course is an exploration into the theories, purpose, scope, and strategies for feminist approaches to research methods. It is an interdisciplinary seminar with a substantive focus on feminist research in the social sciences (and beyond).

We will begin by addressing the distinction between methodology and method, and our focus over the semester will often return to questions of knowledge production: what forms of knowledge are perceived to be valid and valuable? Whose voices “count”? And how can we shift unequal power relations by incorporating the knowledge and experience from those who have been historically marginalized? Attending to knowledge production requires us to think through how, and for what purposes, we want to embody the practice of research. Moreover, we must do so in a context where there are real material consequences for how we negotiate the push-and-pull between feminist enactments of solidarity and efforts toward decolonization on the one hand, and exercises of (academic) hegemonic power on the other hand.

We will read about and evaluate research design, examining the use of quantitative, qualitative, historical, and participatory methods. We will discuss how these methods are employed in different research contexts, by focusing on the methodological and ethical considerations that emerge from the research question. Students will gain hands-on experience with ethnographic observation, census data analysis, and various interview methods, and students will be invited to practice participatory data representation. Students will also read and evaluate graduate-level research methodologies.

The goal of this course is to engage students in an examination of, and conversation about, feminist approaches to research methods. Likewise, this course provides students with hands-on experience in practicing social science methods and evaluating research methodologies from a feminist perspective.

EDUCATIONAL GOALS:
For more detailed information please see the GSWS website: http://www.sfu.ca/gsws/courses/Educational_Goals.html

COURSE TEXTS AND COURSEWARE:
Richa Nagar, 2014, Muddying the Waters, University of Illinois Press  

COURSE EVALUATION AND ASSIGNMENTS:
Attendance and participation (25%)  
Engagements with an academic text (25%)  
Research methods and methodology: application and analysis (50%)

THE DEPARTMENT OF GENDER, SEXUALITY, AND WOMEN’S STUDIES ENCOURAGES CLARITY OF THOUGHT AND EXPRESSION AND GOOD WRITING.
STUDENTS WILL BE EVALUATED ON THESE SKILLS IN ALL COURSES GIVEN BY THE DEPARTMENT.
IN ADDITION, THE DEPARTMENT WILL FOLLOW POLICY T10.02 WITH RESPECT TO “INTELLECTUAL HONESTY,” AND “ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE” (WWW.SFU.CA/POLICIES/TEACHING)