GSWS 333-4: Ruth Wynn Woodward Advanced Seminar: Gender, Place & Culture: Feminist interventions in urban studies

Professor: Dr. Tiffany Muller Myrdahl  
Email: tmullerm@sfu.ca  
Lecture: Wednesdays 9:30 – 13:20; SECB1011

Office: AQ 5095  
Office hours: Mondays 13:00-15:00 and by appointment

Course Description:
This course is an exploration into and conversation about the geographies of social inclusion in the city. We will develop a nuanced understanding of the relationships between bodies (identities/subjectivities/embodied practices/modes of planning and governance), social relations, and cities. At the same time, we will investigate how and by whom social inclusion is practiced and experienced in cities, or not. We will use an intersectional, feminist geographical lens to guide our discussions; we will ask how intersecting power relations are spatialised, and how embodied experiences of identity and difference shape our perceptions and understandings of space and place.

We will use a range of materials, activities, and formats to consider the urban form (including its material, discursive, and symbolic elements: the built environment; dominant social relations; laws and policies; oral histories and archival materials; and cultural and memorial landscapes). We will use these to examine: forces that shape the urban form, the effects of urban form, and the interventions that people have made to make cities more just and equitable.

Throughout this course, we will be in conversation with scholars and activists, and students will be asked to conduct neighbourhood and other types of inventories outside of the classroom to engage in the conversation that takes place in the classroom.

Learning Outcomes:
The goal of this course is to engage students in conversation and critical analysis about social inclusion in the city, where an intersectional framework for thinking about women’s lives is the central lens of analysis. It provides students with an opportunity to explore the work of feminist geographers and the myriad ways scholars/activists seek to address justice and equity in cities. It also offers students experience in the praxis of feminist/urban activism and will engage with Women Transforming Cities initiatives.

Course Texts and Courseware:
- Readings on reserve or electronically accessed through the SFU Library.
- Content on course blog, TBA.

Course Evaluation and Assignments:
- Attendance and Participation 20%
- Reading responses (3) 30%
- Student-led seminar facilitation 20%
- Research portfolio 30%

Prerequisite: 30 units including three units in GSWS, WS or GDST.