The Charter of Rights and Freedoms has provided all Canadians with a tool for molding our society. Like most tools, this one is capable of being used to achieve many different goals by many different people. The primary purpose of this course will be to achieve an understanding of some of the ways that the Charter can be used by women for women, but attention will also be paid to some of the ways that it may be used by those who wish to limit our rights.

The course will begin with a brief introduction during which we will discuss the significance of the Charter in Western legal thought and its impact on the Canadian legal system. We will then turn to the Charter and examine it as a whole and then section by section. There will be considerable emphasis on the procedural and substantive rights but we will also deal with the practical and strategic aspects of actually using the Charter. Guest speakers who are involved in Charter litigation and planning litigation strategy will help to provide an understanding of the problems and issues in this area. It is hoped that by the end of the course we will all be capable of using this new tool to enhance and protect the position of women in society.

**REQUIRED TEXTS:**

Smith, Lynn

 Righting the Balance

Sask. Human Rights Reporter, 1986

Doerr, Audrey and M. Carrier, eds.

Women and the Constitution in Canada


Reading package to be purchased at the Downtown Centre.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

Attendance, weekly readings and class participation: 10%

In class presentation: 25%

2-3 page critical analysis of an assigned reading: 25%

10-15 page essay on a topic to be chosen by the student in consultation with the instructor: 40%

This course is also designated as Canadian Studies credit (upper division) and as Criminology (Group B--upper division).