In Women, Power and Public Policy we will question whether women have the power to influence public policy; we will examine women's changing attitudes about power and public policy; and we will look at some women who have been players in the public policy arena and measure their impact.

We will be addressing the following questions:

1. How and why do women use the vote?
2. What difference does the vote make in the level and type of female participation in the political process, and in public policies of particular interest to women?
3. Has the second wave of political feminism in the twentieth century changed women's attitudes toward and engagement in the political system?
4. What historical changes have there been in women's attitudes to power?
5. What have been and continue to be the critical policy issues in the women's movement?
6. What strategies have the women's movement adopted in the current wave of the feminist political activism? Which have been most successful? Why?
7. What is the actual status of women in the minds of decision-makers?

We will be examining the three major areas in which women have historically functioned. We will be addressing the following questions as they relate to the family, the workforce, and the community:

8. How are the power structure and decision-making responsibilities developed and exercised within the family?
9. What impact do women have on family law and policy-making (for example, day care, divorce, and property)?
10. What are women's role and influence in the workforce in terms of access, pay, promotion, pension (and other benefits), affirmative action, and pay equity?
11. What type of power and influence do women have in the community?
12. How do they influence global decisions that directly touch women (i.e. abortion, violence, peace, environment)?
13. What impact has the new Charter of Rights had on women and power and their influence in the community?
14. How have Native women been able to influence public policy? Immigrant women?
15. How have women influenced the peace movement?

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Since a wide range of policies impact on women, the instructor will select examples from family, labour, welfare, and constitutional law. Students interested in other policy areas will be able to read, prepare reports, and/or write papers on these areas.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Kome, Penny
Taking of 28: Women Challenge the Constitution
Women's Press, 1983

Gilligan, Carol
In a Different Voice
Harvard Univ. Press

Brodie, M.J. and J.M. Vickers
Canadian Women in Politics
CRIAW

Readings on Reserve in the Library

Bashesvin, Sylvia
Kome, Penny
Toeing the Line
Women of Influence
Women, Power and Policy
Women and the Welfare State
Political Women

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Seminar participation: 20%
Oral report on assignment: 30%
Term paper: 50%

PRE-REQUISITES: 60 credit hours