What does equality mean? To quote Catherine MacKinnon, “What is an equality question a question of?” Is it a question of sameness and difference, of dominance and subordination, of advantage and disadvantage, or something else? Do we have to choose only one version of equality and use it in all cases or can feminists argue for equality using whichever kind of equality argument suits the particular context? Can we sometimes argue that equality requires the law to treat women and men the same, and at other times say that to create equality we must treat the sexes differently? Do we risk our credibility when we do this?

In this class we will examine the different political and legal arguments for equality and analyse the results achieved by the various approaches. We will also discuss the strategic value of choosing one or more of the approaches. The last half of the course will look at the last century of equality litigation in Canada focussing on developments in criminal, family and employment law.

**Required readings:**


**Suggested readings:**


**Other readings may be distributed in class.**

**Assignments:**

- Take home mid-term exam (approx. 7 pages) 20%
- Oral presentation, 20-30 minutes maximum 25%
- Classroom participation, including attendance 10%
- Paper, 20 typed pages, or equivalent 45%