Health has been defined ("A Feminist Dictionary", 1985) as the ‘condition of body and mind traditionally assigned to (women’s) care’.

‘As mothers and wives we have been held responsible for the health (or illness) of children, men and parents. As ‘caring’ nurses and auxiliaries in hospitals we have worked long hours for low pay. On the other hand our own health, in body and mind, has often been seen as flowing from, or blocked, by our female biology, and as something to be controlled by doctors’.

In this course, we will look at conceptualizations of health within the Canadian health care system — how so they shape views of physical, mental and social health/disease; and how do they determine who controls the definition and provision of medical treatment? A feminist historical analysis documents the decline of women healers and the rise of ‘professional’ men as health care authorities, paralleled by the industrialization of medicine into a big and profitable business. At a time when universal health care is in danger of dying before being developed, we need to re-examine the whole approach to such care; and to develop ways for increased control by women of their own health.

Required reading:

Course requirements:
Attendance, participation 10%
Journal 10%
Research Paper (8-10 pages) 25%
Presentation 5%
Midterm Examination 25%
Final Examination (scheduled) 25%

DESIGNATED CREDIT:
*This course may be applied to the Certificate in Liberal Arts.

Prerequisite: one of WS 101 or WS 102 (may be taken concurrently).

NOTE: The Department of 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.