

HUMANITIES 101 COURSE

Women's Knowledge

Offered to Women in Second Stage Shelters
University of Alberta, Community Service-Learning Program
at Wings of Providence

The Humanities 101 class *Women's Knowledge* is a 9-week university-level course in the Humanities and Social Sciences for people who have a passion for learning but who have encountered financial and social barriers to education.

Eligibility

This is a barrier-free course for people who live in Edmonton's second stage and transitional women's shelter communities, including current and former residents.

Course Description

We will explore a wide range of ideas about women as knowledge keepers and sharers. Women have been sharing knowledge since the dawn of time, but too often this sharing has been just with other women and children and not with the wider society.

Unfortunately women's knowledge is often not recognized as knowledge, it has been overlooked as women's work is often not seen or valued. Additionally, women are underrepresented in our governments and institutional directors, which in turn keeps women's knowledge from informing the policies that shape our lives. What is knowledge? What is women's knowledge? What can we learn from women and their work? Is knowledge power? If so, what does it mean for women? Together, with guest instructors from the U of A, we will work through some of these questions. But be forewarned, you may leave with more questions than answers.

With your support the course will be a safe, collaborative, and supportive setting that is encouraging of all types of learning. The course instructors will share different perspectives and ideas of how women both affect and are affected by the world around them. The course will also introduce students to ideas from the Humanities and Social Sciences, including literature, history, philosophy, sociology, public policy, and gender studies.

Each of our own stories and life experiences are important, as we all have different understandings and different lenses through which we have understood our social world. We will focus on our own individual experiences and how these have affected how we engage in different forms of knowing.

Each week the course instructors will share different perspectives and ideas related to women's knowledge and knowing, while keeping in mind that each of our own stories and life experience will influence how we explore and understand different ideas and theories. Our hope is that we will learn together as individuals in a class in a welcoming, collaborative, and supportive setting.

Course Objectives

The objectives of the course are to:

- Learn about different ideas about how women and their knowledge both historically and in today's culture/society
- Participate in discussions and activities with classmates and instructors
- Experience a university-level classroom setting
- Explore your passion for learning

Course Format & Activities

Students can expect presentations, class discussion, small group work, and one-on-one assistance. We will discuss ideas about women, talk about course readings, and explore different ways to present our ideas. Students are expected to participate in the following activities:

- Discuss ideas and participate in activities with classmates and instructors
- Complete assigned readings or respond to readings shared out loud in class
- Participate in guided writing assignments

Materials

Students will be provided with all required materials, including pens/pencils, paper, folders, etc.

Class Location, Time & Schedule

Classes will be held in **Eileen's Room** (the Group Room) at Wings of Providence Shelter, from 1:15-3:15 pm, as follows:

Day & Date	Topic
Wednesday, January 25	Introduction & Course Overview Go through the syllabus and develop class guidelines. A quick peak into the topics that we will discuss.
Wednesday, February 1	Never Good Enough: Girls and Women in the Media - Guest Speaker, Sheena Wilson - There are many mothers that we see on the TV, in the movies, in the magazines. Do they look like us? What do we learn about who mothers are and who we are as mothers? Who is telling these stories and why?
Wednesday, February 8	Emotional vs. Rational - Guest Speaker, Katie MacDonald - Women have historically, and are currently, thought of as emotional beings while men are considered to be rational. Is this true? Where do these ideas come from? What impact does this assumption have on women and the knowledge they can access, express, and hold? - What does this mean for who counts as a knower

	and an expert?
Wednesday, February 15	<p>Reading and Writing our Worlds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Guest Speaker, Nat Hurley - What does it mean to write as a woman? - Is writing gendered? - What about our own words? - In this class we will read and write together. Learning from other women and each other.
Wednesday, February 22	<p>Girlhood Knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Guest Speaker, Cristina Stasia - What is girlhood? Is it something every woman goes through? What knowledge do girls learn, have, and share? How is girlhood knowledge valued and shared? As girls become women, what happens to their knowledge?
Wednesday, March 1	<p>Managing Home and Family</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Guest Speaker, Beverly Lemire - Historically women have been, and arguably still are, responsible for life in the home. This means everything from managing household inventory, cooking, to health care. These many responsibilities comprised women's knowledge. What did this look like historically? How can we understand this knowledge and its importance? What can we learn from these women and their endless domestic work?
Wednesday, March 8	<p>Embodied Knowledge: Women and Childbirth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Guest Speaker, Lianne McTavish - Women, as the people who grow and birth our children, have deep-rooted historical knowledge that is embodied within themselves. What does this mean? What kind of knowledge is this? How is it shared, understood, and represented? Has it been the same throughout history? If not, how has it changed and why?
Wednesday, March 15	<p>Professionalization, gender, and healthcare.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Guest Speaker, Amy Samson - Women have historically played a very important and prominent role as healthcare providers in their families and communities. How has this role shifted with the movement to professionalize and specialize health care? - Who became the specialists and professionals? What does it tell us about shifting ideas of

	knowledge? Then, in turn, what can we learn about gendered knowledge and care?
Wednesday, March 22	Graduation Celebration **Student Sharing**

Course Feedback

No grades are assigned in the course.

Certificate Requirements

In order to receive the certificate indicating successful completion of Humanities 101, students must meet the following criteria:

- Complete all in-class assignments
- Attend at least 7 out of 9 classes
- If you are having difficulty meeting these requirements, please speak with the instructor as soon as possible

Course Contacts

- Lisa Prins, University of Alberta; lprins@ualberta.ca or 587-709-5472
- Guest Instructors will also participate in the course