

**Allison Davis**  
**Teaching Statement**

As a Multicultural Women's and Gender Studies educator, I draw on feminist pedagogy to understand the teaching/learning process and to guide my classroom praxis. As an educator, I imbue students with shared responsibility for the course and their own learning so they will actively and critically engage with the course content and their learning community.

I draw on feminist relational theory that situates learning in community. For example, in my Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies course, we explore how the concept of "woman" is constructed by analyzing personal social media feeds. In the following classroom presentations, students lead analysis of the multiplicity of women's lives as they are shaped by identities they have in addition to being women. The community then identifies differences and similarities in the presentations and thinks critically about intersectionality and its application in various contexts. For instance, one student in her 50s shared a feed analysis that served as a stark deviation from her majority younger classmates. Together we reflected on how older women are often desexualized compared to younger women who are just as often hypersexualized, exploring the consequences of ageism for women across the lifespan.

I center a feminist ethic of care in the learning community to reshape the dominance-centered practices in traditional educational approaches. In my Ecofeminist Theory course, for instance, I structure my syllabus to model a caring approach to difference that centers cross-disciplinary affinities. Rather than separate theoretical voices into different weeks, comparing and contrasting their lineages in an oppositional way, I place distinct lines of thoughts side-by-side while we explore transdisciplinary themes in the literature together. Approaching materials to understand rather than dominate through critique sets an empathetic tone for the course, also influencing how students feel supported in the vulnerable learning process. One student in this course shared that rather than feeling confused about the "correct" posthumanist theoretical approach to bring to her research, she felt supported in pursuing the material feminist approach most aligned with her lived experience because we had honored each approaches unique contributions to the larger field of inquiry.

Finally, I invite learners to challenge their biases that reinforce existing social systems by bringing their full selves—ideas, body, emotions, intuition, creativity—to the community. In my Feminist Theory course, I ask students to rewrite a critical period of their life as if they had already learned a foundational feminist lesson from our course that challenged their views about the world. One student with a history of anti-abortion activism shared he questioned his previous stance after learning about the wider field of reproductive justice. He demonstrated his transformation by reworking one of his old clinic protest signs. By dealing critically and creatively with their reality, students can understand their truth as highly contextual and experience their power to reshape the future.

My overall pedagogical goal is to support empowerment through relational, caring, and invitational learning experiences that encourage inquisitiveness, resilience, and self direction. The learning community that forms within my experientially engaged classroom holds space for its members to separate from old beliefs, remake their selves through new relational experiences, and take that new self out into the world in purposeful ways.