



MERCER
COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

COURSE OUTLINE

Course Number	Course Title	Credits
HIS 231	Women in Antiquity	3
Hours: Lecture/Lab/Other	Co- or Pre-requisite	Implementation Semester & Year
3/0/0	ENG 101	Fall 2022

Catalog description: Examines the legal, social, and cultural roles and status of women in the Ancient Near East, Egypt, Greece, and Rome through review of ancient literature, legal and economic texts, art, and archaeology, supplemented with scholarly commentaries.

General Education Category:
Goal 6: Humanities
Goal 7: Historical Perspective
Goal 8: Diversity and Global Perspective

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Required texts & Other materials:

1. *The Epic of Gilgamesh* (Translations by S. Dalley, A. R. George, or B. Foster)
2. Robins, Gay. *Women in Ancient Egypt*, Harvard University Press, 1993.
1. Pomeroy, Sarah, *Goddesses, Whores, Wives and Slaves*. NY: Schocken Books. 1995. ISBN 080521030X
2. Lefkowitz, M. and M. Fant, *Women's Life in Greece and Rome*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press. 1992.
3. Euripides, *Medea*. (Translation to be specified).
4. An additional Greek play will be assigned as part of a group assignment; you may purchase the play or get it from the library.

Course Student Learning Outcomes (SLO):

Upon successful completion of this course the student will be able to:

1. read primary and secondary historical sources critically, with an understanding of their validity, perspective bias, audience, and context. (ILG 1, 5, 6,7, 8, 9) [*Methods of assessment: Essay; small and large-group discussions; individual writing assignments*]
2. analyze and interpret primary sources (whether they seem more “historical,” “literary,” or “philosophical”) and use them as evidence to support historical arguments. (ILG 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9) [*Methods of assessment: Essay; small and large-group discussions*]
3. identify and describe the significance of major figures, ideas, and events of women in antiquity. (ILG 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9) [*Methods of assessment: quizzes; individual writing assignments*]

4. describe and analyze the context of major movements, trends, and developments of women in antiquity. (ILG 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9) *[Methods of assessment: Essay; individual writing assignments]*
5. discuss with authority, either in writing or verbally, the historical forces (e.g., religion, economics, politics, social stratification, gender, individual actors, technology, nature, intellectual and aesthetic thought, etc.) behind the major movements, trends, and developments of women in antiquity. (ILG 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9) *[Methods of assessment: Essay; individual writing assignments]*
6. use information technologies in acquiring new knowledge and perspective. (ILG 4, 7, 10, 11) *[Methods of assessment: Digital History project; essay]*
7. construct an historical essay that presents a clear thesis, a persuasive argument, and uses detailed historical evidence. (ILG 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9) *[Methods of assessment: Essay]*
8. analyze other time periods and cultures with little or no ethnocentrism or modernism, thus displaying a sense of informed perspective and a deeper appreciation of the common threads of human nature. (ILG 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9) *[Methods of assessment: small and large-group discussions; individual writing assignments]*

Course-specific Institutional Learning Goals (ILG):

Institutional Learning Goal 1. Written and Oral Communication in English. Students will communicate effectively in both speech and writing.

Institutional Learning Goal 4. Technology. Students will use computer systems or other appropriate forms of technology to achieve educational and personal goals.

Institutional Learning Goal 5. Social Science. Students will use social science theories and concepts to analyze human behavior and social and political institutions and to act as responsible citizens.

Institutional Learning Goal 6. Humanities. Students will analyze works in the fields of art, music, or theater; literature; philosophy and/or religious studies; and/or will gain competence in the use of a foreign language.

Institutional Learning Goal 7. History. Students will understand historical events and movements in World, Western, non-Western or American societies and assess their subsequent significance.

Institutional Learning Goal 8. Diversity and Global Perspective: Students will understand the importance of a global perspective and culturally diverse peoples

Institutional Learning Goal 9. Ethical Reasoning and Action. Students will understand ethical frameworks, issues, and situations.

Institutional Learning Goal 10. Information Literacy: Students will recognize when information is needed and have the knowledge and skills to locate, evaluate, and effectively use information for college level work.

Institutional Learning Goal 11. Critical Thinking: Students will use critical thinking skills understand, analyze, or apply information or solve problems.

Units of study in detail – Unit Student Learning Outcomes:

I. Sources, methodologies, and historical background [SLO 1-8; ILG 1, 5-11]

Learning Objectives: *The student will be able to*

- Describe the history of the study of women and gender in the ancient world
- Analyze the written, archaeological, and visual sources for the study of women in antiquity.

II. Women in Ancient Mesopotamia [SLO 1-8; ILG 1, 4-11]

Learning Objectives: *The student will be able to*

- Describe and analyze the sources (textual, archaeological, and artistic) for the study of women in Mesopotamia.
- Discuss the impact of social class on the legal, economic, and political status of women in ancient Mesopotamia.
- Explain the importance of key women (queens, princesses, priestesses) in Mesopotamia
- Analyze the characterization of goddesses in Mesopotamian literature (*The Epic of Gilgamesh, The Descent of Ishtar*) and the role of women in religion.

III. Women in Ancient Egypt [SLO 1-8; ILG 1, 4-11]

Learning Objectives: *The student will be able to*

- Describe and analyze the sources (textual, archaeological, and artistic) for the study of women in Egypt.
- Discuss the impact of social class on the legal, economic, and political status of women in ancient Egypt.
- Explain the role of royal women in Egypt (including Hatshepsut, Nefertiti).
- Analyze the social, religious, economic, and political status of women in Egypt.
- Explain how individual artifacts that depict or belonged to women in ancient Egypt help historians to better understand the role and daily life of women.
- Analyze the characterization of goddesses in Egyptian literature and mythology and the role of women in religion.
- Compare the status of women from different classes in Egypt to that of women in Mesopotamia.

IV. Women in the Biblical World [SLO 1-8; ILG 1, 4-11]

Learning Objectives: *The student will be able to*

- Describe and analyze the sources (textual, archaeological, and artistic) for the study of women in the biblical world (ancient Israel).
- Describe the picture of daily life for women in ancient Israel that derives from archaeological evidence.
- Explain the importance of key female role models in the Hebrew Bible.
- Discuss the impact of social class on the legal, economic, and political status of women in the biblical world.
- Place the biblical portrayal of women in its ancient Near Eastern context.

V. Women in Ancient Greece [SLO 1-8; ILG 1, 4-11]

Learning Objectives: *The student will be able to*

- Describe and analyze the sources (textual, archaeological, and artistic) for the study of women in ancient Greece.
- Describe the portrait of women in the Bronze Age that derives from archaeological evidence and the Homeric epics.
- Discuss Greek religion and the role of goddesses and priestesses in daily life and culture.
- Discuss the impact of social class on the legal, economic, and political status of women in ancient Greece.
- Analyze the private and public life of women in Athens vs. Sparta using evidence from literature, inscriptions, drama, and philosophical texts.
- Explain the seeming contradiction between the limited public role of Athenian women and the strong women of the Athenian dramas of Aeschylus (Clytemnestra in the *Agamemnon*), Sophocles (*Antigone*), and Euripides (*Medea*) and the comedy of Aristophanes (*Lysistrata*).
- Analyze the different roles and positions of women in the Hellenistic world.
- Compare the lives of women in Classical Athens and Hellenistic Egypt based on the evidence from legal documents and literature.

VI. Women in Ancient Rome [SLO 1-8; ILG 1, 4-11]

Learning Objectives: *The student will be able to*

- Describe and analyze the sources (textual, archaeological, and artistic) for the study of women in ancient Rome.
- Discuss the impact of social class (slave, lower class, upper class) on the legal, economic, and political status of women in ancient Rome.
- Discuss Roman religion and the role of goddesses and priestesses in daily life and culture.
- Analyze the impact of the Etruscans on early Rome and Roman attitudes toward women.
- Explain the importance of key women in ancient Rome including Cornelia, Cleopatra, and Livia.
- Compare the legal, social, economic, and political status of women in Republican and Imperial Rome.
- Compare the legal, social, economic, and political status of women in Classical Athens and Imperial Rome.

VII. The World Beyond Rome [SLO 1-8; ILG 1, 4-11]

Learning Objectives: *The student will be able to*

- Discuss the changes to women's lives that resulted from the adoption of Christianity in the Roman world.

- Evaluate the impact of the ancient world on the attitudes toward women's roles and status in the Middle Ages and beyond

Evaluation of student learning:

Instructors have some discretion in determining the format and content of required work. However, written and verbal assignments in any history course should be designed to help students develop the General Education skills (historical perspective, critical thinking, information literacy, writing, and public speaking) listed above. Instructors should emphasize these goals in their assignments and should state them in their written and verbal instructions to the students.

Upper level (200-level) history courses must include research papers and instruction in doing research and writing within the conventions of history. The library staff can help with the information literacy orientation.

Reading Assignments

- ♦ Textbook as well as primary documents should be clearly assigned to the students

Exams & Quizzes

- ♦ At least one exam (take home or in class)
- ♦ A Final Exam (2 hour exam or take home exam)
- ♦ Exams should include substantial essay components

Writing Assignments (to assess discipline specific knowledge, communication skills, and critical thinking skills). Students are expected to do research and to develop the ability to construct narratives—written or verbal or both—that clearly present their own thesis based on solid evidence that has been thoroughly and critically evaluated. Students are directed in developing competencies in accumulating evidence from a variety of sources, assessing the validity of the evidence, and extracting substantive generalizations from what they have discovered (Information Literacy).

- ♦ At least two (2) writing assignments or oral reports
- ♦ At least one group presentation or project
- ♦ At least one (1) assignment should concentrate on the primary documents
- ♦ One (1) major research project (8-10 pages).