

**COURSE OUTLINE**

<u>HIS 231</u>		<u>Women in Antiquity</u>		<u>3</u>
<b>Course Number</b>		<b>Course Title</b>		<b>Credits</b>
<u>3</u>	<u>                    </u>	<u>                    </u>	<u>                    </u>	<u>15 weeks</u>
<b>Class or Lecture Hours</b>	<b>Laboratory Work Hours</b>	<b>Clinical or Studio Hours</b>	<b>Practicum, Co-op, Internship</b>	<b>Course Length (15 week, 10 week, etc.)</b>
Not Applicable			<u>none</u>	
<b>Performance on an Examination/Demonstration</b>			<b>Alternate Delivery Methods</b>	
(Placement Score (if applicable); minimum CLEP score)			(Online, Telecourse [give title of videos])	

**Required Materials:**

- E. Fantham, H.P. Foley, N. Kampen, S. Pomeroy, and H. Shapiro, *Women in the Classical World*. NY: Oxford University Press. 1995.  
M. Lefkowitz and M. Fant, *Women's Life in Greece and Rome*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press. 1992.  
G. Robins, *Women in Ancient Egypt*. Harvard University Press. 1993.  
S. Pomeroy, *Goddesses, Whores, Wives and Slaves*. NY: Schocken Books. 1995.

Recommended ancient works:

- Aeschylus, *Agamemnon*  
Sophocles, *Antigone*  
Euripides, *Medea*  
Aristophanes, *Lysistrata*

Course pack of primary documents and secondary sources

**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.

**Prerequisites:**

None

**Corequisites:**

None

**Latest Review:** Spring, 2005

**Course Coordinator** Linda Bregstein Scherr, [bregstel@mccc.edu](mailto:bregstel@mccc.edu); ext. 3839

### **Available Resources:**

Library Resource page (created by Martin Crabtree and Linda Scherr, February, 2004):  
<http://www.mccc.edu/~crabtrem/his231/his231.html>

### **Works on reserve in the MCCC Library:**

- Blundell, S. *Women in Ancient Greece*. Harvard University Press. 1995.
- Brosius, M. *Women in Ancient Persia, 559-331 B.C.* NY: Oxford University Press. 1998.
- Cantarella, E. *Pandora's Daughters: The Role and Status of Women in Greek and Roman Antiquity*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press. 1987.
- Fantham, E., H.P. Foley, N. Kampen, S. Pomeroy, and H. Shapiro, *Women in the Classical World*. NY: Oxford University Press. 1995.
- Fraschetti, A. *Roman Women*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1991.
- I, *Claudia: Women in Ancient Rome*. D. Kleiner and S. B. Matheson, eds. Yale University Art Museum. 1996.
- Lefkowitz, M. and M. Fant, *Women's Life in Greece and Rome*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press. 1992.
- Mistress of the House, Mistress of the Heaven: Women in Ancient Egypt*. A. Capel and G. Markoe, eds. Cincinnati Art Museum. 1996.
- Pomeroy, *Families in Classical and Hellenistic Greece: Representations and Realities*. Oxford: Clarendon Press. 1997.
- Robins, G., *Women in Ancient Egypt*. Harvard University Press. 1993.
- Tyldesley, J. *Daughters of Isis: Women of Ancient Egypt*. NY: Penguin Books. 1994.

### **Learning Center Resources:**

No tutors or study groups as of now.

### **Course Objectives.**

#### ***The student will be able to:***

- Read primary and secondary historical sources critically, with an understanding of their validity, perspective bias, audience, and context.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the reality of women's lives we actually recover, given that the surviving sources were almost entirely produced by men
- Use information technologies in acquiring new knowledge and perspective.
- Construct an historical essay that presents a clear thesis, a persuasive argument, and well-researched supporting data.
- Identify the contributions of important women in antiquity.
- Describe major movements, trends, and developments of women's history.
- Discuss with authority, in writing *and* verbally, the historical forces (e.g., religion, economics, politics, social stratification, individual actors, intellectual and aesthetic thought, etc.) behind the major movements, trends, and developments of women's history.
- Analyze other time periods and cultures with little or no ethnocentrism, thus displaying a sense of informed perspective and a deeper appreciation of the common threads of human nature.
- Understand and appreciate the similarities and key differences of women's experiences in Mesopotamian, Egyptian, Greek and Roman society.
- Discuss the attitudes towards gender roles and how they varied in different times and places in the ancient world.

### **General Education Objectives.**

#### **•Gen Ed Mission:**

- Students will be competent in critical...thinking;
- Students will be immersed in the critical study of what it means to be human;

- Students read, evaluate, appreciate and write about a wide range of texts and experiences;
- Students will learn how to integrate their learning into a lifelong process of understanding themselves, others, and the world
- Communication:** Students will communicate effectively in both speech and writing.
  - 1.1. Students will comprehend and evaluate what they read, hear and see.
  - 1.2. Students will state and evaluate the views and findings of others.
  - 1.3. Students will write and speak clearly and effectively in standard American English.
  - 1.4. Students will logically and persuasively state and support orally or in writing their points of view or findings.
- Critical thinking and Information Literacy:** Students will use critical thinking and problem solving skills in analyzing information gathered through different media [or presented to them by the instructor] and from a variety of sources.
  - 3.2. Students will use appropriate library tools to access information in reference publications, periodicals, bibliographies and databases.
  - 3.5. Students will recognize weaknesses [and bias] in arguments such as the use of false or disputable premises, suppression or contrary evidence, faulty reasoning, and emotional loading.
    - 3.a. Students will distinguish between facts, opinions, and generalizations.
    - 3.b. Students will access and evaluate primary and secondary sources to understand multiple causation
- Historical perspective:** Students will analyze historical events and movements in western societies and assess their subsequent significance
  - 9.1. Students will state the causes of a major historical event and analyze the impact of that event on a nation or civilization.
  - 9.2. Students will show how writers' interpretations of historical events are influenced by their time, culture, and perspective.
  - 9.3. Students will discuss a major idea, movement, invention or discovery, and how it affected the world or American society.
- Diversity and global perspective:** Students will analyze the implications of commonalities and differences among culturally diverse peoples.
  - 10.1. Students will link cultural practices and perspectives with the geographical and/or historical conditions from which they arose.
  - 10.4. Students will recognize the needs and concerns common to culturally diverse peoples.
  - 10.5. Students will recognize contributions made by people from various nations and cultures.
- Ethical dimension**
  - 4.2. Students will analyze and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of different perspectives on an ethical issue or a situation.

### **Examinations and Required Work.**

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).

## **Units of Study in Detail.**

### **I. Sources, methodologies, and historical background**

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**

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**

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**

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**

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**

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**

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