

Women/Early Church

Women in the Bible and Early Church

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This course will survey the construction of gender and roles of women in the Hebrew Bible, New Testament and early Christian communities. The course will utilize Feminist Reconstruction methodology by examining the historical, cultural and religious settings of the texts, including their subsequent transmission through Western Civilization into the present.

Required Texts

Kraemer, Ross S. Mary Rose D'Angelo. *Women & Christian Origins*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.

Myers, Carol, Toni Craven and Ross S. Kraemer, Eds. *Women in Scripture: A Dictionary of Named and Unnamed Women in the Hebrew Bible, the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books and the New Testament*. William B Eerdmann Co., 2001.

Trible, Phyllis. *Feminist Approaches to the Bible*. BAS, 1995.

Course Requirements

- There will be three on-line exams taken through Blackboard, each worth 20% of the final grade. Exams will consist of short written responses and an essay. The essay questions will be posted one week prior to the exam. If you miss an exam you will be penalized by a grade drop unless you have documented proof for a legitimate absence.
- For each exam, you will receive a list of 20 words/phrases to define. Each entry should begin with the word/phrase in bold and consist of a complete paragraph, typed, double-spaced. Each of the three definition lists will comprise 10% of the final grade. Due dates are posted on the Blackboard calendar.
- There will be one 8 – 10 page (2,000 – 3,000 words) response paper typed, double-spaced. You will be given several choices for a topic. Paper will be worth 10% of the final grade.
- All essays, definition lists and the response paper must be submitted through turnitin.com.
- Plagiarism will not be tolerated and will result in a zero. All incidences of plagiarism will be reported to the Dept. of Religious Studies. A second report during your time at FIU will result in an Academic Affairs request for expulsion. **Plagiarism** is 1) copying any written material without using proper citation – this includes material from the internet; 2) incorporating another person's ideas without giving proper credit/citation (literary theft).
- Attendance is mandatory. Missing more than 5 class periods will result in a reduction of your final grade by 5%.

Grading: Grading is on a point system. Each exam is 20 points, each definition list 10 points, and the final response paper is 10 points.

Grading Scale

94 – 100	A	74 – 76	C
90 – 93	A-	70 – 73	C-
87 – 89	B+	67 – 69	D+
84 – 86	B	64 – 66	D
80 – 83	B-	60 – 63	D-
77 – 79	C+	59 & below	F

Students registered through Disability Services will be accommodated. Students with extended time may take exams in the Disability Service Office.

Syllabus (specific dates subject to change)

Learning Module 1: 1/10 – 1/12

- Introduction to class. Introduction to Biblical Studies.
- Readings: “Critical Biblical Scholarship,” pp. 1 - 3 in *Women in Scripture*.

No School: 1/17

Learning Module 2: 1/19 – 1/21

- Introduction to History of Women’s Rights Movement in America. Introduction to Feminist Biblical Studies 1) Working within organized traditions 2) Rejecting organized traditions.
- Readings: “Feminist Biblical Scholarship,” pp. 24 – 31 in *Women in Scripture*. “No Promised Land: Rejecting the Authority of the Bible,” pp. 47 – 73 in *Feminist Approaches to the Bible*.

Learning Module 3: 1/24 – 1/28

- Introduction to Critical Study of the Hebrew Bible. History/Timeline of Ancient Israel. The Ancient Near East: Gender and Goddesses
- Readings: “The Hebrew Bible,” pp. 4 – 11; “Asherah” pp. 508 – 511; “Anath” p. 507; “Astarte” pp. 512 – 513; “Weaving Women” p. 278; “Temple Prostitute” pp. 231 – 232; “Queen of Heaven” pp. 538 – 539 in *Women in Scripture*. “Goddesses: Biblical Echoes” pp. 27 – 45 in *Feminist Approaches to the Bible*.

Learning Module 4: 1/31 – 2/4

- Eve, Gender and Creation Stories. Powerful Women: Pre-monarchy
- Readings: “Eve and Miriam: From the Margins to the Center” pp. 5 – 25 in *Feminist Approaches to the Bible*. “Eve in the Hebrew Bible” pp. 79 – 82; “Woman (and Man) in the First Creation Story” p. 175; “Sarah 1/Sarai” pp. 150 – 152; “Hagar” pp. 86 – 87; “Rebekah” pp. 143 – 144; “Women Drawing Water” p. 180; “Mother of Rebekah” & “Maids of Rebekah” p. 180 - 181; “Rachel” pp. 138 – 140; “Leah” pp. 108 -109; “Dinah” pp. 69 – 70; “Miriam” pp. 127 – 128; “Women with Hand-Drums, Dancing” pp. 189 -190; “Deborah 2” pp. 66 – 67; “Jael” pp. 97 – 98; in *Women in Scripture*.

Learning Module 5: 2/7 – 2/11

- The Good, the Bad and the Victims.
- Readings: “Ruth” pp. 146 – 147; “Naomi” pp. 130 – 131; “Hannah” pp. 90 – 91; “Esther” pp. 74 – 78; “Vashti” pp. 166 – 167; All entries pp. 289 – 292 (Esther); “Jezebel 1” pp. 100 – 102; Jephthah’s Daughter (3 entries) pp. 243 – 245; “Concubine of a Levite” pp. 248 – 250; “Tamar 1 & 2” pp. 161 – 164; “Michal & Merab” pp. 124 – 126; All entries pp. 256 – 269 (women, David & Solomon); “Queen of Sheba” pp. 270 – 271; “Wife” pp. 303 – 304 in *Women in Scripture*.

EXAM 1 On-Line: No Class 2/14

Learning Module 6: 2/16, 2/18, 2/21

- Timeline of Hellenistic Period. Heroines and Erotic Love: Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books.
- Readings: “The Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books” pp. 12 – 16; “Judith 2” pp. 104 – 106; “Susanna 1” pp. 157 – 158; All entries pp. 310 – 315 (Song of Solomon) in *Women in Scripture*.

Learning Module 7: 2/23, 2/25, 2/28

- Jewish Women and the Beginnings of Christianity. Women in the Greco-Roman World. Introduction to the Study of the New Testament.
- Readings: “Jewish Women and Christian Origins: Some Caveats” pp. 35 – 49; “Jewish Women and Women’s Judaism(s) at the Beginning of Christianity” pp. 50 – 79; “Women’s Religions and Religious Lives in the Greco-Roman City” pp. 80 – 102 “Reconstructing ‘Real’ Women from Gospel Literature: The Case of Mary Magdalene” pp. 105 – 128, in *Women and Christian Origins*. “The New Testament” pp. 17 – 23; in *Women in Scripture*

Learning Module 8: 3/2, 3/4, 3/7

- Jesus and Women in the Gospels.
- Readings: “Mary 1” pp. 116 – 119; “Mary 3, 4, 5” pp. 120 – 123; “Martha” pp. 114 – 116; “Joanna” pp. 102 – 103, All Entries pp. 407 – 421 (Mark), pp. 438 – 453 (John); “Salome 1 & 2” pp. 148 - 149 in *Women in Scripture*. “The New Testament: The Case of Mary Magdalene” pp. 75 – 91 in *Feminist Approaches to the Bible*.

Learning Module 9: 3/9, 3/11, 3/21 SPRING BREAK Week of 3/14

- The Gospel Writers and their Communities.
- Readings: “(Re)Presentations of Women in the Gospels: John and Mark” pp. 129 – 149; “Women in the Q Communit(ies) and Traditions” pp. 150 – 170 in “(Re)Presentations of Women in the Gospel of Mathew and Luke-Acts” pp. 171 – 195 in *Women and Christian Origins*. All entries pp. 407 – 421 (Matthew), (Luke), pp. 453 – 456; “Herodias 1 & 2” pp. 92 – 95; in *Women in Scripture*.

EXAM 2: On-line: No class 3/23

Learning Module 10: 3/25, 3/28, 3/30

- Reconstructing Women in the Pauline Tradition.
- Readings: “Reading Real women Through the Undisputed Letters of Paul” pp. 199 – 220 in *Women and Christian Origins*. All entries pp. 457 – 468 (Acts), pp. 468 – 470 (Romans), pp. 470 – 479 (1 Corinthians), pp. 479 – 480 (2 Corinthians), pp. 480 – 483 (Ephesians), pp. 484 – 487 (Phillipians, 1 & 2 Thessalonians); “Phoebe” pp. 134 – 135; “Prisca/Priscilla” pp. 136 – 137; “Junia” p. 107; “Euodia” p. 79; “Syntyche” p. 159; “Lydia” pp. 110 -111; in *Women in Scripture*.

Learning Module 11: 4/1, 4/4, 4/6

- Paul and Gender Construction in the Early Church. Early Interpreters on Paul and Gender.
- Readings: “Paul on Women and Gender” pp. 221 – 235; “Rereading Paul: Early Interpreters of Paul on Women and Gender” pp. 236 – 253 in *Women and Christian Origins*. All entries pp. 487 – 494 (1 & 2 Timothy); “No ‘Male and Female’ in Christ Jesus” pp. 534 – 536 in *Women and Scripture*.

Learning Module 12: 4/8, 4/11, 4/13

- Gender, Women and “Heretical” Christianities; Gnosticism, Montanism
- Readings: “Women, Gender, and Gnosis in Gnostic Texts and Traditions” pp. 257 – 299 in *Women and Christian Origins*; “Woman Wisdom” pp. 548 – 555 in *Women in Scripture*.

Learning Module 13: 4/15, 4/18, 4/20

- Development of the Early Church: Process of Women’s Elimination. Women as Sources of Redemption and Knowledge: Martyrdom
- Readings: “Women, Ministry, and Church Order in Early Christianity” pp. 300 – 329; “Women as Sources of Redemption and Knowledge in Early Christian Traditions” pp. 330 – 354 in *Women and Christian Origins*.

Extra Day: NO Class 4/22 (“extra day” may be used if schedule is changed during semester)

EXAM 3 On-line week of 4/25