

HUM 0009 - INTRODUCTION TO WOMEN, GENDER AND RELIGION

Catalog Description

Also known as WMST 3

Advisory: Eligibility for ENGL 1A

Hours: 54 lecture

Description: Religion from a feminist perspective through a cross-cultural examination of major religious traditions of the East and West, as well as tribal faith practices. Emphasis on the historical role of women and gender in rituals, sacred texts, institutional structures, doctrine and religious iconography with respect to the impact on contemporary women regarding faith, politics and identity. (CSU, UC)

Course Student Learning Outcomes

- CSLO #1: Identify and describe the role of women and gender in religious ideologies and expressions.
- CSLO #2: Analyze and explain the role of women and gender in religious ideologies and expressions.
- CSLO #3: Compare and contrast perspectives regarding gender and sex in religious ideologies.
- CSLO #4: Communicate effectively orally or in writing on women's contribution to major religious traditions.

Effective Term

Fall 2022

Course Type

Credit - Degree-applicable

Contact Hours

54

Outside of Class Hours

108

Total Student Learning Hours

162

Course Objectives

1. Introduction

A. discuss feminist versus androcentric perspectives of women and gender in religion.

B. compare the role of women and gender in religions from various cultures, including archetypes found in prehistoric cultures.

2. Primal Religions

A. discuss methodologies and guidelines for examining women and gender in tribal religions, comparing androcentric and feminist scholarship.

B. describe and compare aboriginal societies' religious structures.

C. compare the role of women and gender roles in religious life in Native American and other aboriginal societies, examining archetypical patterns of exclusion and participation in rituals and myth.

D. examine homosexuality and transvestitism in indigenous American societies as pertaining to religious practices.

3. Eastern Religions

A. describe and compare gender concepts, historical and contemporary, in various Eastern cultures.

B. discuss changing roles of women and gender in religion and chart the changes with parallel historical changes within those societies.

C. describe women and gender in religious rituals and ceremonies and compare with male roles and status, examining subordination and equivalence in ritual and myth.

D. critically assess women and gender through examination of religious texts, doctrine and treatises, including but not limited to the Vedic corpus, Buddhist sutras, the Analects, Tao Te Ching, Pan Chou's Instructions for Women and Classic of Filial Piety for Women.

E. examine and discuss the various representations of women in religious iconography and literature.

F. discuss women and monasticism, historical and contemporary.

G. examine lives of women in a contemporary religious context as pertaining to issues of social justice, economics and ecology, including but not limited to Jiyu Kennett Roshi, Tenzin Palmo, Lin Mei-jung, Jyoti Mhapasekara, Pema Chodron.

H. examine lives and works of contemporary and historical women artist, writers and poets as spiritually influenced expressions.

4. Western Religions

A. describe and compare gender concepts, historical through contemporary, in various Western societies.

B. discuss changing roles of women and gender in religion and chart the changes with parallel historical social and political changes within those societies.

C. describe women and gender roles in religious rituals and ceremonies and compare with male roles and status, examining subordination and equivalence in ritual and myth.

D. critically assess women and gender through examination of religious texts, doctrines, and treatises, including but not limited to the Old Testament, New Testament, the Koran, Talmud; the gnostic gospels A Discourse on the Damned Art of Witchcraft (1596) William Perkins (Puritan); Women's Speaking Justified, Proved and Allowed by the Scriptures (1667) by Margaret Fell (Quaker); The Woman's Bible by Elizabeth Cady Stanton.

E. examine and discuss the various depictions of women in religious iconography and literature.

F. discuss women/gender and monasticism, historical and contemporary perspectives, including but not limited to the female mystics of Roman Catholicism from Clare of Assisi to Therese of Liseux.

G. examine lives and works of women in a contemporary religious context as pertaining to issues of social justice, economics and ecology, including but not limited to Jane Goodall, Sister Helen Prejean, Etty Hillesum, Ayaan Hirsi Ali.

H. examine lives and works of contemporary and historical women artist, writers and poets as expressions of spirituality.

General Education Information

- Approved College Associate Degree GE Applicability
 - AA/AS - Literature & Language
 - AA/AS - Multicultural Studies
 - AA/AS - Social Sciences
- CSU GE Applicability (Recommended-requires CSU approval)

- CSUGE - C2 Humanities
- CSUGE - D4 Gender Studies
- Cal-GETC Applicability (Recommended - Requires External Approval)
- IGETC Applicability (Recommended-requires CSU/UC approval)
 - IGETC - 3B Humanities
 - IGETC - 4D Gender Studies

Articulation Information

- CSU Transferable
- UC Transferable

Methods of Evaluation

- Classroom Discussions
 - Example: Students will be given sample descriptions of various gender roles as presented in religious rituals and ceremonies. In small group discussions students will compare these roles with male roles and status, examining subordination and equivalence in ritual and myth. Based on these discussions, students will write a short paragraph reflecting on what they learned through the discussion. Students reflection paragraph will be evaluated by whether it include relevant concepts and coherent reasoning.
- Essay Examinations
 - Example: Choose one of the two following essay questions and respond in 750 words. A. After reading, Mary Oliver's poem, "When Death Comes," (1) identify the religious traditions implied through the imagery, then (2) define the traditional symbolic meaning expressed by these images then explain how Oliver re-interprets them from a feminist/gender spiritual perspective. Essays will be rubric graded. B. Explain how it could be said that the ideals of Confucianism lead to high rates of female suicide in early China.
- Objective Examinations
 - Example: After learning about gender roles in Ancient Greece, students will take a multiple-choice, T/F, and/or matching exam. For example: What are some of the things married women in the Athenian world could do? Select all that apply. (A) Care and upkeep of the household; (B) Participate in public political activities; (C) Have and raise children; (D) Participate in public religious ceremonies and festivals; (E) Vote, (F) Engage in sexual relations with another man.
- Projects
 - Example: Create a poster board that presents the lives and works of women in a contemporary religious context that address social justice, economics and/or ecology.

Repeatable

No

Methods of Instruction

- Lecture/Discussion
- Distance Learning

Lecture:

1. Instructor will lead students in an in-person classroom discussion modeling interpreting religious texts from a feminist perspective. Students will then be given sample passages from religious texts and in small groups interpret these passages from feminist versus androcentric perspectives.

Distance Learning

1. Students will review online instructional videos on how to interpret religious texts from a feminist perspective. Then in an online discussion forum, the instructor will post passages from a religious text and instruct students to interpret these passages from feminist versus androcentric perspectives and refer to the instructional material to support their interpretation.

Typical Out of Class Assignments Reading Assignments

1. Read Denise Carmody's essay "Judaism" and be prepared to discuss Judaism's contribution to conceptions of gender and community. 2. Read Rita Gross's essay "Tribal Religions: Aboriginal Australia" and be prepared to discuss what gender had to do with why Australian Aboriginal women were often excluded from land settlement discussions.

Writing, Problem Solving or Performance

1. View one of the three films by Deepa Mehta, Earth, Fire, or Water on reserve in the library, then review the Laws of Manu and your notes from our class discussion and write a 750 word essay identifying and discussing the laws and rules set out in the Laws of Manu that Mehta challenges in her films. In what ways do particular characters embody the traditional roles of women in Hindu society? Define and describe the "rebellion," examining the social and individual consequences. 2. Read the two essays posted on the course management system and respond to the following discussion question, 500 words (2 pages). Post your response essays on the webpage and critically respond to one essay posted by a peer. A. Compare the traditional indigenous American societies' role of male and female homosexuals and transvestites as discussed in the essay to the concepts of female/male as expressed in Taoism. Consider the role of the natural world in each of these traditions and how it informs spiritual and feminist principles. Site specific passages from the Tao Te Ching as support.

Other (Term projects, research papers, portfolios, etc.) Required Materials

- Women in World Religions
 - Author: Sharma, Arvind
 - Publisher: State University of New York Press
 - Publication Date: 2005
 - Text Edition:
 - Classic Textbook?:
 - OER Link:
 - OER:
- Today's Woman in World Religions
 - Author: Sharma Arvind
 - Publisher: State University of New York Press
 - Publication Date: 2005
 - Text Edition:
 - Classic Textbook?:
 - OER Link:
 - OER:
- Fundamentalism and Gender

- Author: John Stratton Hawley
- Publisher: Oxford University Press
- Publication Date: 2004
- Text Edition:
- Classic Textbook?:
- OER Link:
- OER:
- Womanspirit Rising: A Feminist Reader in Religion
 - Author: Christ and Plaskow
 - Publisher: Harper Collins
 - Publication Date: 2002
 - Text Edition:
 - Classic Textbook?:
 - OER Link:
 - OER:
- Appalling Bodies: Queer Figures Before and After Paul's Letters
 - Author: Joseph A. Marchal
 - Publisher: Oxford University Press
 - Publication Date: 2019
 - Text Edition:
 - Classic Textbook?:
 - OER Link:
 - OER:

Other materials and-or supplies required of students that contribute to the cost of the course.