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 03-33b Apr 1/20/04 Apr 3/2/04

Curriculum Proposal Cover Sheet - University-Wide Undergraduate Curriculum Committee

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Check all appropriate lines and complete information as requested. Use a separate cover sheet for each course proposal and for each program proposal.

1. **Course Proposals**
 New Course _____ Course Number and/or Title Change _____ Course Deletion
 _____ Course Revision _____ Course Description Change

Course prefix, number and full title: _____ Proposed course prefix, number and full title, if changing: RLST345 Women in the Bible

2. **Additional Course Designations: check if appropriate**
 _____ This course is also proposed as a Liberal Studies Course. Other: (Women's Studies)
 _____ This course is also proposed as an Honors College Course.

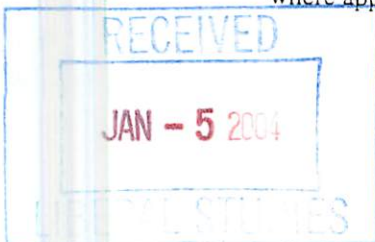
3. **Program Proposals**
 _____ New Degree Program _____ Program Title Change _____ Program Revision
 _____ New Minor Program _____ New Track

Current program name: _____ Proposed program name, if changing: _____

4. **Approvals**

	Date
Department Curriculum Committee Chair <i>Tawny L Holm</i>	10-28-03
Department Chair <i>Shirley Chandler</i>	10/28/03
College Curriculum Committee Chair <i>Alvin Hedent</i>	12-17-03
College Dean <i>Ann</i>	12-17-03
Director of Liberal Studies *	
Director of Honors College *	
Provost *	
Additional signatures as appropriate: (include title)	
UWUCC Chair for APSCUF <i>Gail Sechrist</i>	1-20-04

* where applicable



I. Catalog Description

RLST 345 Women in the Bible

3 class hours

0 lab hours

Prerequisite: one Religious Studies or Women's Studies course,
or permission of the instructor

3 credits

(3c-01-3cr)

Surveys and examines the stories and issues concerning women in the Bible, and introduces students to the questions and methods of research that the contemporary world and feminist biblical scholars bring to them.

II. Course Objectives

Students should be able to:

1. Demonstrate sufficient knowledge about female characters and women's stories in the Old and New Testaments (including the Apocrypha).
2. Describe in sufficient detail the relevant portions of the Bible which address ancient conceptions of women: their abilities in the domestic and public sphere, the Torah laws governing their activities in ancient Israel, etc.
3. Demonstrate a basic understanding of current methodology in feminist biblical scholarship.
4. Explain aspects of the portrayal of women and women's concerns in the Old and New Testaments in terms of an ancient male-oriented culture.
5. Write about and discuss the impact male-controlled composition, canonization and interpretation of the Bible has had on human lives throughout western history.
6. Create and foster an open and courteous atmosphere in which all students are encouraged to articulate their opinions and critically and sensitively discuss the often polemic issues behind the course subject matter.

III. Course Outline

A. Strategies for Reading Women's Stories in the Bible (6 hours)

1. Goals of feminist methodology in biblical scholarship - to uncover the patriarchal in the text itself, in the preservation and canonization of that text, and in the historical control of its interpretation, plus strategies of interpretation by feminists
2. Tracing women's voices - did women write any of the Bible?

B. Women of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament (18 hours)

1. The first woman: Eve
 2. Other women of Genesis, the matriarchs: Sarah and Hagar; Rebekah; Rachel and Leah; Tamar
3. Women of the exodus and the period of judges: Miriam; Rahab; Deborah and Jael; Delilah
 4. Women in the period of the kings and prophets: the female necromancer of Endor, Bathsheba; Jezebel and Athaliah; Gomer; personified cities as whores and virgins in the prophets (Hosea, Ezekiel and Jeremiah)
 5. Women of the Writings: the lover in the Song of Songs; Lady Wisdom in Proverbs 8-9; the "perfect" wife of Proverbs 31; Esther and Ruth
 6. Women of the Apocrypha (the "pure" women of Greek influence): Susanna; Judith; and Sarah in Tobit

C. Interlude – Midterm in class; the gender of God and ancient women's daily lives (6 hours)

1. The gender of Israel's deity - the rare use of feminine imagery in the Bible
2. Issues of canon and translation, inclusive language
3. Women's lives via the archaeological record
4. Women in the laws of the Mosaic covenant, women in the cult (no priests)

D. Women in the New Testament and beyond (12 hours); term paper due on last day of class

1. Women and the Jesus Movement I: Jesus' female disciples in the gospels
2. Women and the Jesus Movement II: Mary, the mother of Jesus
3. Women in the Acts of the Apostles and in Paul's writings - apostles, deacons, leaders

4. Woman in the elders' writings and the subsequent marginalization of women: "saved through childbearing" and "no authority over a man" (1 Tim. 2); the Jezebel woman in Revelation
5. Women in the non-canonical early Christian writings (women in gnostic texts, other gospels); Term paper due on last day of class

Take-home Final Exam due during exam week

IV. Evaluation Methods

25% Weekly response papers to the course readings. These will give students the chance to show they have done the reading and can critically evaluate it. The papers will be only 2-3 pages (type-written) in length, and students must be prepared to read or describe a portion of their essay aloud in class in order to jump-start class discussion.

50% Two tests - one a midterm and the other a final (each 25% of the grade). The midterm will consist of one-third multiple choice or true/false questions, one-third short-answer essays, and one-third essays. The final will be a take-home exam consisting of essays which require the student to take a position on general methodology with regard to the content of the last half of the course.

25% Research paper or project. Students may choose to work alone or with a partner. If working with a partner, each will share the resulting grade. The paper (8-10 pages in length if done alone, or 16-20 pages if done with a partner) could be a critical study of a biblical passage, a female biblical character, a certain concept concerning women in the Bible, the work of a particular feminist biblical scholar, or etc. If a student wishes to do a project rather than a paper, that could take the form of: a portfolio of women in the Bible as portrayed in art, literature or film of a certain period; or interviews with local women theologians/pastors and their interpretation of specific Bible passages or characters; etc. Other suggestions are welcome, although all topics (whether for a paper or a project) must be okayed by the professor in advance.

Grading Scale: 100-90% = A, 89-80% = B, 79-70% = C, 69-60% = D, <60% = F

V. Attendance Policy

The University expects all students to attend class. Individual faculty members will establish attendance guidelines consistent with University policies.

VI. Required textbooks, supplemental books and readings

Bellis, A. O. *Helpmates, Harlots and Heroines*. Westminster/Knox, 1994.

The HarperCollins Study Bible. HarperCollins, 1993 - or another literal version of the Bible that includes the Apocrypha.

Kraemer, Ross Shepard. *Women & Christian Origins*. Oxford University Press, 1999.

Other readings:

Other readings will be distributed in handouts or be available on Reserve as needed.

Bach, Alice, ed. *Women in the Hebrew Bible: A reader*. Routledge, 1999.

Contains articles by:

- Bird, Phyllis. "The Place of Women in the Israelite Cultus"
- Furman, Nelly. "His Story versus Her Story..."
- Greenstein, Edward L. "Reading Strategies and the Story of Ruth"
- Kimelmann, Reuven. "The Seduction of Eve..."
- Levine, Amy-Jill. "Sacrifice and Salvation..."
- Myers, Carol. "Women and the Domestic Economy..."
- Niditch, Susan. "Eroticism and Death in the Tale of Jael"

Brenner, A. and Van Dijk Hemmes, F. *On Gendering Texts*. Brill, 1996.
King, Nicholas. *Whispers of Liberation: Feminist Perspectives on the New Testament*. Paulist, 1998.
Ruether, Rosemary Radford. *Sexism and God-Talk*. Beacon, 1983.
Schotroff, Luise. *Let the Oppressed Go Free*. Transl. by Annemarie S. Kidder. Westminster, 1993.

VII. Special Resource Requirements

There are no special resource requirements.

VIII. Bibliography

- Abma, R. *Bonds of Love: Methodic Studies of Prophetic Texts with Marriage Imagery (Isaiah 50:1-3 and 54:1-10, Hosea 1-3, Jeremiah 2-3)*. K. Van Gorcum & Co., 1999.
- Ackerman, S. *Warriors, Dancer, Seductress, Queen: Women in Judges and Biblical Israel*. New York: Doubleday, 1998.
- Brenner, A. and C. Fontaine, eds. *A Feminist Companion: Reading the Bible: Approaches, Methods and Strategies*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997.
- Fiorenza, E. S. *But She Said: Feminist Practices of Biblical Interpretation*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1992.
- Fiorenza, E. S., ed. *Searching the Scriptures: Vol. 1, A Feminist Introduction*. New York: Crossroad, 1995.
- Jeanson, S. P. *The Women of Genesis: From Sarah to Potiphar's Wife*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990.
- T. Frymer-Kensky. *In the Wake of the Goddesses: Women, Culture, and the Biblical Transformation of Pagan Myth*. New York: Free Press, 1992.
- Lerner, G. *The Creation of Patriarchy*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1986.
- Meyers, C. *Discovering Eve: Ancient Israelite Women in Context*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1988.
- Pelikan, J. *Mary Through the Centuries: Her Place in History and Culture*.
- Perdue, Leo et al. *Families in Ancient Israel*. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1997.
- Reimer, Ivoni Richter. *Women in the Acts of the Apostles*. Fortress, 1995.
- Stocker, M. *Judith Sexual Warrior: Women and Power in Western Culture*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998.
- Streete, Gail Corrington. *The Strange Woman: Power and Sex in the Bible*. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1997.
- Trible, P. *Texts of Terror: Literary-Feminist Readings of Biblical Narratives*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984.
- Weems, R. *Battered Love: Marriage, Sex, and Violence in the Hebrew Prophets*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995.

Course Analysis Questionnaire

A. Details of the Course

- A1. This course is one of the controlled electives for students in the BA in Religious Studies and for students in the Women's Studies program. This course is not intended to be a Liberal Studies course.
- A2. This course does not require changes in any other course in the department. A program revision of the BA in Religious Studies will include this course among the controlled electives.
- A3. This course has been offered as Special Topics 481 in Fall 2000 and in Fall 2002. 19 students were enrolled in Fall 2000, and 25 students were enrolled in Fall 2002.
- A4. This course is not intended to be dual level.
- A5. This course is not to be taken for variable credit.
- A6. Similar courses are offered at the following institutions, among others:
Marquette University: Women in the Bible
DePaul University: Women in the Bible
Wake Forest University: Feminist Approaches to the Bible
Cornell University: Women in the Hebrew Bible
University of Wisconsin, Oshkosh: Women and the New Testament
- A7. No professional society, accrediting authority, law or other external agency recommends or requires the content or skills of this proposed course.

B. Interdisciplinary Implications

- B1. This course will be taught by one instructor.
- B2. The content of this course does not overlap with any other at the University.
- B3. This course is cross-listed with Women's Studies.

C. Implementation

- C1. No new faculty member is required to teach this course. This course will be counted as one preparation and three hours of equated workload. Teaching this course will not negatively impact the teaching schedule of the Religious Studies department or its ability to offer the other courses in the Religious Studies program because this course has already become part of the department's regular offerings. It has been offered as a Special Topics course every other year for the past four years.
- C2. Other resources:
a. Current space allocations are adequate to offer this course.
b. No special equipment is needed for this course.
c. No laboratory supplies are necessary for this course.
d. Library holdings are adequate.
e. No travel funds are necessary.
- C3. The resources for this course are not funded by any grant.
- C4. This course will be offered every fourth semester.
- C5. One section will be offered at a time.

C6. Up to 25 students can be accommodated in this class in which students do a considerable amount of participating verbally and in writing.

C7. No professional society recommends enrollment limits or parameters for this course.

C8. This course does not involve the use of telecourses or the use of interactive technologies.

D. Miscellaneous

No additional information is necessary.