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HSSP 2580 Women and Religious Leadership
Spring, 2005

This course is an intermediate course exploring the history of women in leadership roles within Christianity. Methodologically, the course explores the topic of how women have achieved leadership roles throughout Christian history, therefore the lectures will be historical in nature and students will be expected to use historical method in their analyses. There will be ample room for student-generated input based on experience and research. In fact, students must anticipate being active co-creators of this course, since the topic is too broad for any single professor to teach in a comprehensive way.

Required Textbooks

Beverly Kienzle and Pamela Walker, eds. Women Preachers and Prophets through Two Millennia of Christian History

Patricia O'Connell Killen, Finding our Voices

Catherine Brekus, Strangers and Pilgrims: Female Preaching in America

Karen Jo Torjesen, When Women were Priests

Grade is based on Class Participation (100 points); Oral Report on Interview with a female religious leader (150 points); Final Written Project (200 points); Oral Presentation of Final Project (150 points). The length of the Final Paper depends on the degree program you're in: Special Student and M. Div. 10 pages; MTS 15 pages; MA and Ph.D. 20 pages. n.b. If you're in a ministerial degree program, think in terms of a project that you will be able to use in the future. The Oral presentations should be about 30 minutes in length with 5 minutes for questions and discussion. The expectation is that these are professional quality oral presentations: well-organized; clear; engaging; with appropriate visual aids (short video clips; slides; overheads; PowerPoint, etc.)

Feb. 1 Naming the Women Leaders in the Christian Faith

Defining Leadership

How do we learn about women leaders?

How do we teach about women leaders?

Film Clips: Elizabeth; Joan of Arc; The anchoress; Entertaining Angels

Feb. 8, 15 Ordination: The Ultimate in Leadership?

This class will focus on the historical argument presented by Torjesen; be prepared to discuss the topic of women's ordination historically.

Due 2/8 Read: Torjesen, When Women Were Priests

Due 2/8 Write: One sentence statement of Torjesen's thesis; and up to 250 words analyzing her methodology, including her sources.

Feb. 15: Virginitly and Christian Leadership

A Very Long History...Chastity and Religious Leadership

Readings will be handed out and done in class.

Film Clips: Joan of Arc; The anchoress [vowed virginitly] Elizabeth; The Nun's Story [consecration scenes]

Feb. 22: Female Models and Challenges of Religious Leadership

****Meet in GTU Computer Lab at 7:10 for instruction on Research Techniques**

Challenges women still face with finding appropriate voices.

Read: O'Connell Killen, Finding Our Voice

Write: Bring in three-five possible research questions that will be the core of your research project.

Film Clip: The Sorceress; Elizabeth [claiming a voice to be heard]; Thea Bowman [giving voice to personal conviction]

Mar 1: Privatized Leadership

One-on-One Ministry: Spiritual Direction

Anchoresses: Caged Women

Letter Writing: Catherine of Siena

Monasticism: Behind the Walls

Readings will be handed out and done in class

Film Clip: The Anchoress; The Trouble with Angels; The Nun's Story [finding forms of discipline alone and in community]

Mar. 8: The Active Approach

Women Preachers

Redefining Preaching

Vita Apostolica, Beguines, Humiliati, Devotio Moderna, 3rd Order

Read: Kienzle and Walker, Women Preachers and Prophets (The chapters will be divided so each student presents one chapter. Each student should be prepared to state succinctly the thesis and methodology, including sources, of the piece being presented. After presenting what the author has written, the student should offer a balanced critique.)

Mar. 15 Women Preachers, cont.

Women preachers, speakers, etc. continuation of discussion of Kienzle and Walker, ed.

Film Clip: Gods of Time Square [street preachers]

March 22: Reading Week/ No Class**Mar. 29: Take Home Exam Due: Book Review of Catherine Brekus, Strangers and Pilgrims**

Discussion of Strangers and Pilgrims

Apr. 5: Reports on Interview with Female Religious Leader**Apr. 12: Women Religious Leaders in Film**

You choose film clips to share and analyze for the class. (have the video cued up and ready to show at the time of class)

Apr. 19: Story Telling

The History of Story Telling as Historical Record-Keeping

Be prepared to tell a Story of a Holy Woman (in an engaging way)

Apr. 26 Student Presentations**May 3 Student Presentations****May 10 Concluding Remarks: Name the Women Leaders Again**