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HSTA 370H.01: Women in America Colonial to Civil War

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History 370H: Women in America from the Colonial Era to the Civil War

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Class Hours: MWF 10-10:50 a.m.

Office Hours: MW 1-2 p.m. and by appointment (request via e-mail)

Course Description

This course, the first half of a two-semester sequence on U.S. women's history, will acquaint students with the major issues and events of women's history in the United States from the colonial era through the Civil War. Students also will learn to interpret historical materials and to communicate their ideas effectively through speaking and writing.

In accordance with the criteria for the "Historical and Cultural" category under General Education requirements, this course will:

1. Present ideas and information with a view to understanding the causes, development, and consequences of historical events.
2. Evaluate texts (primary sources) within historical context.
3. Provide broad chronological, geographical, and topical coverage.
4. Introduce students to major historiographical debates in U.S. women's history and related fields.

This course counts toward the "Historical and Cultural" perspective for General Education requirements and fulfills one of the "U.S." courses required of history majors. It also may be used toward a major or minor in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies.

Course Readings

Nancy Woloch, ed., *Early American Women: A Documentary History, 1600-1900*

Kathryn Kish Sklar and Thomas Dublin, eds., *Women and Power in American History* (2nd ed.)

Additional short readings assignments will be posted on Moodle.

NB: Both books are available for purchase at the UC Bookstore and are on reserve at Mansfield Library. If you have difficulty attaining the readings for any reason, please let me know as soon as possible and I will do my best to accommodate you.

Course Requirements and Grading:

Course requirements are designed to foster and measure achievement of the goals listed above. This class will follow a lecture-discussion format; on lecture days (generally Mondays and Wednesdays) information will be presented in class to provide a general overview of the topic for that week, while on discussion days (generally Fridays) we will emphasize active involvement in the learning process through discussion of the assigned readings. Your comprehension of the course material also will be evaluated on four take-home, essay-style

exams, one for each section of the class.

Attendance and Participation

Attendance and participation are vital to your success in this class. This is a lecture-based class, meaning that the primary “text” is my lectures; there is no substitute for attending class and taking good notes. *I will not share lecture notes with students.* If you must miss class, I advise you to get lecture notes from a classmate and compare those notes with the outline (available on Moodle). While you are permitted to get notes from fellow students, or even to have a fellow student record the class for you, this will not earn you credit for class attendance. Moreover, you will need to have good lecture notes to assist you on the (open-book, open-note) exams. I am happy to meet with you individually to help you improve your note-taking skills.

Likewise, there is no substitute for being present for discussions of the required readings and films; while the lectures provide the backbone for the class, the readings and films provide additional information and examples. You will need to be familiar not only with the assigned reading and the films shown in class but also with the way in which the reading and films relate to lecture material in order to do well on the exams.

You are expected to be on time, present, and attentive at each class meeting. Failing to sign in will result in a reduced attendance grade. Late arrivals, early departures, and/or manifest inattentiveness (i.e., reading non-class materials, sleeping, texting, etc.) also will negatively affect your attendance grade. All absences for university-related events (“away” games, Model UN, etc.) or public service (jury duty, Army Reserves) will be excused with written documentation. Under extraordinary circumstances, such as a documented personal, family, or medical emergency, other absences also may be excused at my discretion. Additional work may be required for excused absences and should be arranged in advance except in emergencies.

Good participation is also very important. Discussion days (usually Fridays) will revolve around your comments and questions about the reading and other classroom material (i.e., readings in *W&P*, *EAW*, or on Moodle, and/or films viewed in class). This means that the quality of your preparation and your contributions are essential. First of all, of course, this means that you must read the material carefully and think about what you would like to say about it in class (see tips below). Next, come to class prepared to speak, but be sensitive to others’ comments, too. Listening and posing questions, as well as offering insights, are important discussion skills. Listen to your peers, encourage them to expand on their points, offer supporting comments or alternative viewpoints, and above all, always connect your comments to the reading! Everybody brings a different perspective to the class, but the text is our common ground.

To prepare for discussion, you must submit a comment or question on the assigned reading and other classroom material (i.e., readings in *W&P*, *EAW*, or on Moodle, and/or films viewed in class) each Friday. You must bring this to class with you in hard copy, as you will be expected to read the comment or question aloud in class and turn it in at the end of the class meeting. You may base your comment or question on the reading suggestions below, or on questions posed on Moodle, or you may raise a different topic, but you must include a specific passage (and page number if available) from the reading. You will not receive credit unless you submit hard copy in class.

Reading Assignments

Careful reading is essential to every aspect of this class. In this class, you will read both essays and documents. Essays are secondary sources written by professional historians. As you read the essays in *Women and Power in America*, pay special attention to (and take notes on) these points:

- What is the author's argument, or thesis?
- What evidence does the author present in support of her/his argument?
- How does the essay relate to other class material (lecture and documents in *EAW*) for that week?

Documents are primary sources written by historical actors. As you read each document in *Early American Women* or on Moodle, think about (and take notes on your answers to) these questions:

- Who wrote the document?
- When was the document produced?
- Where was the document made?
- What is the document about?
- Why is the document interesting or significant?
- How does the document support, modify, or contradict relevant material in the secondary sources (essays) and/or in lecture?

Take-Home Exams

There will be four exams in this class. Each will measure your understanding of all class material (lectures, readings, films, and discussion). All exams will be essay-style, take-home, and open-book. The point is for you to synthesize class material and present it in your own words, not to memorize names and dates. Having said that, the exams will consist of identifications, which might include a person's or a group's name, an organization or event, or a short phrase or analytical concept. All such terms will be included on the lecture outlines and/or written on the board. When taking and reviewing notes, make sure that you record and understand material that is identified this way. Ask questions in class or see me in my office, if necessary, to clarify anything that you do not understand. Do not expect to be able to locate this information on the Web or on Wikipedia! I will be looking for your ability to demonstrate your understanding of class material. ***Using outside sources, including the Internet, will be considered cheating and will result in a failing grade.***

Course Grading

Grade Distribution

Attendance/Participation:	20 percent
Exam #1:	20 percent
Exam #2:	20 percent
Exam #3:	20 percent
Exam #4:	20 percent

Grade Scale

Grades will be assigned according to the point system below. According to University policy, all courses taken for General Education credit must be taken for a traditional letter grade; students must earn a C-minus or better to count courses toward either General Education or their major or minor.

93-100 points:A

90-92 points: A-

87-89 points: B+

83-86 points: B

80-82 points: B-

77-79 points: C+

73-76 points: C

70-72 points: C- (*lowest passing grade for General Education or degree requirements*)

67-69 points: D+

63-66 points: D

60-62 points: D-

59 and below:F

Course Policies

No late assignments will be accepted except in cases of a documented personal, family, or medical emergency. In other words, late assignments will receive a zero. There will be no “make-up” exams. Students do have the option of obtaining and completing exams early. Please arrange this at least a week prior to the scheduled distribution of exams.

Incompletes are intended for use by students who have fulfilled all course requirements (including attendance) prior to a documented medical, family, or personal emergency that prevents the student from completing the remainder of the course. Incompletes will be granted at my discretion based on these criteria. Students must arrange incompletes as early as possible.

Students must practice academic honesty. ***Plagiarism or cheating of any kind, including using non-course materials such as the internet to complete exams, will result in a failing grade in the course.*** More severe penalties, including suspension or expulsion from the University, may apply under the Student Conduct Code.

The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and Disability Services for Students. If you think you may have a disability adversely affecting your academic performance, and you have not already registered with Disability Services, please contact Disability Services in Lommasson Center 154 or 406.243.2243. I will work with you and Disability Services to provide a reasonable modification. “Reasonable” means the changes affect only “non-essential” elements of the curriculum; the University permits no fundamental alterations of academic standards or retroactive modifications.

In keeping with UM’s Electronic and Information Technology Accessibility policy, I will post screen-reader accessible documents (syllabi, outlines, other handouts) on the class Moodle

site. All videos will be close-captioned. For additional resources and information, please visit [Disability Student Services](#).

Classroom Etiquette:

Practice common sense and courtesy in the classroom. Be seated and prepared for class prior to the first bell. Do not disrupt class unnecessarily by arriving or departing between the bells. Turn all electronics (cell phones, iPods, etc.) off before class begins; likewise, put away non-class-related readings (newspapers, books for other classes, etc.) prior to the first bell. Bring drinks only in covered containers; do not bring food (except for medical reasons). If you use a laptop computer or tape recorder, set it up prior to the start of class.

Course Schedule

I. Disparate Images: Women in the American Colonies

August 27-31: The First American Women

Read: *EAW*, Chap. 1; *W&P*, Chap. 1

September 3-7: New Women in a New Land (No Class Monday—Labor Day)

Read: *EAW*, Chaps. 2, 3, and 4; *W&P*, Chaps. 3, 4, and 5

September 10-14: Women Rebels

Read: *EAW*, Chaps. 5 and 6; *W&P*, Chap. 2

September 17- 21: Women in Revolutionary America

Film: *Mary Silliman's War*

Read: *W&P*, Chap. 6

*****EXAM #1 DISTRIBUTED IN CLASS FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 21*****

*****EXAM #1 DUE IN CLASS FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 28*****

II. Emerging Ideals: Woman's Sphere in Antebellum America

September 24-28: Defining Woman's Sphere

Read: *EAW*, Chap. 7

October 1-5: Living in Woman's Sphere

Read: *EAW*, Chaps. 7 (review) and 8 (selections); *W&P*, Chaps. 14, 16 and 18

October 8-12: Expanding Woman's Sphere

Read: *EAW*, Chap. 11 (first document); *W&P*, Chap. 13

***** EXAM # 2 DISTRIBUTED IN CLASS FRIDAY, OCTOBER 12*****

***** EXAM #2 DUE IN CLASS FRIDAY, OCTOBER 19*****

III. Varieties of Experience: Women's Lives in Antebellum America

October 15-19: Working Women

Read: *EAW*, Chaps. 8 (selected) and 13; *W&P*, Chaps. 7, 8, and 10

October 22-26: Southern Women

Read: *EAW*, Chap. 10; *W&P*, Chap. 11

October 29- November 2: Western Women

Read: *EAW*, Chap. 9; *W&P*, Chaps. 15 and 17

November 5-9: Immigrant and Rural Women

Read: *W&P*, Chap. 9

*****EXAM #3 DISTRIBUTED IN CLASS FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 9*****

*****EXAM #3 DUE IN CLASS FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 16*****

IV. Changes in Prospect: Women's Activism in Antebellum America

November 12-16: Women's Rights (No Class Monday—Veterans Day)

Read: *W&P*, Chap. 12; *EAW*, Chap. 11

November 19-23: Work and Reform (No Class Weds. or Fri.—Thanksgiving)

Film: *Hearts and Hands*

Read: No reading this week. Happy Thanksgiving!

November 26-30: Women and the Civil War

Read: *EAW*, Chap. 12

December 3-7: Woman Suffrage

Film: *One Woman, One Vote*

Read: No reading this week. Review notes for exam!!! Good luck on finals!

*****EXAM #4 DISTRIBUTED IN CLASS FRIDAY, DECEMBER 7*****

*****EXAM #4 DUE ON FRIDAY, DECEMBER 14*****