

**HIST-806: Women in the Reformation**  
**January 2020**

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**Course Description**

This course will explore various facets of women's lives in the Reformation as well as women's contributions to Reformation-era churches and societies. Four major aspects will be considered: cultural and theological understandings of women, women's participation in theological conversations, women's religious practice, and changing theologies (and realities) of marriage and motherhood. Students will read a mixture of secondary and primary sources, and the course format will give priority to discussion.

**Course Objectives**

- To understand the historical events of the Reformation from the varied perspectives of sixteenth-century women.
- To examine the history of a lay and subordinate group of church members, and to consider the agency and effects of those people in the larger church.
- To use the narratives and experiences of women to critique the standard narrative of the Reformation.
- To exercise critical reading, discussion, research and writing skills.

**Required Texts**

- Davis, Natalie Zemon. *Society and Culture in Early Modern France*. Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 1975. ISBN: 978-0804709729, \$32.00 at Amazon.com.
- Ozment, Steven. *When Fathers Ruled: Family Life in Reformation Europe*. Cambridge, Mass: Cambridge University Press, 1983. ISBN: 9780674951211, \$31.43 at Amazon.com.
- Stjerna, Kirsi. *Women and the Reformation*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2009. ISBN: 9781405114233, \$33.75 at Amazon.com.
- Wiesner-Hanks, Merry and Joan Skocir, eds. *Convents Confront the Reformation: Catholic and Protestant Nuns in Germany*. Milwaukee: Marquette University, 1996. ISBN: 978-0874627022, \$15.00 at Amazon.com.
- Other readings will be posted on the course Moodle site or available through United Library.

## **Assignments & Grading**

### *Participation 40%*

The majority of class time will be reserved for discussion, so students should come to class prepared and ready to discuss the readings. Each week, students will fill out one Discussion Sheet for each reading before class and will bring that sheet to class.

Participation grade will be assigned based on both the Discussion Sheets and in-class contributions to discussion.

### *Discussion Leadership 10%*

Students will take turns guiding the discussion using questions formulated before class. The discussion can use parts of the leader's Discussion Sheet, but this is not required. Discussion questions should engage the assigned readings, locate critical issues, and help students bring each week's readings into conversation with related historical, theological, and social subjects.

### *Final Presentation 10%*

Each student will give an in-class presentation on a draft of the final paper at the end of the semester. This presentation should last about 10 minutes and cover the following: topic, main question(s), sources, thesis, and remaining questions to be explored before completing the paper. The class will then respond with feedback as to what is unclear, interesting, problematic and/or insightful.

### *Final Paper 40%*

A final research paper on the subject of the student's choosing is due on February 3. Master's students should write 10-15 pages; doctoral students should write 20-25 pages.

*Final grades* for the course are determined by the following scale:

A: 100-93%

A-: 90-92%

B+: 88-89%

B: 83-87%

B-: 80-82%

C+: 78-79%

C: 73-77%

C-: 70-72%

D+: 68-69%

D: 63-67%

D-: 60-62%

F: 59% and below

## Policies and Procedures

1. *Absences from class* are excused only in emergencies or unavoidable scheduling conflicts. For an excused absence, students must submit thorough discussion sheets for each reading in order to get participation credit for that day. In accordance with the student handbook, students who miss more than two class meetings – excused or unexcused – should not expect to pass the class.
2. *Late papers and other assignments* will be accepted without penalty only in extreme and documented situations, such as a death or serious diagnosis in the family, a lengthy illness, or other emergency. Please plan your work so that an acute emergency (e.g. brief illness, computer problems, pastoral emergency) does not interfere with submitting your work on time. Unexcused late assignments will be docked a full letter grade (i.e., 10 percentage points) for every day they are late. Any portion of a day late counts as a full day, so if a paper is due at 10 p.m. and you submit it at 10.30 p.m., your grade will be docked by one full letter grade (e.g., 90% becomes 80%).
3. *Regarding plagiarism*, please familiarize yourself with Garrett-Evangelical policies as found in the Academic Handbook. It is especially important to make sure you understand what constitutes plagiarism so that you do not inadvertently violate the policy. All written work will undergo an online plagiarism check. A violation of the plagiarism policy will result in a grade of zero for that assignment and disciplinary action in consultation with the Academic Dean.
4. *For students with special needs or disabilities*, Garrett-Evangelical is committed to providing a quality theological education and will provide reasonable accommodations for documented conditions. Students requiring specific assistance such as classroom changes, alternative ways of notetaking, different classroom procedures, or alternative testing formats are urged to request the appropriate accommodations from the director of academic studies/registrar. The director of academic studies/registrar can advise students on other support services and resources, for example, diagnostic testing. Students must complete a request for accommodations using the form available from the director of academic studies/registrar or through MyGETS, documenting their condition(s) through appropriate verification methods.

Accommodation(s) cannot be retroactive. Accommodation(s) begins only after documentation is received and reasonable time for accommodation development has been allowed.

## COURSE SCHEDULE

### Women as Subjects

January 13:

#### **Course Introduction & Reformation Review**

- “The Reformations of the Sixteenth Century,” Carter Lindberg

#### **Gender and the Reformation**

- Stjerna, pp. 213-222 (“Conclusions and Observations”)

#### **Sixteenth-century Understandings of Women**

- “Ideas and Laws Regarding Women,” Merry Wiesner
- “Women on Top,” in *Society and Culture*, Natalie Zemon Davis
- *The Witch-Hunt in Early Modern Europe*, pp. 1-29, Brian Levack

### Women as Agents of Change

January 14:

#### **Female Theologians**

- Stjerna, chs. 6, 8 and 9 (on Argula von Grumbach, Katharina Schütz Zell, and Marie Dentiere)
- “Letter to the Suffering Women of the Community of Kentzingen,” and “Apologia for Master Matthew Zell,” (1524) Katharina Schütz Zell

January 15:

#### **Female Leaders**

- Stjerna, ch. 10 (on Marguerite de Navarre and Jeanne d’Albret)
- “Elizabeth I of England,” Bainton
- *Mirror of the Sinful Soul* (1531), Marguerite de Navarre

## Women as Religious Practitioners

January 16:

### **Devotional Reading and Urban Women**

- “City Women and Religious Change,” Davis
- “Printing and the People,” Davis
- “Reading,” Alec Ryrie

January 17:

### **Reforming Practice & Women’s Devotion**

- “Churching, a women’s rite,” Susan Karant-Nunn
- “The Virgin Mary and the Saints,” Christine Peters
- *Stjerna*, ch. 1 (on “Prophets, Visionaries, and Martyrs”)

January 21:

### **Convents and the Reformation**

- *Convents Confront the Reformation*, Wiesner-Hanks and Skocir (all)

## Women as Wives and Mothers

January 22:

### **Reinterpreting Marriage**

- *When Fathers Ruled*, Steven Ozment (chapters 1 and 2)
- “Sermon on Marriage,” (1522) Martin Luther

January 23:

### **Radical Reinterpretations of Marriage**

- “Sexual Utopianism in the German Reformation,” Lyndal Roper
- “Women of the Anabaptists,” Roland Bainton
- “The Institutional Matrix,” and “The Rationale for Divorce,” Robert Kingdon

Updated 12/3/19

*January 24:*

**Reinterpreting Motherhood**

- *When Fathers Ruled*, Steven Ozment (chapter 3 and 4)
- "Sermon on Marriage," (1519) Luther

**In-class presentations on research topics**

**February 3: Final Papers / Projects Due**