

**NT 265 COURSE SYLLABUS**  
**WOMEN IN THE NEW TESTAMENT WORLD**  
Fall 2007

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**Course Description:** This course explores the social context of women in the New Testament era through evidence from writings by women and about women contemporary to Jesus and Paul. Social science models such as patronage, honor/shame, and patriarchy will be examined in light of the ancient literary evidence and comparisons will be made with the New Testament literature.

**Course Objectives:** This course will provide a(n):

- Survey of some of the extra-canonical literature by and pertaining to women in the NT era
- Introduction to social science, cultural and feminist critical methodologies and the application of these methods upon selected readings
- Comparison of extra-canonical writings to NT writings
- Analysis of the position of the NT writings in the broader ancient cultural, historical and literary contexts

**Course Requirements:**

- Class attendance—this is particularly important in a weekend format. Missing more than one day will be considered as insufficient for basic course requirements
- Class participation—part of each weekend session will be devoted to class discussion and active and informed participation is required. Therefore, careful reading of the assigned texts beforehand is essential
- Leading discussion—each student will be part of one assigned group which will be responsible for discussion during class sessions 2-4. The content of these discussions is primarily from the readings from Kraemer's *Women's Religions in the Greco-Roman World* sourcebook and will focus upon a critical examination of how these readings inform the NT views of women. Comparison with Malina's models will also be applied.
- Two response papers—during the two sessions in which the student is not responsible for classroom discussion in sessions 2-4, she/he must turn in response papers to the readings for the week. These papers are not to exceed 4 double-spaced, 12 point font typed pages and should address selected issues in the assigned readings. The response may deal with such issues as source reliability, authorship, social/religious location of the sources; insights about women from the sources; and the initial insights cast upon particular NT texts by the sources.

- Final paper—due at the final class session—no later than 3pm on Saturday, December 8<sup>th</sup>. This paper is not to exceed 10 double-spaced, 12 point font typed pages and will consist of an analysis of one selected passage or woman from the extra-canonical materials and one selected NT passage or NT character (supposedly a woman). The two passages/women will be compared/contrasted with the assistance of the critical methods, looking for directions of influence and the means by which the passages/characters shed light upon the social-historical-religious location of the other.

### **Evaluation:**

- Led classroom discussion                      20%
- Two response papers                              20% (10% each)
- Final paper    50%
- Classroom participation                          10%

A note on the class assignments and preparation: The weekend format is a unique learning experience which requires more work outside the classroom sessions on behalf of the students. Therefore, the reading assignments are heavy and expectations for classroom participation are high. In order to take advantage of the 5 class sessions, come prepared with questions, well informed by the readings.

A note on the use of language: Students are expected to use inclusive language both in their written work and in the classroom discussions. Non-gender specific language can be achieved by using either plural pronouns or joint singular pronouns. The accepted non-gender specific pronoun for God is Godself.

A note on written work: The student's work is expected to conform to traditional writing format and those papers which do not meet the specifications may be returned without comment until the form is acceptable. I recommend that every student obtain a copy of Kate L. Turabian's *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 6<sup>th</sup> ed. (Chicago: University Press, 1996) to be used as a writing format guide. For final papers, I am willing to look over drafts, thesis statements, or partial papers in advance of the due date. Please allow a few days for comments and then corrections to the work.

**No papers will be accepted beyond the due date unless arrangements have been made with the instructor at least three days in advance. In the event that late work is approved, it will be returned graded without written comments.**

### **Textbooks:**

Kramer, Ross Shepard, ed. *Women's Religions in the Greco-Roman World: A Sourcebook*. Oxford: University Press, 2004.

Malina, Bruce J. *The New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001.

Other readings will be available on e-reserve via the online course file.

## **Course Schedule:**

### **SESSION I—SEPTEMBER 7-8**

Course introduction—syllabus

#### Critical methodologies for course

- Malina, Ch. 1 “Honor and Shame” pp. 27-57
- Ch. 2 “The Individual and the Group” pp. 58-80
- Ch. 5 “Kinship and Marriage” pp. 134-60
- Feminist Criticism introduction

#### Cosmic View

- Plato *Timaeus* 41e-42d; 68e-92c
- Aristotle *Generation of Animals*
- Philo *The Special Laws* 324-332; 34-50

#### Philosophical Understanding

- Plutarch *Moralia* “Bravery of Women”
- Brown, *Body and Society*, 5-32.

### **SESSION II—SEPTEMBER 28-29**

#### **Reflection papers due**

**1<sup>st</sup> group leads discussion in Saturday section**

#### Societal Roles

- Musonius Rufus “That Women, Too, Should Study Philosophy,” in Malherbe, *Moral Exhortation*, 132-34
- Arlandson, *Women, Class and Society*, 14-112
- Winter, *Roman Wives*, 39-74
- Rouselle, “Body Politics,” in Pantel, ed., *History of Women*, 296-336
- Osiek & Balch, *Families*, “Social World,” 48-87
- Dixon, *Reading Roman Women*, “Womanly Weakness,” 73-88
- Kraemer Text #54 Sale of House between Two Women

#### Familial Roles

- Hierocles “Household Management” and “On Marriage,” in Malherbe *Moral Exhortation*, 98-105
- Plutarch *Moralia* “Advice to Bride and Groom”
- Josephus *Against Apion* II.21-31
- Dixon, “Sex and the Married Woman,” in Balch & Osiek, *Early Christian Families*, 111-29.

Osiek & MacDonald, *A Woman's Place*, Ch. 3, "Birth, Nursing," 50-67  
 Kraemer Text #14 Jewish Women in Public Life  
 #52 Divorce Agreement  
 #62 Papers of Babatha

### **SESSION III—OCTOBER 26-27**

**Reflection papers due**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> group leads discussion in Saturday session**

#### Women at Work

Corley, *Private Women* "Greco-Roman Meals," 24-79  
 Myers, "Gendered Space," in Balch & Osiek *Early Christian Families*, 44-69  
 Osiek, "Female Slaves," in Balch & Osiek *Early Christian Families*, 255-74  
 Dixon *Reading Roman Women*, Ch. 7 "Profits and Patronage," 89-112  
 Dixon *Reading Roman Women*, Ch. 8 "Woman's Work," 113-32  
 Kraemer Text #51 Contract of a Wet Nurse

#### Religious Roles

Scheid "Religious Roles of Roman Women," in Pantel, ed. *History of Women*,  
 377-408  
 Kraemer & D'Angelo *Women and Christian Origins*, Ch. 4 "Women's Religions  
 in the City," 80-102  
 Kraemer Text #17 Rites to Demeter  
 #19 Procession to Isis  
 #20 Meroe  
 #21 Pamphile  
 #80 Priestess of Athena Honored  
 #81 Vestal Virgins  
 #82 Choosing Vestal Virgins  
 #83 Inscriptions Honoring Priestesses  
 #84 Juliane  
 #89 Jewish Women Priestesses  
 #102 Spread of Bacchic Rites to Rome  
 #110 Spiritual Inheritance of Daughters of Job  
 #126B Arrival of Cybele in Rome  
 #131B Kyme Aretology

**SESSION IV—NOVEMBER 9-10****Reflection papers due  
3<sup>rd</sup> group leads discussion in Saturday session**Judaic Life

Schuller, *The Dead Sea Scrolls*, “What Have We Learned About Women?” 80-104

Ilan, *Jewish Women*, 57-175

Josephus *Jewish War* II.119-121

Wilson, *The Sentences of Pseudo-Phocylides*, 185-213

Kraemer, *Her Share of the Blessings*, Ch. 8, “Jewish Women’s Lives,” 93-105  
Ch. 9, “Jewish Women’s Lives,” 106-27

Kraemer Text #13 Therapeutai  
#15 Josephus  
#35 Mishnah  
#48 Women’s Epitaphs  
#60 Josephus—Herodias, etc.  
#61 Josephus, et.al.—Berenice  
#85A Rufina  
#103 Helena Converts  
#104 Non-Jewish Women Attracted to Judaism  
#106 Aseneth  
#111 Gullible Pious Women

**SESSION V—DECEMBER 7-8****FINAL PAPERS DUE NO LATER THAN 3PM ON SATURDAY**Christian Communities

Osiek & MacDonald, *A Woman’s Place*, Ch. 4 “House Church,” 68-94

Kraemer & D’Angelo, *Women and Christian Origins*, Ch. 14 “Women as Sources of Redemption and Knowledge,” 330-54

Miller, *Women in Early Christianity*, “Widows,” 49-61  
“Deaconesses,” 62-65

Kraemer Text #105 Acts of Thecla  
#112 Acts of Martyrs of Scilli  
#114 Perpetua & Felicitas

Reactions to Women in NT Era

MacDonald, *Early Christian Women and Pagan Opinion*, 49-120

Kraemer & D’Angelo, *Women and Christian Origins*, Ch. 12, “Women, Gender and Gnosis,” 257-99

Miller, *Women in Early Christianity*, “Female Comportment,” 71-78  
“Clement of Alexandria,” 257-67

“Comments on Women & Teaching,” 29-31

Kraemer Text #40 Women Writing Books

#92 Tertullian—Women Teaching & Baptizing

#94 Hippolytus—On Maximilla & Priscilla

Various Early Christianities

Miller, *Women in Early Christianity*, “Montanists,” 31-38

“Subintroductae,” 117-23

“Shepherd of Hermas,” 256-57

“Mary Magdalene,” 305-07

Kraemer Text #23-24 Callihroe excerpts

#29 Leucippe

#32 Justin Martyr & Ascetic Woman

#93 Female Montanist Visionary

#128 Odes of Solomon—Female Spirit of the Lord

#132A Thunder, Perfect Mind

New Testament Exerpts:

Mk 15.40-41 + par.

Mk 14.3-9 + par.

Lk 10.38-42; Jn 11.1-12.8

Mk 5.21-43 + par.

Mk 7.24-30; Mt 15.21-28

Mk 12.41-44; Lk 21.1-4

Gal 3.26-28

Rom 16

1 Cor 11.2-10

1 Cor 14.33b-36

1 Cor 7

Col 3.18-25; Eph 5.22-6.9

1 Tim 2.8-3.15

## Selected Bibliography

### Ancient Sources

Aristotle *Generation of Animals*

Josephus *Against Apion*  
*Jewish War*

Philo *Hypothetica*  
*The Special Laws*

Plato *Timaeus*

Plutarch *Moralia*: “Advice to Bride and Groom”  
“Bravery of Women”

### Modern Sources

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- \*---denotes items on reserve in library**