**Course Description:**
In the past African women were powerful leaders, strong economic contributors and respected members of their extended families. This course will examine these historical roles as well as factors that undermined African women's status and changed gender relations, such as slavery, economic forces and colonialism.

**Prerequisite(s):**
2.0 courses in History or Women's Studies, taken at the 2200 level or above if they are History courses or at the 2000 level or above if they are Women's Studies courses.

This course counts as a History credit in the International Relations module.

Unless you have either the prerequisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. The decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

**Antirequisite(s):**
Women's Studies 4607F/G.

**Course Syllabus:**
Women in Africa today are exceedingly diverse and accomplished, despite the negative news we read every day about violence, disease and poverty. Even those who recognize this often assume that women’s growing influence in African societies is a recent development due to the influence of modern liberal values. Contrary to this, in the past African women were not the victims of male domination, but held powerful leadership roles, were strong economic contributors and respected members of their extended families. African feminists today draw upon these traditions as a source of empowerment. This course will examine African women’s roles in the past as well as factors that undermined their status and changed gender relations such as slavery, economic forces and colonialism.
Course Objectives

• Develop a knowledge of how gender is an important factor in understanding history
• Learn about the variety of sources that allow us to reconstruct a history that was not always present in official written records such as linguistics, oral history, archaeology, anthropology and material history
• Examine the variety of important roles that African women fulfilled in the past
• Trace the shifts that occurred over time that changed gender relations and undermined women’s roles such as slavery, economic forces and colonialism
• Come to an understanding of how their traditions have empowered African women today

Course Materials:
All course information and readings will be posted on the course website at https://owl.uwo.ca/portal

Methods of Evaluation:
This course will be conducted as a seminar. Readings will be assigned every week and students will be expected to come prepared to discuss them. Class participation grade will be assessed on the basis of attendance and demonstrated engagement with the assigned reading. Each student will be required to give an introduction to course reading for one class which will raise questions for discussion. The following week, they will be required to submit a paper based on all the reading for the class (5-6 pages). The major assignment in this course will be a research paper on a topic dealing with an aspect of the history of women and gender in Africa. Students are required to discuss this with the professor before the essay proposal is due in week 8 of the course. This will consist of one or two paragraphs describing the topic and the approach or thesis the student plans to present, plus an annotated bibliography of 8-10 scholarly sources that will be used. The proposal should be 6-7 pages. The final essay will be due in the last class and will be 12-15 pages long. Students will be required to submit this paper to turnitin.

Mark Breakdown:
Class Participation 15%
Class Presentation 10% (dates will be determined in the first class)
Class Reading Essay 20% (due the week after your class presentation)
Research Essay Proposal 20% (due October 30)
Research Essay 35% (due December 4)

Course Schedule and Readings:
Subject to revision by September 2019 with possible updates from recent publications.
1. September 11 Introduction

Reading:

Video: Umoja: No Men Allowed

Background Reading:

Pre-Colonial History:

2. September 18 Pre-history: Gender Roles and Matriarchy

Reading:


3. September 25 Women’s Spiritual Roles and the Importance of Motherhood

Reading:


Todd Sanders. Beyond Bodies: Rainmaking and Sense Making in Tanzania. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008) ix-xvi; 139-159.

4. October 2 Women of Power: Queens, Queen Mothers and Female Warriors

Reading:


5. October 9 Women’s Economic Roles and Contributions to the Family Economy

Reading:


Challenges to Women’s Traditional Roles:

6. October 16 Women and Slavery

Reading:


7. October 23 Christian Missionaries and Sexuality

Reading:

Marc Epprecht. ‘This matter of women is getting very bad’: Gender, Development and Politics in Colonial Lesotho. (Scottsville, South Africa: University of Natal Press, 2000) 30-38.


8. October 30 Women’s Resistance to Colonialism: Rebellion and the 1929 “Women’s War” in Nigeria

Essay Proposals Due

Reading:


November 6 Reading Week

9. November 13 Colonialism, Migration and Economic Change

Reading:


The Post-Colonial Era:

10. November 20 Women’s Contributions to African National Liberation Movements

Reading:


11. November 27 Gender Roles, Modernity and ‘Development’

Reading:


Video: Sasa! A Film About Women, Violence and HIV/AIDS
Can be viewed on-line at http://raisingvoices.org/resources/

12. December 4 Women’s Activism and Struggles for Peace in Africa: The Case of Liberia

Reading:


Video: Pray the Devil Back to Hell

**Additional Statements**

**Academic Offences:**

Scholastic Offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitute a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:


All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com ([http://www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com)).

**Accessibility Options:**

Please contact the course instructor if you require material in an alternate format or if you require any other arrangements to make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at 519 661-2111 x 82147 for any specific question regarding an accommodation. Information regarding accommodation of exams is available on the Registrar’s website: [www.registrar.uwo.ca/examinations/accommodated_exams.html](http://www.registrar.uwo.ca/examinations/accommodated_exams.html)

**Medical Issues**

The University recognizes that a student’s ability to meet his/her academic responsibilities may, on occasion, be impaired by medical illness. Please go to: [https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_illness.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_illness.pdf) to read about the University’s policy on medical accommodation. In the event of illness, you should contact Academic Counselling as soon as possible. The Academic Counsellors will determine, in consultation with the student, whether or not accommodation should be requested. They will subsequently contact the instructors in the relevant courses about the accommodation. Once the instructor has made a decision about whether to grant an accommodation, the student should contact his/her instructors to determine a new due date for tests, assignments, and exams.

Students must see the Academic Counsellor and submit all required documentation in order to be approved for certain accommodation.

Please note: Please visit [https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/academic_policies/index.html](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/academic_policies/index.html) to view all updated academic policies regarding medical accommodations.
**Plagiarism:**

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offense (see Scholastic Offence Policy in the Western Academic Calendar).

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (http://www.turnitin.com).

Students are expected to retain all research notes, rough drafts, essay outlines, and other materials used in preparing assignments. In the unlikely event of concerns being raised about the authenticity of any assignment, your instructor may ask you to produce these materials; an inability to do so may weigh heavily against you.

The following rules pertain to the acknowledgements necessary in academic papers.

A. In using another writer's words, you must both place the words in quotation marks and acknowledge that the words are those of another writer.

You are plagiarizing if you use a sequence of words, a sentence or a paragraph taken from other writers without acknowledging them to be theirs. Acknowledgement is indicated either by (1) mentioning the author and work from which the words are borrowed in the text of your paper; or by (2) placing a footnote number at the end of the quotation in your text, and including a correspondingly numbered footnote at the bottom of the page (or in a separate reference section at the end of your essay). This footnote should indicate author, title of the work, place and date of publication and page number. Method (2) given above is usually preferable for academic essays because it provides the reader with more information about your sources and leaves your text uncluttered with parenthetical and tangential references. In either case words taken from another author must be enclosed in quotation marks or set off from your text by single spacing and indentation in such a way that they cannot be mistaken for your own words. Note that you cannot avoid indicating quotation simply by changing a word or phrase in a sentence or paragraph which is not your own.

B. In adopting other writer's ideas, you must acknowledge that they are theirs.

You are plagiarizing if you adopt, summarize, or paraphrase other writers' trains of argument, ideas or sequences of ideas without acknowledging their authorship according to the method of acknowledgement given in 'A' above. Since the words are your own, they need not be enclosed in quotation marks. Be certain, however, that the words you use are entirely your own; where you must use words or phrases from your source; these should be enclosed in quotation marks, as in 'A' above.

Clearly, it is possible for you to formulate arguments or ideas independently of another writer who has expounded the same ideas, and whom you have not read. Where you got your ideas is the important consideration here. Do not be afraid to present an argument or idea without acknowledgement to another
writer, if you have arrived at it entirely independently. Acknowledge it if you have derived it from a source outside your own thinking on the subject.

In short, use of acknowledgements and, when necessary, quotation marks is necessary to distinguish clearly between what is yours and what is not. Since the rules have been explained to you, if you fail to make this distinction, your instructor very likely will do so for you, and they will be forced to regard your omission as intentional literary theft. Plagiarism is a serious offence which may result in a student's receiving an 'F' in a course or, in extreme cases, in their suspension from the University.

**Scholastic Offences**

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following web site:

[www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf)

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**Support Services**

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western, [http://uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/](http://uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Please contact the course instructor if you require material in an alternate format or if you require any other arrangements to make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at 661-2111 x 82147 for any specific question regarding an accommodation.

If you have any further questions or concerns please contact, Heidi Van Galen, Administrative Officer, Department of History, 519-661-2111 x84963 or e-mail vangalen@uwo.ca.