HISTORY [4607G]
[History of Women and Gender Relations in Africa]
Fall/Winter 2022-23
[Winter 2023 Mondays 1:30-4:30 SH3355]
[Course delivery: In-person]

Instructor: [Professor Katherine McKenna]
Office Hours: [TBA]
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This is a draft syllabus. Please see your course OWL site for the final syllabus.

Course delivery with respect to the COVID-19 pandemic
The intent is for this course to be delivered in-person but should the COVID-19 landscape shift, the course will be delivered on-line synchronously (ie., on Zoom at the times indicated in the timetable) / asynchronously (eg., posted on OWL for students to view at their convenience) [delete as necessary]. The grading scheme will not change. The course will return to an in-person mode of delivery when the University and local health authorities deem it safe to do so.

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.]

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 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):
[GSWS 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 materials will be posted in Resources on the course website in OWL]

Methods of Evaluation:

[Students must attend and participate in all the seminars unless the professor has given them permission to be absent.

Students must submit all course assignments in order to pass the course, unless there are extenuating circumstances that the professor approves.

[This course will be conducted as a seminar. Readings will be assigned every week and students will be expected to come to class prepared to discuss them. The 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 the course reading for one class which will briefly summarize the reading for that week and raise questions for discussion. The following week, they will be required to submit a paper based on all the reading for the class (approximately 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 advised to discuss this with the professor before the essay proposal is due in week 8 of the course in order to ensure their topic is acceptable. The proposal 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.

Students who miss deadlines for illness or another reason for must speak to the professor to negotiate late submission. Students who miss more than 10% of assignment grades should consult with their Faculty for an accommodation and refer to the university Policy on Accommodation for Illness.
Mark Breakdown:

Class Participation 25%
Class Presentation 10%
Class Reading Essay 20%
Research Essay Proposal 15%
Research Essay 30%
Total 100%

Course Schedule and Readings:
[Subject to revision by January 2023.]

1. January 9 Introduction

Reading:

Video: Umoja: No Men Allowed

Background Reading:

Pre-Colonial History:

2. January 16 Pre-history: Gender Roles and Matriarchy

Reading:


### 3. January 23 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. January 30 Women of Power: Queens, Queen Mothers and Female Warriors

**Reading:**


### 5. February 6 Women’s Economic Roles and Contributions to the Family Economy

**Reading:**


Challenges to Women’s Traditional Roles:

6. February 13 Women and Slavery

Reading:


February 20 Reading Week

7. February 27 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. March 6 Women’s Resistance to Colonialism: Rebellion and the 1929 “Women’s War” in Nigeria

Essay Proposals Due

Reading:


9. March 13 Colonialism, Migration and Economic Change

Reading:


The Post-Colonial Era:

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

Reading:


11. March 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. April 3 Women’s Activism and Struggles for Peace in Africa: The Case of Liberia

Reading:


Video: Pray the Devil Back to Hell

Final Essay Due ]

Additional Statements:
Please review the Department of History Course Must-Knows document, https://www.history.uwo.ca/undergraduate/Docs/Department%20of%20History%20Course%20Must-Knows.pdf for additional information regarding:

- Academic Offences
- Accessibility Options
- Medical Issues
- Plagiarism
- Scholastic Offences
- Copyright
- Health and Wellness