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CL MS 651 Women in Ministry

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The purpose of this course is to acquaint students with matters relating to women in the ordained and lay ministries of the church. Consideration is given to both the impact of the Church on women, and the impact of women on the Church, from biblical times to the present. The course is interdisciplinary in its structure, investigating the topic of women in ministry from biblical, historical, theological, psychological, sociological, anthropological, and pastoral perspectives.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

Students who complete the course with basic competency will:

1. Use the Wesleyan quadrilateral to work through their questions on, and develop their theology of women and ministry.
2. Explore biblical perspectives on women in ministry, examine, and evaluate the varying views based on different hermeneutical approaches to biblical passages seen as relating to women in ministry.
3. Examine research findings on the developmental patterns and ways of knowing for both women and men and discover the significant contribution women as well as men have to offer in ministry.
4. Grow in knowledge of the contributions women have made to the Church throughout history.
5. Reflect on the impact of women on their personal lives and spiritual growth.
6. Gain insights into the experiences of contemporary women in the Church and develop skills to meet the challenges of being a woman in ministry, supporting women ministers, and affirming the ministry of all women in the Church.

**ASSIGNMENTS**

**Reading**

*Equal to the Task: Men and Women in Partnership*, Ruth Haley Barton
*Women in the Church: A Biblical Theology of Women in Ministry*, Stanley J. Grenz with Denise Muir Kjesbo
*Not Without a Struggle: Leadership Development for African American Women in Ministry*, Vashti M. McKenzie
"Learning from Gender Differences" by Catherine Stonehouse. Or, if you have read the Stonehouse article for another course, review it and read two chapters from *You Just Don't Understand: Women and Men in Conversation*, Deborah Tannen. (Continued)
An additional 200 pages, including reading on:
   The ministry of women throughout history
   God language.

**Reading Reports**

Submit a card indicating the completion of reading in each assigned book. The final grade will be reduced by .25 or .50 for each reading assignment not completed.

Reading cards are due as follows:
   October 8 – Clouse
   October 22 - Storkey
   October 29 - Stonehouse or Tannen
   November 16 - Barton
   November 26 – Grenz
   December 3 - McKenzie
   December 10 – Additional 200 pages: submit a list of the books read, number of pages in each, and total pages read.

**Class Attendance**

Regular class attendance is expected. If absence is unavoidable, discuss with the professor how the class session can be made up.

**Church Visit**

With class members, visit a church pastored by a woman.

**Journaling**

Twice during the semester, spend a minimum of 30 minutes reflecting on your experiences as a woman or with women in the church and the impact of women on your formation. Journal the insights that come from your reflections.
Some possible reflection questions:
   **First Journaling Session**
   Who have been the most important women in my life?
   How did they impact me?
   At points in my life where I have been most at risk, who, by God's grace, was there for me?
   Was there a woman?
   What experiences have I had with women in ministry?
   Has the limited number of women in ministry models impacted me?
   How has the way in which women have been treated in the churches I have attended affected my attitudes and me?
   What have been the important influences and events along my path to ministry? What has helped or hindered?

   **Due: September 24**
   **Second Journaling Session**
What insights or concepts from the course have been most helpful? Why?
With which aspects of the course materials have I struggled most? Why?

**Due: November 12**

**Cooperative Learning Project**

Form a cooperative learning group of 3 or 4 persons and identify times available for the group to meet, beginning the end of September.

Groups will meet for a minimum of 4 hours. Together review the insights and concepts from course readings and class presentations. Who needs to hear the concepts you see as most important? How could these concepts be communicated with a particular group? Develop a creative presenting of the concepts. Presentations are to be brief, and will be shared with the class.

**Grading Criteria**

- Significance of concepts and clarity of presentation
- Creativity and effectiveness of presentation

**Due: December 10**

**Interview and Report**

Interview a woman in ministry. Complete a significant portion of the required reading before conduction the interview. Decide on the questions to ask in the interview based in part on questions raised by your reading. In a 3-4-page paper give an abstract of the interview, then compare and contrast your story with that of the interviewee. What questions do your stories raise? What actions are suggested for you out of those reflections? Include responses to these questions in your paper.

**Grading Criteria**

- Understanding of the woman’s call to ministry and the gifts she brings to ministry
- Grasp of the challenges the woman faces in ministry
- Insightfulness of questions identified
- Significance of actions suggested

**Due November 12**

**A Ten Page Paper**

Research and write a ten page paper on a subject related to the content of this course and to your particular interests or needs for learning. Possible topics for the paper are listed below. **Choose just one.** Whichever focus you choose, integrate into the paper the witness of scripture, church history, contemporary research, and experience, as you discuss some aspect of women in the ordained, professional lay, or volunteer lay ministries of the church. Document your paper including endnotes and bibliography.

**A Theology of Women in Ministry** – further explore your theology of women in ministry and articulate it in the paper. You may want to prepare the paper so that it could be of help to others in your area of the church who are struggling with the issue of women in ministry.

**A Workshop on Women in Ministry** – develop a workshop which you could present to pastors, church leaders, college students, or a women’s group which would allow them to discover some of the insights from this course which you believe the selected audience needs
to discover. This project requires creative ways of teaching the material and engaging participants in the subject matter.

**A Biography with Reflective Commentary** – research the life of a woman and her ministry. Provide commentary on her life and ministry in the light of the content of this course.

**A Study of Women in Ministry in Your Denomination** – study the history or the present status of women in ministry in your denomination. Write up your findings, analyzing them in the light of the course.

**A Topic of your Choice** – Discuss with the professor other ideas you might have.

**Grading Criteria**
- Clarity in articulating significant issues relating to women in ministry
- Quality of the biblical support for positions taken in the paper
- Significance of integration with history and an understanding of women’s development
- Insightfulness of the paper

**Due: December 10**

**GRADING**

The assignments will contribute to the grade as follows:
- Interview – 25%
- Cooperative Learning Project – 25%
- Paper – 50%

All material is to be typed, double-spaced and written in inclusive language.
Provide documentation when drawing ideas from other sources.
Type SPO number on the front of all papers.

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

**Women in Church History**

September 10 – Introduction
  - Sharing our stories
September 17 – Women in Church History
  - **Reading:** Grenz: pp. 7 – 62
  - McKenzie: pp. 1 - 40
  - Additional reading on women in church history

**The Bible on Women in Ministry**

September 24 – Women in the Old Testament
  - **Reading:** Grenz pp. 63 – 71, 142 – 172
  - Clouse pp. 9 - 52
October 1 – Jesus and Women
  - **Reading:** Grenz pp. 71 – 97
October 8 – Women in the New Testament Church
  - **Reading:** Grenz pp. 98 – 141
October 15 – Yentel
October 22 – Feminist Theology  
**Reading:** Storkey  
God language articles

### Contributions Women Bring to Ministry

October 29 – Women's Ways of Knowing and Valuing  
**Reading:** Stonehouse or Tannen  
November 5 – Male and Female Serving Side by Side  
**Reading:** Barton pp. 13 - 151  
Grenz pp. 173 – 198

### The Woman's Real World of Ministry

November 12 – The Issue of Ordination  
**Reading:** Grenz pp. 199 – 233  
November 26 – Women Experiencing Ministry  
**Reading:** Barton pp. 152 - 213  
Grenz pp. 199 – 233  
December 3 – Ministry Challenges  
**Reading:** McKenzie 55 - 120  
December 10 – Wrap Up  
**Reading:** All additional reading due