Scholars and activists frequently claim that the current status of women in Latin America stems from a colonial legacy of gender oppression. And yet, the status of women has changed substantially, not always for the better, since the colonial period. This course examines the sources, methodologies, and theoretical approaches that shape the history of women in early Latin America. A variety of interdisciplinary approaches and concerns are considered from an historical perspective. The readings represent ethnic, racial, and class-based distinctions among women and emphasize the importance of using diverse approaches in the reconstruction of women’s history and culture, particularly for indigenous and African women. The course finishes with an analysis of how female figures from the colonial period, such as La Malinche and the Virgin of Guadalupe, have been incorporated into modern political agendas by intellectuals and political activists. Students will read, analyze, and discuss both primary and secondary sources to understand how history is conceived and written.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING**

1. **Reading.** Each week’s assigned readings should be completed at the beginning of the week.

2. **Participation.** Learning is an interactive process and I strongly encourage students to participate in lecture meetings by providing comments and questions based on readings or previous lectures. Class time will be regularly devoted to discussion. Student participation in those discussions, in addition to regular attendance, is the basis for the participation portion of the grade. (10%)

3. **Written Assignments.** Students are asked to write two interconnected papers for the course. Each paper is worth 20% of the final grade. Suggested topics and guidelines for these assignments will be distributed in class.

   **Paper #1:** In this first assignment students will choose a topic that relates to our course and write a short (4-5 pages) analysis of two articles from different journals.
Paper #2: In this assignment students will write a research paper of 6-8 pages based on information from the first assignment, one book, and at least one primary source.

4. Exams. There will be a Latin American geography quiz the second week of the semester worth 5% of the final grade. The course will have a mid-semester exam, worth 20% of the final grade, and a final exam, worth 25% of the final grade. Exams must be in my hand or email in-box by 5pm the day they are due. Late exams will be penalized.

OTHER COURSE POLICIES

Please Note: If any special accommodations are needed to complete the course requirements, please come see me at the beginning of the semester.

Absences: Multiple absences will be noted and will affect the student’s participation grade.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism occurs when someone knowingly or unknowingly presents another person’s words or ideas as his or her own. Any work turned in for this class must meet University standards for academic honesty. Any students unsure about how to apply these rules are urged to consult with me prior to turning in any written work.

Deadlines: Assignments that are due in class must be turned in at the start of class. If you anticipate problems, please contact me before the assignment is due, not after!

Office Hours: Students are strongly encouraged to speak with me outside of class. I am available during office hours on a first-come, first-served basis. If you cannot come during office hours, please contact me via email or phone to schedule an appointment.

REQUIRED READINGS
The following books have been ordered for your purchase:


All other readings for this course are on reserve.
SCHEDULE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

Week #1  Women and Gender
8/23  Introduction to the Course
8/25  The Study of Women in History
READ:  Reserve Week 1
2. Handout on the use of primary and secondary sources.

Week #2  Spanish Gender Norms
8/28  Marriage, Family Structure
8/30  Cross-Cultural Comparison of Gender Norms
9/1  Map Quiz, Discussion
READ:

Week #3  Spanish Women
9/4  Legal System: Property and Crime
9/6  Women as Economic Agents
9/8  Discussion
READ:
2. Reserve Week 3
2. Primary Documents:

Week #4  Indigenous Women in the Andes
9/11  Gender and Class in Peru
9/13  Andean Women in the Documentary Record
9/15  Discussion
READ:
2. Reserve Week 4

4. Primary Sources. Selections from:

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**Week #5**  
**Introduction to Mesoamerica**

*9/18*  
Movie: *Five Suns: A Sacred History of Mexico*

*9/20*  
Finish Movie, Preconquest Nahua Society

*9/22*  
Discussion

**READ:**


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**Week #6**  
**Indigenous Women in Mesoamerica**

*9/25*  
Indigenous Societies and Gender in Mesoamerica

*9/27*  
Nahua Women in the Documentary Record

*9/29*  
Discussion

**READ:**


**Reserve Week 6**

2. Primary selections from:
   a) “Nahuatl Speeches and Dialogues”: Selections from the “Tetzcoco Dialogues” and the Florintine Codex, Book VI.
   b) “Mesoamericans.” A selection of indigenous language documents.

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**Week #7**  
**African Women**

*10/2*  
African Societies

*10/4*  
African Women in America

*10/6*  
Discussion; **Paper #1 DUE.**

**READ:**


Week #8   Review and Exam
10/9   Review
10/11  No class; take home due by 5pm.
10/13  Fall Break.

Week #9   Sexuality and Society
10/16  Sexuality and social control
10/18  Honor, shame, and the slightly sullied
10/20  Discussion
READ:   Reserve Week 9
4. Primary sources from Boyer, ed., Colonial Lives:
   a) “Catarina María Complains that Juan Teioa Forcibly Deflowered Her”
   b) “Dn Manuel Valdiviesos y Carrión Protests the Marriage of His Daughter to Dn Teodoro Jaramillo, A Person of Lower Social Standing.”
   c) “Scandal at the Church: José de Alfaro Accuses Doña Theresa Bravo and Others of Insulting and Beating His Castiza Wife, Josefa Cadena.”
   d) “Wife of my Soul and Heart, and All My Solace”: Annulment Suit Between Diego Andrés de Arenas and Ysabel Allay Suyo.

Week #10   Witchcraft and Women’s Culture
10/23  Delusion, Fraud, or Diabolic Inspiration
10/25  Under the Spell of Women
10/27  Discussion
READ:   Reserve Week 10
4. Primary Documents:
   a) Selections from Guaman Poma.
**Week #11  Women and the Church**  
10/30  Convents: Only a Few Good Women…  
11/1  An Intellectual: Sor Juana  
11/3  Discussion  
**READ:** Reserve Week 11  
3. Primary Documents:  
   b) Selected poetry by Sor Juana.

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**Week #12  Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz**  
Movie: “I the Worst of All.”  
**READ:** Reserve Week 12  

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**Week #13  The Fringes of Sainthood**  
11/13  Mystical Nuns  
11/15  Beatas and Recogidas  
11/17  Discussion  
**READ:** Reserve Week 13  
4. Primary Documents:  
   a) Selections from the Autobiography of Sor María de San José  

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**Week #14  The “Virgins” Maria**  
11/20  The Multiplicity of Mary  
11/22  The Virgin of Guadalupe; Paper #2 DUE.  
**READ:** Reserve Week 14

Week #15  The Malinche Controversy: Gender, Politics, Identity
11/27 History in the Making: Doña Marina and the Conquest of Mexico
11/29 “Damn! How it hurts to be Malinche!” The burden of the present on history.
12/1 Discussion
READ:
Reserve Week 15

Week #16  Exam
12/4 Take-home Final Due by 5pm.