Women, Religions and Politics in the Latin American and Caribbean History
REL 4064 & RLG 5388 (Hybrid Course)

Semester: Fall, 2017
Room: OE100
Days: Mondays
Times: 1 pm – 3:15 pm

Professor: Dr. Ana María Bidegain
Office: DM 305B
E-mail: bidegain@fiu.edu
Office Hours: By appointment

INTRODUCTION

This course focuses on women’s religious experience, in connection with their social and political practices within their historic and geographic contexts: Latin America and the Caribbean. It analyzes religious history, considering the marginalizing narratives that render women’s contributions invisible, a reflection of colonialism and dominance based on socioeconomic status, race and gender, inherent in religious discourse and practices. The course analyzes how, historically, religions have provided rich resources for liberation and resistance to counter oppression, as well as means for the legitimation of power and domination. It discusses and posits theoretical and methodological tools for an alternative reading: moving away from top-down perspectives, to perspectives grounded on lived experiences. It recasts events and narratives in which women have played significant, central roles fashioning their religions, rather than being passive, subjugated members. It examines both the production of women’s religious discourse and the production of religious discourse on women that justifies and promotes their invisibility, legitimizing women’s sociocultural disadvantaged status and political underrepresentation.

JUSTIFICATION

Until the 1970s, women’s presence and visibility in history, as well as their political practices, have been resolutely dismissed, particularly in recorded religious history and associated narratives. This course fills this gap; aiding students with tools and concepts to better understand how Latin American and Caribbean women have been instrumental in actively shaping the religious and political contemporary landscape.

GOALS & STUDENT OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of this course, students can expect:

1) To have a nuanced and critical understanding of the religious experience of Latin American and Caribbean women, by examining female-centered perspectives of gender, class and ethnicity.
2) To understand and articulate the interplay of religion, politics and economics in the gendered societies of Latin America.

3) To comprehend, from a critical gender perspective, the important roles played by the Christian churches in the colonization and acculturation processes of the southern regions of the world, and in the development of globalization.

**COURSE STRUCTURE & REQUIREMENTS**

This is a hybrid course that promotes an active approach to learning. The class physically meets only once a week. However, students are expected to intensively engage course work online through Blackboard.

The professor will: Introduce the material in person at the beginning of each learning unit; teach and steer learning activities through the discussion board; share PPPs to complete the information required for each unit; and provide guide and support toward the development of the final research paper throughout the semester.

Students must: Complete the required readings; listen to and understand the PPPs through Blackboard; biweekly present their comments and viewpoints through the discussion board; prepare and post a video on the selected topic (the list of suggested topics will be provided by the professor); formally present a term paper research proposal; formally present a literature review toward the term paper; write a final research paper on one aspect of the material covered in class, according to a list given by the professor.

The final research paper can be written in either English or Spanish. It will consist of a 15 page, double-spaced essay in Times New Roman 12 font. References and citations are expected, in a recognized format (MLA, Chicago, APA, etc.) and consistent throughout the text.

The required readings will be in English; however, those students with enough Spanish or Portuguese language skills could read and include bibliography available in those languages.

The final grade will be determined by a total of points scored throughout the semester. These points will be converted into percentages [that is, points scored by student/total number of points [200] x 100]. Please keep printed copies of all assignments and graded material. If you cannot produce your class material in a grade dispute, the grade recorded in the instructor's grade book will take precedence. Students are responsible for keeping up with the schedule of required readings and for all the Blackboard assignments.

Students are expected to check the Announcement and Assignment sections of Blackboard at least every other day. Students who take this course are expected to
have the skills necessary to complete all assignments. Essay assignments must be posted in the Assignment drop box, not directly to the professor’s email as attachments. Otherwise, they will not be graded.

If you have computer technology questions during the semester, you should contact the FIU Computer Help Desk.

Note: The professor reserves the right to alter this syllabus if and whenever necessary.

**BREAKDOWN**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>40%</td>
<td>Participation in discussion board 5% each unit (8 x 5%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Video Presentation</td>
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<tr>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Comments on the videos 2% (8x2)</td>
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<tr>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Research proposal Presentation (Sep. 2)</td>
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<tr>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Literature review Presentation (Oct. 29)</td>
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<td>15%</td>
<td>Final Research Paper (Dec.2)</td>
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<td>100%</td>
<td>Total</td>
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**GRADING CRITERIA AND RANGE**

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<th>GRADE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A/A-</td>
<td>Outstanding or exceptional in terms of content (grasp of concepts, depth of analysis and comprehension) and expression.</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+/B</td>
<td>Above average to very good.</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-/C+</td>
<td>Good to above average.</td>
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<tr>
<td>C/C-</td>
<td>Achieving minimum standards.</td>
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<tr>
<td>D+/D</td>
<td>Passing, but barely meeting minimum standards.</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Not meeting minimum or acceptable standards.</td>
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Note: This course may fulfill the critical inquiry requirement of the FIU core curriculum if the student earns a grade of “C” or higher. A “C-” or lower grade will not satisfy the critical inquiry requirement.

**GRADE RANGE**

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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>94-100</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-81</td>
<td>D+</td>
<td>68-69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-93</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>78-79</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>63-67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>88-89</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>73-77</td>
<td>D-</td>
<td>60-62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83-87</td>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-72</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>0-59</td>
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ADDITIONAL HYBRID COURSE STANDARDS

This is a hybrid course. A major part of the course work will be conducted online, although the class will also meet physically every week, seven times throughout the semester. Expectations for performance in this hybrid courses are the same as for online courses. This course format requires degrees of self-motivation, self-discipline, and technology skills that can make it more demanding for some students. You must be very active on the discussion board each week.

All students are expected to interact both online and in person with the professor and fellow students, to complete assignments, to meet deadlines, and to develop and present a research paper. In the course content portion of Blackboard, power-point notes on some of the topics are posted. Also, some required readings are posted in this portion of Blackboard. Power points are not substitutes for readings. The readings and the Power Points are mutually complementing. Students need to be familiar with the materials from both sources if they expect to do well in this course and contribute to the weekly discussion board.

TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF THIS COURSE

Regular attendance is very important for the success and enjoyment of this course. Staying on schedule with reading assignments is also key to achieve its academic goals. Finally, it is essential that students contribute through their active participation on the discussion board, as well as during the in person seminar meetings.

INTELLECTUAL AND ACADEMIC CONDUCT

As members of the academic community, students are expected to recognize and uphold high standards of intellectual and academy integrity. Plagiarism is presenting another person’s work as one’s own. Plagiarism includes submitting another student’s work as one’s own.

REQUIRED READINGS


Additional bibliography and suggested readings will be posted on Blackboard.
RECOMMENDED FURTHER READING


SCHEDULE

UNIT 1 – Concepts and Seminar Foundations

Week 1 (Aug. 21-26) and Week 2 (Aug. 28 – Sept. 2)

Subject: Gender, Class and Race: Necessary Categories to Understand the Latin American and Caribbean Women’s Hidden History.

Goals: Understanding the meaning and interplay of genders, social classes, race, ethnicity with religion throughout the Latin American and Caribbean History.

Activities and Tasks

1) Meeting in person: Monday, August 21, Room OE100, 1:00 pm – 3:15 pm.

2) Online Tasks
   • Post personal Introduction video.
   • Review PPP presentation on Blackboard.
   • Participate and respond questions through the discussion board.
• Select research topic and seminar presentation from the list proposed by the professor.

3) Research Tasks

• Preparing First Paper – Selecting research topic from the list proposed (2-3 pages) Due on Sept. 2.

READINGS


Miller text, Chapter 1, pp. 1-14.

Unit 2 – Women at the Center of Popular Religions’ Roots and at the Margins of the Imposed New Religion

Week 3 (Sept. 4-9) and Week 4 (Sept. 11-16)

Subject: Women under Colonial Rule
2) Women Resisting Slavery through Religions: Voodoo, Santería, Candomblé.
4) Special Case Study: Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz.

Goals: Understanding 1) how gender, race, ethnicity and social classes were interweaved in the colonial cast system; 2) the importance of “hidden subjects,” such as women, in the history of religions.
Activities and Tasks

1) **Meeting in person:** Monday, September 4, Room OE100, 1:00 pm – 3:15 pm

2) **On-line Tasks**
   - Review and analyze PPP presentation on Blackboard.
   - Participate and respond questions through the discussion board.
   - Selected student’s video presentation. **Due on Sept. 8.**
   - Comment on the student’s video presentation. **Due on Sept. 14.**

READINGS

Navarro text, Part I, pp. 5-57.


Miller text, Chapter 2, pp. 14-34.

Unit 3 – Women Facing the Crises of the Catholic Church under Liberal States since the Independence

Week 5 (Sep. 18-23) and Week 6 (Sep. 25-30)

Subjects: Women’s Participation in a Major Historical Transition
1) Women’s Participation Breaking Colonial Ties.
2) Women Facing the Crises of the Catholic Church under Liberal States since the Independence.
3) Women Start Requesting Political and Civil Rights.
4) Special Case Studies: Policarpa Salavarrieta (La Pola) (1793- 1817) and Soledad Acosta de Samper (1833-1913).

Goal: Understanding how women have confronted political and religious situation without political and civil rights.

Activities and Tasks

1) Meeting in person: Monday, September 18, Room OE100, 1:00 pm – 3:15 pm

2) Online Tasks
   • Review and analyze PPP on Blackboard.
   • Participate and respond questions through the discussion board.
   • Selected student’s video presentation. Due on Sept. 22.
   • Comment on the student's video presentation. Due on Sept. 29.

READINGS

Navarro text, Part II, pp. 59-106.


Unit 4 – The Role of Women and Religions Building Nation-States in the 19th Century

Week 7 (Oct. 2-7) and Week 8 (Oct. 16-21)

Subjects: Women Searching for Modernization
1) Religions and Modernization.
2) Women’s Education and Social Justice.
3) Protestant Women’s Leadership and Migration to South America.
4) Case Study: Ana Armand Ugón de Tron

Goals: Understanding women’s search for civil and political rights and social justice.

Activities and Tasks

1) Meeting in person: Monday, October 2, Room OE100, 1:00 pm – 3:15 pm

2) Online Tasks
   - Review and analyze PPP on Blackboard.
   - Participate and respond questions through the discussion board.
   - Selected student’s video presentation. Due on Oct. 6.
   - Comment on the student’s video presentation. Due on Oct. 12.

READINGS


Miller text, Chapter 3, pp. 35-67 and Chapter 4, pp. 68-109.

Unit 5 – Migration and Religion // RESEARCH WEEK

Week 9 (Oct. 16-20) and Week 10 – RESEARCH WEEK (Oct. 23-28)

Subject: Jewish and Muslin Women in Latin America Research Week

Goals: 1) Understanding Religious Diversity in Latin America and the Caribbean. 2) Developing a literature review on the topic selected for the research paper.

Activities and Tasks

1) No meeting in person this week – RESEARCH WEEK

2) Online Tasks
   - Review and analyze PPP on Blackboard.
   - Participate and respond questions through the discussion board.
   - Selected student’s video presentation. Due on Oct. 20.
   - Comment on the student’s video presentation. Due on Oct. 26.

SECOND PAPER: Literature review and sources on the selected topic. DUE: Oct. 29.


Week 11 (Oct. 30 – Nov. 4) and Week 12 (Nov. 6-11)

Subjects: Catholic Women Organizations and the Transit to Political Participation.
1) Latin American women in search of civil and political rights and social justice.
2) Case study: Brazil “La liga electoral católica.”
3) From Catholic Action students’ organization to political participation.
4) Case study: Solange Silvany.

Goals: Analyzing the role of Catholic women organizations in political activities, in two historical moments: Before Latin American women got political rights, such as the case of the Liga electoral; and later as citizens living the experience of personal secularization and political radicalization.

Activities and Tasks

1) Meeting in person: Monday, October 30, Room OE100, 1:00 pm – 3:15 pm.

2) Online Tasks
   - Review and analyze PPP on Blackboard.
   - Participate and respond questions through the discussion board.
   - Selected student’s video presentation. Due on Nov. 3.
   - Comment on the student’s video presentation. Due on Nov. 9.

READINGS

Miller text, Chapter 5, pp. 110-144 and Chapter 6, pp. 145-186.

(https://kellogg.nd.edu/publications/workingpapers/WPS/048.pdf)

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Unit 7 – Women’s Orders and Congregations Face Political Turmoil.

Week 12 (Nov. 13-18) and Week 13 (Nov. 20-25)

SUBJECTS: The Activism of Women Religious
1) Catholic feminine orders and congregations developing social movements through CEBs.
2) Facing political and ecclesiastical repression.

Goals: To understand the role of religious women in the rise of the Latin American welfare states and how later they confronted the states’ crises.
Activities and Tasks

1) Meeting in person: Monday, Nov13th, Room OE100, 1:00PM - 3:15PM

2) Online Tasks
   • Review and analyze PPP on Blackboard.
   • Participate and respond questions through the discussion board.
   • Selected student’s video presentation. Due on Nov. 17.
   • Comment on the student’s video presentation. Due on Nov. 23.

READINGS

Miller text, Chapter 7, pp. 187-237.

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Unit 8 – Women Producing Theology and Leading New Pentecostal Churches.

Week 14 (Nov. 27- Dec. 2) and Week 15 (Dec. 4-9)

Subjects: Latin American Feminist Theology.
2) Ecofeminism.
3) Women religious leaders and political participation.
4) Case studies: Ivone Gebara’s writings and Maria Luisa Piraquive, leader of the MIRA movement.

Goals: Discovering 1) the production of Latin American feminist theologians and 2) the empowerment of women through their religious engagements.

Activities and Tasks

1) Meeting in person: Monday, Nov 27, Room OE100, 1:00 pm – 3:15 pm.

2) Online Tasks
   • Review and analyze PPP on Blackboard.
   • Participate and respond questions through the discussion board.

READINGS

Miller text, Chapter 3, pp. 35-67 and Chapter 4 pp. 68-109.

Drogus, Carol Ann. “Religious Change and Women’s Status in Latin America. A Comparison of Catholic Base Communities and Pentecostal Churches.” Kellogg


FINAL RESEARCH PAPER PRESENTATION DUE DEC. 2

RESEARCH TOPICS LIST