PROPOSAL FOR A JUNIOR-SENIOR CLUSTER COURSE

Please type:

Title of proposed course: Women & Gender in America, Colonial to 1865

When will this course be offered? Nearly every year; in 97-98 it will be offered Fully Winter

Title of cluster: American Studies

Name of cluster proposal coordinator: Sue Tomajan

Please address the following matters in your narrative, keying your text to the corresponding item below:

A. COURSE DESCRIPTION (100 words or less).

B. COURSE DEVELOPMENT. Please indicate whether the course is based on an existing course (and if so, specify), or is a new course in development. If the course is a revision of an existing course, please explain what form the revision will take (this may be addressed under item C).

C. GENERAL EDUCATION GOALS. Please describe how your pedagogical goals for the course promote the goals of General Education as adopted by the Faculty Senate. Please review the relevant sections of the General Education Working Group Report, or the September 16, 1994, report of the General Education Committee (both documents are available in the Office of University Studies, 445 NH). Applicants are reminded that the junior-senior cluster courses are expected to focus on program goals related to Human Experience and to Ethical Issues and Social Responsibility, while continuing to build on Inquiry and Communication program goals. Course instructors should use active learning strategies and challenge students to display increasingly sophisticated research and communication abilities. Examples of strategies for each of the General Education program goals are listed in the General Education Working Group Report and in the General Education Committee report (also, please be advised that faculty development events bearing on these strategies will take place in the Winter and Spring, 1995 terms). Attention should also be given to how this course functions in tandem with other courses in the cluster in working toward curricular integration within the cluster.

D. COURSE OUTLINE. Please provide a detailed outline of the proposed course. This need not be a completed syllabus, but should include an outline of topics, a preliminary reading list, and the name(s) or instructor(s) committed to teaching the course during its first year.
A. COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

HST 340 - Women and Gender in America, Colonial Era to 1865
WS 340

This course explores women's lives and work in America from European contact with the New World through the end of the Civil War. Through primary and secondary material, students will confront the diversity of female experience as well as the ways in which gender shaped the economic, political, and social life of the emerging nation. Possible themes include native women and colonial settlement, Puritan religion, the household economy, the American Revolution, evangelicalism and the rise of the Victorian home, women and the westward movement, slavery and race, gender and industrialization, and the emergence of women's rights.

HST 341 - Women and Gender in America, 1865 to the present
WS 341

Who was a suffragette? A flapper? Rosie the Riveter? What do these images hide as well as reveal about American women's recent past? This course surveys the making of modern American women by focusing on gender, family, work, and political arrangements from 1865 to the present. Students will explore the diversity of women's lives through the ideas and institutions -- both the outstanding and everyday -- forged by women in this period. Themes include missionaries and reform in the Gilded Age, higher education and the professions, women workers and labor organizing, the rise of sexual modernism, gender in the Jim Crow South, postwar domesticity and the "feminine mystique," feminism's roots in the Civil Rights movement, and "second wave" feminism and its discontents.

B. COURSE DEVELOPMENT

These courses were developed and submitted as new courses last year when the History and Women's Studies Departments revised their curricula. They appear for the first time in the current (1996-97) catalog. These courses were added because they filled a void in both the History and Women's Studies curricular offerings and also because, until my recent hire in 1995, no historian on the faculty was specifically trained in the area of American women's history.

C. GENERAL EDUCATION GOALS

Human Experience - the content of these courses is primarily focused on women's historical experiences in America, which recent scholarship has made available. Along with women and gender issues, these courses also deal with race and class. The experiences of African-American, Indian, Asian, and Hispanic women are covered as well as those of women of European descent.
Ethical Issues and Social Responsibility -- Throughout the class we explore the issues of gender and racial discrimination in U.S. history. My hope is to educate students in ethical issues and social responsibility by studying American history as a continuing quest for the realization of the promises upon which this country was founded. The Declaration of Independence and the Constitution contain certain promises such as equality, justice, and freedom for all. By studying the topics of westward expansion and the resulting demise of Native American culture and way of life, slavery and abolition, women’s struggles for political and economic equity, and immigration and labor issues as they involve women of every class and race, I hope to show students how actual historical experience documents the successes and failures of different groups as they strive for fulfillment of these uniquely American promises.

Active Learning Strategies -- These courses combine discussion with lecture and other forms of information presentation. Films and guest speakers supplement the readings and lectures; students are expected to actively participate in discussions and sharing of information with the class.