Course Description:
Sex and gender are inextricably linked together throughout history. Both are cultural constructs that evolve from a power relationship. In studying these aspects of a society we are much better informed about a wide variety of cultural features, from social mores to hierarchical relationships to even political strategies. The medieval era, especially through the exploration of sexual values through the medieval Church, plays a vital role in the construction of modern Western sexual and gendered identities. Thus, a study of the medieval era (covering roughly the years 1000-1500) will help students to form a more precise understanding of modern gender and sexual identities and their origins. This course will ask a number of questions: What did the medieval world think about sex and gender? How were sex and gender defined by medieval rites of passage? What impact did Christian perceptions about sex and gender have on the daily lives of both the laity and the clergy? How were gendered and sexual identities ordered and limited in the medieval world, and what happened when those boundaries were breeched? In order to answer these questions, this class will draw on a wide variety of sources: from law, popular literature, theology, and hagiography to science.

Points of information:

1) This is a seminar course. In general, we will be reading fabulous articles and spending our class time discussing them. PARTICIPATION IS ESSENTIAL.
2) This is a Blackboard course. All discussion questions and Powerpoint presentations will be posted on Blackboard.
3) This course is an advanced Common Curriculum course in the Social Sciences. It also meets the requirements for the Medieval Studies Minor and the Women’s Studies Minor.

Learning Outcomes
a) Students should demonstrate a proficiency and general understanding of gender theory and the ways in which gender and views of sexuality have changed over time and place.
b) Students will show proficiency in the critical reading of texts and in historical writing.
c) Students will be knowledgeable of the principal forces of change and adaptation that have marked medieval Western Europe’s approach to sex and gender.

**Required Readings:**
- All other course readings can be found on Blackboard. The readings for this class can be quite heavy at times – do not get behind! You will not be able to participate in class discussions if you have not done the readings.

**Grade Distribution:**
- Participation: 15%
- Reading Logs: 20%
- Class Presentation: 15%
- Document Analysis: 25%
- Final exam: 25%

**Assignment Descriptions:**

a) **Participation**  
   *Perfect attendance is not sufficient to receive a passing grade.* As a rule of thumb: in a class of twenty-five people, I expect to see active participation in the small groups and everyone should attempt to contribute one comment / insight to the larger group discussion at every class.

b) **Reading Logs**  
   Students will be required to write a response to the article readings (usually the Wednesday and Friday classes) of roughly one page per reading. Do not summarize the readings. Instead, discuss something about the article that raised questions / was particularly interesting / relates to other issues we have discussed in the course. The goal of this assignment is to demonstrate that you have thought critically about the readings before class. If you have to miss class for any reason, please email your reading log to me as a Word attachment the same day as the class. **If you do choose to email in any assignments for this course, it is your responsibility to make sure that I receive your work.**

c) **Class Presentation**  
   Students will work either individually or in pairs to do a 20 minute presentation on a primary source. Because others in the class will not have read that source, a good summary of the source is expected. Then, students should proceed to an analysis of what the source can tell us about attitudes towards sex and gender in this period. Presentations will be interspersed throughout the semester and will relate to the theme for the week. Presentation sign-up will be the first week of class.
d) **Document Analysis**
This assignment is tied to the class presentation. You are expected to take the primary source you were assigned, read it, research it, and think critically about it. **Put it in context of the era,** gain a better understanding of why it was written, who it was written for, and what kind of reception it had (did it have a big impact on lots of people? Was it translated in many languages so that it had a European-wide impact?). Then, most importantly, focus on how this document can give us a better understanding of medieval values about sex and/or gender.

This paper should be approximately 10 to 12 pages (of double-spaced text, 12 point font, regular margins) and it should include footnotes and a works cited. At least six scholarly books or articles should appear in the essay’s works cited, of which two must be journal articles (articles assigned in this class do not fulfil this requirement).

With the exception of encyclopedias specific to the period (such as, *The Dictionary of the Middle Ages,* or *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*), I do not want to see encyclopedias listed as references in your works cited. The same applies to internet sources. Most internet sources are unreliable; at best, they are the equivalent of encyclopedia entries. Unless you have come across a really useful site, written by a qualified historian, do not include this as a source in your paper.

**Research Tools:**
There are a number of useful indexes and bibliographies to help you find articles or books for your field of research. Here are some that you may find particularly useful:

1) The *International Medieval Bibliography.* This on-line index is the most comprehensive bibliography for medieval studies in existence. Available through Monroe Library at [http://www.brepolis.net/](http://www.brepolis.net/)

2) *Feminae: Medieval Women and Gender Index.* This on-line index is searchable by author, title and subject. It is particularly useful for any works that have been published since the early 1990s. [http://www.haverford.edu/library/reference/mschaus/mfi/mfi.html](http://www.haverford.edu/library/reference/mschaus/mfi/mfi.html)

3) The *Royal Historical Societies Bibliography.* This on-line index includes all works (articles and books) relating to the history of Britain and Ireland. It is searchable by author, title, subject and keyword. [http://www.rhs.ac.uk/bibwel.html](http://www.rhs.ac.uk/bibwel.html)

d) **Take-home Examination**
The final exam will be one essay question. You will be given the question in advance. Please allow me to note: knowing the question does not make this an easy exam. Because you know the question in advance, I expect a thoughtful response.

**Attendance Policy**
1. Attendance will be taken orally at the beginning of every class – if you are not present when attendance is taken, you will be considered absent.
2. Each student is permitted to miss class three times without explanation. After that, the student’s grade will be adjusted by 2 percent for each missed class.
3. I cannot, in good conscience, give a passing grade for the course to a student who has missed more than 12 classes, regardless of how well that student has done on
class assignments. This rule will apply also in medical circumstances. This is not
distance learning. Please keep this in mind and track your absences.

Extensions and Late Work Policy
If you need an extension, please ask for one in advance (“in advance” means at least 2
full days before it is due). Late papers will be penalized a full letter grade per day. For
example, if your paper would have received an “A” on the deadline, the next day it will
receive a “B.”

Grading Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage Range</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90-100</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>85-89</td>
<td>Very good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>80-84</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>75-79</td>
<td>Very satisfactory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70-74</td>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>65-69</td>
<td>Minimal pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60-64</td>
<td>Minimal pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>below 60</td>
<td>Fail</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notice to Students with Disabilities
Students with disabilities who wish to receive accommodations in this class should contact
Disability Services at 865-2990 as soon as possible so that warranted accommodations can
be implemented in a timely fashion. Disability Services are located in the Academic
Enrichment Center, Monroe Hall 405.

Departmental Statement on Plagiarism
“Plagiarism – the use of another person’s ideas or wording without giving proper credit –
results from the failure to document fully and accurately. Ideas and expressions of them
are considered to belong to the individual who first puts them forward. Therefore, when
you incorporate ideas or phrasing from any other author in your paper, whether you quote
them directly or indirectly, you need to be honest and complete about indicating the source
to avoid plagiarism. Whether intentional or unintentional, plagiarism can bring serious
consequences, both academic, in the form of failure or expulsion, and legal, in the form of
lawsuits. Plagiarism is a violation of the ethics of the academic community.”

William G. Campbell, Stephen V. Ballou, and Carole Slade, *Form and

For more information on plagiarism and how to avoid it, go to:
http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/wts/plagiarism.html

Where to Find Help with your Writing
• Writing across the Curriculum, Bobet 100, ext. 2297 -- the WAC workshops are
intended to help you with drafts of your essays. They are extremely helpful, and an
excellent resource for students of all writing levels.
**Student Decorum**
Tardiness, talking out of turn, text-messaging, sleeping, web-surfing, or generally disrupting the class will not be tolerated. Those disrupting the class will be asked to leave. Also, please turn off all cell phones and beepers before entering the classroom.

**Revision of the Syllabus**
I reserve the right to revise this syllabus at any point once this course is in progress. I will inform students of any changes.
Course Schedule:

Medieval Sex and Gender

Spring 2009

Week 1: *Theorizing about Sex and Gender*

Jan. 12: Introduction to the Course
Jan. 14: lecture: “Gender, Sex and Power”
Jan. 16: discussion of Thomas Laqueur, “Of Language and the Flesh”

**Assignment (Jan. 16):**

*** 1) Sign up for a presentation
2) Get an ILLiad account at Monroe Library & order in one of your presentation articles or books

Week 2: *Medieval Approaches to Sex*

Jan. 19: MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR DAY – NO CLASS
Jan. 21: discussion of Ruth Mazo Karras, “Sex and the Middle Ages,” from her *Sexuality in Medieval Europe.*
Jan. 23: discussion of Joan Cadden, “‘Nothing Natural is Shameful: Vestiges of a Debate about Sex and Science in a Group of Late-Medieval Manuscripts”

Week 3: *Becoming Male*

Jan. 26: presentations: Andreas Capellanus, *The Art of Courtly Love*
Jan. 30: discussion of Georges Duby, “Youth in Aristocratic Society: Northwestern France in the twelfth century”

Week 4: *Becoming Female*

Feb. 2: presentations:
   a) *The Goodman of Paris*
   b) *Knight of La Tour-Landry*
Feb. 4: discussion of Felicity Riddy, “Mother Knows Best: Reading Social Change in a Courtesy Text”
Feb. 6: discussion of Sharon Farmer, “Persuasive Voices: Clerical Images of Medieval Wives”
Week 5: Marital Sexuality

Feb. 9: presentations:
   a) Medieval Handbooks of Penance
   b) Ecclesiastical Materials Packet (see Blackboard)


Week 6: Ungendered, or multiple-gendered beings?

Feb. 16: presentations: “The Trial of Arnaud of Verniolle for Heresy and Sodomy”
Feb. 20: Discussion of Miri Rubin, “The Person in the Form: Medieval Challenges to Bodily Order”

Week 7: Document Analysis Work Week!

Feb. 23: MARDI GRAS HOLIDAY – NO CLASS
Feb. 25: Work on your papers – NO CLASS
Feb. 27: Work on your papers – NO CLASS

Week 8: Sex, Gender and Male Religious Orders

Mar. 4: discussion of Jacqueline Murray, “Masculinizing Religious Life: Sexual Prowess, the Battle for Chastity, and Monastic Identity”
Mar. 6: discussion of P.H. Cullum, “Clergy, Masculinity, and Transgression in Late Medieval England”

Week 9: Sex, Gender, Religion and Women

Mar. 9: presentation: Letters of Abelard and Heloise
Mar. 11: discussion of Michael Goodich, “The contours of female piety in later medieval hagiography”
Mar. 13: discussion of Katherine Jansen, “Like a Virgin: The Meaning of the Magdalen for Female Penitents of Later Medieval Italy”

Week 10: God and Passion

Mar. 16: presentation: Richard Rolle’s The Fire of Love
Mar. 18: discussion of Carolyn Diskant Muir, “Bride or Bridegroom? Masculine Identity in Mystic Marriage”
Mar. 20: discussion of Julie B. Miller, “Eroticized violence in medieval women’s mystical literature: a call for a feminist critique”

**Week 11: Gender as Symbol**

Mar. 23: presentation: Julian of Norwich, *Showing of Love*
Mar. 25: discussion of Caroline Walker Bynum, “...And Woman his Humanity’: Female Imagery in the Religious Writing of the Later Middle Ages”
Mar. 27: discussion of Jane Chance, “Gender Subversion and Linguistic Castration in Fifteenth-Century English Translations of Christine de Pizan”

**Week 12: Sex In and Out of Marriage**

                           2) Chaucer, “The Clerk’s Tale”

**Assignment Deadline (Apr. 3):**

- Document Analyses due (whether you have presented or not)

APRIL 6, 8, 10: EASTER HOLIDAYS – NO CLASS

**Week 13: Gender Boundaries**

Apr. 13: EASTER HOLIDAY – NO CLASS
Apr. 15: discussion of Elizabeth Ewan, “The Dangers of Manly Women: Late Medieval Perceptions of Female Heroism in Scotland’s Second War of Independence”
Apr. 17: discussion of Ruth Mazo Karras and David Lorenzo Boyd, “‘Ut cum muliere’: a Male Transvestite Prostitute in Fourteenth-Century London”

**Week 14: Challenging the Gendered Order**

Apr. 20: presentations: *The Interrogation of Joan of Arc*
Apr. 22: discussion of Hans Peter Broedel, “To Preserve the Manly Form from So Vile a Crime: Ecclesiastical Anti-Sodomitic Rhetoric and the Gendering of Witchcraft in the *Malleus Maleficarum*”
**Week 15:  *Sex, Gender and Cultural Contact***

April 27: **discussion** of David Nirenberg, “Conversion, Sex and Segregation: Jews and Christians in Medieval Spain”

Apr. 29: discussion of S.F. Tougher, “Images of Effeminate Men: the Case of Byzantine Eunuchs”

**Final Exam: Wednesday May 6, 9:00 to 11:00 am**
Presentation Materials

NB: Some of these materials will have to be ordered in through ILL (Interlibrary Loan) – so please do not wait until the last minute! Find your materials weeks before you need them!

“Where to start” – this section includes suggestions of GOOD material to get you going on your project. I expect you to locate and read these suggestions. However, this is not ALL you are going to read. This is simply a place to start.

Abelard and Heloise


Where to start:

Andreas Capellanus


Where to start:

Arnold of Verniolle


Where to start:
- Francesca Canade Sautman, “Response: Just like a woman: queer history, womanizing the body, and the boys in Arnaud’s band,” in Glen Burger (ed.), *Queering the Middle Ages* (UP Minn, 2001), pp. 168-89.
Ecclesiastical Authorities

- Ecclesiastical Materials Packet. (BLACKBOARD)

Where to start:


Geoffrey Chaucer


Where to start:


Goodman of Paris


Where to start:

- Kathleen M. Ashley and Robert Clark (eds), *Medieval Conduct (U of Minnesota P, 2001).*

Joan of Arc

Where to start:


Julian of Norwich


Where to start:


Knight of La Tour-Landry

- De La Tour Landry, Geoffrey. The Book of the Knight of La Tour-Landry, compiled for the instruction of his daughters. Early English Text Society, 1868. RESERVE MONROE PR 1119 A2 N033

Where to start:


The Penitentials

(please note: I do not expect you to read ALL of the penitentials – just look through to see what is of use to you in here – but read the introduction so that you understand what penitentials are!)


Where to start:


Peter Damian

Where to start:


Richard Rolle

Where to start:
