

H761/SP761 Women in the Early and Medieval Church

Overall goals

This course aims: 1) to introduce you to the lives of several female pioneers of the early and medieval church, how they creatively overcame the challenges they faced, and a variety of their influential spiritual practices and disciplines - from ascetic withdrawal to pilgrimage, persecution to patronage, and lay piety to mysticism, 2) to encourage you to critically analyze the primary sources and historical context surrounding them, 3) and to inspire your faith and spirituality as you examine this period of breaking gender ideals and share in the memory of these remarkable women.

Reading Requirements

Students should expect to read *at most* 800-850 pages from the required texts below and from additional sources still being selected.

Writing Requirements

Students should expect to write *at most* 22-26 double-spaced pages. This will be comprised of the following:

- a. Two 10-12 page papers, double-spaced (80% total, 40% each paper)
- b. One single page presentation handout (part of class presentation, see below)

Other

In addition to reading, writing and class participation, students also should expect to produce or participate in these graded activities: Class presentation (10%); Oral participation (10%)

Required Texts

Books of Hours, Phaidon Miniature (Phaidon Press: 1996), ISBN: 0714834645

Egeria's Travels, ed. John Wilkinson, 3rd edition, (Aris and Philips: 1999), ISBN: 0856687103

Francis and Clare: The Complete Works, Classics of Western Spirituality (Paulist Press: 1986), ISBN: 0809124467

Handmaids of the Lord: Contemporary descriptions of feminine asceticism in the First Six Christian Centuries, Cistercian Studies Series, No. 143, ed. Joan Petersen, (Cistercian Publications, 1996), ISBN: 0879077433

Hildegard of Bingen, *Scivias*, Classics of Western Spirituality (Paulist Press: 1990), ISBN: 0809131307

Julian of Norwich, *Showings*, Classics of Western Spirituality (Paulist Press: 1977), ISBN: 0809120917