UNIVERSITY OF MANAGEMENT & TECHNOLOGY

**DEPARTMENT OF GENDER STUDIES**

**GS-645 GENDER AND RELIGION: COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVES**

**Capsule statement:**

This course examines the historical and contemporary roles of women and men in different religions of the world. Beginning with the discussion of women’s status in major religions of the world, particularly in Judaism and Christianity and Islam, this course looks at the historical and contemporary understanding of God as a masculine power and critically examines the profound implications of this andocentric concept not only on the religious and spiritual experiences of women but also on the development of the society in general. We will read empirical studies about Muslim women and Islam to assess the complex intersections between traditions, male authority, state power, and women’s vision. This course will critically take an account of Pakistani society where, discriminatory cultural and customary practices are rampant under the cover of religion. Also, rights of minorities in context with religion will also be taken into account.

**Objectives:**

The purpose of this course is to

* Introduce the students to the views of different religions about women and gender
* Help the students how to differentiate between cultural practices and real injunctions of Quran
* Enable students to critically examine the gender roles in world’s major religions

**Contents:**

1. **Introduction to world’s major religions**
   1. Judaism
   2. Christianity
   3. Islam
   4. Hinduism
   5. Buddhism
2. **Eve and Adam: The Story of creation**
3. **Pre-Islamic Middle East: the coming of Islam**
4. **The major themes of the Qur’an**
5. **Women and gender in the Qur’an**
6. **Female Figures in the Qur’an**
7. **Tafsir, Hadith, the Sunnah, Shariah, and the State power**
8. **Islam, gender and patriarchy: Male authority-issuance of Fatawah and the role of the State power**
9. **Women in early Islamic history: the family of the Prophet (PBUH). Mothers of the Believers and the Prophet’s (PBUH) daughters**
10. **Muslim Family life: marriage, divorce, birth control and abortion, and custody of children**
11. **Sexuality in Islam: issues of modesty, virginity, chastity, purity, and ‘family honour’**
12. **Concept of Nishuz: the Law of Obedience**
13. **Women’s economic freedom: property rights, inheritance and gainful employments**
14. **Women and spirituality: women in Sufi literature; women Sufis**
15. **Women interpreting Islam: Islamic feminism?**
16. **Women and political leadership**
17. **Challenges and issues of the present century for Muslim women with special focus to Pakistan**
18. **Gender, minorities and religious norms**
    1. **Concepts of freedom and tolerance**

**Suggested Readings:**

Ahmed, Leila. (1992). *Women and Gender in Islam.* New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press.

Awde, Nicholas. (1998). *Women in Islam: An anthology from the Quran and Hadith*.

London: Curzon Press.

Badawi, Jamal A. (1995). *Gender equity in Islam: basic principles*. Plainfield, Ind: American Trust Publications.

Barlas, Asma. (2002). *“Believing Women” in Islam-Unreading Patriarchal* *Interpretations of the Quran*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Cooke, Miriam. (2001). *Creating Islamic Feminism Through Literature: Women Claim* *Islam.* New York: Routledge.

Firdous, Rehana. (2003). “A Permissible Step for Restraining Man’s Unilateral Right to Divorce: *Talaq-i-tafwid* (Delegation of Power of Divorce)’ in *Pakistan Journal of Women’s Studies,* Vol. 10, No. 1, pp. 73-79.

Firdous, Rehana. (2000). “Woman’s Right of Separation (Khul’): Can she claim it as a matter of Law? In *Pakistan Journal of Women’s Studies,* Vol. 57 No. 1, pp. 1- 20.

Firdous, Rehana. (1998). “Polygamy in slam” in *Pakistan Journal of Women’s* *Studies,* Vol. 5, No. 1 & 2, pp. 1-16.

Hassan, Riffat. 1994. Family Planning and Islam: A Muslim Women’s Perspective. *Pakistan Journal of Women’s Studies,* Vol. 1, No. 2, pp. 25-33.

Maudoodi, Syed Abul ʻAla, and al-Ashʻari. (1972). *Purdah and the status of woman in* *Islam*. Lahore: Islamic Publications.

Mernissi, Fatima. (1996). *Women’s Rebellion & Islamic Memory*. London: Zed Books. Mernissi, Fatima. 1991. *Woman and Islam- An Historical and Theological Enquiry*. Oxford: Blackwell Ltd.

Murshid, Tazeen M. (2005). “ Islam, Shariah Law, and the Role of Women in Muslim Societies: Myths and Perceptions” in *Pakistan Journal of Women’s Studies,* Vol. 12, No. 1, pp. 1-21.

Naseef, Fatima Umar, and Saleha Mahmood Abedin. (1999). *Women in Islam: a discourse in rights and obligations*. New Delhi: Sterling Publishers.

Rahman, Fazlur. (1980). *Major Themes of the Qur’ān*. Minneapolis: Bibliotheca Islamica.

Roald, Anne Sofia. (2001). *Women in Islam-The Western Experience*. London: Routledge.

Schimmel, Annemarie. (1997). *My soul is a woman: the feminine in Islam*. New York: Continuum.

Siddiqi, Mazheruddin. (1981). *Women in Islam*. Delhi: Islamic Book Trust.

Skramstad, Siri Helene. (2006). “Sex and Gender in Maryam Jameelah’s Writings” in *Pakistan Journal of Women’s Studies,* Vol. 13, No. 1, pp. 81-91.

Smith, Jane I. and Haddad, Yvonne Y. (1982). Eve: Islamic Image of Woman. *Woman’s Studies International Forum,* Vol. 5, pp. 135-145.

Spellberg, D. A. (1994). *Politics, gender, and the Islamic past: The Legacy of ʻAʼisha* *bint Abi Bakr*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Badawi, Jamal A. (1980). *The Muslim Woman’s Dress: According to the Qur’an and* *Sunnah*. London, Ta-ha Publishers.

Thurlkill, Mary F. (2007). “Holy Women, Holy Vessels: Mary and Fatima in Medieval Christianity and Shi’ite Islam” in *Pakistan Journal of Women’s Studies,* Vol. 14, No. 2, pp. 27-51.

Wadud, Amina. (1999). *Qur’an and Woman- Rereading the Sacred Texts from a* *Woman’s Perspective*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Wadud, Amina. (1997). Women and Islam: Beyond the Stereotypes. *Pakistan* *Journal of Women’s Studies,* Vol. 4, No. 2, pp. 1-14.