Pilot Course Proposal

Submitted by: **Isabelle Walchenbach** Building: **Hazen High School**

Proposed Course Title: **Medieval Women's History**

Grade Level: **11-12, must have taken World A/B OR AP World OR outside of district equivalent**

Department**: Social Studies**

This course is based off of the course **HSTAM 340 Medieval Women** at the University of Washington, taught by Dr. Charity Urbanski. This course was developed with her permission and collaboration.

This course should be adopted because it meets current needs not met by other courses, specifically its focus on…

- Women and their role in history, which is often ignored or cut for time in other courses
- Social history including gender, power, art, and religion, which is often missing from courses that prioritize economic and political history,
- A small, precise region that allows for deep learning about that region, which is often missing from other courses that focus on 2+ continents in 12 weeks
- An intense focus on writing and primary source analysis

(Women) What makes this potential course addition unique is that it focuses specifically on women, which no other course at Hazen does. History has traditionally been a field dominated by men, whether they are the subjects or documenters of it. This is particularly true about the European Middle Ages. In this way, traditional history has ignored at least half of the world's population. A shift began in the 1960s with the Civil Rights Movement, second wave feminism, and other movements where marginalized peoples fought for their rightful power in society. However, this change has not fully been recognized at the K-12 level.

When I was a high school student, I rarely heard about women as significant historical actors unless they were the wife of a significant person. It was not until I got to college that there were courses in social history- classes that focused on power- who had it, who did not, and why. Students should not have to wait until a 300 level college history course to see women's history as worthy of study. I want to bring this course to Hazen and center this non dominant narrative so that all students can see women as valid historical subjects. This is especially important for women identifying students who likely haven't seen themselves represented significantly in any of their prior courses.

(Social History) Social history at its core is the history of people and power. Though this course will focus on the relationship between gender and power by looking at the gender norms societies expected women to follow, this course also uses intersectionality to examine the lived experience of women. In other words, what other identities do these women have that impact their power and opportunities in society? These additional lenses include socioeconomic status, marital status (single/unmarried, married, widowed), geography (rural vs. urban, north vs. south), religion (Judaism/Islam/Christianity/Norse mythology), Christian religious hierarchy (nun, abbess, lay woman), kinship and family, employment, law, etc. The intersectionality of these lenses support student analysis and understanding of the power and privilege women did or did not have. For example, the wealthy daughter of a Norse Lord will have more power, privilege, and opportunities in a society compared to the daughter of a poor rural farmer who does not have the money to pay for his daughter's dowry nor the money to pay for her to live unmarried as a nun.

Medieval Europe and the Concept of Race

- Structural inequality was present throughout the world at this time, including Europe. These structural inequalities were primarily based on nationality, ethnicity, and religion.
- The way we understand race today is not how race was thought of in Europe at this time. This is best illustrated by these quotes from Geraldine Heng, author of *The Invention of Race in the European Middle Ages* and the most well respected historian studying race in Medieval Europe:
    - "My book The Invention of Race in the European Middle Ages suggests that the exclusion of the medieval period from the history of race issues derives from an understanding of race that has been overly influenced by the era of scientific racism (in the so-called "Age of Enlightenment"), when science was the magisterial arbiter of racial classification. But today, in news media and public life, we see how religion also can function to classify people in absolute and fundamental ways—for instance, Muslims, who hail from a **diversity of ethno-races and national origins, have been talked about as if their religion somehow identified them as one homogenous people."** (emphasis my own)
    - "So tenacious has been scientific racism's account of race, with its entrenchment of high modernist racism as the template of all racism, that it is still routinely understood…that *properly* racial logic and behavior *must* invoke biology and the body as their referent" while race in the European Middle Ages was "*a structural relationship for the articulation and management of human differences, rather than a substantive content*" used to "demarcate human beings through differences among humans that are selectively essentialized as absolute and fundamental, in order to distribute positions and powers differentially to human groups" (Heng, P.19, p. 27, p. 27)
    - While"…racial thinking, racial practices, and racial phenomena…" were present in the European Middle Ages, these are primarily seen in examples where people were differentiated by nationality, ethnicity, and religion (Heng, 2). For example….
        - "Instead of opposing premodern 'prejudice' to modern racisms, we can then see the treatment of medieval Jews—including their legalized murder by the state on the basis of community rumors and lies—as racial acts, which today we might even call hate crimes, of a sanctioned and legalized kind. In this way, we would bear witness to the full meaning of events in the medieval past, and understand that **racial thinking, racial practices, and racial phenomena can occur before there was a vocabulary to name them for what they are**."

To conclude, people in medieval Europe did not use the term "race" like we do today. However, racial thought, practices, and other related phenomena were present. To best see these thoughts, practices, and phenomena in medieval Europe one uses the lenses of religion, nationality, and ethnicity together. By using these three lenses together when analyzing available information and records, we see the same type of information as if we were looking at the 20th century US through the single lens of race.

(Specific region) Additionally, this course dives into a specific region which allows the course to dive deep into topics that would otherwise be missed in a course. For example, World History B focuses on the history of the Americas and Europe from 1450 in ~12 weeks. As a result of the large time period covered as well as the significant area covered, topics such as the Industrial Revolution are taught with a focus on its widespread influence. Though this is important, students do not have the opportunity to dive deep into how the Industrial Revolution impacted a specific field. For instance, how the Industrial Revolution began in the textile industry which was previously a field dominated by women looking for flexible work that could be done in addition to their home responsibilities. As a result of the Industrial Revolution, many women were out of skilled labor employment and over time, began to work as laborers in factories.

This course would cover a much smaller region, specifically Scandinavia and Western Europe including Italy and the Iberian peninsula. The UW course this course is based on did not include Italy and the Iberian Peninsula, but I chose to include them in this version of the course. The Iberian Peninsula and Italy differed significantly from other parts of Europe due to their location on the Mediterranean Sea, where they traded significantly with peoples living in North Africa and the Middle East, unlike other governments throughout Europe. During this time, the Iberian Peninsula

(today's Portugal and Spain) was ruled by various Muslim caliphates/empires. People practiced different religions, identified with various ethnic groups, and immigrated from many places. These caliphates/empires were multicultural, multireligious, and multiethnic. Available records depict society as sometimes peaceful, and other times tumultuous and marked by violence. Southern Italy, but especially the island of Sicily, was also a diverse kingdom- arguably more diverse than the Iberian Peninsula. By including these areas in the course, women of color are included infinitely more than in the college version of this course.

Studying a smaller region is a significant source of strength for this course. An example of how this course dives deeper into a specific region is the "Sagas" project I have planned. In this project, students would read and analyze translated excerpts from Icelandic Sagas that focused on a specific woman in Iceland during the Early Middle Ages. For example, one group would be assigned the *Laxdaela Saga* and learn about Unn the Deep Minded while another group would read *Njal's Saga* and learn about Hildigunnur's Feud with Gudrun and Kjartan. This project is more precise in scope than projects in other history courses, and supports students in learning deeply about topics they would not otherwise learn about in a high school history course. Their analysis would focus on:

- Where women have social, economic, religious, and/or political power
- Where women do NOT have social, economic, religious, and/or political power (limitations)
- How the woman was TYPICAL or ATYPICAL for early medieval Europe
- How did they stay/work within societal gender norms/expectations/boundaries
- How did the women bend or break out of societal gender norms/expectations/boundaries
- Were any CONSEQUENES for breaking societal gender norms documented, and if so, what were they
- Why they think this woman was focused on in the Saga, and why we still have this information today

By the end of the course, students will know… (content)	**By the end of the course, students will be able to… (skills)**
• The shift from Germanic society to the Early European Middle Ages, to the High Middle Ages, and the Late Middle Ages Study of these topics across time, place, and religion • Marriage, divorce, dower/dowry, intermarriage between people of different faiths • Exceptional women and women with political and religious power • Primogeniture/inheritance laws, land ownership, changes in law over time • Religion and socioeconomic status as narrowing or expansive forces • How society defined in/out groups and the resulting persecution (religion/gender/SES) • Economic opportunities for women, and the professionalization of work Connect to present day: integrated within the course based on current events as well as student interest/voice. Possible examples include: • Historical oppression against women, the lack of equitable representation of women in government according to gender, race, ethnicity, + religion • Studying Iceland as an the country with the highest amount of gender equality in the world	**Primary source analysis, including** • Laws • Sagas • Art • Burial mounds / graves • Journal entries • Oral histories • Other primary source records as relevant to the course **Secondary source analysis, the texts mentioned on page XXXX** **Writing, including** • Thesis statements • Argumentative paragraphs + essays that incorporate relevant evidence from primary and secondary sources • Use research skills and primary/secondary source analysis to prepare a written and verbal presentation for the class

(and how being a homogeneous society in a small country may contribute to that) • 3) Hijab/Burka bans across Europe while non-Muslim women who veil do not face the same level of scrutiny, etc	

<u>This course will focus on the following Washington State K-12 Learning Standards for Social Studies:</u>

Social Studies Skills:

- SSS1.9-12.4 Gather relevant information from multiple sources representing a wide range of views while using the origin, authority, structure, context, and corroborative value of the sources to guide the selection
- SSS2.9-12.3 Determine the kinds of sources and relevant information that are helpful, taking into consideration multiple points of view represented in the sources, the types of sources available, and the potential uses of the sources.
- SSS3.9-12.5 Integrate evidence from multiple relevant historical sources and interpretations into a reasoned argument about the past and its relationship to the present.
- SSS4.9-12.2 Construct arguments using precise and knowledgeable claims, with evidence from multiple and reliable sources, while acknowledging counterclaims and evidentiary weaknesses.

Civics

- C4.9-10.1 Use appropriate deliberative processes in multiple settings.

Economics

- E1.11-12.3 Analyze how economic choices made by groups and individuals in the global economy can impose costs and provide benefits.
- E3.11-12.5 Analyze the role of government in defining and enforcing property rights of a good or service.
- E4.11-12.3 Evaluate how individuals and different groups affect and are affected by the distribution of resources and sustainability.

Geography

- G1.9-10.4 Explain relationships between the locations of places and regions, and their political, cultural, and economic dynamics, using maps, satellite images, photographs, and other representations.
- G1.11-12.6 Assess the social, economic, and political factors affecting cultural interactions.
- G2.11-12.6 Evaluate how political and economic decisions throughout time have influenced cultural and environmental characteristics of various places and regions.
- G3.9-10.1 Define how the geography of expansion and encounter have shaped global politics and economics in history.

History

- H1.9-10.2 Assess how historical events and developments were shaped by unique circumstances of time and place as well as broader historical contexts.
- H2.9-10.1 Analyze how individuals and movements have shaped world history
- H2.9-10.2 Summarize how cultures and cultural and ethnic groups have shaped world history
- H2.9-10.4 Analyze multiple and complex causes and effects of events in world history
- H2.11-12.4 Analyze how cultural identity can promote unity and division.
- H3.9-10.1 Analyze and interpret historical materials from a variety of perspectives in world history (1450-present).

- H3.11-12.2 Analyze the ways in which the perspectives of those writing history shaped the history that they produced.
- H3.11-12.4 Integrate evidence from multiple relevant historical sources and interpretations into a reasoned argument about the past to create claims and counterclaims.
- H3.11-12.6 Evaluate the ways in which the perspectives of those writing history shaped the history that they produced.
- H3.11-12.7 Analyze how current interpretations of the past are limited by the extent to which available historical sources represent perspectives of people at the time

What are the assessments that will be used to determine student achievement of the goals of this course?

- Summative assessments include but are not limited to
    - Sagas project + presentation
    - 4 Unit assessments (tests modeled off of the college version's test, essays, paragraphs, etc)
    - Writing assignments (thesis, paragraphs, essays, critiques, source analysis)
    - Women at Work Research Project + Presentation
    - Socratic Seminars
- Formative assessments include but are not limited to
    - Source analysis
    - Daily work
    - Exit Tickets
    - Daily conversations
    - Mini projects (e.g. 1 pager advertisement for suitable marriage partner)
    - Question development
    - Connections to prior content + skills

Describe how this course will address:

- **Integration of technology**
    - Technology would be used throughout the course to support student learning. Examples include
        1. Using their computer for research
        2. Accessing Canvas and the activities + resources provided
        3. Watching videos
        4. Accessing virtual museums
        5. Completing art analysis
        6. Analyzing how the geography of different regions can impact the culture, norms, and expectations of a specific place (e.g. Google Maps on terrain version)
        7. Video call relevant experts, especially Dr. Charity Urbanski and other Medieval historians at the University of Washington
        8. Virtual review games, like Kahoot and Gim Kit
- **Infusion of diversity/multicultural perspectives**
    - Analyzing who has power in society by examining the intersection of social categorizations but especially gender, socioeconomic status, and religion
- **Integration with other subject areas**
    - This course would use the content students learned in World History A/B or AP World to dive deeper into a familiar content area (e.g. Medieval history) with a new framing that is likely unfamiliar to them. Skills from World History A/B or AP World would be key in a student's success in the course since the course builds off skills such as writing thesis statements, primary and secondary source analysis, multiple perspectives/view points, and argumentative writing (e.g. paragraphs, essays, critiques, etc)
    - This course would best align with ELA given its focus on reading, writing, speaking, and listening.

- **Provision of appropriate experiences for learners of varying abilities**
    - This course is designed with every learner in mind and in accordance with UDL.
    - Materials would be modified for learners of varying abilities. This could look like translating materials, having multiple Lexile levels of reading materials, having projects where students could focus on the most important learning outcomes, reduced writing assignments, Socratic Seminars, small group debates, hard copy vs. digital materials, printed slides, and other modifications and accommodations as they arise.
- **Development of higher level thinking and processing skills**
    - This would be done in writing, speaking, and reading
        - Writing = thesis statements, argumentative, essay writing
        - Reading = source analysis (OPCVL), being able to discuss and question sources, the inquiry process, and developing questions
        - Speaking = In the moment thinking and processing of information, sources, etc in conversation with others (e.g. Socratic Seminars)
- **Articulation of scope and sequences across grades K-12. Will this course replace an existing curriculum? If so, which course?**
    - This course would be an 11-12th grade only course at Hazen High School
    - Pre-requisites would be World History A and B OR AP World OR an outside of district equivalent.

Instructional materials would be pulled from the University of Washington Library System, the HSTAM 340 Medieval Women's course materials, my extensive personal library, and other reputable online and print sources. Main sources include…

Secondary sources such as:

- *The Medieval World View: An Introduction* by William R Cook and Ronald B Herzman
- *The Oxford Handbook of Women and Gender in Medieval Europe,* edited by Judith M Bennett and Ruth Mazo Karras including chapters titled
    - Jewish Traditions about Women and Gender Roles: From Rabbinic Teachings to Medieval Practice
    - Women and Gender in Islamic Traditions
    - Gender and Daily Life in Jewish Communities
- *Holy Feast and Holy Fast* by Caroline Bynum
- *Women in Medieval Europe 1200 – 1500, Second Edition* by Jennifer Ward
    - Chapter 7: Ethnic Minorities: Jews, Muslims, and Slaves
- *The Fabric of Civilization: How Textiles Made the World* by Virginia Postrel
    - World focus, not a European focus
- *The Invention of Race in the European Middle Ages* by Geraldine Heng
- *Pious and Rebellious: Jewish Women in Medieval Europe* by Avraham Grossman, including information about
    - Spain/Portugal, Sicily + Southern Italy, and how Christians + Muslims treated Jews differently/similarly depending on time/place
- A History of Portugal and the Portuguese Empire: Volume 1 by A.R. Disney
- A History of Medieval Spain by Joseph O'Callaghan

Primary Sources such as:

- *Beowulf* translated by E. Talbot Donaldson, edited by Nicholas Howe
- *World History in Documents: A Comparative Reader (Second edition)* edited by Peter N Stearns, including
    - A section titled "Conditions of Women in Islam, Byzantine Christianity, and Western Christianity"
    - "The Crusades: Muslim and European Reactions"
    - "Merchants and Trade"
- *Women's Lives in Medieval Europe: A Sourcebook* edited by Emilie Amt. Includes sources such as

    - Laws of Sicily, Spanish Laws, Dowry practices in Italy (14th c), Leonora Lopez de Cordoba: An Autiobiography, as well as
    - A section on Jewish and Muslim women
- *Aspects of Western Civilization: Problems and Sources in World History 7th Edition* Volumes 1 and 2, edited by Perry M Rogers including sections titled
    - The Qur'an on Women
    - The Medieval Woman

There is no material cost to the district to pilot this course.

SIGN-OFF FOR PILOT COURSE RECOMMENDATION

	Signature **Date**
1. Department Head (Secondary) **Accepts ☐ Rejects ☐**	_____
2. Principal **Accepts ☐ Rejects ☐**	_____
3. District Content Facilitator **Accepts ☐ Rejects ☐**	_____
4. Curriculum Director **Accepts ☐ Rejects ☐**	_____

Return original to the Director of Curriculum and Instruction. Copies to Principal and Course Originator.