WS 200-3 Women in Cross-Cultural Perspective

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The goal of this course is to build a sense of connection with women in other cultures around the world. Thus one “thread” of the course will be concerned with identifying issues we share, and appreciating the range of creative responses to these issues. Through specific example, we will also consider the ways in which historical circumstances, cultural assumptions, religion, economics, and political factors interrelate to shape women’s lives, roles and status in different cultural contexts. Finally, we will see how groups women in various regions have joined with each other across ethnic/religious/political lines to dialogue and work together for reconciliation, justice, and peace.

An important aspect of the course will be to “meet”, through the medium of film, a number of the women whose cultures we touch upon. These women become more real to us when we can see them in their material and geographical environments, experience their facial expressions, hair styles, clothing, etc., and hear their voices. Students will also do ethnographic group projects on the life style and culture of women in a particular society, which will include interviewing one or more informants from that background.

Required readings:
A custom courseware package will be available at the university bookstore

Course requirements and Grading Structure:

Attendance and participation: 15%
Midterm test: 20%
2 Short papers (400-500 words each): 10%
Written report (about 2000 words): 20%
Group presentation: 10%
Take-home final exam: 25%
(Note: One page is approximately 250 words.)

Prerequisites:
WS 101 or WS 102 (may be taken concurrently).

THE DEPARTMENT OF WOMEN’S STUDIES ENCOURAGES CLARITY OF THOUGHT AND EXPRESSION AND GOOD WRITING. STUDENTS WILL BE EVALUATED ON THESE SKILLS IN ALL COURSES GIVEN BY THE DEPARTMENT.