1. **TITLE OF COURSE AND COURSE NUMBER:**
   Life Passages: The Female Experience  WS 218

2. **DESCRIPTION OF COURSE:**
   This course looks at the diversity of the female experience over a lifespan: infancy, girlhood, menarche, adolescence, adulthood, middle age, menopause, and old age. Attention is given to diversity issues including race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, abilities and disabilities, class, religion, and political perspectives. Some of the topics addressed include mother-daughter and father-daughter relationships, gender and sexual identity awakenings and struggles, motherhood, marriage/partnership, friendships, and ageing. The course materials include contemporary, multicultural and interdisciplinary essays, literature, and films.

3. **COURSE PREREQUITIES:**  ENG 110

4. **COURSE OBJECTIVES:** This course will

   - Explore female life passages
   - Examine the differences between the coming of age experience for females and males
   - Compare and contrast mother-daughter and father-daughter relationships
   - Review the socialization of the female
   - Consider the impact of sexual violence on females
   - Present the diversity of gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, class, and other identities
   - Explore relationships including sisterhood, marriage/partnership and friendship
   - Look at motherhood as a personal experience and as an institution
   - Consider the impact of abilities and disabilities on females of all ages
   - Analyze female ageing experiences in the context of an ageist and sexist society

5. **LEARNING OUTCOMES:** Students will

   - Explore female life passages through journal writing
   - Discuss the differences between female and male coming of age experiences
   - Read and write about relationships with parents
   - Analyze the socialization of the female from literary and sociological perspectives
   - Critique the social institutions that perpetuate violence against females
   - Use literature to explore the gender, sexual orientation, and race, ethnicity, class, and other identities
   - Write about familial and chosen relationships
   - Show an understanding of the differences between the lived experiences of mothers and the social institution of motherhood
   - Reveal an understanding of disabilities and abilities and their impact on the life passages of females
   - Critique societal messages about ageing
6. Topical Outline:

- Course introduction. What are female life passages? Family Relationships and identity
- Infancy and girlhood
- Parent/Child, especially mother/daughter dynamic
- Other familial relationships: siblings, birth order, etc.; ancestral heritage: grandparents, aunts/uncles, cousins, etc.
- Female friendships: childhood through middle age
- Adolescence and obstacles to self esteem and maturation: subordinating messages from media and school
- Sexuality and gender: sexuality and gender identities, lesbianism, abuse, fears/pressures
- Prejudice and discrimination: race, class barriers
- Abilities and Disabilities
- Marriage/partnership
- Motherhood
- Divorce and child custody
- Menopause
- Old age
- Life cycles

7. GUIDELINES/SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING METHODS AND STUDENT LEARNING ACTIVITIES:

- Lectures
- Discussion
- Groups work
- Films
- In-class writing
- Guest speakers

8. TEACHING METHODS AND STUDENT LEARNING ACTIVITIES:

- Journals
- Oral presentations
- Reader-response logs
- In-class writing
- Essays
- Research projects
- Service learning projects

8. SUGGESTED READINGS, TEXTS, OBJECTS OF STUDY

Angelou, Maya. I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings
Brown, Rita Mae. Rubyfruit Jungle
Brumberg, Joan Jacobs. *The Body Project*
Cisneros, Sandra. *The House on Mango Street*
Cofer, Judith Ortiz. *Silent Dancing: A Partial Remembrance of a Puerto Rican Childhood*
Feinberg, Leslie. *Stone Butch Blues*
Hegi, Ursula. *Stones From the River*
Heilbrun, Carolyn. *Writing a Woman's Life*
Jen, Gish. *Mona in the Promised Land*
Kincaid, Jamaica. *Annie John*
Kingston, Maxine Hong. *The Woman Warrior*
Miller, Sue. *The Good Mother*
Morrison, Toni. *Sula*
Panzarino, Connie. *The Me in the Mirror*
Pipher, Mary. *Reviving Ophelia; Saving the Selves of Adolescent Girls*
Robinson, Marilynne. *Housekeeping*
Rule, Jane. *Memory Board*
Sarton, May. *After the Stroke: A Journal*
Scholinski, Daphne. *The Last Time I Wore a Dress*
Sebold, Alice. *Lucky*
handouts of essays in criticism, theory, and a cross-section of videos to complement the texts.

**Films**

*Acting Our Age: A Film about Women Growing Old*
*Addressing Economic Inequality in Marriage: A New Therapeutic Approach*
*Childhood and Adolescence*, documentary (VC 2669)
*The Good Mother*, feature film
*Her Mother Before Her*, documentary (grandmother, mother, daughter relationships, Native American)
*Iris* (feature film about Iris Murdoch through old age and dementia)
*Lucille Clifton*
*Maya Angelou*
*Menstruation*
*The Motherhood Manifesto*
*Rape Is: A Crime Against Humanity*
*Ruthie and Connie: Every Room in the House* (a lesbian relationship at late mid-life)
*Women At Midlife*, documentary (VC 4675)

**10. BIBLIOGRAPHY OF SUPPORTIVE TEXTS AND OTHER MATERIALS:**

*Historical Perspectives on Feminism*


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**Health, Medicine, Psychology and “the Body”**


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**Media and Other Cultural Messages**


**Theory and Literary Criticism**


11. PREPARER'S NAME AND DATE: Dr. Arlene Holpp Scala , November 13, 2002.

