

# Women in Perspective Request for Regular Status

Erin Lange, Supervisor of Social Sciences

Karen Gonano-Martin, Social Science Teacher Havre de Grace HS

Alyssa King, RELA Teacher Fallston HS

Erica Richardson, Social Science Teacher Joppatowne HS & HCPS Teacher of the Year 2024

# Background

- Women in Perspective (WIP)
  - Created in 2006
  - Course Genesis: proposal to create an elective course of thematic units for students with the following objectives:

*Women in Perspective is a year-long course designed so that students will:*

- *Discuss their opinions about women's lives past and present*
- *Examine women's issues, struggles, and achievements in society through the study of various forms of text and non-text pieces.*
- *Develop a global perspective of women who live in the world.*
- *Examine and define the female voice by evaluating various elements of narrative and non-narrative forms of creative expression.*
- *Explore their own identity through discussion, reflective writing, and creative expression.*
- *Clarify or capture their individual voice and perspective based on their own observations and experiences.*
- *Create and present projects based on unit themes studied throughout the year.*

# SY23-24 WIP Enrollment in HCPS

- FAHS: 16 students
- JOHS: 18 students

# Background

- January 2024: WIP moved from the Office of RELA to the Office of Social Sciences
  - Four person writing team: two RELA teachers and two Social Sciences teachers
  - Goal: adjust scope and sequence and align the course to Maryland Social Studies standards
  - Utilized the AP African American Studies multidisciplinary approach as a model

# State Standards

## Maryland Social Studies Standards

Standard	Description of Standard
<b>Standard 1.0 Civics</b>	Students shall inquire about the historical development of the fundamental concepts and processes of authority, power, and influence with particular emphasis on civic reasoning in order to become informed, responsible citizens, engage in the political process, and contribute to society.
<b>Standard 2.0 Peoples of the Nations and World</b>	Students shall inquire about the people of the United States and the world using a historically grounded, multidisciplinary approach in order to recognize multiple narratives and acknowledge the diversity and commonality of the human experience.
<b>Standard 3.0 Geography</b>	Students shall inquire about the role of culture, technology, and the environment in the location, distribution, and impact of human activities using geographic tools and spatial thinking in order to demonstrate a significance of place.
<b>Standard 4.0 Economic</b>	Students shall inquire about decisions made by individuals and groups using economic reasoning in order to understand the historical development and current status of economic principles, institutions, and processes needed to be effective citizens, consumers, and workers participating in local communities, the nation, and the world.
<b>Standard 5.0 History</b>	Students shall inquire about significant events, ideas, beliefs, and themes to identify patterns and trends and to analyze how individuals and societies have changed over time to make connections to the present in their communities, Maryland, the United States, and the world.
<b>Standard 6.0 Skills and Processes</b>	Students shall inquire about civics, geography, economics, history, and people and nations of the world using disciplinary literacy skills and processes to critically evaluate content through a variety of source materials across disciplines and use reading, writing, and other forms of communication to develop, defend, and critique arguments in order to take informed action.

# State Standards

## Standard 6.0

The four dimensions of The Inquiry Arc are reflected in Maryland's Standard 6.0:

1. Developing Questions & Planning Inquiries – constructing compelling and supporting questions, planning inquiries, and determining helpful sources.
2. Applying Disciplinary Concepts & Tools – applying the disciplinary concepts and tools of civics, geography, economics, and history.
3. Evaluating Sources & Using Evidence – evaluating sources, identifying credible, relevant information contained in sources, using evidence to support and develop claims.
4. Communicating and Critiquing Conclusions & Taking Informed Action – communicating and presenting claims, critiquing claims, and identifying ways to address problems in their communities.

Throughout the course, students should be employing the social studies skills and processes delineated in the 6.0 Skills and Processes standard. Organizing these skills is the Inquiry Arc which provides a structure to facilitate effective instruction in social studies.

### *The Inquiry Arc*



# The Inquiry Arc

Inquiry-Based Instruction in the Social Sciences  
C3 Framework: College, Career, & Civic Life



# Goals of curriculum realignment project

- Aligned to Maryland State Social Studies Standards
- Grounded on compelling questions
- Provide multiple perspectives and balanced resources
- Celebrate accomplishments of women
- Support students in understanding themselves, their families, and the complete picture of the world around them



# WIP Course Scope and Sequence

## **Unit 1: Our Story/Her Story**

- Gender Stereotypes
- Who am I?
- The Status of Women in Human History

## **Unit 2: Challenges and Struggles**

- Identifying Struggles
- Women's Health and Welfare
- Historical Struggles
- A Case Study on Sylvia Plath
- Struggles Research Project

## **Unit 3: Breaking Barriers**

- Women in Antiquity
- The First Wave Feminist Movement
- Second, Third, and Fourth Wave Feminism
- African American Activists
- Women's History Month Project

## **Unit 4: HERculean Women**

- Revolutionary Women
- American Herculean Women

## **Unit 5: Women's Voice and Empowerment**

- Women in Fashion
- Women in Comedy
- Women in Visual and Culinary Arts
- Women in Music Project
- Capstone Final project

# Board of Education Members Concerns

- Concerns about:
  - ensuring a balance of perspectives
- Response
  - Inquiry-design approach to building lessons ensures that learning experiences are framed through the lens of a compelling question and provide students with opportunities to evaluate various perspectives
    - Compelling questions allow students to draw their own conclusions
  - Discussion-based strategies center student voice

# Board of Education Members Concerns

- Concerns about:
  - perceived lack of inclusion of women in science, medicine, business, leadership/politics
- Response
  - These narratives are embedded throughout the curriculum rather than as individual experiences
    - Specific examples include:
      - Zenobia of Palmyra, Kyniska of Sparta, Viking female warriors (3.2)
      - Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Alice Paul, Carrie Chapman Catt, Ida B. Wells, Zitkala-sa, Mary Wollstonecraft, Julia Ward Howe, Mary Church Terrell, etc. (3.3)
      - Shirley Chisholm (3.5)
      - Olympe de Gouge (4.1)
      - Female leaders of global revolution movements (e.g. Margarita Neri, Kuttur Chennamma, Mercy Otis Warren, etc.) (4.1)
      - Women in leadership or politics discussion and research project (student choice) (4.1)
      - Female entrepreneurs in the American "wild west" (4.2)
      - Women in War Movements experience (4.3), including but not limited to Yaa Asantewaa; Joan of Arc; Khutulun; Tomoe Gozen; Juana Azurduy de Padilla; Clara Barton; US Army Nurse Corps during WWI; female computer programmers and coders during WWII; Night Witches (female fighter pilots during WWII); Eleanor Roosevelt; female graduates of US Army Ranger School
  - Women's History Month Project student choice topic from a variety of recommended groups, including "women in science, business, government, medicine, art, literature"

# Board of Education Members Concerns

- Concerns about:
  - inclusion and celebration of Margaret Sanger and Hillary Clinton
- Response
  - Neither Margaret Sanger nor Hillary Clinton is not in the curriculum (neither in the former RELA curriculum nor in the new SS version)
  - Information on either woman may be found in supplemental resource lists of famous women in history, provided among many different lists for student choice projects such as the Womens History Month Project in Unit 3, Experience 6
    - Example- Hillary Clinton is included in a National Archives list of Notable Women and another on First Ladies and in the Time Magazine 100 Women of the Year archive site

# Feedback from Students

## Why should The Women In Perspective Course be offered?

- [I]t's important to highlight women's history. There are many classes within the graduation requirements that are filled with Powerpoint slides about men, with a slide or two mixed in about a revolutionary woman. A majority of books I've read in school were written by men. **Women's voices are important**, especially for **ALL children** growing up now.
- We don't learn about these women otherwise—I feel like history classes repeat so much.
- It is **unique** to all the other social science classes because we learn about things we don't anywhere else.
- It provides a **safe and informative space** to discuss the past and current struggles of women throughout history and in today's society. Women in Perspective should be offered to students that wish to get a **better understanding** of their peers as well as themselves.

# Feedback from Students

## What has been your most memorable or favorite activity from the course and why?

- My favorite activity in Women in Perspective was when we taught a lesson to our middle school. Getting to teach younger students about important yet unknown women in history and their impacts to today's society was a **meaningful experience** to teach younger students about how women's impacts and experiences are often forgotten or disregarded by society.
- We learned how to plan an event, invite people to it, make a budget, and have conversation with our peers and teachers.
- Talking about the warmup (feminine beauty and body image) all class. Hearing other people's **perspective** is a lot more helpful to **hear about each other**.

# Feedback from Teachers

- Course provides opportunity for authentic moments (Healthy)
- Memorable moments for students
- Allows for deep study into topics that are skimmed or skipped in broad survey courses
- Importance of diverse electives
  - Student choice engages and empowers students
- Preparation for college and career (Employable)
  - Opportunity to teach others (Growing our own)
- Cross-curricular (Reader and Writer)
- Real world relevance

# Interest for SY24-25

Of the schools that included WIP in the student course selection sheets, the following schools enrolled students:

- EDHS: 33 students
- FAHS: 91 students
- JOHS: 60 students



# Request

The Office of Social Sciences requests that the Women in Perspective course be approved for regular status on the recommendation of the Superintendent.

# Questions Regarding Women in Perspective