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Remember the ladies

Posted on 25 October 2012. Tags: [HST-295 American Portraits](#), [Kris Pence](#), [women's suffrage movement](#)

Ask a college class to name five of the American Founding Fathers. Most students will be able to respond with names like George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin or Alexander Hamilton.

Now, ask a college class to name five important American ladies in the women's suffrage movement. Most students will not respond. On rare occasions, the name of Eleanor Roosevelt might come up.

Upon random inquiry, these are the answers assistant professor of political science Kris Pence typically gets from students.

Pence has observed that, when asked the latter question, most students hesitate to answer.

In his new class, HST-295 American Portraits, which is being offered next semester, Pence hopes that students will gain a better knowledge of some of the American women who truly made an impact in history.

Pence explained the hesitation and limited answers he's gotten from students "is what gave rise to this idea of examining standing women in American politics and society. There's something to be learned about the role women have played."

Many students will know the contributions of leading women in today's society, but according to Pence, these women only "stand on the shoulders of those who came before them."

Aaron Augello (sr) plans to sit in and audit the class next semester. "I could see [this class] as very beneficial for our political knowledge and our history, to not only know where our nation has been, but [also] where it should go regarding women's rights," he said.

Augello also mentioned he is looking forward to class discussions on the roles of leadership for women, not only in politics, but also in the family and church.

The class itself, according to Pence, will be focused more on the biographical and autobiographical accounts of American women, rather than a brief survey of the entire women's rights movement.

"To have a class ... where you narrow in on a few people is really appealing to me," Jenna Childress (sr) said. "It's a different way to study history."

Childress, who hopes to enroll in the class next semester as well, said the benefit of taking this class is the positive influence these American leaders could have on her.

"Any time I study a person, it starts to challenge me about my perspective on life and leadership," Childress said. "I'm excited to not only learn about these women but [also to] be challenged by them."

Augello said the course is also significant because of its "multiple applications." The class is not just for political science or international relations majors, he said, but is beneficial to everyone who is interested.

"I think the ultimate goal is to just introspect and figure out what you believe about the roles of men and women in politics and across the board in other roles of society," Augello said.

HST-295 will be offered in the 2013 spring semester. It provides credit for the Social and Behavioral