

FRENCH 290
FRENCH LITERATURE IN TRANSLATION

BULLETIN INFORMATION

French 290: French Literature in Translation (3 credit hours)

Course Description:

Readings and discussion in English, with consideration of the cultural context

SAMPLE COURSE OVERVIEW

Taught in English, the primary goals of FREN 290 are to introduce students to French literature, to expose them to some useful approaches to narrative and to give students some information about the cultural, historical, and political contexts of some important works of literature originally written in French. The theme of FREN 290 varies, depending on the instructor. The theme of this sample syllabus is “Women and Desire in French Literature.” In addition to the above goals, this course aims to help students think critically about women’s situations across cultures and time from the seventeenth century to the present. Students will analyze and discuss how race, class and gender intersect in shaping women's lives, how women's sexuality has been conditioned and regulated by economic, social, and kinship structures from the aristocracy of pre-revolutionary France to colonial and post-colonial Indochina, Africa, and the Caribbean.

ITEMIZED LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of French 290, students will be able to:

1. Discuss some important works of French literature and be able to engage in meaningful discussion of the literature and the cultural, historical, and political contexts that shaped them.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the meaning and use of different narrative techniques in selected fiction.
3. Write analytically about literature.

SAMPLE REQUIRED TEXTS/SUGGESTED READINGS/MATERIALS

1. Mme de Lafayette, *The Princesse de Clèves*
2. Françoise de Graffigny, *Letters from a Peruvian Woman*
3. George Sand, *Indiana*
4. Marguerite Duras, *The Lover*
5. Miriama Bâ, *So Long a Letter*
6. Maryse Condé, *Heremakhonon*
7. Additional materials will be posted on the Blackboard web site.

SAMPLE ASSIGNMENTS AND/OR EXAM

Class format will generally be lecture/discussion, with some supplementary activities (cultural background of the period studied, oral presentations done by the students). In order to facilitate class discussion, students are to prepare answers to the study questions accompanying the day's assignments; responses to and questions about them will generate class discussions.

1. Students must participate in the **Blackboard discussion board** at least once a week. Students will write their reactions to the reading, ask questions they may have about the texts, analyze the works, and so forth; again, students may wish to focus on the study questions, but are encouraged to communicate their own insights into the texts. This discussion board is an extension of in-class discussions, and each student is responsible for reading and responding to the posts.
2. Each student will give an **oral presentation** of research related to one of the works on the reading list.
3. Finally students will write **six short (500-1000 words) critical essays** to be submitted electronically approximately every other week (see course schedule)

4. Final exam

SAMPLE COURSE OUTLINE WITH TIMELINE OF TOPICS, READINGS/ASSIGNMENTS, EXAMS/PROJECTS

- Week 1:** Introduction to course and to each other; discussion of oral presentations
Historical context and background for *Princesse de Clèves*
Introduction to seventeenth century and Lafayette; read Introductory material in *Princesse*.
- Week 2:** *Princesse*, begin Book I (pp. 1-42 and study questions). *Be sure to read the annotations (pp. 177-182) as you go along. They will help a lot.
Princesse, finish Book I (42-61 and study questions)
Princesse, Book II (62-98 and study questions)
- Week 3:** *Princesse*, Book III (99-138 and study questions)
Princesse, Book IV (139-176 and study questions)
Princesse, wrap-up / oral presentations
**: turn in first essay before midnight
- Week 4:** Introduction to eighteenth century, to eighteenth-century novel and Graffigny; read introduction and forewords in *Letters* pp. ix-15. .
Letters , forewords, introduction, letters I-X (pp. 3-52 and study questions)
Letters XI-XXVI (52-113 and study questions)
- Week 5:** *Letters*: XXVII-XLI (113-174 and study questions)

Letters: wrap-up / oral presentations:

****turn in second essay before midnight**

Review of 'ancien régime' and discussion of the French Revolution

- Week 6:** Introduction to Nineteenth-century French Literature
Introduction to Georges Sand, read pp. vii-14 in *Indiana*. Be sure to read the annotations (pp.272-278) as you go along
Indiana Part One (15-76)
- Week 7:** *Indiana* Part Two (77-135)
Indiana Part Three (136-198)
- Week 8:** *Indiana* Part Four and Conclusion (199-271)
Indiana: wrap-up / oral presentations
****turn in third essay before midnight)**
Introduction to Twentieth- century French Literature
- Week 9:** Introduction to Duras
The Lover (3-35)
The Lover (36-64)
- Week 10:** *The Lover*: (65-117) wrap-up / oral presentations
turn in fourth essay before midnight
Feminism and 'écriture féminine'
Introduction to French colonial presence and post-independence West Africa
- Week 11:** Introduction to Miriama Bâ; *So Long...* chapters 1-12 (1-34). Notice that there are some notes on p. 90 that explain unfamiliar terms
*So Long...*chaps. 13-19 (35-63)
So Long.. chaps 20-27 (63-89)
- Week 12:** *So Long..* wrap-up / oral presentations
turn in fifth essay before midnight
Introduction to Caribbean history and literature
Heremakhonon Part I (3-52) (Use the 'guide' on Blackboard to make sense of the narrative if you are too confused.)
- Week 13:** *Heremakhonon* Part II (55-99)
Heremakhonon Part III (103-167)
Heremakhonon wrap-up and discussion/ oral presentation(s)
turn in last essay before midnight
- Week 14:** Contemporary issues – feminism, race, class, and gender
Review and discussion

Presentations

Week 15: Review and discussion

Final exam according to university exam schedule