MAJOR—French Language and Literature

The French major seeks to provide training in literary and cultural analysis and linguistic expression through the study of selected texts from the French-speaking world. Emphasis is placed on the changes in form and subject matter from the early modern period to the contemporary era.

The major consists of nine courses. One of these courses must be the 400-level senior seminar during the student’s final year at the College.

Students entering the major program at the 200-level may, with the permission of the Department, choose as part of their major program, one course in Art History, History, Philosophy, Comparative Literature or other subjects that relate to and broaden their study of French. Students entering the major program at a very advanced level may, in some cases and with the permission of the Department, include two such courses in their major program.

Working with the major advisor, the student will formulate a curricular plan that will ensure balance and coherence in courses taken. Such balance and coherence will be based on the above areas of literary and cultural investigation. Prospective majors should discuss their program with the major advisor by the end of their sophomore year. This is especially imperative for students who are planning to spend a part or all of their junior year in France.

Inasmuch as all courses in French assume the active participation of each student in discussions conducted in the foreign language, regular attendance at class meetings is expected.

MAJOR—French Studies

The major in French Studies is an interdisciplinary program that provides students with the opportunity to acquire skills and knowledge embracing the cultural, historical, social, and political heritage of France and the Francophone world. The program allows for an individualized course of study involving work in several departments and the opportunity to study abroad.

Students electing the French Studies major should register with the French Studies faculty advisor during their sophomore year. At that time, they should submit a feasibility plan that articulates their projected program.

The French Studies major consists of ten courses satisfying the following requirements:

- at least five RLFR courses in French language, literature, film, or culture;
- the RLFR senior seminar during the student’s final year at the College;
- Electives: The remaining courses needed to complete the major must be drawn from at least three different departments and relate primarily to an aspect of the cultures, histories, societies, and politics of France and the Francophone world. These courses will be selected in consultation with members of the Department of Romance Languages. Appropriate electives might include:
  - AFR 360 Political Thought Frantz Fanon
  - ARTH 254 Manet to Matisse
  - HIST 390 Haitian and French Revolutions
  - RLFR 101-450 All courses in French and Francophone language, literature, film, and culture

THE DEGREE WITH HONORS IN FRENCH

Students majoring in French may apply to be admitted to the Honors Program in French upon demonstrating the following: (1) fluency of spoken and written language; (2) potential for successful independent research, as demonstrated by strong performance in advanced-level coursework; (3) interest and motivation; and (4) overall quality and feasibility of the proposal.

By May 15th of their junior year, candidates will have found a thesis advisor, and given the Department a three- to five-page proposal and a preliminary bibliography. (In some cases, and upon consultation with the Department, candidates will have the option to choose a second reader in
addition to their primary advisor; for example, when the thesis is interdisciplinary enough in nature that it requires the expertise of an additional reader). This proposal will be discussed by the Department; by June 1st, the candidate will be informed whether they can proceed with the thesis, and if so, what changes need to be made to the focus and scope of the project. The summer before the senior year will be spent reading, researching (in relevant archives or with field work), and compiling a more detailed bibliography.

Upon their return to Williams, candidates will devote to their theses two semesters of independent study (beyond the nine courses required for the major) and the winter study period of their senior year (493-W31-494). The thesis will be written in French and will usually not be shorter than fifty pages. By the end of the Fall semester, students will normally have a clear outline of the project, have done substantial research, and produced the draft of at least the first half of the project. During January this draft will be suitably rewritten and edited with a view to a final version, while the candidates will also begin work on remaining chapters.

Candidates will submit what they have written to the department on the last day of Winter Study.

On the Tuesday of the first week of the spring semester candidates will make a presentation of the project at a departmental colloquium in French. The thesis will be promptly discussed and evaluated to determine whether or not the student should continue in the honors program. The second semester of independent thesis work will be spent writing more chapters, as well as revising, rewriting, and polishing the project where necessary. The completed thesis in its final form will be due on April 25th. At the end of the Spring term, the student will present and defend the final project before members of the Department and others by invitation. The grade will be awarded once members of the Department have consulted after the defense.

THE CERTIFICATE IN FRENCH

The Certificate in French Language and Cultures consists of a sequence of seven courses for which the student must earn a cumulative grade average of B or higher.

For students with no prior study of French, the course sequence will consist of RLFR 101-102, RLFR 103, RLFR 104, and three additional courses, with at least one of these at the 200-level or higher taken at Williams. For students starting the sequence at RLFR 103 or higher, six additional courses must be taken, including at least three French courses at the 200-level or higher. For these students starting at French 103 or higher, two electives may be taken in other departments: one elective should be in French or Francophone culture (art, literature, theatre, music) and the other in French or Francophone civilization (history, political science, philosophy).

PLACEMENT

A placement test in French is administered at Williams at the opening of the fall semester. Incoming first-year students who register for any French course above the 101 level must take this test, regardless of their previous preparation.

STUDY ABROAD

We encourage all students of French to complement their courses at Williams with the life-changing experience of studying abroad in a Francophone country. In particular, French majors and certificate students are strongly advised to complete part of the requirements for the major or certificate by studying abroad, for either a semester or a year. Most study abroad programs require applicants to have completed a fifth-semester French course in college (French 105) or higher before they go abroad. Credit for up to a total of 4 courses towards the major or certificate can be granted for either a semester or a full year abroad, at the discretion of the Romance Languages Department. Students who are planning to get credit for their study abroad courses should meet with a French faculty member in advance, to review the courses they intend to take abroad. Normally, only courses that focus on French language or Francophone literature, history, politics, art, and culture may be counted towards the major or certificate.

The final assignment of course credit will be authorized in consultation with the student’s French advisor, once the student has returned to Williams. Such credits can only be determined by review of course format, course materials, and evidence of satisfactory academic performance; students should thus provide not only their study abroad transcript, but retain course materials (including syllabi, papers, exams, and other projects) for potential review back at Williams. While students can gain credit for 100-, 200-, and 300-level courses during their time abroad, the 400-level senior seminar must be taken during the senior year at Williams. Early planning is essential: Students interested in studying abroad are strongly urged to attend the yearly Francophone Study Away Information Session (held each October) during their first year or sophomore year. Students will receive credit for only those study abroad programs recommended and approved by the Dean of Study Away and the Romance Languages Department. Williams has long-term affiliations with the following programs: Hamilton College (Paris), Sweet Briar College (Paris), CUPA (Paris), Middlebury College (Paris), Wellesley College (Aix-en-Provence), Boston University (Grenoble), and both SIT and CIEE (in Morocco, Senegal, and Madagascar). For more on all approved study-abroad programs, see the webpages for the French program (french.williams.edu) and Study Away (study-away.williams.edu/programs). Finally, the Department does not administer proficiency exams (for study abroad, fellowships, or job applications) to students who have not completed a French course at Williams; and most study abroad programs will not accept students who have not taken any college courses in French (at Williams) prior to their application. Students should thus plan well ahead (as early as their first year and sophomore year) to take appropriate courses at Williams, before applying for and taking part in study abroad programs in the Francophone world.
In this course, we will revisit the boundaries between self-portraiture and portraiture. Working in pairs, students will both practice being a model and a photographer: they will pose as a model for their classmates and assist a classmate in creating a self-portrait. In addition, using as a point of departure Hippolyte Bayard's photograph Self-Portrait as a Drowned Man, one of the first self-portraits in the history of photography, students will learn how to use the view camera (a large format camera used during the invention of photography in 1839 and still in use today). We will also study the characteristics of film photography, specifically, light, chemicals, sensitive media, and negative and use them as tools to make creative portraits in the darkroom. By the end of the course, students will have learned to shoot with a 4 x 5 view camera and have practiced with manipulations in the darkroom in order to create unique portraits. Each student will exhibit their work as a triptych in an exhibition. Be aware that this class requires an average of 15 weekly lab or studio hours outside of regular classes and sometimes during the weekend. Adjunct Instructor Bio: Documentary photographer Daniel Goudrouffe, who describes himself as a photographer-author, creates compelling visual narratives about the complexity of life in the Caribbean and its diaspora. His archive of the contemporary Caribbean equally enables a public reckoning with the impact of slavery and colonialism in the region. In 2017, his images were showcased at Les Photaumnales in Beauvais, France and at the Biennale Internationale des Rencontres Photographiques de Guyane.

Requirements/Evaluation: short paper and final project or presentation
Prerequisites: knowledge of black and white analog photography is preferred, but not required
Enrollment Limit: 10
Enrollment Preferences: Art major and minors then random
Grading: pass/fail only
Materials/Lab Fee: $120

This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:
ARTS 13 RLFR 13
Attributes: EXPE Experiential Education Courses

Winter 2020
LEC Section: 01 TBA Daniel Goudrouffe

RLFR 30 (W) Honors Essay: French
To be taken by candidates for honors other than by thesis route.
Class Format: honors essay
Grading: pass/fail only

Winter 2020
HON Section: 01 TBA Jennifer L. French

RLFR 31 (W) Senior Thesis: French
To be taken by students registered for French 493-494.
Class Format: thesis
Grading: pass/fail only

Winter 2020
HON Section: 01 TBA Jennifer L. French

RLFR 99 (W) Independent Study: French
Open to upperclass students. Students interested in doing an independent project (99) during Winter Study must make prior arrangements with a
faculty sponsor. The student and professor then complete the independent study proposal form available online. The deadline is typically in late September. Proposals are reviewed by the pertinent department and the Winter Study Committee. Students will be notified if their proposal is approved prior to the Winter Study registration period.

Class Format: independent study
Grading: pass/fail only

Winter 2020
IND Section: 01 TBA Jennifer L. French

RLFR 101 (F) Introduction to French Language and Francophone Cultures
This year-long course offers a complete introduction to the French language and is designed to help you become fully conversant in French by focusing on four fundamental language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Through daily practice, class activities, interactive discussion, listening exercises, written work, reading assignments, and active engagement with music, video, and film, you will quickly gain confidence and increasing facility with your abilities to speak and understand both spoken and written French. In addition, our study of grammar, vocabulary, and communication skills will be organized around an engaging and dynamic introduction to a variety of French-speaking cultures around the world, from France and Belgium, to Québec and Martinique, to Sénégal and Morocco. Conducted in French.

Class Format: the class meets five hours a week
Requirements/Evaluation: evaluation in both semester-long courses will be based on active class participation, workbook exercises and compositions, chapter tests, midterms, and final exams
Extra Info: students registered for RLFR 101-102 are required to attend and pass the sustaining program during the winter study period; credit granted only if both semesters (RLFR 101 and 102) are taken
Prerequisites: none; for students who have never formally studied French; students who have previously studied French must take the French Placement Test during First Days
Enrollment Limit: 20
Enrollment Preferences: all are welcome, but if over-enrolled, preference will be given to first-year and second-year students and those with compelling justification for admission
Expected Class Size: 20
Grading: yes pass/fail option, no fifth course option
Distributions: (D1)

Fall 2019
LEC Section: 01 M-F 9:00 am - 9:50 am Brian Martin

RLFR 102 (S) Introduction to French Language and Francophone Cultures
This year-long course offers a complete introduction to the French language and is designed to help you become fully conversant in French by focusing on four fundamental language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Through daily practice, class activities, interactive discussion, listening exercises, written work, reading assignments, video-observations, and film-viewing, you will quickly gain confidence and increasing facility with your abilities to speak and understand both spoken and written French. In addition, our study of grammar, vocabulary, and communication skills will be organized around an engaging and dynamic introduction to a variety of French-speaking cultures around the world, from France and Belgium, to Québec and Martinique, to Sénégal and Morocco. Conducted in French.

Class Format: the class meets five hours a week
Requirements/Evaluation: evaluation in both semester-long courses will be based on active class participation, workbook exercises and compositions, chapter tests, midterms, and final exams
Extra Info: students registered for RLFR 101-102 are required to attend and pass the sustaining program during the winter study period; credit granted only if both semesters (RLFR 101 and 102) are taken
Prerequisites: none; for students who have taken less than two years of high school French
Enrollment Limit: 20
RLFR 103 (F) Intermediate Studies in French Language and Francophone Cultures
As a continuation of French 101-102, this dynamic first-semester intermediate course is designed to help you improve your French, while at the same time learning more about French and Francophone cultures, politics, literature, and film. Through the active study and daily practice of listening, speaking, reading, and writing in French, you will: continue developing your communication skills and learn to express your opinions and ideas; improve your command of spoken and written French through a revision of important grammatical structures; strengthen your reading and writing skills in order to prepare you for further study of literary texts; and develop an increased vocabulary and cultural appreciation of French-speaking cultures around the world.

Class Format: lecture; the class meets five days per week
Requirements/Evaluation: grade based on active participation, workbook homework, chapter tests, short papers, midterm exam, and final exam
Prerequisites: RLFR 101-102, or by Placement Test, or permission of instructor
Enrollment Limit: 20
Enrollment Preferences: French majors and French certificate students, and those with compelling justification for admission
Expected Class Size: 20
Grading: yes pass/fail option, no fifth course option
Unit Notes: students should seriously consider taking RLFR 103 AND 105 if they intend to enroll in more advanced French literature courses at the 200-level and above, or if they anticipate studying in France or a Francophone country during their junior year
Distributions: (D1)

RLFR 104 (S) Intermediate French II: Advanced Intermediate Studies in French
As a continuation of French 103, this course will help students gain greater fluency in French, through an exploration of French and Francophone literature, film, media, politics, and culture. With a focus on listening, speaking, reading, and writing, students will review advanced grammar expand their vocabulary, gain greater confidence, and both discuss and debate central questions in the social, political, and cultural landscape of French-speaking communities in Europe, Africa, and the Caribbean.

Class Format: Class meets twice a week with the professor (for 75 minutes each, on TR 11:20AM-12:30PM), plus a required 30-minute conversation session with the French TA, at a time to be mutually determined by the students and TA
Requirements/Evaluation: grade based on active participation, workbook homework, chapter tests, short papers, midterm exam, and final exam
Prerequisites: RLFR 103, or by placement test, or permission of instructor
Enrollment Limit: 20
Enrollment Preferences: French majors and French certificate students, and those with compelling justification for admission
Expected Class Size: 20
Grading: yes pass/fail option, no fifth course option
Unit Notes: after successfully completing RLFR 104, students may register for RLFR 201
Distributions: (D1)
RLFR 105  (F)  Advanced French: Advanced Studies in French Language and Francophone Culture
In this course, we will concentrate on polishing your oral and written expression and on expanding your vocabulary, while focusing on the analysis and discussion of French and Francophone cultures and the concepts that define them. In addition to helping you improve your speaking, listening comprehension, reading, and writing, as well as reviewing advanced grammar, we will explore key myths and practices linked to municipal, regional, and national identities in France and the Francophone world, and seek to understand the history of contemporary debates surrounding these identities. Topics of discussion will include: Which cultural practices represent what it means to be French? How do certain regions and cities derive a sense of identity distinct from that of the nation? How do overseas departments and territories inflect Frenchness by means of their own histories and geographies? Short literary, theoretical, and historical texts, along with films, music, photography, press articles, and websites, will inform our discussions. Class meets three times a week with the professor (for 50 minutes each), plus a required 30-minute conversation session with the French TA each week, at a time to be mutually determined by the students and TA.

Class Format: weekly conference with TA
Requirements/Evaluation: class participation, grammar exercises, short response papers, essays, presentations, final project
Prerequisites: RLFR 104, placement exam, or by permission of instructor
Enrollment Limit: 20-25
Enrollment Preferences: French majors and certificate students
Expected Class Size: 20
Grading:  yes pass/fail option,  yes fifth course option
Distributions: (D1)

RLFR 106  (S)  Advanced French: Danger and Desire in French Film and Fiction
This is an advanced course in French language designed to help you improve your speaking, comprehension, reading, and writing, through the dynamic study of short literary texts and films focusing on danger and desire in nineteenth-, twentieth-, and twenty-first-century France. Through active discussion and debate, textual and cinematic analysis, grammatical review, and careful writing and revision, you will improve your command of spoken and written French, strengthen your ability to express complex ideas, expand your vocabulary, and deepen your understanding of French fiction, film, and culture. This is an ideal course to prepare for study abroad or for more advanced coursework in French literature and cinema. As a focus for improving your French, we will examine a broad range of texts and films on danger and desire in France from 1830 to 2010, with an emphasis on passion and ambition, infatuation and seduction, betrayal and vengeance, courage and cruelty, warfare and resistance. Works to include nineteenth-century texts by Chateaubriand, Duras, Balzac, Mérimée, Flaubert, Maupassant, Zola; twentieth-century texts by Colette, Camus, Sartre, Beauvoir, Duras, Ernaux, Guibert, Quint, Lindon, Vilrouge; and twenty-first-century films by Caron, Ozon, Ducastel, Martineau, Dercourt, and Becker. Conducted in French.

Class Format: seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: active class participation, grammar exercises, two short papers, midterm, and final paper
Prerequisites: exceptional performance in RLFR 104; successful performance in RLFR 105; or by placement test; or permission of the instructor
Enrollment Limit: 20
Enrollment Preferences: all are welcome, but if over-enrolled, preference will be given to French majors and certificate students; and those with compelling justification for admission
Expected Class Size: 20
Grading:  yes pass/fail option,  no fifth course option
Distributions: (D1)

Not offered current academic year
RLFR 108 (S) Voyages Francophones: Alienation and Self-Discovery in Contemporary Literature and Film

This is an advanced course in French language designed to help you improve your speaking, listening comprehension, reading, and writing, through the dynamic study of literary texts and films focusing on the themes of alienation and self-discovery in the late twentieth- and early twenty-first-century Francophone world. Through active discussion and debate, textual and cinematic analysis, grammatical review, and careful writing and revision, you will improve your command of spoken and written French, strengthen your ability to express complex ideas, expand your vocabulary, and deepen your understanding of French-language fiction, film, and culture. This is an ideal course to prepare for study abroad or for more advanced coursework in French language and cinema. As a focus for improving your French, we will examine a broad range of texts and films on the themes of alienation and self-discovery—especially in the context of immigration and coming of age—as they are represented in texts from France, Québec, and the Caribbean.

Class Format: Lecture

Requirements/Evaluation: class participation, grammar exercises, two short papers, midterm, and final project

Prerequisites: exceptional performance in RLFR 104; successful performance in RLFR 105; or by placement test; or permission of the instructor

Enrollment Limit: 20

Enrollment Preferences: French Majors and certificate students

Expected Class Size: 20

Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

Distributions: (D1)

Attributes: FMST Related Courses

Spring 2020

LEC Section: 01 TR 9:55 am - 11:10 am Carl B. Cornell

RLFR 202 (F) War and Resistance: Two Centuries of War Literature in France (1804-2016)

Cross-listings: WGSS 201 RLFR 202

Primary Cross-listing

In 1883, Maupassant called on his fellow war veterans and writers to join him in speaking out against warfare and violence, crying "Let us dishonor war!" From the Gallic Wars against Caesar (during the first century BC) to the recent terrorist attacks in France (at the opening of the twenty-first century), the French literary tradition is rich in texts that bear witness to war and speak out against its monstrous inhumanity. While war literature in France can be traced back to ancient and medieval texts on Vercingétorix, Charlemagne, William the Conqueror, and Joan of Arc, this course will focus specifically on literary representations of war during the nineteenth- and twentieth-centuries, from the Napoleonic Wars, to the First and Second World Wars, to the Algerian and Cold Wars, and the "War on Terror." Discussions will examine the impact of war on soldiers and civilians, patriotism and pacifism, history and memory; the implications of war as invasion and conquest, occupation and resistance, victory and defeat; the relationship of war to gender, sexuality, and ethnicity; and the role of war in colonialism and genocide. Readings to include novels, short stories, and poems by Balzac, Stendhal, Hugo, Rimbaud, Daudet, Maupassant, Zola, Cocteau, Wiesel, Duras, Camus, and Fanon. Films to include works by Resnais, Renoir, Carion, Jeunet, Malle, Anglo, Pontecorvo, and Duras. Conducted in French.

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: active class participation, midterm exam, and two to three papers

Prerequisites: exceptional performance in RLFR 105; successful performance in RLFR 106 or 107; or by French placement exam; or by permission of instructor

Enrollment Limit: 20

Enrollment Preferences: French majors and certificate students; Comparative Literature majors; Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies majors; and those with compelling justification for admission

Expected Class Size: 20

Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

Distributions: (D1)

This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:

WGSS 201 (D2) RLFR 202 (D1)
RLFR 203  (F) Introduction to Francophone Literatures

Cross-listings: AFR 204  RLFR 203  COMP 282

Primary Cross-listing

What is the Francophone world comprised of? Who speaks French today and why? What does the idea of Francophonie really mean? Is this term really relevant? Why, how, and by whom is this idea being criticized? How does the littérature-monde manifesto fit within these interrogations? Is the French-speaking world merely a linguistic community or is it also a political, cultural, and economic project? Last but not least, why is the idea of Francophonie so important for France? We will answer these questions through the lens of literary and cinematic texts from Québec, Sénégal, Vietnam, France (l’hexagone), and Haiti among others.

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: presentation, journaling, final project, participation

Prerequisites: RLFR 105 and above, placement exam or by permission of instructor

Enrollment Limit: 20

Enrollment Preferences: French majors and certificate, Africana and Comp. Lit

Expected Class Size: 20

Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

Distributions: (D1)

This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:

AFR 204 (D1) RLFR 203 (D1) COMP 282 (D1)

Attributes: GBST African Studies Electives  GBST Borders, Exiles + Diaspora Studies Electives

Not offered current academic year

RLFR 205  (S) On Strike: Workers and Revolutions in the French Republic

The recent "yellow vests" (gilets jaunes) protests in France have attracted international attention to the experiences of French workers. Yet these protests are only the latest example in a series of workers' movements that have shaped French identity. From the revolutions of 1830 and 1848, to the Popular Front of the 1930s, to the general strike that fueled the events of May 1968, workers have played a significant role in determining France's sociocultural values and political orientation. In this course, we will study representations of workers in literary and filmic texts dating from the late nineteenth century to the present. We will consider how depictions of the worker have evolved amid changing sociocultural conditions in France: for instance, the arrival of immigrants from such countries as Spain, Italy, and Portugal, and later from the Maghreb; the entry of women into the workforce; the disappearance of the rural farm worker, or paysan; the creation of a nuclear power grid; and deindustrialization. Finally, we will examine how the memory of workers is preserved in twenty-first-century France. Conducted in French.

Class Format: Seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: class participation, reaction papers, oral presentations, and a final project

Prerequisites: strong performance in RLFR 105; RLFR 106; another RLFR 200-level course; placement exam; or permission of instructor

Enrollment Limit: 20

Enrollment Preferences: French Majors and certificate students

Expected Class Size: 20

Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

Distributions: (D1)

Spring 2020

SEM Section: 01  TF 2:35 pm - 3:50 pm  Carl B. Cornell

RLFR 206  (F) The Outsider in French & Francophone Film Adaptations of Literary Texts  (DPE)
In this course students will examine the figure of the outsider (queer, black, woman, intruder, loner) in several French and Francophone literary texts and their film adaptations and will explore questions such as: how are such outsiders translated onto the screen? To what extent does outsider status help maintain, challenge, or reveal hegemonic discourse? In what ways do non-Western and Western filmmakers (re)cast power and privilege through the figure of the outsider in their film adaptations (of Western canonical texts)? Students will read original French and Francophone literary texts and apply theories of film adaptation to their analyses.

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: three response papers, one short essay on film adaption, one video essay with a student partner

Prerequisites: students should have taken RLFR 105 or above, or placement test, or by permission of instructor

Enrollment Limit: 16

Enrollment Preferences: Comparative Literature majors, Africana Studies concentrators, French majors and certificates

Expected Class Size: 12

Grading: yes pass/fail option, no fifth course option

Distributions: (D1) (DPE)

Difference, Power, and Equity Notes: This course fulfills the DPE requirement because it focuses via the figure of the outsider on power dynamics (based on sexual identity race, class, gender) between cultural producers, in literary texts and their film adaptations.

Attributes: FMST Core Courses

Not offered current academic year

RLFR 208 (F) Queens, Crusaders and Cannibals: Gender, Race and Religion in Medieval and Renaissance France

The intersection of gender, race, and religion is at the heart of contemporary political and social debates. How to build a nation and how to live together were also key questions for Medieval and Renaissance writers. In this introductory course in Early Modern Literature, we will study how literary works from the 11th to the 16th centuries represented conflicting debates on gender, race, and religion, from the Crusades opposing Christians and Muslims, to the Wars of Religion opposing Catholics and Protestants. We will explore how these concepts were intertwined in courtly love poems and chivalric novels in Europe, and how they were redefined in humanist writings and travel narratives to the Americas. Through an investigation of epic poems, allegories, tales, sonnets, novels, travel narratives, and essays by Marie de France, Christine de Pisan, Pierre de Ronsard, Louise Labé, François Rabelais, Michel de Montaigne and Marguerite de Valois, students will compare cultural, political, and ideological debates in Early Modern France with 21st-century questions on racism, sexism and discrimination.

Class Format: Seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: grade based on active participation, weekly written responses, midterm exam, and final project

Prerequisites: exceptional performance in RLFR 105, strong performance in RLFR 106, or by Placement Test, or permission of instructor

Enrollment Limit: 20

Enrollment Preferences: French majors and French certificate students, and those with compelling justification for admission

Expected Class Size: 20

Grading: yes pass/fail option, no fifth course option

Distributions: (D1)

Fall 2019

SEM Section: 01 TF 2:35 pm - 3:50 pm Cécile Tresfels

RLFR 210 (F) Scientific Selves: Medicine, Technology, and Identity in Early Modern France

The early modern period has long been associated with scientific discovery and shifting ideology in France. From Copernicus on, thinkers such as René Descartes, Blaise Pascal, and Antoine Lavoisier helped advance the Scientific Revolution, which led to medical and technological breakthroughs, as well as important advances in our understanding of the world and our solar system. This course examines the role that France played in pursuing such discoveries, as well as the ways newfound knowledge impacted notions of belonging and alterity. How did the Scientific Revolution and French colonization lead to the creation of social, cultural, and medical "others"? How did scientific discourse permeate verbal and
visual expression and depict those who did not fit into normative paradigms of gender, sexuality, ability, ethnicity, belief, and culture? What avenues for self-expression and definition were available to those whom society excluded? What parallels can we see with twenty-first-century questions of political activism, social justice, sciences, and technology? To explore these questions, we will analyze literary texts, visual representations, and historical documents, such as medical treatises, scientific diagrams, and texts on new technologies. Conducted in French.

Class Format: Seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: active class participation, written reflections, quizzes, mid-semester presentation, and final paper
Prerequisites: strong performance in RLFR 105; RLFR 106; another RLFR 200-level course; placement exam; or permission of instructor
Enrollment Limit: 20
Enrollment Preferences: French Majors and certificate students
Expected Class Size: 20
Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option
Distributions: (D1)
This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:
RLFR 210 (D1) STS 211 (D2)

Fall 2019
SEM Section: 01 MR 1:10 pm - 2:25 pm Theresa Brock

RLFR 212 (S) Scandalous News: Media and Transgression in Pre-Revolutionary France
Today's twenty-four-hour news cycle bombards us with scandalous stories. On our smartphones, tablets, and screens, personal transgressions and their political consequences loom large. In this constant state of media immersion, scandal and its communication have come to define our time. Yet centuries ago in Pre-Revolutionary France, scandalous news played an even more crucial role, in a society centered on obedience to monarchy and monolithic institutions. In this course, we will consider how institutionalized codes of gender, social class, and religion shaped individual identity, how those who broke from these codes created individual autonomy, and how the scandals they caused were communicated to others. To pursue these questions, we will analyze literature, journalism, and legal texts that document scandalous figures and compare these early modern scandals with those of the twenty-first century.

Class Format: Seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: active class participation, written reflections, quizzes, mid-semester presentation, and final paper
Prerequisites: strong performance in RLFR 105; RLFR 106; another RLFR 200-level course; placement exam; or permission of instructor
Enrollment Limit: none
Enrollment Preferences: French Majors and certificate students
Expected Class Size: 20
Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option
Distributions: (D1)

Spring 2020
SEM Section: 01 MR 1:10 pm - 2:25 pm Theresa Brock

RLFR 215 (F) The French Adventure: Word, Sound, and Image in the Digital Age
The French Adventure examines celebrated French literary texts (from the Middle Ages to Modernity) that draw on the theme of adventure, putting them into dialogue with their graphic novel and filmic adaptations (from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries). This course seeks to explore the phenomena of word (written or spoken), image (still or moving), and sound, as well as their interactions in today's environment of multimedia and digital immersion. Why have we seen an explosion of graphic novels and films depicting French literary classics in recent decades? How can these visual and audiovisual renderings enhance our appreciation for and understanding of written texts, and what aspects of the written word remain untranslatable to the world of the image? To address these questions, we will study a series of literary texts that depict historical moments from the late Middle Ages, to Absolute Monarchy, to the Belle Époque. From our visual vantage point of the twenty-first century, we will gain familiarity with the defining figures and events that these texts represent, from the fifteenth to the twentieth centuries. At the same time, we will interrogate the
French-language graphic novel adaptations of each text, as well as portions of American-made filmic representations to consider questions of patrimoine, visual culture, and (trans)national identity. *Conducted in French.*

**Class Format:** seminar

**Requirements/Evaluation:** active class participation, reading journal (with written reflections), quizzes, discussion leading, and final paper

**Prerequisites:** successful performance in RLFR 105, RLFR 106, or another RLFR 200-level course; or by placement test; or permission of the instructor

**Enrollment Limit:** 20

**Enrollment Preferences:** all are welcome, but if over-enrolled, preference will be given to French majors and certificate students; and those with compelling justification for admission

**Expected Class Size:** 10

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D1)

*Not offered current academic year*

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**RLFR 220 (S) Fairy Tales: Love and Politics at the Sun King’s Court**

This course explores the literary and historical development of love and politics in 17th-century France. These two motifs dominated courtly life at Versailles during the reign of Louis XIV, the Sun King. Since cultural and artistic creations tend to dialogue with social circumstances, the literature of this time period—which critics have sometimes called the “Grand Siècle”—develops different schools of thought on the interactions between politics and love. Some authors approached these interactions from an idealistic or innocent perspective, while others had a more pessimistic or realistic outlook. Together, we will examine why and how each trajectory formed while also investigating the roles of literary genre and authorial gender. As part of our explorations, students will compose their own, original fairy tales and will also adapt a written tale into an in-class theatrical performance. *Conducted in French.*

**Class Format:** seminar

**Requirements/Evaluation:** active class participation, quizzes, a midterm paper, an original fairy tale, an in-class performance of the fairy tale in groups

**Prerequisites:** successful performance in RLFR 105, RLFR 106, or another RLFR 200-level course; or by placement test; or permission of the instructor

**Enrollment Limit:** 20

**Enrollment Preferences:** all are welcome, but if over-enrolled, preference will be given to French majors and certificate students; and those with compelling justification for admission

**Expected Class Size:** 15

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D1)

*Not offered current academic year*

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**RLFR 224 (S) Sexuality and Seduction in Nineteenth and Twentieth-Century France** (DPE)

**Cross-listings:** WGSS 224  RLFR 224

**Primary Cross-listing**

In 1857, both Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* and Baudelaire's *Les Fleurs du mal were put on trial for sexual indecency and "crimes against public morality." In 1868, *Le Figaro* attacked Zola's novel *Thérèse Raquin* as "putrid literature" for its depiction of adultery, murder, and scandalous sexuality in nineteenth-century Paris. A century later, Gide, Proust, Colette, and Duras continued to shock French readers with their extraordinary novels on male and female homosexuality, intergenerational lovers, and biracial relationships. In this course, we will examine a broad range of issues on sexuality and seduction in nineteenth- and twentieth-century French literature, including eroticism and desire, love and betrayal, marriage and adultery, prostitution and fetishism, gay and lesbian identities, cross-dressing and gender representation, exoticism and colonial (s)exploitation. Readings to include novels, shorts stories, and poems by Chateaubriand, Constant, Duras, Balzac, Flaubert, Baudelaire, Zola, Maupassant, Barbey d'Aurevilly, Gide, Proust, Colette, Duras, and Guibert.

**Class Format:** seminar
**Requirements/Evaluation:** active class participation, two shorter papers, a midterm, and a longer final paper

**Prerequisites:** exceptional performance in RLFR 105, successful performance in RLFR 106 or 107, or by French placement exam, or by permission of instructor

**Enrollment Limit:** 18

**Enrollment Preferences:** French majors and certificate students, Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies majors, and those with compelling justification for admission; if the course is overenrolled, students will submit an online form

**Expected Class Size:** 18

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, no fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D1) (DPE)

This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:

WGSS 224 (D1) RLFR 224 (D1)

**Writing Skills Notes:** As the course description explains, this course centers on a critical examination of difference, power, and equity in a broad range of debates on sexuality in France, from 1800-2000. The content examines the effects of class, race, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality on social inequality; and the course employs critical tools to teach students how to articulate and interrogate the complexities of gender and sexuality, from reading and discussion, to critical analysis and writing.

**Difference, Power, and Equity Notes:** As the course description explains, this course centers on a critical examination of difference, power, and equity in a broad range of debates on sexuality in France, from 1800-2000. The content examines the effects of class, race, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality on social inequality; and the course employs critical tools to teach students how to articulate and interrogate the complexities of gender and sexuality, from reading and discussion, to critical analysis and writing.

Not offered current academic year

**RLFR 225 (F) Remembering the Great War: The First World War in Literature and Film (DPE)**

**Cross-listings:** COMP 224 RLFR 225

**Secondary Cross-listing**

From 1914 to 1918, the First World War ravaged Europe and slaughtered millions of soldiers and civilians from across the globe. Known as the "war to end (all) war(s)," World War I set the stage for an entire century of military conflict and carnage. New technologies led to unprecedented violence in the trenches, killing and wounding as many as 41 million soldiers and civilians. Beyond the slaughter at the front, the Great War also led to the global influenza pandemic that claimed up to 50 million lives, and the Armenian genocide that presaged the later atrocities of the Holocaust. The war also led to massive political transformation, from the Irish Rebellion and Russian Revolution, to the collapse of the German, Russian, Austro-Hungarian, and Ottoman Empires, and the redrawing of national borders across Europe and the Middle East. Even the end of the war with Treaty of Versailles lay the groundwork for new animosities that would lead to the Second World War just two decades later. However, the First World War also inspired great social change, from the emergence of the United States as a global leader and the founding of the League of Nations, to growing discontent with colonial rule in Asia and Africa, and greater power for women whose wartime labor influenced the post-war passage of their right to vote in countries across Europe and North America. To honor the centenary of the Great War in 2018, we will examine texts and films that bear witness to the suffering and courage of soldiers and civilians, and consider the legacy of the war in the twentieth- and twenty-first centuries. Readings to include memoirs and novels by Barbusse, Barker, Brittain, Cocteau, Graves, Hemingway, Jünger, Remarque, Wharton, Woolf; poetry by Apollinaire, Brooke, Mackintosh, McCrae, Owen, Sassoon; films by Attenborough, Boyd, Carion, Chaplin, Jeunet, Ozon, Renoir, Trumbo, Walsh, Weir; and archival materials on the roles of Williams students and faculty during the First World War. Readings and Discussions in English.

**Class Format:** seminar

**Requirements/Evaluation:** active class participation, two shorter papers (4-5 pages), a midterm, and a longer final paper (6-8 pages)

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 18

**Enrollment Preferences:** all are welcome, but if the course is overenrolled, preference will be given to Comparative Literature majors and French majors and certificate students; if the course is over-enrolled, students will submit a form online

**Expected Class Size:** 18

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, no fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D1) (DPE)

This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:
Difference, Power, and Equity Notes: As the course description explains, this course centers on a critical examination of difference, power, and equity during WWI. The content examines the effects of class, race, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality on social inequalities among soldiers & civilians, nations & colonies, men & women. The course also employs critical tools to teach students how to articulate and interrogate the social injustices of the Great War, from reading & discussion, to analytical essays & archival investigation.

Not offered current academic year

RLFR 226 (S) Black France/France Noire

Cross-listings: RLFR 226 AFR 226

Primary Cross-listing

On the eve of the new millennium, the year 1998 saw the emergence in France of "Black studies à la française" (Ndiaye). Inspired, in part, by the 150th anniversary of the 1848 abolition of slavery, the French black minority "made itself more visible" (Faes and Smith). This course examines a wide range of discursive practices through which athletes, artists, authors, politicians, activists, and scholars amplified their voices in the French hexagone. It retraces the rise of these discourses and how they assert, reframe, and establish blackness as a legitimate field of knowledge and a space of affirmation and contestation. Following a study of the interwar period (1918-1939), when the work of "negritude women" (Sharpley-Whiting) such as "afro-latinité" spurred the negritude movement, we will discuss publications, documentaries, and seminal moments of protest in the early twenty-first century. Course material may include works by Suzanne Césaire, Jane and Paulette Nardal, Aimé Césaire, Frantz Fanon, Achille Mbembé, Françoise Vergès, Pascal Blanchard, Nicolas Bancel and Sandrine Lemaire, Pap Ndiaye, Gaston Kelman, Rokhaya Diallo, Alice Diop, Léonora Miano, and Fabienne and Véronique Kanor. Conducted in French.

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: response papers, midterm paper, TV show, colloquium

Prerequisites: RLFR 201, 202, or 203, or by permission of instructor

Enrollment Limit: 20

Enrollment Preferences: French and Africana Studies concentrators

Expected Class Size: 12

Grading: yes pass/fail option, no fifth course option

Distributions: (D1)

This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:

RLFR 226 (D1) AFR 226 (D1)

Not offered current academic year

RLFR 228 (S) Introduction to French and Francophone Film

Cross-listings: COMP 298 RLFR 228

Primary Cross-listing

In this course, we watch and examine seminal French and Francophone films. Starting with early French cinema and silent movies of the end of the nineteenth century, we continue with landmark films from the 1920s, '30s and '40s. World War II serves as a point of rupture to explore how the advent of Francophone film parallels postcolonial theory. Throughout the semester, we discuss film as spectacle, the emergence of narrative forms, innovative technical practice and their connection to aesthetics. We also look at the role of film in addressing larger questions that include acts of rebellion, decolonization, the radical rejection of societal values, colonialism, dislocation, alienation, French collaboration during the German occupation, and the intersection of history and biography, as well as migration, in between-ness, and transnationalism. Films from the Lumière brothers, Méliès, Guy-Blaché, Vigo, Truffaut, Sembene, Mambety, Malle, Varda, Palcy, Peck, and Sissako. Conducted in French.

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: response papers, midterm paper, TV show, colloquium

Prerequisites: RLFR 201, 202, or 203, or by permission of instructor

Enrollment Limit: 15

Enrollment Preferences: RLFR 201, 202, or 203, or by permission of instructor
**RLFR 240 (S) The Banlieue in Literature, Music, and Film**

**Cross-listings:** AFR 241 COMP 281 RLFR 240

**Primary Cross-listing**

In this course we will read, watch, and listen to various constructions of the banlieue in French music, film, and literature to focus on the contestatory and affirmative dimensions of these narratives.

**Class Format:** seminar

**Requirements/Evaluation:** journaling, presentation, in-class discussion, and final project

**Prerequisites:** RLFR 105 and above

**Enrollment Limit:** 20

**Enrollment Preferences:** French majors, certificate, Africana and Comparative literature students

**Expected Class Size:** 15

**Grading:** no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D1)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

AFR 241 (D1) COMP 281 (D1) RLFR 240 (D1)

**Attributes:** FMST Core Courses

Not offered current academic year

**RLFR 260 (F) Reading Comics from the French-Speaking World**

**Cross-listings:** COMP 260 RLFR 260

**Primary Cross-listing**

From political cartoons and satire of the 19th century to contemporary graphic novels, the bande dessinée has a long history in the French-speaking world. We will read classics such as Astérix and Tintin, and contemporary BD from France, Québec, Côte d'Ivoire, Morocco, Rwanda, and Guadeloupe to analyze how they tackle subjects such as nation, empire, sexuality, biography, war and human rights. We will pay attention to the visual form and critical theory of the genre. *Conducted in French.*

**Class Format:** seminar

**Requirements/Evaluation:** weekly response papers, two short papers, presentation and final research project

**Prerequisites:** RLFR 201, 202, or 203, or by permission of instructor

**Enrollment Limit:** 20

**Enrollment Preferences:** French majors and certificate students, Comparative Literature majors

**Expected Class Size:** 15

**Grading:** no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D1)

**This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:**

COMP 260 (D1) RLFR 260 (D1)

Not offered current academic year
RLFR 261  (F)  Haitian and French Caribbean Literatures and Films

Cross-listings:  COMP 283  AFR 261  RLFR 261

Primary Cross-listing

Over the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, authors and filmmakers have questioned prevalent representations of the Creole and French-speaking Caribbean such as the idea of Haiti as the First Black republic and the poorest nation in the Western hemisphere and of Martinique and Guadeloupe as the "French" Caribbean. They have also interrogated their forebears by reclaiming modernity, reframing History, and telling "intimist" stories (Ferly). This course focuses on the diverging paths by Haitian and French Caribbean literatures (short stories, play, poem, novels) and film (short, feature and documentaries) as critical interventions that bring into focus gender, slavery, identity, exile, migration, imperialism, culture, and (non) sovereignty.

Class Format:  seminar

Requirements/Evaluation:  in-class discussions, journaling, steps towards final project, final project and presentation

Prerequisites:  French majors, French certificate, Africana and Comparative Literature students

Enrollment Limit:  15

Enrollment Preferences:  105 and above, French majors, French certificate, Africana and Comparative Literature students

Expected Class Size:  10

Grading:  no pass/fail option,  no fifth course option

Distributions:  (D1)

This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:

COMP 283 (D1) AFR 261 (D1) RLFR 261 (D1)

Attributes:  FMST Core Courses

Not offered current academic year

RLFR 302  (S)  Monsters of the Renaissance

Where did monsters appear before comics and blockbusters? Before cinematic ghosts, vampires, and zombies, the French Renaissance popularized the Scythian Lamb, the Monk Fish, the Monopod, the Wind-Eaters from the Island of Ruach, and the mythic giants Gargantua and Pantagruel. The Latin word monstrum referred to a prodigy that did not fit the laws of nature. Thus, the monster not only generated wonder, curiosity, and fear, but both challenged and disrupted normative social values. In this course, students will analyze novels, travel narratives, medical treatises, essays, and epic poems from 16th-century France, when writers, doctors, and travelers developed a critical reflection on monstrosity in order to deal with otherness. This encompassed fantastic creatures, non-human beings, and natural phenomena, as well as people whose gender, race, religion, and bodies deviated from established norms. In this course, students will think critically about race, gender, and disability, and study the complexities of fear, disgust, wonder, and fascination. Readings to include classical texts by Homer and Ovid, medieval texts like the Legend of Saint George and the Dragon, and Renaissance texts by Francois Rabelais, Jean de Léry, Marguerite de Navarre, Ambroise Paré, Michel de Montaigne, and Agrippa d'Aubigné.

Class Format:  Seminar

Requirements/Evaluation:  grade based on active participation, weekly written responses, midterm exam and final project

Prerequisites:  exceptional performance in RLFR 106, or an RLFR 200-level course, or by Placement Test, or permission of instructor

Enrollment Limit:  20

Enrollment Preferences:  French majors and French certificate students, and those with compelling justification for admission

Expected Class Size:  20

Grading:  yes pass/fail option,  no fifth course option

Distributions:  (D1)

Spring 2020

SEM Section: 01   TF 1:10 pm - 2:25 pm    Cécile  Tresfels

RLFR 305  (F)  Where We Are & Where We Go: Spaces & Places of Contemporary France
How do people in France give meaning to the spaces they inhabit or move through? What does it mean to be from "here" or "there"? Through contemporary French literature and cultural analysis, we will explore these questions in the urban landscapes of major French cities, including Lyon, Marseilles, Nantes, and Angoulême. We will focus on literary representations of the home, the street, the park, the grocery store, and the train, and discuss the ways videos, press articles, photographs, and websites depict neighborhoods, festivals, and street theater. We will also examine a variety of theories that will help us conceptualize urban space and interpret these literary and cultural texts on city life in contemporary France. Readings to include texts by Annie Ernaux, Patrick Modiano, Leïla Sebbar, Didier van Cauwelaert, Yasmina Reza, Jean Rolin, Marie Darrieussecq, and Xavier Houssin. Conducted in French.

Class Format: seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: class participation, several short essays (1-2 pages), midterm essay (5 pages), digital mapping project, and final oral presentation (based on midterm)
Prerequisites: strong performance in RLFR 106 or 107; a RLFR 200-level course; another RLFR 300-level course; or permission of instructor
Enrollment Limit: 20
Enrollment Preferences: French majors & certificate students; those with compelling justification for admission; seniors returning from study abroad (Francophone countries) particularly welcome
Expected Class Size: 20
Grading: yes pass/fail option, no fifth course option
Distributions: (D1)

Not offered current academic year

RLFR 309 (F) Contemporary Short Stories from North Africa
Cross-listings: AFR 307 RLFR 309

Primary Cross-listing
Short stories are the vibrant center of the literary landscape in North Africa today. Written in French, Arabic and sometimes Amazigh languages, short stories provide timely interventions in political and social discourse. In this course, we will read short stories that use humor and satire to address the effects of globalization on local communities, that experiment with language to portray war and revolution, and that seek to create a new space for the discussion of gender. We will also analyze films, sociological texts and Moroccan, Algerian and Tunisian online newspapers in order to explore contemporary transformations of life in North Africa. Readings by Maissa Bey, Abdelfattah Kilito, Zeina Tabi, Mohamed Zafzaf, Ahmed Bouzfour, Soumaya Zahy and Fouad Larouzi among others. Conducted in French.

Class Format: seminar/discussion
Requirements/Evaluation: active class participation, weekly response papers, two short papers, an oral presentation and a final paper
Prerequisites: RLFR 201, 202 or 203 or permission of instructor
Enrollment Limit: 20
Enrollment Preferences: French majors and those with compelling justification for admission
Expected Class Size: 20
Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option
Distributions: (D1)

This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:
AFR 307 (D1) RLFR 309 (D1)
Attributes: GBST African Studies Electives
Not offered current academic year

RLFR 310 (S) Le Moyen Âge en images: Decoding the Middle Ages

This seminar investigates questions of visual culture and textual analysis in the Middle Ages. Although different from today's multimedia and digital environment, the Middle Ages boasted its own form of visual culture that will enable us to draw meaningful connections between medieval literature and history and modern-day debates on gender and sexuality. To explore these connections, we will study literary texts from the 12th-16th centuries in modern French translation, making comparisons to bandes dessinées that seek to visualize each text from a twenty-first-century perspective. We will investigate the points of overlap and divergence between the original texts and accompanying comics to ask why and how today’s artists are returning
to the literature and culture of the Middle Ages, especially in a time of globalization and technological immersion. For example: How might our findings inform our outlook on international politics, as well as gender-based forms of activism, such as the #MeToo movement, among other forms of social and political engagement? Conducted in French

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: active class participation, reading journal (with written reflections), quizzes, mid-semester project: une bande dessinée, and final paper

Prerequisites: successful performance in RLFR 106 or another RLFR 200-level course; or by placement test; or permission of the instructor

Enrollment Limit: 20

Enrollment Preferences: all are welcome, but if over-enrolled, preference will be given to French majors and certificate students; and those with compelling justification for admission

Expected Class Size: 12

Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

Distributions: (D1)

Not offered current academic year

RLFR 316  (S) Paris on Fire: Incendiary Voices from the City of Light (1830-2015)

Cross-listings: WGSS 315  RLFR 316

Primary Cross-listing

During the 1830s, Balzac described Paris as a "surprising assemblage of movements, machines, and ideas, a city of one hundred thousand novels, the head of the world," but also characterized the French capital as a "land of contrasts," a "monstrous wonder," a "moral sewer." Similarly, writers from Hugo to Zola have simultaneously celebrated Parisian elegance and condemned the appalling misery of Paris's urban poor. Since 1889, Paris has been feted as the "City of Light" for its Enlightenment legacy, its Eiffel Tower modernity, and its luminous urban energy, captured in countless paintings, photographs, and film. However, Paris is also the historical site of revolution, resistance, and riots. From revolutionary revolt (1830, 1848, 1871), to wartime resistance (1870, 1914-18, 1940-44), to reformist and race riots (1968 and 2005), Paris has repetitively sparked with incendiary passion and political protest. As fires raged during the riots in 2005, many heard the echo of Hitler's ominous 1944 question, "Is Paris burning?" and asked: why was Paris burning again at the dawn of the twenty-first century? And following the recent terrorist attacks in Paris in 2015, many wonder what lies ahead for the City of Light. To answer these questions, we will examine the social, political, and literary landscape of Paris during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, from urbanization and modernization, to occupation and liberation, to immigration and globalization. Readings to include poetry, short stories, and novels by Hugo, Balzac, Baudelaire, Maupassant, Verne, Zola, Apollinaire, Colette, Duras, Perec, Rochefort, and Charef. Films to include works by Clair, Truffaut, Godard, Minnelli, Clément, Lelouch, Luhrmann, Kassovitz, Besson, and Jeunet. Conducted in French.

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: active class participation, midterm exam, and two to three papers

Prerequisites: strong performance in RLFR 106 or 107; a RLFR 200-level course; another RLFR 300-level course; or permission of instructor

Enrollment Limit: 20

Enrollment Preferences: French majors and certificate students; Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies majors; and those with compelling justification for admission

Expected Class Size: 20

Grading: yes pass/fail option, no fifth course option

Distributions: (D1)

This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:

WGSS 315 (D2) RLFR 316 (D1)

Attributes: GBST Urbanizing World Electives

Not offered current academic year

RLFR 318  (F) Twentieth-Century French Novel: From Adversity to Modernity

Cross-listings: COMP 318  RLFR 318
In his futurist novel *Paris in the Twentieth Century* (1863), Jules Verne envisions an era of technological superiority, complete with hydrogen cars and high-speed trains, televisions and skyscrapers, computers and the internet. But in Verne's vision of modernity, technological sophistication gives way to intellectual stagnation and social indifference, in a world where poetry and literature have been abandoned in favor bureaucratic efficiency, mechanized surveillance, and the merciless pursuit of profit. To contest or confirm this dystopic vision, we will examine a broad range of twentieth-century novels and their focus on adversity and modernity. In a century dominated by the devastation of two World Wars, the atrocities of colonial empire, and massive social and political transformation, the novel both documented and interrogated France's engagement with race and ethnicity, gender and sexuality, colonialism and immigration. Within this historical context, we will discuss the role of the novel in confronting war and disease, challenging poverty and greed, and exposing urban isolation and cultural alienation in twentieth-century France. Readings to include novels by Colette, Genet, Camus, Duras, Ernaux, Guibert, Begag. Lectures to include discussions of Gide, Proust, Sartre, Beauvoir, Cixous, Foucault, Jelloun, Djébar. Films to include works by Fassbinder, Annaud, Lioret, Ducastel, Martineau, Téchiné, Charef. *Conducted in French.*

**Class Format:** seminar

**Requirements/Evaluation:** active class participation, midterm exam, and two to three papers

**Prerequisites:** a 200-level course; or by placement test; or permission of instructor

**Enrollment Limit:** 20

**Enrollment Preferences:** French majors and certificate students; Comparative Literature majors; and those with compelling justification for admission; seniors returning from study abroad (in France or other Francophone countries) are particularly welcome

**Expected Class Size:** 20

**Grading:** yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D1)

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In 1834, Balzac wrote that "Paris is a veritable ocean. Sound it: you will never know its depth." The same can be said of the French nineteenth-century novel and its boundless ability to echo the past and illuminate the present. From the Romanticism of Stendhal and Hugo, and the Realism of Balzac and Flaubert, to the Naturalism of Zola and Maupassant, the novel became a forum for examining illicit sexuality, institutional misogyny, social injustice, criminal passions, revolutionary struggles, and Parisian pleasures in nineteenth-century France. Characters such as the imprisoned housewife Emma Bovary, the reluctant revolutionary Jean Valjean, the social-climbing lover Julien Sorel, the ambitious undergraduate Rastignac, and the domestically-abused Gervaise became synonymous with France's turbulent social and political landscape from the 1830s to the 1880s. And as recent film adaptations make clear, these desperate housewives and extreme makeovers continue to haunt our twenty-first century present. Reinterpreted by such actors as Gérard Depardieu, Isabelle Huppert, Uma Thurman, Claire Danes, and Jennifer Aniston, the nineteenth-century novel continues to sound out the scandalous and sensational depths of our own century. Readings to include novels by Balzac, Stendhal, Hugo, Flaubert, Maupassant, Zola. Films to include adaptations by Clément, Berri, August, Arta, Lelouch, Chabrol. *Conducted in French.*

**Class Format:** seminar

**Requirements/Evaluation:** active class participation, midterm exam, and two to three papers

**Prerequisites:** a 200-level or 300-level RLFR literature course at Williams; advanced coursework during study abroad; or by permission of the instructor

**Enrollment Limit:** 16

**Enrollment Preferences:** French majors and certificate students; Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies majors; Comparative Literature majors; and those with compelling justification for admission

**Expected Class Size:** 16

**Grading:** no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

**Distributions:** (D1)

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**Primary Cross-listing**

**Primary Cross-listing**

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RLFR 414 (S) Senior Seminar: Coming of Age: French and Francophone Childhood and Adolescent Film (DPE)

Cross-listings: RLFR 414 COMP 414

Primary Cross-listing

Like the bildungsroman in literature, the coming of age story is a genre in itself in cinema. In this senior seminar, we will watch, discuss, and analyze French and Francophone childhood and adolescent narrative films whose protagonists bring into focus larger issues such as racial discrimination, class, gender, sexual identity, social mobility, repression from the state, regime change, delinquency, justice, bereavement, and human trafficking. We will watch seminal films by Euzhan Palcy, the Dardennes brothers, Céline Sciamma, Férid Boughédir, François Truffaut, Michel Ocelot, Claude Pinoteau, Abdellatif Kéchiche, Laurent Cantet, and Raoul Peck.

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: three, three-page response papers; thesis statement, methodology, and works cited list on one page; one script of a video essay

Prerequisites: 200 RLFR level courses

Enrollment Limit: 19

Enrollment Preferences: French and Comparative Literature majors and certificate students

Expected Class Size: 10

Grading: yes pass/fail option, no fifth course option

Distributions: (D1) (DPE)

This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:

RLFR 414 (D1) COMP 414 (D1)

Difference, Power, and Equity Notes: This course qualifies for a Difference, Power, and Equity requirement because the films we focus on racial inequality, class, gender, sexual identity, post slavery society in the Caribbean, lack of social mobility, repression from the state, regime change, delinquency, justice, bereavement, and human trafficking.

Not offered current academic year

RLFR 493 (F) Senior Thesis: French

French senior thesis.

Class Format: independent study

Extra Info: this is part of a full-year thesis (493-494)

Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

Distributions: (D1)

Fall 2019

HON Section: 01 TBA Jennifer L. French

RLFR 494 (S) Senior Thesis: French

French senior thesis.

Class Format: independent study

Extra Info: this is part of a full-year thesis (493-494)

Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

Distributions: (D1)
Spring 2020
HON Section: 01    TBA     Jennifer L. French

RLFR 497  (F) Independent Study: French
French independent study.
Class Format: independent study
Grading:  yes pass/fail option,     yes fifth course option
Distributions: (D1)

Fall 2019
IND Section: 01    TBA     Jennifer L. French

RLFR 498  (S) Independent Study: French
French independent study.
Class Format: independent study
Grading:  yes pass/fail option,     yes fifth course option
Distributions: (D1)

Spring 2020
IND Section: 01    TBA     Jennifer L. French

RLFR 511  (F) Intensive  French Grammar and Translation
This course is designed to offer students a thorough and systematic review of sentence structures and grammar to develop a reading knowledge of French. Through this intensive study, students will learn to decipher the subtleties of the written language, and as they become more confident they will start translating a variety of short excerpts. Students are also expected to learn and develop a wide lexical range centered on art history and criticism, but not limited to it.
Class Format: classes meet twice weekly and are conducted in English
Requirements/Evaluation:  evaluation will be based on class participation, papers, a midterm, and a final examination
Prerequisites:  a strong interest and need to learn French
Enrollment Preferences:  although this course is to serve the needs of students enrolled in the Graduate Program in the History of Art, undergraduates may enroll by permission of the instructor
Grading:  pass/fail option only
Distributions: (D1)

Fall 2019
LEC Section: 01    TR 8:30 am - 9:45 am     Pramila Kolekar

RLFR 512  (S) Readings in French Art History and Criticism
This course is designed to provide Graduate Program students and interested others with knowledge of French acquired through translation and interpretation. The core of this course is based on the reading and translating of a variety of critical works covering different periods and genres in the field of art history. The material read (excerpts from museum catalogues; the Gazette des Beaux-Arts and other publications; Salons by Diderot, Baudelaire, and Thoré; artists on their works; and critics such as Francastel, Ch. Sterling, M. Faré, Valéry, Focillon) will be analyzed in form and content, translated or summarized, in order to develop the skills and understand the techniques necessary for reading French accurately. Grammar will be reviewed in context.
Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: evaluation is based on class participation, papers, a midterm, and a final examination

Prerequisites: RLFR 511 or permission of instructor; undergraduates are welcome with permission of instructor

Grading: pass/fail option only

Distributions: (D1)

Spring 2020

LEC Section: 01    TR 8:30 am - 9:45 am    Pramila Kolekar