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
This year-long course offers a complete introduction to the French language and is designed to help you become fully conversant in French by the end of the course. It is recommended for students who have no prior study of French. For those with some previous preparation, the 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 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).

**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 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.

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.

**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. 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.

**RLFR 101 (F) Introduction to French Language and Francophone Cultures (DPE)**

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.*

**Requirements/Evaluation:** active class participation, workbook exercises and compositions, chapter tests, midterms, and final exams

**Prerequisites:** none; for students who have never formally studied French; students who have previously studied French (in any formal course, at any level) must take the French Placement Test in late August or early September

**Enrollment Limit:** 18

**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:** 18

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

**Unit Notes:** RLFR 101-102 is a year-long course; credit granted only if both semesters (RLFR 101 and 102) are taken. RLFR 101-102 students must also take the French Winter Study Course.

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

**Difference, Power, and Equity Notes:** Through its focus on French and Francophone cultures around the world, this course enables students to gain both linguistic and cultural proficiency, and to engage with the great diversity of colonial and post-colonial cultures, histories, and identities in France and Belgium, Québec and Martinique, Sénégal and Morocco.

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**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:** This class meets 5 times a week from M-F. Students are required to attend class from Monday to Friday.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** participation, online homework, mid-semester and final projects, short writing assignments

**Prerequisites:** RLFR 101, or by Placement Test, or permission of instructor

**Enrollment Limit:** 20

**Enrollment Preferences:** Preference will go to first- and second-year students and those with compelling justification for admission. Statement of interest solicited if overenrolled.

**Expected Class Size:** 18

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

**Distributions:** (D1)

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**Spring 2023**

**LEC Section: 01  M-F 10:00 am - 10:50 am  Sophie F. Saint-Just**

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**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.

Requirements/Evaluation: Class participation, Homework, Mid-Semester and Final Exams, Short Writing Assignments

Prerequisites: RLFR 101-102, or by Placement Test, or Permission of Instructor

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 2022

SEM Section: 01 M-F 9:00 am - 9:50 am Preea Leelah

SEM Section: 02 M-F 11:00 am - 11:50 am Kathryn E Levine

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.

Requirements/Evaluation: Participation, Homework, Writing Assignments, Midterm, & Final Project.

Prerequisites: RLFR 103, or by Placement Test, or Permission of Instructor.

Enrollment Limit: 20

Enrollment Preferences: Enrollment preference for students who completed RLFR 103 in Fall 2022, or those who have placed into RLFR 104 on the French Placement Test.

Expected Class Size: 20

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

Distributions: (D1)

Spring 2023

SEM Section: 01 MW 7:00 pm - 8:15 pm Preea Leelah

RLFR 105  (F) Advanced French: Advanced Studies in French Language and Francophone Culture

In this French course, we will read and examine literary texts from the twelfth to the 19th centuries, and films from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. In order to analyze them, we will briefly situate them in their social and historical contexts. These works will help us better understand contemporary France and explore France's colonial past. We will also learn how to write a short research paper in French in the form of an explication de texte. While the themes, authors, time periods will vary, our approach will remain the same. The three themes love, fear, and France's colonial past will be the course's organizing principles. A small section of our course will be devoted to grammar revisions in order to continue to improve our reading and language skills. Conducted in French

Requirements/Evaluation: class participation, grammar exercises, 2 five-page papers, 1 presentation

Prerequisites: RLFR 104, placement exam, or by permission of instructor

Enrollment Limit: 15

Enrollment Preferences: All are welcome, but if overenrolled, preference will be given to first- and second-year students and French major and certificate students. If necessary, a statement of interest will be solicited.

Expected Class Size: 12
RLFR 106 (S) Advanced French: Danger and Desire in French Film and Fiction (DPE)

Cross-listings: RLFR 106 COMP 107

Primary Cross-listing

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 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 1820 to 2020, 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.

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: 16
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: 16
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 106 (D1) COMP 107 (D1)

Difference, Power, and Equity Notes: This course centers on a critical examination of difference, power, and equity in French film & fiction. The content examines the effects of class, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality on social inequalities among rich & poor, soldiers & civilians, nations & colonies, men & women. The course employs critical tools to teach students how to articulate and interrogate social injustice, through reading, viewing, discussion, writing, and revision.

Not offered current academic year

RLFR 107 (S) Advanced French: Formation and Transformation (DPE)

This advanced course is designed to help you refine your French speaking, comprehension, and writing skills in preparation for studying abroad or for more advanced French coursework. We will explore the themes of formation (the French term that means at once education and training) and personal transformation, through fictional and autobiographical texts and films. How do individuals find their place in societies and both define and redefine their own identities? Is it possible to reflect critically on one's own formation, or is it easier to do so through works of fiction? We will also reflect on our own educational experiences as we read works by authors such as Marguerite Duras, Maryse Condé, Annie Ernaux, and Pierre Bourdieu, and watch both recent and classic films from 1950s France to 2020s Québec.

Requirements/Evaluation: One close-reading presentation and essay, one discussion-leading presentation, two analytical essays, final project
Prerequisites: Successful performance in RLFR 105 or 106, or by placement test, or permission of the instructor.
Enrollment Limit: 20
Enrollment Preferences: Students from all majors welcome, but if over-enrolled, preference will be given to French majors and certificate students.
Expected Class Size: 20

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

Distributions: (D1) (DPE)

Difference, Power, and Equity Notes: This course explores questions of difference, power, and equity through a critical analysis of educational systems in France and the Francophone World. Although education is assumed to create equity (in both France and in North America), the content of this course will help students nuance this view and articulate how different social identities are often excluded from the power and opportunity that education seems to promise.

Spring 2023

SEM Section: 01 MWF 12:00 pm - 12:50 pm Kathryn E Levine

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, Quebec, and the Caribbean.

Requirements/Evaluation: class participation, grammar exercises, group discussion leading, two short papers, 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

Not offered current academic year

RLFR 202 (F) War and Resistance: Two Centuries of War Literature in France (1800-2015) (DPE)

Cross-listings: RLFR 202 COMP 292 WGSS 201

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 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 Vercingetorix, 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, Malo, Anglo, Pontecorvo, and Duras. Conducted in French.

Requirements/Evaluation: active class participation, midterm exam, and two to three papers (of 3-5 pages each)

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

Enrollment Limit: 16

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:** 16

**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 202 (D1) COMP 292 (D1) WGSS 201 (D1)

**Difference, Power, and Equity Notes:** This course focuses on a critical examination of difference, power, and equity in French war literature and film. Through the study of war (as invasion and conquest, occupation and resistance, colonialism and genocide), the course thus challenges students to examine the effects of class, race, religion, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality in narratives on war and violence, and on survival and resistance.

Not offered current academic year

**RLFR 214  (S) Everything New is Old Again: Legacies of Medieval France**

In the twelfth century, the French language shifted from a mostly ephemeral spoken language to a language that deserved to be written down. Authors began recording stories that had only been told aloud, and readers of Latin begin translating classical literature for French-speaking audiences. This huge burst of creative expression remade popular culture in ways that we can still recognize today--if we know what to look for. In this course, we will explore how our twenty-first-century passion for memes on TikTok and other social media has similar roots in twelfth-century tastes, and how the literature and culture of medieval France have shaped what we now think of as literature and pop culture. We will explore four major themes: the reinvention and adaptation of classical literature, the invention of modern romantic love, the introduction of King Arthur, and hilarious short fiction (also known as twelfth-century memes). Readings to include love poetry, short narratives both funny and serious, and longer texts about adventure and love. Conducted in French.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** active class participation, midterm paper, class presentation, and final project

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

**Enrollment Limit:** 16

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

**Expected Class Size:** 16

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

**Distributions:** (D1)

Not offered current academic year

**RLFR 216  (F) Women Behaving Badly: Deviant Women in Early Modern French Literature**

Female deviance often implies resisting a dominant and oppressive patriarchal status quo embedded within cultural and historical backgrounds. This course explores female characters in early modern French literature who refuse to conform to established gender roles. Defying social constructs of femininity, through either judicious negotiations or more aggressive and violent behavior, is an important trope in the writings of both male and female authors of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. What constitutes deviant behavior, however, depends on social definitions of gender roles, which evolve over time. In this course, we will first examine women's place within the historical and socio-cultural context of the Ancien Régime, which will lead to an examination of female behavior censured during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. We will then reflect on how we, as modern readers, perceive such deviancy at it relates to the past. Finally, we will discuss the relevance of studying deviant women in light of current events, such as the #MeToo movement, which has led to a new level of consciousness and empathy for the plight of marginalized groups. Potential readings to include Corneille's Médée, Madame de la Fayette's Princesse de Clèves, Laclos's Liaisons dangereuses, and Isabelle de Charrière's Lettre à Mistriss Henley.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** active class participation, one presentation (8-10 minutes), three to four papers (3-5 pages), and a longer final paper

**Prerequisites:** strong performance in RLFR 105; successful performance in RLFR 106; 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: 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 216 (D1) WGSS 216 (D2)

Difference, Power, and Equity Notes: This course focuses on a critical examination of difference, power, and equity in early modern France. Through the study of deviant women, the course thus challenges students to examine the effects of class, race, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality in narratives on women, misogyny, and criminality.

Fall 2022
SEM Section: 01 MR 2:35 pm - 3:50 pm Preea Leelah

RLFR 218 (S) Translating French: An Introduction to Theory and Practice

Cross-listings: COMP 209 RLFR 218

Primary Cross-listing

What decisions do translators make in order to render texts accurately (and even beautifully) into another language? What makes one translation "better" than another? Should we consider translation as a literary genre in its own right, and should we read translated texts differently from texts in their original language? This advanced course will invite you into the world of translation studies, bringing together aspects of translation theory and technical translation methodologies in order to develop your skills as translators, readers, and speakers of French. We will translate texts from a range of genres mostly from French into English and occasionally from English into French, paying particular attention to the formal and linguistic differences that can pose problems for translators. In addition to completing an independent translation project on your choice of text or media, you will also consider your own priorities as translators, formulating and revising two translation statements over the course of the semester. This course will be taught in French, and the class format will vary between lectures, seminar-style discussions, workshops, and student presentations.

Requirements/Evaluation: Active class participation, three written translations, and final translation project (including a written translation and class presentation).

Prerequisites: Strong performance in RLFR 106, successful performance in another 200-level French course, or by placement, or by permission of the instructor.

Enrollment Limit: 20

Enrollment Preferences: Preference will be given to French majors and certificate students, and to Comparative Literature majors.

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:
COMP 209 (D1) RLFR 218 (D1)

Spring 2023
SEM Section: 01 MWF 10:00 am - 10:50 am Kathryn E Levine

RLFR 226 (S) Black France/France Noire (DPE)

Cross-listings: AFR 226 RLFR 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
This course explores multiple ways Black identity evolves, adapts and is experienced differently depending on location. Students analyze Black experience in the U.S., France and Senegal through a range of texts from books and social media to music and film. One key aspect of the course is a study abroad trip to Senegal, which increases cultural awareness through experiential learning. This combination of textual learning with experiential knowledge exemplifies how language, religion, gender, geography, and performance shape one's racial identity. In the first section of the course, students investigate Black experience in the U.S., focusing on such topics as the one-drop rule, racial profiling and where mixed people fit within Black/White tensions. The second section highlights the politics of language in France. Students explore how words like "Black," "noir" and "race" have strong political connotations in France and spur both resistance to and alliance with Black American civil rights history. In the third part of the course, students visit Dakar, Senegal, and analyze Blackness through their own observations and encounters. Their trip insights jumpstart the final focus of the course on Senegal. Students investigate the influence of French colonialism on Black identity in Senegal, which makes the two geographical experiences of Blackness very different but still forever linked.

Class Format: seminar, the course includes a required spring break trip to Dakar, Senegal, which is no additional cost to students

Requirements/Evaluation: evaluation will be based on class participation, short weekly reading responses, two 4-5 page papers, a presentation based on the spring break trip, and a final presentation including a short 2-page report

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 8

Enrollment Preferences: students who have taken other AFR courses, Francophone speakers and students

Expected Class Size: 8

Grading: 

Distributions: (D2)

Attributes: AFR Core Electives GBST Borders, Exiles + Diaspora Studies Electives

Not offered current academic year

RLFR 232  (S)  Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité ? Race, Gender, and Political Power in Eighteenth-Century France  (DPE)

Cross-listings: RLFR 232 COMP 219

Primary Cross-listing

The French Revolution of 1789 was, to a large extent, inspired by Enlightenment thinkers such as Voltaire, Rousseau, and Diderot who promoted ideas on individual liberty, scientific progress, religious freedom, and secularism. The Revolution brought with it promises of a society freed from the abuses of an absolute monarchy. Yet as feminist thinker Olympe de Gouges would note, when France redefined its notion of citizenship after 1789, it did not include women and people of color. This course examines Enlightenment ideas that led to the French Revolution, while analyzing how those ideas failed to bring true equality. Voltaire, Buffon, and Montesquieu all advocated for the abolition of slavery, but they also held racist and sexist
views, justified by pseudoscientific discourse. By further juxtaposing these thinkers with feminist and abolitionist authors such as Olympe de Gouges and Claire de Duras, we will examine how eighteenth-century female authors advocated for the rights of women. Finally, we will analyze artworks such as Marie-Guillemine Benoist's *Portrait d'une nègresse* (1800) and discuss how France is using such works today to reckon with its history of discrimination.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** active class participation, one presentation (8-10 minutes), three to four papers (3-5 pages), and a longer final paper

**Prerequisites:** excellent performance in RLFR 105; successful performance in RLFR 106; other RLFR 200-level courses; or by French placement exam; or by permission of instructor

**Enrollment Limit:** 20

**Enrollment Preferences:** French majors and certificate students; Comparative Literature majors; and those with compelling justification for admission

**Expected Class Size:** 20

**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 232 (D1) COMP 219 (D1)

**Difference, Power, and Equity Notes:** In its focus on Race, Gender, and Political Power, this course centers on a critical examination of difference, power, and equity in eighteenth-century France. Through the study of enlightenment and feminist thinkers and leaders, the course asks students to analyze the social, political, and discursive effects of class, race, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality in narratives on revolution, and to re-examine both past and present definitions of "liberty, equality, fraternity."

Spring 2023

SEM Section: 01  MR 2:35 pm - 3:50 pm    Preea Leelah

**RLFR 260 (F) Francophone Graphic Novels**  (DPE)

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

**Primary Cross-listing**

In this class we will read contemporary graphic novels and *bandes dessinées* from Côte d'Ivoire, Morocco, Guadeloupe, Lebanon, France, and Québec to analyze how they approach subjects such as colonial history, migration and discrimination, gender and sexuality, and representations of disability and the racialized body. We will pay particular attention to the visual form and the critical theory of the graphic novel to further understand why this hybrid genre has become so popular and widespread, and how it is shaping conversations about difference and power in the Francophone world. *Conducted in French.*

**Requirements/Evaluation:** weekly 1-page response papers, two short 4-5-page papers, presentation and final 7-8-page research paper

**Prerequisites:** RLFR 105, 106, by placement 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) (DPE)

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

RLFR 260 (D1) COMP 260 (D1)

**Difference, Power, and Equity Notes:** The readings in this course focus on French colonial and Francophone postcolonial history, contemporary migration, and structures of discrimination built on race, religion, gender, and ableism in the French-speaking world. We will explore how graphic novels in their hybrid visual/verbal forms propose different ways of shaping the dynamics and the discourse of difference and power.

Fall 2022

SEM Section: 01  TR 11:20 am - 12:35 pm    Katarzyna M. Pieprzak
The banlieue looms large in the French collective imagination. From its origins in medieval law, the term banlieue at the end of the 20th century has taken on multiple, at times overlapping, but almost exclusively negative meanings. It designates a peripheral geographical space often in contrast to its city center, social exclusion, "urban culture"—as in Hip Hop-produced within that space, and last but not least the symbolic bias through which its inhabitants are viewed (Vieillard-Baron). In this course, we will examine various constructions of the banlieue in French music, a manifesto, film, blogs, and literature to focus on the analytical, contestatory and affirmative dimensions of these narratives. Two decades after the film La haine, and ten years after the riots, how are filmmakers, artists, authors, and scholars of the banlieue reimagining and reframing the banlieue? What do current depictions of banlieues in the French media tell us about the State, French politics, and the state of French politics? What do "banlieue films" and "banlieue lit" tell us about the banlieue? In this course, conducted in French, 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.

Requirements/Evaluation: 3 thesis five-page research papers, 2 start-of-the-class brief presentations, active participation to in-class discussions and mini-conference on the banlieue (class final project).

Prerequisites: RLFR 105 and above

Enrollment Limit: 14

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

Expected Class Size: 10

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

Distributions: (D1) (DPE) (WS)

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

RLFR 300 (D1) AFR 339 (D2) COMP 336 (D1)

Writing Skills Notes: To hone their research and writing skills (and prepare for their conference on the banlieue), students will write three research papers (with thesis statement and subheadings) from which they will receive professor feedback.

Difference, Power, and Equity Notes: This course, Banlieue in Lit, Music, Film fosters difficult but carefully framed conversations about race, class, gender, citizenship, housing segregation, discursive practices, immigration and belonging in contemporary France and how identities and power relationships are expressed in banlieue film, literature and French hip hop music.

Attributes: FMST Core Courses

Not offered current academic year
Difference, Power, and Equity Notes: This course examines the French colonial history and postcolonial futures of five major Francophone cities and pays particular attention to questions of representation of class, race and gender in the historical, literary and visual record.

Fall 2022

SEM Section: 01    TF 1:10 pm - 2:25 pm    Katarzyna M. Pieprzak

RLFR 360  (S)  Repairing a Broken World: Intro to North African Contemporary Art  (DPE)

Cross-listings:  ARTH 460  COMP 361  ARAB 360  RLFR 360  ARTH 560

Primary Cross-listing

How do artists respond to a world in crisis? How does visual art engage violent histories, injured bodies, social injustice and ecological disaster? In this course we will explore the political and ethical concept of repair as it emerges in the work of contemporary North African visual artists. Repair is both a material and symbolic transformational practice of putting together something that is torn or broken. It is never complete, nor does it redeem a history of harm or violence. Rather repair is an invitation: a bringing of people, histories, objects, buildings, feelings and geographies into relation with one another in order to link worlds that have been splintered and separated. It is also a call to imagine other futures. North African contemporary artists have deeply engaged in this type of repair work, attending to colonial history, economies of extraction and environmental damage, race and slavery, housing inequity, gender identity and broken transmission of memory. We will dive into the work of individual artists as well as collectives while reading theoretical texts about broken-world thinking, reparative epistemology, alternative archives, and material reparations.

Class Format: Section 1 is conducted entirely in French. Section 2 is conducted in English (with the option of selected reading in French). Students are welcome to sign up for either section but students taking the course for RLFR credit must register for section 1.

Requirements/Evaluation: For undergrads: Active participation, weekly glow posts, 5-page mid-term paper, 10-12 page final paper and presentation.
For grad students: Active participation, weekly glow posts, 5-page mid-term paper, and 20-page final paper and presentation.

Prerequisites: For RLFR students, any RLFR 200-level course or above, or by permission of instructor.

Enrollment Limit: 18/sec

Enrollment Preferences: If over-enrolled, preference will be given to RLFR, ARAB, ARTH and COMP majors, and only 4 spots will be offered to Grad Art students.

Expected Class Size: 15/sec

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

Distributions:  (D1)  (DPE)

This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:
ARTH 460 (D1) COMP 361 (D1) ARAB 360 (D1) RLFR 360 (D1) ARTH 560 (D1)

Difference, Power, and Equity Notes: This course critically examines art work that engages colonial history, economies of extraction and environmental damage, race and slavery, housing inequity, gender identity.

Spring 2023

SEM Section: 01    TR 11:20 am - 12:35 pm    Katarzyna M. Pieprzak

SEM Section: 02    TF 1:10 pm - 2:25 pm    Katarzyna M. Pieprzak

RLFR 410  (F)  Senior Seminar: Movement and Migration  (DPE)

How do movement and migration produce and disrupt constructions of identity, home, and the nation? In the context of movement and migration, how is place imagined, experienced and remembered? What are the relationships between movement and containment, flight and freedom? Over the course of the semester, we will examine literary texts, film and visual art from French-speaking communities that focus on: the immigration experience in France, the construction of a Francophone Atlantic identity, internal migration between rural and urban spaces, clandestine migration between Africa and Europe, population displacement due to war, and the possibility of creating portable or nomadic places of memory. Works by Chamoiseau, Glissant, Diome, Condé, Maffre, Pineau, and Binebine among others. Conducted in French.

Requirements/Evaluation: Weekly 1-page response papers, 5-page mid-term paper and a final 10-page research paper and presentation.

Prerequisites: Any 200-level RLFR course, or by permission of instructor
Enrollment Limit: 15

Enrollment Preferences: Senior French majors and students completing the certificate in French, but open to advanced students of French.

Expected Class Size: 12

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

Distributions: (D1) (DPE)

Difference, Power, and Equity Notes: Students will explore how literature, film and art narratives on migration and movement challenge (and also sometimes replicate) discourses of exclusion and structures of discrimination based on race and ethnic identity and gender. While the course focuses on French-speaking communities and people, we will think broadly about difference and power as they relate to movement, flight and freedom.

Not offered current academic year

RLFR 412 (F) Senior Seminar: Nineteenth-Century French Novel: Desperate Housewives and Extreme Makeovers

Cross-listings: WGSS 408  RLFR 412

Primary Cross-listing

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, Arteta, Lelouch, Chabrol. Conducted in French.

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)

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

WGSS 408 (D2) RLFR 412 (D1)

Not offered current academic year

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, Faiza Ambah, and Raoul Peck.

Requirements/Evaluation: three three-page response papers; thesis statement, methodology, and works cited list on one page; 2 low-stakes presentations and one script of a video essay or academic journal "special issue" essay

Prerequisites: 200-level RLFR 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

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.

Spring 2023
SEM Section: 01 MW 11:00 am - 12:15 pm Sophie F. Saint-Just

RLFR 493 (F) Senior Thesis: French
French senior thesis; this is part of a full-year thesis (493-494).
Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

Fall 2022
HON Section: 01 TBA Leyla Rouhi

RLFR 494 (S) Senior Thesis: French
French senior thesis; this is part of a full-year thesis (493-494).
Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

Spring 2023
HON Section: 01 TBA Leyla Rouhi

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

Fall 2022
IND Section: 01 TBA Leyla Rouhi

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

Spring 2023
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: 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)
Not offered current academic year

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 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.

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)
Not offered current academic year

Winter Study -------------------------------------------

RLFR 13 (W) Creative Portraiture in the Darkroom
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 (the 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 10 weekly lab or studio hours outside of regular classes.

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 majors then random
Expected Class Size: NA
Grading: pass/fail only
Unit Notes: 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 enable
Materials/Lab Fee: $150
Attributes: SLFX Winter Study Self-Expression

Winter 2023
LEC Section: 01 TWR 10:00 am - 12:50 pm 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 2023
HON Section: 01 TBA Leyla Rouhi

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

Winter 2023
HON Section: 01 TBA Leyla Rouhi

RLFR 88 (W) French Sustaining Program
Students registered for RLFR 101-102 are required to attend and pass the French Sustaining Program. However, students are also required to register for a regular Winter Study course. Once the regular Winter Study registration process is complete, the Registrar's Office will automatically enroll you in the Sustaining Program, check your class schedule to confirm enrollment.
Grading: pass/fail option only

Winter 2023
LAB Section: 01 TBA Danae Tsiamis, Paul Bouchet, Leyla Rouhi

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 2023
IND Section: 01 TBA Leyla Rouhi