Spring 2020 – List of advanced classes in French

France Through the Ages
FRE 3500
Dr. Brigette Weltman-Aron (MWF: 3)
This course explores selected French cultural landmarks and historical events from Gallo-Roman times to the mid-twentieth century. In addition to the textbook, we will read short texts illustrating various approaches to culture and history, and discuss works of art, photographs or film excerpts linked to each period. The course provides a deliberately broad overview of French cultural productions as an introduction to more specifically focused courses in literature and culture. This class will be taught in French.

Special Topics: Introduction to Semiotics
FRE 4930 / FRE 6735
Dr. Theresa Antes (MWF: 7)
Course description: This course will provide a general introduction to Semiotics, the study of signs. We will focus primarily on a linguistic approach to semiotics, focusing on ways that language is used signify meaning. Through a close examination of symbols, indexes and icons that derive from language but appear in other media, such as advertising, art, clothing, literature, and film and television, we will discuss how cultural differences shape message transmission in different languages and in multilingual societies. We will explore myth and metaphor, and examine ways that language and thought are shaped by forms of expression that we use, both denotative and connotative.

The French Language in the Americas: Varieties of French in North America
FRE 4501 / FRE 6736
Dr. Hélène Blondeau (M: 11, W: 10-11)
French in the Americas, language practices of Francophone communities, linguistics characteristics of the varieties of French, language variation, effect of language contact, language representations, attitudes. This semester the course will focus on the situation of the varieties of French in North America. This class will be taught in French.

Holocaust Memory in France
FRT 3004
Dr. Gayle M. Zachmann (T: 7, R: 7-8)
This course targets Holocaust memory in French majority and French-Jewish culture. It traces how Holocaust memory is mediated and performed in history, literature, film, exhibitions, commemorations and memorials, as well as when French Jewish memory runs parallel, diverges, or collides with majority discourse from the mid 1940s to the present. Class systematically introduces various kinds of archives, as well as less traditional materials, including footage and interviews filmed expressly for the course in France and Israel as recently as summer 2019. Students will have a rare opportunity to attend an international conference on Holocaust Memory in France in April. Some authors and filmmakers include: Vercors, Cahun, Delbo, Ophuls, Duras, Lanzmann, Goldman, Raczymow, Finkielkraut, Cixous, etc. This course is taught in English. It meets requirements for the Certificate in Holocaust Studies and the Certificate in European Jewish Studies, and is cross-listed with JST 3930 (section 0787) and EUS 3930 (section 7A49).
Special Study in French Literature: Literature and Migration

The New Francophone “novel of education”

FRW 4770 / FRW 6900
Dr. Alioune Sow (M: 9-10, W: 9)
The aim of this course is to examine the renewal of the bildungsroman using a selection of contemporary francophone novels. The course engages with the idea that the novel of education is a “symbolic form” (Moretti) whose variations (Lukacs, Williams) are determined by a changing social and political history in which youth remains “problematic” (Moretti). The commentaries and analysis of the works will focus on the relation between the forms, features and narrative configurations of the selected novels and the recent transformations of French society and francophone spaces. We will see how the selected novels respond to the new exigencies imposed by issues of migration, mobility, diaspora, race, extremism and terrorism. Authors include Mahir Guven, Alain Mabanckou, Jean-Eric Boulin, David Diop and Marie NDiaye.

Le nouveau « roman d’éducation » francophone

FRW 4770 / FRW 6900
Dr. Alioune Sow (M: 9-10, W: 9)
L’objectif de ce cours est d’examiner le renouvellement du bildungsroman à travers une sélection de romans contemporains francophones. Le cours s’articule principalement autour de l’idée que le roman d’éducation reste une « forme symbolique » (Moretti) dont les variantes (Lukacs, Williams) sont déterminées par une histoire sociale et politique changeante dans laquelle la jeunesse demeure « problématique » (Moretti). Les commentaires et l’analyse des œuvres porteront sur la relation entre les formes et configurations narratives des œuvres et les transformations récentes de la société française et des espaces francophones. Nous verrons comment les romans répondent aux nouvelles exigences imposées par des questions comme la migration, la mobilité, la diaspora, la race, les extrémismes et le terrorisme. Les auteurs étudiés incluent Mahir Guven, Alain Mabanckou, Jean-Eric Boulin, David Diop et Marie NDiaye.

Readings in 18th-Century French Literature: Eighteenth-Century Paris

FRW 4770 / FRW 6276
Dr. Rori Bloom (T: 7, R: 7-8)
Before Paris became “the capital of the nineteenth century,” it was already in the eighteenth century the capital of the Enlightenment, with its famous salons and cafés as centers of the new philosophy. In studying Paris through eighteenth-century French literature, we will develop an understanding of how space can be an essential inspiration for art and ideas. Our reading of the novel Manon Lescaut will explore the Parisian underworld with a focus on gambling dens and prisons (The Châtelet and the Salpêtrière) but also interrogate the novel’s the evocation of America as a utopian/dystopian, anti-Parisian experience. Our analysis of Le Neveu de Rameau will examine the open spaces of the Palais Royal and the Jardin de Luxembourg as well as the space of the philosophical and anti-philosophical salon as we accompany the characters on their stroll through the city. In between, we will analyze descriptions of Paris in Mercier (Le Tableau de Paris) and Restif (Les Nuits de Paris) as calls for reform on the eve of the French Revolution. For additional context for our primary texts, we will consult historiographical materials that provide background on the evolution of the city. Ultimately, students will create their own mental (and maybe digital!) maps of eighteenth-century Paris and come away with a more place-based understanding of this period in French cultural history.
Senior Seminar in French Literature  
FRW 4932  
Dr. Sylvie Blum (T: 8-9, R: 9)  
*Extreme Orient – Far East...* the class borrows this geographical term in examining literature from or about several eastern countries – Russia, India, Vietnam, Cambodia, China, Japan – as well as literature from persons from these areas relocated in the West: France or Canada. A short selection of films will be included. Authors include Clara Malraux, Kim Thuy, Amélie Nothomb, Dai Sijie, etc. Theories will include Edward Saïd and Homi Bhabha.