

2016

# FREN 340 Great Books Introduction Literature/ Analysis

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# FREN 340 - Great Books Intro Lit/Analysis

Spring 2016 \* Section 01

**Professor:** Bertin Ondja'a

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**Email:** [ondjaab@xavier.edu](mailto:ondjaab@xavier.edu)

**Office hours:** TR 2:00-4:00pm & by appt

**Class meetings:** TR 10:00 to 11:15

**Room:** Alter Hall 304

**Course Description:** This course serves as an entry point to the study of French literature. Through a deep reading of a selection of poems, plays, and prose works, we will explore together the tools, methods, and objectives of literary analysis. Spanning in time from the medieval period to today, and reaching across the globe from France to Africa to the Caribbean, students will gain insights into major Francophone literary movements and cultural forces. This course is designed for students who have just finished the intermediate sequence. It is required for all French majors.

In terms of the study of literature, the course provides an introduction to traditional forms of literary analysis through close readings of representative works in fables, poems and prose. The method of "*explication de texte*" will also be studied. In terms of language practice, the course provides additional opportunities to improve the four skills of French (speaking and understanding, reading, writing), with special emphasis on acquiring vocabulary, achieving greater fluency in spoken French, and eliminating basic grammatical errors from written French. The class activities and written work are geared to achieving these goals.

The class is conducted entirely in French. For each day, students should prepare any assigned written work (e.g., study questions) and should read carefully the text assigned for the class. The best method consists in reading the text without a dictionary the first time; one's subconscious will do a good deal of the work. At the second reading, the glosses and a dictionary can be consulted for words that escape the subconscious. If you find that you have looked up a word more than twice, you should make an index card entry for it (French on one side, English on the other). If you review these cards regularly, you will quickly acquire a good vocabulary.

Other recommendations for practicing French and increasing your cultural knowledge in general include reading additional short stories and novels. A limited number of bonus points will be available for written reports on any of this extra exposure to French culture. (Work prepared for other classes is not, of course, eligible.)

## Required Books:

- 1) Cahier d'un Retour au Pays Natal (French Edition) Jun 2000 by Aimé Césaire
- 2) Ville Cruelle (French Edition) 1971 by Mongo Beti
- 3) Contes de la Bécasse (French Edition) by Guy de Maupassant
- 4) Le Mariage de Figaro (French Edition) by Pierre - Augustin Caron de Beaumarchais

## Responsibilities of Students:

- \* Attend and participate in classes regularly.
- \* Complete all assigned activities.

\* Prepare the assignments before class. I may or may not collect homework exercises; in either case, you are responsible for preparing them as assigned and being ready to turn them in on the due date.

\* Students are responsible for all material covered in class **including schedule changes announced in class or via Canvas.**

\* Show respect for me and for your classmates by observing appropriate behavior, i.e. not interrupting or speaking when someone else is answering or explaining.

### **Evaluation:**

In order to pass the class, you will need to comply with the absence policy and do the readings and complete all assignments in due time, and produce satisfactory work. Satisfactory work means that I grade your work (such as a paper, or class participation for instance) higher than an F (60%). If an assignment is unsatisfactorily completed, I will let you know immediately and we will discuss the matter together. Here is the breakdown of how I will calculate your final grade.

**Paper 1 (in pairs):** 10% -

**Paper 2 (alone, but one of your peers will proofread it):** 15%

**Paper 3 (alone):** 20% -

**Short response papers:** 25 %

**Participation:**10%

**Reading journal:**10%

**Presentation:**10%

A=93-100    A-=90-92.5

B+=88-89.5    B=83-87.5    B-=80-82.5

C+=78-79.5    C=73-77.5    C-70-72.5

D+=68-69.5    D= 63-67.5    D-=60-62.5

F=<60

### **Papers 1(3 pages), 2(5 pages), and 3(9 pages):**

I will give you guidelines for all three writing assignments, but for the third paper you will also have the possibility to write on the topic of your choice. You will write the first paper in collaboration with another student from the class. You will write the second paper alone, but you will have to send it to a peer a few days before the deadline; your peer will then edit it and make suggestions with“track-changes” in Word; you will do the same for their paper. You will return the reviewed papers to each other two days before the deadline, which will give you time to work on your paper again before you submit it. I will grade both your paper and your review of your partner’s paper.

**Short response papers:** You will have short response papers (1-2 pages) to hand in on Thursdays. I will give you the subjects in advance.

**Participation:**

Being active in class is essential to your progress. You are expected to have done the readings actively: when reading, you can underline, take notes, write questions, or take any other approach that helps you participate in class later on.

**Reading journal:** this writing assignment will be your reading diary for the semester. You can choose to write on a bluebook or make a notebook if you prefer. You are required to write at least 3 sentences in a bluebook or a notebook for every class, and at least 2 pages/reflection (handwritten, the format being approximately that of a Blue Book) before the diaries are due. I read these journals and comment on them, but I do not “correct” them: we will use them as a means of communication. You will have a lot of freedom for this assignment. I will give you a grade at the end of the semester. These journals are due every other week.

**Presentation:** You will prepare a 3 minutes summary every time the class meets of what you got from the readings. You organize your presentation as wish, but it should be articulated around specific area. You could a specific theme that emerges from the reading.

**Absences & Participation:** You are expected to attend each class meeting, mostly because we miss you when you’re absent, but also because it affects your grade. I understand that things happen, so you have **two** free unexcused absences. Note: emailing me with an “excuse” does not excuse the absence. Absences are considered excused only in the case of a documented serious illness, a death in the immediate family, religious observance, or participation in a university-sponsored event (sports, field trip, etc.). Each absence beyond the first two will result in a deduction of 2 points **from the final grade**.

*Participation is key!* You cannot expect to improve if you do not engage with your fellow students or with me. Come to class each day with interesting things to say – and then say them! When your classmates say something, respond! As an added way of urging you to join the conversation, you will receive a daily grade for having participated and having spoken French.

**Phones & Electronics:** Unless instructed to bring and use a device for an in-class activity, these need to be shut off/silenced (vibrate doesn’t count – we can all hear it) and put away. You will be marked absent if I observe you using one. Take notes the old-fashioned, and better, way: on paper with a pen or pencil.

**Academic Honesty:** You should be aware of the University policy on Academic Honesty, excerpted here from the University Catalog. This policy applies to all courses in the Department of Modern Languages.

“All work submitted for academic evaluation must be the student’s own. Certainly, the activities of other scholars will influence all students. However, the direct and unattributed use of another’s efforts is prohibited as is the use of any work untruthfully submitted as one’s own. Penalties for violations of this policy may include one or more of the following: a zero for that assignment or test, an “F” in the course, and expulsion from the University.”

*Use of translation programs and websites is considered a violation of academic honesty.*