



AIX CENTER OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

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FRE/LIT 362
3 CREDITS
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SYLLABUS

WOMEN AND THE MEDITERRANEAN: FROM MYTH TO MODERNITY

« Women in art and society from the 16th Century to the present day »

I DESCRIPTION DU COURS / COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to invite students to question the notion of gender, building on classics of French literature. By studying “great texts” in different forms, including novels, poetry, and theatre, and using images (paintings, engravings, and photographs), this course will question the fabrication of gender (and particularly femininity) through the cultural and aesthetic devices presented in these works. It will articulate the socio-historical context in which they arose, and the individual resent movements of the authors studied. How do these representations continue to shed light on the present?

Using a variety of texts, we will explore the aesthetic and social issues related to femininity and its representations: female stereotypes, the social condition of women, and their relationship to creation and of the world. Daily in-class discussions will allow students to synthesize the different issues raised by the concept before engaging in their own creative writing.

II NIVEAU REQUIS / REQUIRED LEVEL

Students must have a good knowledge of French and of their own language. They must master both languages’ specificities (vocabulary, grammar, idioms).

These skills adhere to the European Language Portfolio of **level B2** of the CECRL (Cadre Européen Commun de Référence des Langues) of the Council of Europe.

III LES BUTS/ AIMS

The aim of the course is to provide students with training in the theory and practice of translating. At the end of the semester, the students who have done all the assignments and attended class every week will reach the beginning of **level C1** of the CECRL.

- 1) Students will learn to analyse literary texts, considering both the problems of meaning and form, in order to develop an overall vision of the creative process.
- 2) Students will improve their language skills through the discovery of French texts and during the discussions in class.
- 3) Students will be able to have a better understanding of the specificities of each literary genre.

IV LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of the semester, students will be able to :

- 1) Enrich their level of French
- 2) Analyze a literary text in context.
- 3) Master literary analysis tools (versification, stylistic devices, etc.)
- 4) Understand the literary and philosophical issues of a text.
- 5) Engage text and image in a dialogue.
- 6) Learn basic iconographic analysis.
- 7) Consider a text in both its literal and figurative senses.
- 8) Make their own literary creation, drawing from what has been studied.

V. PRIMARY TEXTS

Charles BAUDELAIRE, *Les Fleurs du mal* (1857)
Simone de BEAUVOIR, *Les Mémoires d'une jeune fille rangée*, (1958)
Pierre CHORDELOS de LACLOS, *Les Liaisons dangereuses*, (1782)
Juliette DROUET, « *Mon grand petit homme...* » - *Mille et une lettres d'amours à Victor Hugo* (1843-1854)
Gustave FLAUBERT, *Madame Bovary* (1857)
Louise LABE, *Les Elégies et Sonnets* (1555)
Marie-Madeleine de LAFAYETTE, *La Princesse de Clèves* (1678)
Alfred de MUSSET, *Les Caprices de Marianne* (1833)
Jean RACINE, *Phèdre* (1677)
Françoise SAGAN, *Avec mon meilleur souvenir* (1984)

VI. EVALUATION AND GRADING

- * In-class participation: 15%
- * Homework 60% :
 - Dissertation 30%
 - Creative writing project 30%
- * Final Exam 25%

- a) The assignments will be graded, using the following rubric:
 - Grammar, syntax, and vocabulary : 10 points
 - Style, register, creativity: 10 points

Total: 20 points

Equivalence regarding grading:

A = 17/20 A- = 16/20 B+ = 15/20 B = 14/20 B- = 13/20 C+ = 12/20 C = 11/20 C- = 10/20
D+ = 09/20 D = 08/20 D- = 07/20 F = 06/20

VII. ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

One of the primary requirements this semester is that **you attend class**. This is not a lecture class, and its success depends very much on your coming to class on time, prepared for the lesson, and ready to participate in discussion and activities. Participation will be part of your final grade.

The grade will be reduced by half a letter after two unjustified absences. For example, if your average grade is 16 (A-) but you have one unexcused absence, your final grade will be 15 (B+). The followings are considered excused ones: absences linked to IAU excursions; sickness (a medical certificate is required); emergencies.

When you return to class after an absence, even an excused absence due to an IAU field trip or sickness, **you are required to make up the lesson and all homework must be done.** Ask another student for worksheets and notes **before** the next class.

VIII. PLAGIARISM

Your academic honesty is required and **plagiarism is not tolerated in our institution.**

If compositions are copies of internet websites or written by anyone other than the student, the grade will be **F**.

Cheating is also a form of plagiarism. During a test or an exam, do not use your phone, textbooks, or notebooks, and do not look at your classmate's paper.

It is expected as well that, regarding group work, the efforts presented in class reflect the contributions of every member of the group.

VII. ACHIEVEMENT

Your cell phone must be turned off.

Carefully prepare your material and your homework for each class. If you come to class without your material and without having done your homework, you waste your classmates' and professor's time, as well as your own. You must have read and worked on the material to be prepared in advance for class!

Participate regularly in class activities with respect and consideration for all: take advantage of chances to talk, repeat the answers to yourself when others are talking, listen to your fellow students, and play an active role. It is vital to have a classroom atmosphere of mutual respect and consideration. Treat others as you would like to be treated.

Do not be afraid to make mistakes: error is the site of learning. You cannot learn another language without making mistakes and learning from them. Please, don't limit your participation, speaking out and use the language even with mistakes, and you will get a higher participation grade.

The class will be in French. Even if you don't understand everything the professor says, you will be able to get the main idea by paying attention to everything that happens (gestures, mimes, writing, repetition, explanations...). Do not be frustrated if you don't understand every word. Using all the available information to figure out what is being said is how one learns to understand a second language. Thus we practice this skill in class a lot, and your comprehension will improve over time.

Finally, please, **enjoy and take advantage of this learning period.** You are going to live in another country, different culture, surrounded by new people, immersed in another language. Make sure to learn all you can, be curious, courageous, and make the most of this amazing experience. Find aspects of the course that motivate you. Be open to new ideas and approaches. You will do well in the class if you come to class well-prepared and with a good attitude.

IX. CALENDAR:

Here is the list of the documents which will be studied in class (it is subject to modifications over the course of the semester, according to the pace of progress of the group). Every class

will start with a recap of the previous session, and with students' questions. Each text will be presented and studied in class, which will then enable the students to make a detailed analyses.

Prior to each discussion, the professor will introduce the historical, social, political and literary context in which the work has been written. This will allow students to feed their discussions and reflections on the extract to be analyzed. Students must have read the text at home.

Any delay is likely to affect the smooth running of the class, the students' discussions and finally the analysis of the text. The excerpts studied will all be posted on Teams.

Dates and contents subject to change according to the pace of the class.

Refer to the updated calendar on Teams:

<https://portal.office.com/>

- Session 1 / General introduction: Feminine: definition and representation from Antiquity to the Renaissance. The ambivalence of the feminine: diabolical or sacred? Presentation of Louise Labé.
- Session 2/ Louise Labé and feminine writing: claim of a social and loving femininity through writing. Sonnet number 18.
- Session 3 / Louise Labé: Sappho or Fury? The controversy.
- Session 4 / Introduction *Les Fleurs du Mal*. The Woman and her allegories: Reading of the poem *Le Masque*.
- Session 5 / Women in the crowd: *A une passante*.
- Session 6 / The place of women in theatre. The song of Racine's *Phèdre*: a word between two silences. Reading of the confession scene. Discussions.
- Session 7 / Projection of *Phèdre* directed by Patrice Chéreau.
- Session 8 / Chéreau taking up Racine: two visions of the woman? Discussions.
- Session 9 / Introduction: Alfred de Musset's *Les Caprices de Marianne*.
- Session 10 / Projection of *Les Caprices de Marianne* directed by Jean Vilar.
- Session 11 / Vilar resuming Musset: discussions. Submit the analyses to the professor at the end of the session.
- Session 12 / The epistolary genre: the letter that makes up the body. Presentation of Choderlos de Laclos. Reading of the letter I.
- Session 13 / Letter LXXXI. The libertine, a liberated one? Discussion.
- Session 14/ Presentation by Juliette Drouet, mistress and muse of Victor Hugo.
- Session 15/ Reading of two letters. Discussions.
- Session 16/ Presentation of *La Princesse de Clèves*. The princess between the cabinet and the court: on the border between two worlds. Reading of the confession of Madame de Clèves.
- Session 17/ Problems of plausibility of la *Princesse de Clèves*? Reading of the Letter *Lettre sur le sujet de La princesse de Clèves* of Valincourt. Discussions.
- Session 18/ Presentation of *Madame Bovary*: from stereotypes to despair. Emma Bovary: a myth? Reading. Discussions.
- Session 19/ The revolt against myth: presentation of the book *Les Mémoires d'une jeune fille rangée*. Reading a passage
- Session 21/ Reading an excerpt from *Le Deuxième sexe*. Discussions.
- Session 22/ Presentation of *Avec mon meilleur souvenir*. Representation of women in Nouvelle Vague cinema. Reading an excerpt.
- Session 23/ Course conclusion. Personal creation workshop.

- Session 24/ Final exam.