Syllabus – Elective Course

Course title:

Introduction to French & Francophone Women Writers. Breaking Boundaries: Gender, Power and Identity.

Credits:

6 ECTS credits

Teaching language:

English

Target students:

Undergraduate students from all study areas with an interest in French Literature.

Teacher in charge of the course:

Nadia Louar, Professor of French and Francophone Studies, Department of Global Languages and Cultures, *University of Wisconsin Oshkosh*

COURSE PRESENTATION

Prerequisite:

To take this course, students should have completed at least one semester of university study and demonstrate college-level reading and writing abilities. They should be prepared to engage actively in seminar discussions and collaborative analysis. Students should be comfortable reading and discussing texts in English, as we will explore literary works together and share our insights through group discussions and presentations. The course welcomes students from diverse academic backgrounds and international perspectives, as these varying viewpoints enrich our exploration of women's histories.

Content:

This course will provide students with an introduction to / overview of the literary representation of gendered experiences in personal stories authored by a range of leading contemporary female French-speaking writers.

By reading selection of critical writings alongside literary texts, we will explore the relation between sexual identity and literary practices and between gender and genre.

How do stories shape our understanding of gender roles? How do they reveal stereotypes about feminity, masculinity, sexuality and ethnicity? How does literature deconstruct common attitudes about sex, gender, abortion, sexual difference, sexual politics, language, culture and society? What is the role of women's writing in contemporary France in reimagining and reshaping sexual and racial identities? How does the representation of gendered and racialized experiences in women's literature challenge the dominant patriarchal and colonial discourse of contemporary France?

This schedule is provisional and subject to modification. Changes may be made based on student needs, pace of discussion, or other pedagogical considerations. Students will be notified of any modifications in advance.

Course sessions will include:

- Lectures, discussions.
- Close reading analysis.
- Individual and group presentations.
- Wrap-up and evaluation.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of the course, the students should:

- Acquire knowledge of women's writing in contemporary France.
- Acquire the critical vocabulary used in the field of literature and women's studies.
- Develop an ability to use concepts of literary and cultural analysis.
- Develop an ability to engage in focused discussion and formal presentation.
- Develop an understanding of the issues involved in writing autobiographically.
- Improve reading skills through close readings of texts.
- Understand various critical approaches to women's writing.

WORKLOAD

French contact hours = 60 minutes (in some countries/institutions, 1 contact hour = 45-50 minutes)

Form	Number of hours	Comments
Face-to-face, in-class, on-site learning	39 hours	13 sessions of 3 hours
Additional field trips		
Approximate personal work/homework	15 hours	
Student total workload	**54 hours**	

EDUCATIONAL METHODS

This course will explore these questions through class discussions, presentations and close readings.

RESOURCES

We will read extracts from the following texts:

- Marie Darrieussecq, Pig Tales: A Novel of Lust and Transformation. New York: The New Press,
- 1997.
- Fatima Daas, *The Last One*. Other Press, 2021.
- Virginie Despentes, King Kong Theory. New York: Feminist Press, 2010.
- Marjane Satrapi: **Women, Life, Freedom: a graphic novel**. Seven Stories Press 2024
- Critical scholarship on the authors and their works.

Optional Reading/Film:

- Vanessa Springora, *Consent*. It remains optional reading for students interested in further exploration of autobiographical writing by French women authors. Students are encouraged to incorporate references to this work in their final presentations and take-home exams if relevant to their chosen topics.

ASSESSMENT

Form	Number	Comments
Continuous assessment (30%)	3 3	Critical Response Papers (20%) Reading Quizzes (10%)
Final exam (50%)	1 1	Final Take-Home Exam (30%) Final Presentation (20%)
Other (student participation…) (20%)		Attendance, participation, and contribution to group discussion.

This syllabus is based on information available at the time of publication (November 2026). Changes may occur. For updated information about course content, please contact us: lilleprograms@univ-catholille.fr