SYLLABUS – Fall 2012

FREN 170 – Seminar in French
Screening France Today: How Contemporary French Films Portray French Culture and Society

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Web sites: professor Elstob’s site is http://www.csus.edu/indiv/e/elstobk/index.htm
SacCT home page is: http://online.csus.edu
Office Hours:
Thursdays 1.30pm-4.30 pm
and by appointment
Text: Downloadable collection of articles and excerpts from chapters

IMPORTANT

Syllabus changes
The instructor reserves the right to alter this syllabus at any time should it be warranted by the demands of sound pedagogy. Changes to the syllabus will be posted on the SacCT home page for the class. In any event, the posted, online version of the syllabus and schedule are authoritative, taking precedence over any printed version.

Special needs - Students with Disabilities
In order to ensure equal access and opportunity to pursue their educational goals, CSUS Services to Students with Disabilities (SSWD) offers support services for students with visual, hearing, mobility impairments, specific learning disabilities, psychiatric disorders, and/or other types of disabilities. For more information call 916-278-7825.

If you have a documented disability and verification from SSWD, and wish to discuss academic accommodations, please contact me as soon as possible.

Expectations and Ethics
Do work in a timely manner – take time to practice French outside of class. In order to successfully achieve the above goals the professor requires your full cooperation:

○ Regular participation and attendance in class
○ Timely completion of reading and writing assignments (including online assignments)
○ Completing homework preparation exercises before class

Classroom/Online Behavior
CSUS expects students and faculty to conduct themselves with honesty and integrity; everyone is expected to uphold high ethical standards inside and outside the classroom. Therefore, behavior that is disruptive, that belittles or discourages others from achieving their academic goals has no place in this classroom.

Academic Misconduct
When you turn in an assignment and take credit for it, it must be your own work. If it is not, you have committed academic misconduct.

Plagiarism is representing the work of someone else as your own. Most commonly this occurs by cutting text and images from a website and pasting them into your work without giving the proper credit to the website creators, and copying from a textbook or other source and failing to give proper credit to the author. You may avoid this problem by always using quotation marks whenever you use someone else’s exact words and by always giving references whenever you quote from or paraphrase another author.

Cheating. If you give or receive unauthorized aid while completing any of the requirements for this course, you have cheated. Giving answers during an exam, writing a paper for another student or copying another student's work are all forms of cheating. Assistance from the writing lab, talking with a professor or fellow student or forming a study group before an exam are all acceptable forms of aid.

Penalties
At the instructor's discretion, penalties for violation of above ethics policy will range from having to redo assignments, to failing the course, to an appearance before the Dean. Any late work will be penalized.
Overview
Language: This course is designed for students studying French at the upper intermediate to advanced level, regardless of their major field of study. The class emphasizes the linguistic skills and cultural knowledge that a student needs in order to work and succeed in an international French-speaking environment. The course objective is to analyze Contemporary France or Today's French Culture through French films of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.

Content: Films are dense. They organize lots of varied information in a small space by bringing together images, words, sounds, and music to create effects of depth and density on a two-dimensional surface. Films have commonalities with other visual representations such as paintings, photographs, sculpture and maps. They position spectators in particular places, but they do not immobilize them. They offer their viewers connections to other locations and other situations, but in order to get there the viewers have to call upon their faculties for observation and interpretation.

Approach: Screening France Today investigates contemporary landmark films and major directors in contexts: history, geography, biography, aesthetics and film theory. We will integrate a number of perspectives:
- French culture is a mosaic of many different cultural elements.
- Films can work as mental maps that challenge and assist people in their efforts to connect and comprehend their situation, so a film from France orients its viewers and helps them put the pieces of France and their world together.
- The act of seeing a film takes place in a cultural context and it happens with a certain critical attitude.
- Films work both visually and textually, creating inscriptions or hieroglyphs.
- Films are also experiential representations that engage our receptivity and understanding.
- Films also allude to, quote from, and interact with other films and representations of life and culture creating dynamic combinations or fusions.

Objectives
- This class aims to give students a better understanding of contemporary French cinema and how its films relate to the culture they come from.
- The activities and readings identify and analyze today's major directors and influential movies, while relating the stories the films tell and the representations they make to their historical context and critical milieu.
- Assignments and homework give students the opportunity to demonstrate knowledge of film as an art form and a cultural product and filmmaking as a craft and a collaborative process.
- Building on French grammar foundations and grammar rules learned in beginning and intermediate classes, the class introduces students to practical applications of their knowledge in discussion and writing about French film and culture.
- The lessons concentrate on language for communication (speaking/listening, writing/reading) in French and in real-life formats: film, of course, but also radio, song, TV, commercials, literature, newspaper, and blogs.
- Through a better understanding French grammar students will be more aware of the norms of French culture while maintaining their own values and identity.

Student Learning Outcomes
By completing this class, students will:
- Deepen their understanding of French grammar and their proficiency in the language to express themselves accurately and comprehensibly through exercises and communicative activities.
- Demonstrate in writing assignments and oral presentations, their ability to analyze, interpret, and critique films, from different perspectives, using the critical vocabulary and methodologies of the discipline.
- Show their knowledge of French cinema as a means of seeing French culture from a variety of points of view including: historical, geographical and social.
- Express their interpretations of film as an art form that engages with its public on social and political issues.

Methodology
- Students will be given a foundation for discussing French films and their contexts through a set of readings, in-class and out-of-class discussions, and screenings of films and excerpts from films. The written and oral assignments will put into practice the knowledge students obtained from these readings and discussions to identify, analyze and evaluate what they see in a film.

Catalog Description
FREN 170. Seminar in French. Conducted in French. Prerequisite: Second year college level proficiency or equivalent; or instructor permission. Units: 3.0
**GRADED ACTIVITIES:**

*See “Travaux Pratiques” section on SacCT for details of in-class and homework assignments*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>ASSIGNMENTS</th>
<th>POINTS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dec 10</td>
<td>In-Class Final</td>
<td>200</td>
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<tr>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>2 In-Class Oral Presentations</td>
<td>200</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3 Short Written Analyses (1-2 pages)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(See “Travaux Pratiques” section for more details)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sep 19</td>
<td>Cartes et Mosaiques (Maps and Mosaics) (100 points)</td>
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<td>Oct 17</td>
<td>Visionnements et Sentiments (Acts of Seeing and Feelings) (100 points)</td>
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<td>Nov 14</td>
<td>Connections et Citations (Connections and Quotations) (100 points)</td>
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**Various due dates:**

*Attendance, In-Class Assignments, and Mini-Quizzes*

It is important to be in class since most of the work we do in class cannot be made up. Students who miss class explanations and exercises consistently score lower than those who do not. If absent, you are responsible for all assignments, including those done in the class you missed (e-mail me, ask a fellow student, or look on the “Travaux Pratiques”). In class, take notes. I will emphasize in class the points that you most need to know and that will be quizzed and tested. There will be in-class assignments in most classes – some written some oral.

**Watching Films and Journal Entries**

Students will keep a journal of reflections on what they see in class and what they think about and see out of class with regard to films. The entries should be written in French, but some can be written in English (it can all be in French, but should at least be half in French alternating one time in French one time in English). Students must watch four films (chosen by the professor) outside of class and write a short appreciation in their journals. They can watch more than the four designated films and write about them in their journals for extra credit. (See “Travaux Pratiques” section for more details)

**Homework**

Various short Assignments from the textbook and web sites. Students use the “Travaux Pratiques” section on SacCT to find out their assignment and due date.

**Nov 28**

*Portfolio*

See SacCT for details on what should be in your portfolio

100

1500

**DOING ASSIGNMENTS ON TIME IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY!**

Grades are calculated out of a maximum of 1500 points which is converted to a percentage:

1500 = 100%; 1425 = 95%; 1350 = 90%; 1275 = 85%; 1200 = 80%; 1125 = 75%; 1050 = 70%; 975 = 65%

100 - 94% = A; 93-90% = A-; 89-87% = B+; 86-84% = B; 83-80% = B-; 79-77% = C+; 76-74% = C;
73-70% = C-; 69 and below = D; 70-79% = C; 60-69% = D; 59% and below = F