

**Department:** Modern and Classical Languages

**Course No:** FREN 3218 [218]

**Credits:** 3

**Title:** Francophone Studies

**Contact:** Roger Travis (Lucy McNeece)

**Content Area:** CA1-Arts and Humanities

**Diversity:** CA4 International

**Catalog Copy:** French 218: Francophone Studies.

The literatures, societies, and cultures of French-speaking countries in North Africa, West Africa, the Caribbean, the Pacific and the Francophone communities of Europe and North America.

Either semester. Three credits. Recommended preparation: French 261 or 262 or instructor consent.

Course description: This course examines the diverse cultural productions of those countries formerly under French colonial rule to understand how literature and art are shaped by political and social developments and in turn contribute to the emergence of new cultural forms and identities. The course examines the different histories of the regions under colonial rule from the 17th century to the present, studying modes of negotiation and resistance expressed in literature and art.

**Course Information:** Students are required to read selected literary texts and critical essays in French, and to write two to three short papers. Short oral presentations are also required. Students take a mid-term and a final exam.

**Meets Goals of Gen Ed:** Students are expected to engage in dialogue and debate in each class on material studied.

Students necessarily expand their conceptions of basic notions of genre (epic, poetry, narrative) as they discover the uses made of these concepts by societies with different traditions.

Students are encouraged to question the critical categories that are used to study foreign art and culture.

Ethical or moral sensitivity is encouraged through the study of the historical and material conditions of cultural production, and by the use of imaginative role-play in oral and written assignments.

Students are constantly asked to relate new knowledge of other cultures to their own, and thus discover both the relativity of phenomena they believed to be absolute, as well as the interrelated character of global history.

Both the material and the methodology of the course have diversity as a focus. Students should emerge from the course with a heightened sensitivity to the subjective experiences of cultures once believed to be 'remote,' and an appreciation of other modes of knowing and "being in the world."

Students are taught to examine the premises of their own ways of approaching difference, whether artistic or literary, and to understand to what extent the instruments of inquiry condition the results.

**CA1 Criteria:** 1. Investigations and historical/critical analyses of human experience: Students engage in the study of authentic historical documents and learn to question official versions of historical events. They learn to perceive the many factors that come into play in historical evolution, factors which are often either neglected or minimized. Most important they come to appreciate the intersection of developments in different spheres of cultural life, such as ecology, economics, politics and literature.

3. Investigations into modes of symbolic representation: Students discover the processes whereby concrete experience becomes transformed into literary or artistic expression, and come to recognize the complexity and diversity of cultural productions arising out of distinct contexts.

4. Comprehension and appreciation of written , graphic and/or performance art forms: Students are taught to appreciate the specific function of artistic forms such as poetry, epic, novel or theater in a variety of cultural contexts. They also learn that in many traditional cultures the function of art itself is quite different than in their own. Finally, they are encouraged to participate in the creation of a poem, a text, or a visual expression relating to the cultural material studied.

**CA4 Criteria:** 1. This course is designed specifically as a vehicle for teaching diversity and multiculturalism. It has as a primary objective to open up the supposed “unity” of French culture, showing that despite the long and frequently oppressive conditions of French colonial rule, local traditions subsist, and further, they produce new forms which eventually influence the hegemonic culture and its cultural productions.

2. The course exposes students to varieties of modes of understanding the world, and to the logic of modes often marginalized by dominant cultures. The course also introduces students to the importance of historical processes in the determination of current situations, and to the impact of complex factors on cultural evolution.

3. The course examines the various discourses that have evolved to account for France’s heterogeneous “others,” whether anthropological, philosophical, psychological, political or literary, and helps students understand the premises of such theoretical positions. Students learn to appreciate the ideological role of such discourses in the development of cultural productions, especially literature and art. Finally, they are always encouraged to reflect upon their own assumptions, and to understand what produced them.

4. Students learn to appreciate patterns and analogies among diverse cultures.

5. The methodology of the course encourages the experience of multiculturalism through a great many imaginative exercises. Students are encouraged to take roles in debates and in narratives which give them insight into several sides of the issues studied.

6. This course addresses issues of diversity in an international context.