

**FREN 1232.402**

**Perspectives in French Literature  
The Individual and Society**

**Tuesday and Thursday, 10:15-11:45 AM**

**Instructor**

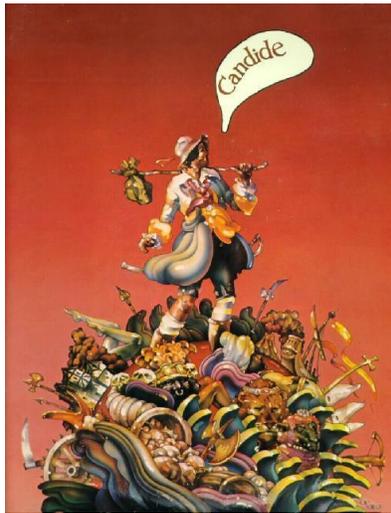
Scott Francis

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Office: 546 Williams Hall

Hours: Tues. and Thurs.,

12:30-1:30 PM



How are creative works (fiction, poetry, theater, film) shaped by societal norms or societal change? How do they reinforce or question norms, and how do they help bring about or resist change? How do they reflect conceptions of class, race, gender, religion, and national identity across the centuries?

This course will answer these questions while introducing students to a range of genres and creators from the eleventh century to the twentieth century. We will situate works in their historical context while considering how they convey their message through literary or cinematographic techniques. Students will acquire the critical tools to analyze, discuss, and write about texts and films while perfecting their oral and written expression in French.

This course fulfills the Sector III (Arts and Letters) requirement and the Cross-Cultural Analysis foundational approach for the College of Arts and Sciences. It also counts toward the Minor in Global Medieval and Renaissance Studies.

## Course Materials

### Available through the Penn Bookstore

- Honoré de Balzac, *Le Père Goriot* (ISBN: 9782035834119)
- *La Chanson de Roland* (ISBN: 9782253053415)
- Molière, *Le Bourgeois gentilhomme* (ISBN: 9782035834164)
- Voltaire, *Candide* (ISBN: 9782035866011)

If possible, versions of these texts will be made available in online format, either as digital editions or as scans for the course reserve. However, the library may be unable to procure digital versions of the same editions. As such, students are encouraged to acquire physical copies of the specified editions.

### Available on Canvas

- Guillaume Apollinaire, *Alcools*, « Zone », « Le Pont Mirabeau »
- Charles Baudelaire, *Les fleurs du mal*, Tableaux parisiens (selections)
- Jean de La Fontaine, *Les Fables*, « Le corbeau et le renard », « La grenouille qui se veut faire aussi grosse que le bœuf »
- Marguerite de Navarre, *L'Heptaméron* (Prologue, Nouvelles 1-5)
- Michèle Lalonde, « Speak White », and Marco Micone, « Speak What »
- *Manuel de littérature française* (recommended supplemental readings)

### Film available for streaming via Canvas

- *Playtime*, dir. Jacques Tati

### Recommended reference works

- *Le Robert & Collins Dictionnaire Français-Anglais/Anglais-Français*, or a similar unabridged or college-level dictionary
- Le dictionnaire libre de TV5 (<http://dictionnaire.tv5.org/dictionnaire>)
- A French grammar manual like *Nouvelle grammaire du français* (Hachette) or *Grammaire expliquée du français* (CLE International)
- Le Conjugueur du *Figaro* (<http://leconjugueur.lefigaro.fr/>)

### Important documents available on Canvas

- Explanations of the *passé simple* and other literary past tenses (under *Course Documents*)
- A list of literary terms and figures to use in discussions and writing (*Course Documents*)
- An explanation of French versification, or how to read a poem in French (*Course Documents*)

## **Grades**

Perusall and discussion posts: 20%

Attendance and participation: 20%

Composition: 30%

Midterm exam: 15%

Final exam: 15%

### **Perusall and Canvas discussion posts**

Starting in Week 2, students will be asked to annotate passages from each day's reading on Perusall. On the day devoted to Jacques Tati's *Playtime*, the conversation will take place through Canvas discussion posts.

To get full credit for this assignment, you must choose one of two options for each class session:

1) You can generate your own comment, question, clarification, or appraisal with a thoughtful explanation for your reaction and react to a peer's comment (agree, disagree, expand, support, etc.).

2) Alternatively, you can react to two of your peers' comments.

Your two contributions should contain a total of 200-300 words, about the equivalent of one or two substantial paragraphs.

Annotations or discussion posts must be submitted no later than 9:00 AM on the day the source is scheduled to be discussed.

For each class session, points will be awarded as follows:

- Annotations or discussion posts meet the above guidelines and are submitted on time: 5
- Annotations or discussion posts are submitted late or do not meet the guidelines: 3
- No annotations submitted: 0 points

### **Attendance and participation**

Students are expected to attend and participate in all class meetings, which will be devoted to discussion (in French) of the assigned reading or viewing for that day. These discussions will take the discussion threads and students' responses as a point of departure.

To receive full credit for participation, you must make at least one relevant contribution to the discussion. If you are unable to attend a meeting for any reason, please contact the instructor ASAP so that the absence can be excused.

There are 28 class meetings for a total of 28 possible points:

- Participation = 1 point
- Unexcused absence = 0 points

- In attendance, but no contribution to the discussion or Google Doc = ½ point

Students who join the class late during Course Selection Period will not be penalized for classes they miss prior to joining.

### **Composition**

Students will write one composition, 4-5 pages long (double-spaced, Times New Roman 12). The composition can take one of two forms:

- 1) An analytical essay on a work studied in the course; you will be given a list of possible topics for analysis for both compositions, but you may write on a topic of your choosing, as well.
- 2) A creative exercise that consists of a creative composition that incorporates formal elements or themes from a work studied in the course, along with a 2-3 page explanation of the choices you made in the creative composition and how they relate to the formal elements and themes in the work you're imitating.

Students will first submit a draft of the composition that will be reviewed by the professor and by a fellow student in a guided peer review exercise. They will then revise the composition accordingly and submit the final version to be graded. Satisfactory performance in the peer review of a fellow student's paper will factor into the final grade for the composition.

### **Midterm and final exams**

Both the midterm and final exams are divided into three parts: identifications of works and their producers based on excerpts, short answer questions based on excerpts, and an essay question on broader themes that span multiple works.

The midterm examination covers works studied in the first half of the course (up to Molière's *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*), and the final examination covers the entirety of the course, but with a greater emphasis on works covered in the second half.

The midterm exam is a written exam that will be administered in class. The final exam is a take-home exam that will be emailed to students at the beginning of the allotted time; students must email their completed exams to the instructor at the end of the allotted time. Both exams are open-book and open-note.

### **Plagiarism and academic integrity**

Students are expected to be familiar with the University of Pennsylvania's Code of Academic Integrity, a clearly defined set of rules governing student conduct in terms of crediting the work of others, collaborating with others on coursework, and completing assignments in a proper fashion. The instructor will hold students to the Code, and any and all violations of it will be referred to the Center for Community Standards and Accountability.

Online version: <https://catalog.upenn.edu/pennbook/code-of-academic-integrity/>.

General set of guidelines on how to cite sources properly and avoid plagiarism: <https://guides.library.upenn.edu/copyright/citation>.

Students are encouraged to discuss course materials or lessons with one another. They may NOT, however, complete all or part of any assignment for other students or share their work with other students for exercises or essays.

### *A note on the responsible use of AI*

As far as this instructor is concerned, speed is generative AI's only attractive quality when it comes to the study of language and culture. In terms of the other skills this course is meant to cultivate, including independent thought, deep and accurate knowledge, and the ability to produce correct French, AI is more a hindrance than a help, and should be treated as such.

At most, you may use AI for brainstorming and proofreading, but even then, you should do so with caution. It will often provide misleading or even outright false information, and fabrication of information or sources is considered a clear violation of the Code of Academic Integrity and will be treated as such. You will be much better off relying on direct engagement with the works we study, on class discussions and materials, and on other reliable sources such as peer-reviewed publications. When in doubt as to whether a source is reliable or as to where to find reliable sources, ask the instructor.

Similarly, all assignments must be written in your own words. Submitting work that contains AI-generated content will be considered a violation of the Code of Academic Integrity and treated accordingly.

### **Wellness**

Your mental wellbeing is of the utmost importance. If you, or someone you know, are struggling call Student Health and Counseling for 24/7 support at 215-746-WELL (9355). For more information on wellness at Penn: <https://wellness.upenn.edu/counseling/caring-yourself-and-others-stress-distress-and-crisis>.

### **Weingarten Center**

<https://weingartencenter.universitylife.upenn.edu/>

The Weingarten Center offers a variety of resources to support all Penn students in reaching their academic goals. All services are free and confidential. To contact the Weingarten Center, call 215-573-9235. The office is located in Stouffer Commons, 3702 Spruce Street, Suite 300.

### *Academic Support*

Learning consultations and learning strategies workshops support students in developing more efficient and effective study skills and learning strategies. Learning specialists work with undergraduate, graduate, and professional students to address time and project management, academic reading and writing, note-taking, problem-solving, exam preparation, test-taking, self-regulation, and flexibility.

Undergraduates can also take advantage of free on-campus tutoring for many Penn courses in both drop-in and weekly contract formats. Tutoring may be individual or in small groups. Tutors will assist with applying course information, understanding key concepts, and developing course-specific strategies. Tutoring support is available throughout the term but is best accessed early in the semester.

### *Disability Services*

The University of Pennsylvania is committed to the accessibility of its programs and services. Students with a disability or medical condition can request reasonable accommodations through the Weingarten Center website. Disability Services determines accommodations on an individualized basis through an interactive process, including a meeting with the student and a review of their disability documentation. Students who have approved accommodations are encouraged to notify their faculty members and share their accommodation letters at the start of each semester. Students can contact Disability Services by calling 215-573-9235.