

## **FREN 1233: Francophone Literature & Film**

### **Course Description**

French 1233 is designed to give students a basic historical and theoretical groundwork in Francophone and postcolonial studies, and to help them develop their skills in literary and filmic analysis. It will provide an introductory survey of the richly diverse literature and film of the French-speaking world, from the 1950s through to the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Beginning with the gradual breakup of the French colonial empire, we will see how writers and filmmakers from such regions as the Caribbean, Africa, and the Maghreb have seized on the French language as a medium in which to forge new artistic expressions of individual and collective identity. Throughout the course we will remain especially attentive, not only to literary and cinematic forms, but also to questions of space – public and private spheres, urban and rural topographies, borders and migrations, as well as the complex dynamics between the Francophone regions and France itself – and to the ways in which these tensions are mapped onto the textual and visual surfaces of the works studied.

In addition to the primary texts, there will be occasional supplementary critical readings in English; class discussion will be conducted exclusively in French. **The course is intended principally for non-native speakers of French.**

### **Objectives**

French 1233 is intended to help students accomplish the following:

- Sharpen their reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills in French
- Hone their interpretative skills in literary and filmic analysis, and perform detailed close readings of texts, movie scenes, etc.
- Gain a broader understanding of French colonial history and its legacies
- Acquire a firm grasp of some of the main tenets of postcolonial theory
- Develop original critical perspectives on the literary and cinematic output of a number of French-speaking regions (and individuals) throughout the world, as well as on the concept of *Francophonie* itself

### **Expectations & Required Work**

- **Participation & Engagement**

Students are expected to come to class ready to contribute regularly to discussion, having prepared the readings and films and completed any supplementary assignments (e.g. Canvas discussion boards) in advance. Readings and assignments will be indicated in the Programme. Participation will be graded on a daily basis; the two lowest daily participation grades will be dropped at the end of the semester.

**\*\*This syllabus is provisional and subject to change\*\***

In case of absence, students should notify the instructor by submitting a Course Action Notice. When a student is unable to attend class, they will have the option of submitting a commentary on the day's readings for partial participation points.

- **Incitations**

At periodic intervals throughout the semester, students will write short interpretative commentaries in Canvas of a selection of citations from the assigned readings.

- **Essays**

The readings and films for the semester will be grouped into 3 thematic dossiers. At the end of each dossier, there will be an asynchronous essay exam covering topics and materials that have been assigned.

- **Presentations**

Each of the feature-length films for the semester will be accompanied by an oral exposé, to be done in groups of 2-3 students. On the day of your exposé (10-12 minutes per group member), your group will be responsible for close analysis of your film's major themes, as well as for leading a follow-up class discussion.

- **Critical Letter**

At the end of the semester, each student will address a critical letter (5-6 pages, Times New Roman font, double-spaced) to one of the writers or filmmakers whose work they will have studied in the course, taking their cue from Alain Mabanckou's *Lettre à Jimmy*.

## Grades

- Participation & Engagement (25%)
- Incitations (10%)
- Essais (30%)
- Présentation (15%)
- Lettre critique (20%)

A+ : 99-100	A : 94-98	A- : 90-93
B+ : 88-89	B : 83-87	B- : 81-82
C+ : 79-80	C : 76-78	C- : 74-75
D+ : 72-73	D : 70-71	F : below 70