



LT 331 – FRENCH WOMEN WRITERS
IES Abroad Paris

DESCRIPTION:

This is a course in French literature, in other words, a course of literary analysis and not feminism. We will analyze the themes developed by female writers, but always in relation to the analysis of style. Short stories, autobiographies, novels, and plays will allow us to navigate the twentieth century, from 1930 to 1984, by studying notable issues in society, family, and language.

CREDITS: 3 credits

CONTACT HOURS: 45 hours

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION: French

PREREQUISITES: Must have read at least one book in French

ADDITIONAL COST: None

METHOD OF PRESENTATION:

Group work, presentations, discussions, lectures

REQUIRED WORK AND FORM OF ASSESSMENT:

- 3 written works (around 4 pages each) - 20%
- 2 class presentations - 20%
- Mid-term exam: based on coursework + an essay - 20%
- Written exercises and quizzes - 20%
- Class participation - 20%

Participation

The detailed program indicates the required readings for each course. Students must read each text and look up vocabulary they come across. A comprehensive understanding of the texts is essential. In case of difficulties, students should take notes in order to ask questions at the beginning of class. It is recommended that each student bring a bilingual dictionary to class, or even a unilingual French dictionary for further language proficiency.

Written exercises

Assignments and exercises (indicated in the syllabus) must be written on a computer. Students should respect the following guidelines: wide margin on the left, double-spaced, right-justified text (flush right). Written work should not exceed 4 pages. The exercises indicated in the syllabus must be written in complete sentences and prepared for the required date.

Presentations

Presentations are freely chosen according to the poetry book's propositions, or according to students' interests. Length: 10 to 15 minutes.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Read and understand texts
- Perfect literary analysis
- Recognize literary styles in relation to theme
- Construct various arguments

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Attendance is mandatory. Please note that absences and tardies will prevent you from fully understanding the material of the course and lowers your final grade. In case of illness, please alert your professor and the academics coordinator.

CONTENT:

Session	Content	Assignments
Session 1	<p>Course Introduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to the notion of literature as a genre and to the methodology of literary analysis • History: women in French literature 	
Session 2	<p>Biography of Colette</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autobiographical short stories • The life of the couple and social life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colette <i>Toby-Chien parle, De quoi est-ce qu'on a l'air</i> (1908 <i>Les Vrilles de la vigne</i>)
Session 3	<p>Biography of Irène Némirovsky</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The lead-in, the narrator, characterization and characters, verb tenses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irène Némirovsky <i>Le Bal</i> Chapter 1
Session 4	<p>Irène Némirovsky</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct speech, indirect speech, free indirect speech • Dialogue, monologue, upstart social criticism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irène Némirovsky <i>Le Bal</i> Chapters 2 and 3 • <i>Assignment:</i> What is the conflict between the mother and the daughter? Discuss the principal characteristics of each character and explain their relationships (with the help of questions 4-8, p. 108) (1-2 pages)
Session 5	<p>Irène Némirovsky</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The stages that lead Antoinette to vengeance, upstart parents and their dialogues, Antoinette's silence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irène Némirovsky <i>Le Bal</i> Chapters 4 and 5
Session 6	<p>Irène Némirovsky</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Antoinette's evolution, the climax, childhood, and autobiography 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irène Némirovsky <i>Le Bal</i> Chapter 6 • <i>Assignment:</i> Answer questions 1, 2, 3, 13 and 13, p. 114 and 115 (1-2 pages)
Session 7	<p>Irène Némirovsky</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 1920s and 1930s in perspective • Literature and childhood, literature and deportation • Parallel with Maupassant's <i>La Parure</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irène Némirovsky <i>Le Bal</i> • Extracts from Nathalie Sarraute and Elisabeth Gille, p. 120-122 and Maupassant's <i>La Parure</i> (photocopy) • <i>To research:</i> Research the gender of "écrivain" and "auteur" and their usage in the feminine

Session	Content	Assignments
Session 8	<p>Simone de Beauvoir</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The title, the lead-in, the narrator, point of view 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Simone de Beauvoir <i>Les belles images</i> Chapter 1, p. 7-27 (until "routinier") <i>Assignment:</i> Make a comment list for the following passage, in line with the text, p. 16-17 "Dans le miroir" until "ou simplement détaillées" (1-2 pages)
Session 9	<p>Simone de Beauvoir</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding and questions about the text Family, character traits, the relations between Laurence and his mother and parents, images Course study: the title, the lead-in, the narrator Text explanation p.16-17 "Dans le miroir" until "ou simplement détaillées" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Simone de Beauvoir <i>Les belles images</i> Chapter 1, p. 7-44 <i>Deadline:</i> 1st Writing Assignment: Irène Némirovsky (around 4 pages)
Session 10	<p>Simone de Beauvoir</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding and questions about the text Narration, point of view The narrator's physical and psychological reactions during the story's evolution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Simone de Beauvoir <i>Les belles images</i> <i>Assignment:</i> Text explanation p. 72 "Laurence examine" until p. 74 "mieux lui parler qu'avant". Identify the passage's main themes by analyzing the structure and vocabulary (2 pages)
Session 11	<p>Simone de Beauvoir</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Study the amount and status of women in French Literature from the 19th and 20th centuries Understanding and questions about the text and the accident, explanation p. 101 "He bien ! ma pauvre petite fille" until p. 104 "Elle hesite" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Simone de Beauvoir <i>Les belles images</i>
Session 12	<p>Midterm Exam</p>	
Session 13	<p>Simone de Beauvoir</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding and questions about the text, the evolution of Laurence's point of view and his parents Text explanation: p. 126 "Laurence a choisi un restaurant" until p. 127 "leur nuit de noces, dit-elle" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Simone de Beauvoir <i>Les belles images</i> Chapter 3, p. 113-152 <i>Assignment:</i> Make an outline of the passage and remark on the themes and style <i>To research:</i> Is there a feminine style of writing? What is your opinion?

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Session 14	Simone de Beauvoir <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family mythology Explanations 1) p. 168 “l’air etait doux” until p. 169 “aucun sens” 2) p. 178 “Mais papa etait-il d’accord?” until p. 180 “c’est deux gouttes d’eaux” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Simone de Beauvoir <i>Les belles images</i> Chapter 4, p. 153-183
Session 15	Marguerite Duras <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding and questions about the text The title, the lead-in, the narrator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marguerite Duras <i>Le ravissement de Lol V. Stein</i> p. 11-36 <i>Assignment:</i> P. 17 “Il était devenu différent” until p. 19 “Puis, à la fin de la danse qui avait suivi, il n’était pas allé retrouver Lol.” (2-3 pages) <i>To research:</i> Is there a feminine style of writing? Find evidence.
Session 16	Marguerite Duras <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding and questions about the text Repetition, Lol’s character 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marguerite Duras <i>Le ravissement de Lol V. Stein</i> p. 37-74 <i>Assignment:</i> P. 47 “Et cela recommence:” until p. 49 “l’éternité du bal dans le cinéma de Lol V. Stein.” (2-3 pages)
Session 17	Marguerite Duras <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding and questions about the text The narrator’s identity, names, and characters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marguerite Duras <i>Le ravissement de Lol V. Stein</i> p. 75-110 <i>Deadline:</i> 2nd Written Assignment: Simone de Beauvoir (around 4 pages)
Session 18	Marguerite Duras <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding and questions about the text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marguerite Duras <i>Le ravissement de Lol V. Stein</i> p. 111-153
Session 19	Marguerite Duras <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding and questions about the text Lecture de la page 111 à la page 153 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marguerite Duras <i>Le ravissement de Lol V. Stein</i> <i>Assignment:</i> p. 132, from “Je réponds : - Je ne peux pas me passer d’elle” until p. 134 “Elle dit votre nom. Je n’ai pas inventé.” (2-3 pages)

Session	Content	Assignments
Session 20	Marguerite Duras <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding and questions about the text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marguerite Duras <i>Le ravissement de Lol V. Stein</i> Assignment, text explanation: p. 174 "C'avait été par ce train qu'elle était repartie pour toujours" until "ensemble nous voyons venir la station balnéaire".
Session 21	Nathalie Sarraute <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation of Sarraute, tropism, language Questions about the text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nathalie Sarraute <i>Pour un oui ou pour un non</i> p. 23-35 To research: Is there a feminine style of writing? Research (Internet) the major ideas and themes related to this question. Film screening: <i>Doillon, Pour un oui ou pour un non</i>, either at home or to organize with a group at IES
Session 22	Nathalie Sarraute <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Text explanation: p. 26 "Alors chiche ... on verra" until the end of p. 28 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nathalie Sarraute <i>Pour un oui ou pour un non</i> p. 35-50 Deadline: 3rd Writing Assignment: Marguerite Duras (around 4 pages)
Session 23	Nathalie Sarraute <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Words and metaphor, speech and memory, expressions Text explanation: from p. 40 "Si je ne devais plus voir ca" until p. 43 "qu'on met aux fers" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nathalie Sarraute <i>Pour un oui ou pour un non</i> To research: Is there a feminine style of writing? What are the major issues/aspects of this question?
Session 24	Course Conclusion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Class outing 	

REQUIRED READINGS:

- COLETTE, « Toby-Chien parle » et « De quoi est-ce qu'on a l'air ? », (1908, *Les Vrilles de la vigne*), photocopies.
- IRENE NEMIROVSY, *Le Bal*, (1930, éd. Grasset), Biblio collège, Hachette, 2007, n°57.
- SIMONE DE BEAUVOIR, *Les belles images*, (1966, éd. Gallimard), Folio, n°243.
- Marguerite DURAS, *Le Ravissement de Lol. V. Stein*, (1964, éd. Gallimard), Folio, n°810.
- NATHALIE SARRAUTE, *Pour un oui ou pour un non*, (1982, éd. Gallimard), Folio Théâtre, n°60.

RECOMMENDED READINGS:

- "Boîte à outils" pour la lecture méthodique (photocopies)
- Camille Aubaud, *Lire les Femmes de Lettres*, Dunod, 1993.
- Béatrice Didier, *L'écriture-femme*, PUF, collection écriture, 1991.