香港中文大學 CUHK | 語言學及現代語言系 Department of Linguistics and Modern Languages

Term 2, 2026-2027

Course Code & Title:	FREN2100 Exploring French Literature
Language of Instruction: English	Units: 3

Course description

This course is aimed at giving students a better understanding of the specificity of the French literary culture from the 16th to the 20th century. It aims at enriching the student's general knowledge of the French literature, allowing them to explore the writings of selected famous French authors through the centuries. A presentation of the socio-intellectual, historical and literary context of each century's French literature will be provided. Through short excerpts of French works, we will explore how the literary works mirror and transform the social and intellectual ideas of their time, while also examining their innovative literary aspects. The emphasis will be put on the appreciation of the texts and the use of basic reading strategies. Students will be exposed to a group of selected works through multimedia such as movies, voice recordings, and visual illustrations.
Since this is an introductory course, prior knowledge in French is not required.

Learning outcomes

Upon the completion of this course, students will be able to:

- place authors and literary texts in their cultural and historical context.
- get an overview of the main literary trends in the history of French literature across different centuries.
- recognize the major elements of the literary genres, such as poetry, novel, and drama, and assess their significance.
- analyze texts from different genres (novel, poetry, drama).
- comprehend and respond to the French literary works with a heightened cultural awareness.

Course Syllabus

Unit	Topic	Contents
1	The Nineteenth Century	Romanticism, Realism and Naturalism • Poetry, novel and short story Representative authors may include: Alphonse de Lamartine, Victor Hugo, George Sand, Guy de Maupassant, Émile Zola
2	The Twentieth Century	Existentialism, the Absurd, and Women in Literature • Novel, theatre and autobiography • Representative authors may include: Albert Camus, Jean-Paul Sartre, Samuel Beckett, Simone de Beauvoir
3	The Eighteenth Century	The Enlightenment and the Encyclopédie • Stories, essays and theatre Representative authors may include: Voltaire, Denis Diderot, Choderlos de Laclos, Beaumarchais
4	The Seventeenth Century	Baroque, Préciosité and Classicism • Theatre, fables, moralistic writing and novel Representative authors may include: Molière, Jean de La Fontaine, Jean de La Bruyère, Madame de Lafayette
5	The Sixteenth Century	Humanism and the Reformation • Poetry, stories and essays Representative authors may include: François Rabelais, Pierre de Ronsard, Louise Labé, Michel de Montaigne

Course Components							
Teaching Mode							
On-site face-to-face interactive classwork: 100%							
Learning Activities							
Interactive classwork[1] (hr)		Extra-curricular activities (hr)		Web-based teaching (hr)		Homework / Self-study (hr)	
in /	out class	in /	out class	in /	out class	in /	out class
3			0.5		1		3
M			O		M		M

M = Mandatory / O = Optional

[1] Interactive classwork focuses on student-centered activities such as pair work, group work, role-playing and student-teacher interaction.

Assessment Type		
Task nature	Description	Percentage
Participation	Punctuality, active participation.	10%
In-class Presentation	Working in teams of two to three, students will present a selected writer and examine the writer's contribution to and influence on the literary and cultural context of the period. Further details will be provided in class.	20%
Mid-Term Test	The test is divided into three parts. In the first part, students will complete a short quiz on the course content. In the second part, students will write a short reflective essay on a topic related to the historical and cultural context studied in the course. In the third part, students will analyze a short literary text, such as a poem or an excerpt. Further details will be provided by the teacher in class.	35%
Final Test	The purpose is the same as for the mid-term test. Further details will be provided by the teacher in class.	35%
Important Points to Note for Assessments: All in-class assessments (written and oral) are conducted under **closed-book conditions** unless otherwise announced by the course teachers explicitly. Students are not permitted to consult textbooks, workbooks, notes, dictionaries, handouts, or any other reference materials during the assessment. Mobile phones, smart watches, tablets, laptops, AI tools, and all other electronic devices must be switched off and put away before the assessment begins.		

Notes: - Students are required to attend all classes on time.
- Students are required to attend at least 75% of the class. Treat 75% of attendance as the minimum, not the maximum.
- Should a student miss more than 25% of the class, he/she will automatically fail the course.
- If a student is unable to attend, he/she should review the content and homework that are missed and make them up by him/herself.
- if a student misses a test, make-up tests will not be arranged unless the student can provide an official supporting document, such as a medical certificate.

Learning Resources
Required Readings and Course Materials
➢ Course material will be provided by the teacher in class. ➢ Jennifer Birkett, James Kearns, *A guide to French Literature: from early modern to postmodern*, St. Martin's Press, New York, 1997. ➢ David Coward, *A History of French Literature: from chanson de geste to cinema*, Blackwell publishers, 2002. ➢ Anthony Levi, *Guide to French literature*, St. James Press, Chicago, 1992. ➢ Sarah Kay, Terence Cave, Malcolm Bowie, *A short history of French literature*, Oxford University Press, 2003. ➢ *Littérature progressive du français*, CLE International, selected levels and extracts.
IT Resources:
- cuhk.start.me : French Common Room. This is the French Programme web page. It includes a lot of resources for students from every level.
Recommended Readings & Library Resources:
Recommended materials: an exhaustive bibliography will be provided at the beginning of the course.

Assessment Rubrics	
General Grade Descriptors:	
Grade	**Overall Course**
A	Outstanding performance on all learning outcomes.
A-	Generally outstanding performance on all (or almost all) learning outcomes.
B	Substantial performance on all learning outcomes, or high performance on some learning outcomes which compensates for less satisfactory performance on others, resulting in overall substantial performance.
C	Satisfactory performance on the majority of learning outcomes, possibly with a few weaknesses.
D	Barely satisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes.
F	Unsatisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes, or failure to meet specified assessment requirements.

Course Schedule (Subject to changes):

Week	Date	No Class Days	Assignments	Content	Events
Week 1	Wed, Jan. 13			Unit 1 The Nineteenth Century	
Week 2	Wed, Jan. 20				
Week 3	Wed, Jan. 27				
Week 4	Wed, Feb. 3			Unit 2 The Twentieth Century	
Week 5	Wed, Feb. 10	Lunar New Year Vacation (from Friday 05 to Thursday 11)			
Week 6	Wed, Feb. 17		**Group presentation 1**		
Week 7	Wed, Feb. 24		**Group presentation 2**		France Summer Courses Briefing Session (Exact date TBD)
Week 8	Wed, Mar. 03		***Mid-term Test (Unit 1-2)***	Unit 3 The Eighteenth Century	
Week 9	Wed, Mar. 10	Reading Week (from Monday 08 to Friday 12)			
Week 10	Wed, Mar. 17		**Group presentation 3**		Francophonie Film Festival 2027 (Exact date TBD)

Week 11	Wed, Mar. 24		Group presentation 4	Unit 4 The Seventeenth Century	
Week 12	Wed, Mar. 31		Group presentation 5		
Week 13	Wed, Apr. 07		Group presentation 6		
Week 14	Wed, Apr. 14		Group presentation 7	Unit 5 The Sixteenth Century	
Week 15	Wed, Apr. 21		*Final Test (Unit 3-5)*		

Class sections and teachers' contact details:

Class	Time	Classroom	No of weeks	Teacher	Email
FREN2100	Wednesday 2:30-5:15 p.m.	HYS G06	13	Louis MUNSCH	louis.munsch@cuhk.edu.hk

All course sections comprise **13 teaching weeks (39 contact hours)**. Make-up classes will be arranged whenever necessary to compensate for the shortfall due to public holidays, class suspensions for university events, or other approved situations.

Adverse Weather Arrangements

In the event that a face-to-face class is suspended due to adverse weather conditions, the teacher may, where appropriate, conduct the class online at the scheduled class time. Students will be informed through Blackboard and/or email of any such arrangement. If a student is unable to participate in the online session due to technical difficulties or other unforeseen circumstances, alternative arrangements (e.g. access to lecture recordings, supplementary materials, or make-up arrangements, where applicable) will be provided.

For further information and inquiries, you are welcome to contact:

Contact	Telephone	Email	Office
Louis MUNSCH **(Course coordinator)**	3943 8617	louis.munsch@cuhk.edu.hk	Rm G23, Leung Kau Kui Building (KKB) **Office Hours:** Monday: 12:00 to 13:00 p.m. Thursday: 12:00 to 13:00 p.m.
General Office	3943 9836	lin@cuhk.edu.hk	Rm G17, Leung Kau Kui Building (KKB) **Office Hours:** Monday to Thursday: 8:45 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 2 to 5:30 p.m. Friday: 8:45 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 2 to 5:45 p.m.

Details of Course Website
CUHK Blackboard: https://blackboard.cuhk.edu.hk and/or start.me: https://fr.about.start.me/

Feedback for Evaluation
Our language programme highly values students' feedback and comments and is happy to use them for reflection on our teaching and improvement. Students are very welcome to provide comments and feedback on the course at any time to their course teacher or the course level coordinator through email or in personal conversation. In addition, students' feedback will be collected in the middle of the term through an open-ended questionnaire and the teacher will discuss the feedback in class and make improvements if necessary. The course will also follow the university's course evaluation exercise at the end of the term, and students' feedback will be used for future course planning and teaching.

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Attention is drawn to university policy and regulations on honesty in academic work, and to the disciplinary guidelines and procedures applicable to breaches of such policy and regulations. Details may be found at http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/.

With each assignment, students will be required to submit a signed declaration that they are aware of these policies, regulations, guidelines and procedures.

- In the case of group projects, all members of the group should be asked to sign the declaration, each of whom is responsible and liable to disciplinary actions, irrespective of whether he/she has signed the declaration and whether he/she has contributed, directly or indirectly, to the problematic contents.
- For assignments in the form of a computer-generated document that is principally text-based and submitted via VeriGuide, the statement, in the form of a receipt, will be issued by the system upon students' uploading of the soft copy of the assignment.
- Students are fully aware that their work may be investigated by AI content detection software to determine originality.
- Students are fully aware of the AI approach(es) adopted in the course. In the case where some AI tools are allowed, students have made proper acknowledgment and citations as suggested by the course teacher.

Assignments without a properly signed declaration will not be graded by teachers.

Only the final version of the assignment should be submitted via VeriGuide.

The submission of a piece of work, or a part of a piece of work, for more than one purpose (e.g. to satisfy the requirements in two different courses) without declaration to this effect shall be regarded as having committed undeclared multiple submissions. It is common and acceptable to reuse a turn of phrase or a sentence or two from one's own work; but wholesale reuse is problematic. In any case, agreement from the course teacher(s) concerned should be obtained prior to the submission of the piece of work.

The copyright of the teaching materials, including lecture notes, assignments and examination questions, etc., produced by staff members/ teachers of The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) belongs to CUHK. Students may download the teaching materials produced by the staff members/ teachers from the Learning Management Systems, e.g. Blackboard, adopted by CUHK for their own educational use, but shall not distribute/ share/ copy the materials to a third-party without seeking prior permission from the staff members/ teachers concerned.

Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) Tools in Teaching, Learning and Assessment

All use of AI tools is prohibited in assignments and assessment tasks

In any kind of learning activity or assessment that will be counted towards the final course grades (or used for evaluating attainment of the desired learning outcomes), students are not allowed to submit work which is produced with the collaboration of or supported by the use of any AI tools (e.g. ChatGPT, DeepSeek). Improper/unauthorized use of AI tools in learning activities and assessments will constitute acts of academic dishonesty and will be handled according to the University's Procedures for Handling Cases of Academic Dishonesty. In case of queries, students should seek advice from the course teacher.

For more information about our French Programme, please subscribe to our Instagram account!

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