

Department: Modern and Classical Languages (French)

CourseNo: 261W

Credits: 3

Title: From the Holy Grail to the Revolution: Introduction to

Contact: Roger Travis

Content Area: CA1-Arts and Humanities

WQ: Writing

Catalog Copy: 261W. From the Holy Grail to the Revolution: Introduction to Literature

Either semester. Three credits. Recommended preparation: FREN 164 or 175 or three years of high school French or consent of instructor.

Texts from the Middle Ages to the 18th-Century, including the Arthurian legend, Renaissance poetry, Classical theater, and the philosophy of the Enlightenment, in the cultural context in which they were produced.

Course Information: A. Description. The course covers French Literature from the Middle Ages to the Revolution of 1789. Its main objective is to acquaint students with the major issues, genres and questions that build French literature from the apparition of the vernacular language (*_roman_*) to the violent upheaval of the French Revolution following the Enlightenment.

B Course requirements : Weekly short writing assignments about the classic texts of the period ; two essays, one mid-term and one final examination ; one long term-paper ; one oral presentation. In general, students are expected not only to understand the major ideas developed through these texts, but to also respond to them critically and comparatively.

C. Major themes, issues, topics, etc., to be covered. Naissance de la littérature *_romane_* La Chanson de geste - La Chanson de Roland *_Ecrire en roman_*: Tristan et Yseut, Chrétien de Troyes Troubadours et Trouvères Charles d'Orléans - Villon Introduction Renaissance Rabelais et l'*_Humanisme_*; Gargantua *_La Pléiade_* - Du Bellay, Ronsard, Jodelle, Les baroques: D'Aubigné La désillusion: Montaigne Philosophie et religion au XVIIe siècle: Descartes - Pascal La mode du roman - La Princesse de Clèves Le Triomphe du théâtre: Molière: Dom Juan; Corneille: Le Cid;

Racine: Andromaque

Les "Lumières": - Voltaire et le conte philosophique

- Diderot - L'Encyclopédie

- Beaumarchais : Le Mariage de Figaro

- Rousseau et les Pré-Romantiques - Vers la Révolution

Meets Goals of Gen Ed: The course requires of students to become familiar with the traditional poetics of the literary texts under study, which involves familiarity with metaphor and alliteration as well as narrative technique. In addition, students are asked to familiarize themselves with the rhetoric of a text: how the author uses language, but also how characters themselves within the text use language for

different ends. Beyond emotional engagement with a literary text, students are taught how a literary text is constructed and how it functions. The objective is to develop their critical faculty and give them the rhetorical tools to articulate and support what they have learned. Lastly, since the texts under study cover several centuries, students become familiar with a broad range of stylistic and cultural contexts.

CA1 Criteria: The wide range of texts studied and discussed are essential for an understanding of the cultural as well as literary background of the French exception. In addition, because of France's in-depth exploration of various literary genres from the beginning of the vernacular language period, this course serves as a basis for discovering and experimenting with the specific process of literary writing.

W Criteria: This course is based on the close study of various literary genres and forms, which naturally promotes the ability to reuse these processes in the students' own writing samples; the course requires a considerable amount of written work from the students, each essay being first presented in draft form, then corrected and resubmitted for approval. Students are required to write and revise two short essays of five pages each; they begin work on the final term paper soon after the mid-term exam, and exchange drafts with the instructor and with each other a total of four times. Students cannot pass the course without passing the "W" component.