

OXFORD COLLEGE of Emory University
Humanities Division

Français 341
Études de l'Âge classique (1600-1800)

Printemps 2014
les lun, mer, et ven 8h15-9h20
Tarbutton Performing Arts Center
"Green Room"

Matthew Moyle, Ph.D.

bureau: Language Hall 111
permanences: tous les jours 10h45-11h45
et sur rendez-vous
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Prerequisites: French 310, French 314, or equivalent experience. Please see the instructor if you have any questions about your preparedness for the course.

Introduction and course objectives:

The catalog description of French 341 is "a survey of literary and artistic creations of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, with special attention to the cultural and historical context in which they were produced." The "Classical period" in this course's title is somewhat misleading, as many scholars restrict the "classical" in French culture to a period roughly parallel to the reign of Louis XIV (that is, 1643-1715). Texts written prior to this period are often considered "baroque;" those after it are classed within the broader movement of the Enlightenment, which itself gives way to the beginnings of the Romantic period around the time of the French Revolution. However, as we will see, there is a great deal more overlap and ambiguity than these simple dates reveal.

While the course's orientation is thus broadly historical, and works will be treated in approximately chronological order, the questions we will discuss around these texts aim to draw comparisons between the thematic content and formal structures of the works and how these change (or not) over time. Our primary mode of inquiry will be the careful reading of a set of texts and reflection on them through discussion and writing. We will focus more of our attention on theater for two reasons: one practical – plays are shorter and thus we can read a wider range of authors --, and one historical, as most would agree that the 17th century was the golden age of French theatre.

The objectives of the course are as follows: To develop students' skills as critical readers of the texts under study, that they may know how literary texts mean what they mean, to help students acknowledge the cultural prisms – their own as well as that of the authors -- that influence literary meaning, to interrogate how artistic forms influence our understanding of abstract concepts, and to imagine what connections can be drawn between fiction and reality, from the page, stage or screen to the "real world." More specifically, students will learn the major figures of 17th and 18th century French letters, and will understand the defining characteristics of the baroque, classical, and enlightenment periods.

The course also aims to improve language skills. It is hoped that by the end of the course, students will be more confident readers, attentive to nuance and style, while also improving their conversational fluency, pronunciation, as well as grammatical and lexical accuracy both orally and on the page.

This course is part of the Humanities, Arts, and Language component of Oxford's general education program. It also counts toward both the minor and the major in French at Emory College.

Of the twelve objectives of higher education identified by the IDEA Center (<www.theideacenter.org>), this course primarily contributes to these: 1) *Gaining factual knowledge (terminology, classification, methods, trends)*; 7) *Gaining a broader understanding and appreciation of [French-language] intellectual and cultural activity*; 8) *Developing skill in expressing oneself orally or in writing: learning how to speak and write about literature in French as well as giving you new insights into English and/or your first language*; 9) *Learning how to find and use resources for answering questions or solving problems: becoming independent readers of complicated texts and learning how to conduct research in literature*; and 11) *Learning to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view: especially constructing such an analysis in clear and persuasive prose*.

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Texts to purchase:

- Pierre CORNEILLE. *L'Illusion comique*. Ed. Alain Migé. Paris: Larousse (Petits Classiques), 2006. ISBN: 978-2-03-583216-0
- Pierre CORNEILLE. *Polyeucte*. Ed. Patrick Dandrey. Paris: Gallimard (Folio théâtre), 1996. ISBN: 978-2-07-039359-6
- Pierre Carlet de Chamblain de MARIVAUX. *Le Jeu de l'amour et du hasard*. Paris: Larousse (Petits Classiques), 2011. 978-2-03-585915-0
- Jean-Baptiste Poquelin, dit MOLIÈRE. *Le Tartuffe*. Paris: Larousse (Petits Classiques), 2011. ISBN: 978-2-03-585917-4
- Charles de Secondat, baron de MONTESQUIEU. *Lettres persanes*. Paris: Larousse (Petits Classiques), 2011. ISBN: 978-2-03-585918-1
- Jean RACINE. *Andromaque*. Ed. Frédéric Weiss. Paris: Larousse (Petits Classiques), 2008. ISBN: 978-2-03-583918-3
- Jean ROTROU. *Le Véritable Saint Genest*. Ed. Nancy Oddo. Paris: Hatier (Classiques et Cie.), 2009. ISBN: 978-2-218-93628-9.
- **RECOMMENDED:** *Le Petit Robert Micro*. Paris: Le Robert, 2011 (or newer ed.). ISBN: 978-2849028919
- **RECOMMENDED:** A good French-English dictionary (for example: *Collins-Robert College French-English Dictionary*. New York: HarperCollins, 2007 or newer ed.; ISBN-10: 0061690236).

Please purchase the edition indicated, as I have chosen where possible those with features likely to be helpful to you (glosses, notes, introductions, etc.). All are available at the College bookstore, in Candler Hall.

Other readings will be made available online and/or distributed in class.

Assessment:

Présence, préparation, participation (30%)

This is a discussion-based course which functions best when each student comes to class prepared to carefully engage with the texts and the ideas, worlds, and cultures that they come from and create.

You should **read well**: There will be daily readings from texts in the corpus. The introductory material in each edition will help you identify and situate authors and texts. Use of other secondary sources is not ordinarily required for daily discussions; instead, you are asked to carefully read, and reread, texts in order to be able to discuss them thoughtfully. It is not necessary to understand every word –remember to rely on context and other lexical strategies in your first reading, before going back and rereading more closely sections that you identify as particularly important.

You should **question well**: Keep track of comprehension questions that you come across: important words that you didn't understand, sections that didn't make sense, or anything else. No question is too basic. In addition, I will ordinarily distribute discussion questions before each class. These questions are meant to guide your reading and provoke in-class discussions. It is therefore suggested that notes be jotted down before class to ensure that you can actively engage in discussion. In any case, there are no incorrect answers, and students should never hesitate to venture a response or contribution – however tentative – as it is especially by this activity that literary texts come alive.

You should, therefore, **participate frequently**: Active participation in class discussions (and therefore, regular attendance) is indispensable for successful completion of the course. In practical terms, 10 points are assigned for in-class participation each day, according to the following approximate scale:

- 10: you are present, fully engaged, well-prepared, and participating willingly in small- and large-group discussions.
- 8-9: You mostly meet the above standards but there is room for improvement.
- 6-7: Infrequent participation or evidence of poor preparation.
- 5 or less: Infrequent participation AND evidence of poor preparation. Evidence of disengagement (cell phone use, working on other homework, sleeping...).
- 0: absent.

Participation points are also deducted for arriving late, leaving early, or leaving and returning. Please also refer to the separate document *Standards for Mutual Respect*, incorporated by reference into this syllabus.

TWICE only during the semester, you may turn in a written response to a discussion question or questions (1 page long, due at the next class) in lieu of presence for a maximum of 7.5 points. Absences beyond two forfeit all points.

NOTE: Some class sessions may be replaced by one-on-one meetings with me; missing such a meeting without giving advance notice will count as an absence.

Travaux écrits (20%)

You will write several **short essays** interrogating the form and theme of a given text or excerpt. Some of these will be responses to a specific question, others may be open-ended. There will 7-8 paper assignments – one for each text that we study, more or less – and you will be required to complete **four** of these. Written work will be graded according to the following approximate rubric:

- A: clear, coherent, and compelling argument that closely engages with the text and fully addresses the assignment parameters, written with careful attention to correct expression in French.

- B: the paper has a clear argument that is only partially supported, only partially addresses the assignment, OR is written in comprehensible French, but there are sufficient errors to suggest a rushed composition.
- C: more than one of the issues named under “B;” argument difficult to determine, issues in expression that partially interfere with understanding of the paper.
- D: more than one of the issues mentioned under “C.”
- F: the paper fails to even remotely address the prompt, shows a complete lack of effort.

In most cases, you may resubmit these essays with corrections for an improved grade.

Travail de recherche (20%)

A staged **research project**, culminating in a 7-10 page paper, will ask you to make an argument (or answer a question) treating one or more of the course texts, supporting this by careful consideration of scholarly writings on the subject. The project will be due in its final form on the last class day.

Exposés (15%)

Each student will do a number of oral presentations over the course of the semester. One of these will be a presentation of your research project, and will take place during the period reserved for a final exam. Exposés will be assessed according to a similar rubric to written work.

Exams (15%)

Three exams will be given, at approximately the fifth, tenth, and fourteenth week, consisting of short-answer and essay questions over the works studied.

Grading Scale:

93-100%: A; 90-92: A-; 88-89: B+; 84-87: B; 80-83: B-; 78-79: C+; 74-77: C; 70-73: C-; 68-69: D+; 60-67: D; 59 or less: F.

A word on academic integrity:

Students are expected to be familiar with, and to strictly abide by the Oxford College Honor Code. In the context of this course, please be aware that the following are considered “unauthorized assistance,” and therefore constitute academic misconduct (see Honor Code, art. 1, A.3.):

- 1) The use of online or automated translators in ANY written or oral work.
- 2) Having a more advanced student or native speaker correct or complete assignments. (I want to see YOUR French, mistakes and all.)
- 3) The recycling of your own or other people’s work.
- 4) Using the words or ideas of another person (such as you might find in a secondary source) without specifically citing the author and work where those ideas are found. See also *On the Citation of Sources*, incorporated into this syllabus by reference.

The normal penalty for a first offense of academic misconduct is a grade of ‘F’ in the course.

If you have a documented disability, please arrange for the office of Access and Disability Resources (Murphy Hall, <ods.emory.edu>) to send me a letter detailing any necessary accommodations, then see me to discuss it.

Kindly note the following: “Student work submitted as part of this course may be reviewed by Oxford College and Emory College faculty and staff for the purposes of improving instruction and enhancing Emory education.”

Pour le bien-être de tous... please refrain from eating or chewing gum, silence and stow cell phones, participate with enthusiasm, ask questions when you have them, and do all you can to contribute to the learning experience.

Programme général

- 17 janvier – 12 février: le baroque
 - poèmes de Scarron et Théophile
 - Sorel, *Francion* (1623), extraits
 - Corneille, *L'Illusion comique* (1636)
 - Rotrou, *Le Véritable Saint-Genest* (1647)
 - **examen: 12 février**
- 14 février – 24 mars: l'Âge d'Or
 - poèmes de Malherbe et Boileau
 - Corneille, *Polyeucte* (1642)
 - Racine, *Andromaque* (1667)
 - Molière, *Tartuffe* (1664-1669)
 - **examen: 24 mars**
- 28 mars – 25 avril: les Lumières
 - Montesquieu, *Les Lettres persanes* (1721)
 - Marivaux, *Le Jeu de l'Amour et du Hasard* (1730)
 - Rousseau, *Discours sur l'origine de l'inégalité* (1754)
 - d'Alembert et al., *L'Encyclopédie* (1740-1772)
 - **examen: 21 avril**