FRENCH 108 COURSE DESCRIPTION

Description:

FRE 108 is an intermediate/advanced course. It will take you on a journey through various periods of French/ Francophone history and culture and offer an opportunity to reflect on important questions at the center of contemporary debates. Examples include: the role of the State in the shaping of the nation, architecture and urbanism, pandemics and ecology, healthcare system, the role of education in our society, and the concept of colonization, decolonization and identity (e.g. Mauritius). We have selected a wide variety of authentic material (films, documentaries, videos, music, ads, newspapers articles and literary texts, from Le Malade imaginaire by Molière, Entre les murs by Laurent Cantet to Soupir by Ananda Devi) and have been carefully incorporated them into our curriculum, so that you develop your ability skills, communicate and write on a wide range of topics in French and gain understanding of French and francophone cultures and societies. FRE 108 is also a stepping-stone toward candidacy to the Aix-en-Provence and Princeton-in-France programs, and upper-level French courses. The course is conducted entirely in French and aims to improve communication skills in reading, writing, listening and speaking.

Class objectives:
By the end of the semester you will be able to:
- communicate and write on a wide range of topics (art and architecture, cultural events, healthcare, ecology, education, etc..)
- develop and provide persuasive arguments
- write creative and argumentative essays
- have a better grasp of French and Francophone societies and cultures
- think analytically

Sample Reading List:
All the readings are excerpts drawn from authentic material (literary, cultural or news events):

- Balzac Ferragus
- Bégaudeau, Entre les murs
- Devi, Soupir
- La Fontaine, Les Animaux malades de la peste
- Le Clézio, Désert
- Sonia Shah, “Contre les pandémies, l’écologie”, Le Monde diplomatique

Films:
- Cantet, Entre les murs (2008)
- Liti, Hippocrate (2014)
- Toledano, intouchables (2011)
- Guillaume Mouton(Mouts)and Nans Thomasse, Nus et cullotés (les îles Rodrigues) (2019)
Assignments:

2 press reviews from a francophone newspapers (non-graded)
3 exams (based on grammar and weekly reading)
2 creative essays and 1 argumentative essay
1 final presentation with a partner based on a topic studied during the semester
1 final exercise

Grade Breakdown:

- Attendance, participation 20 %
- Exams (3) 30 %
- Compositions (3)/ 2 rewrites 30 %
- Presentation(s) 10 %
- Final exercise 10 %

Testimonials:

I feel that I improved in all three of these areas throughout the course. The compositions and blog posts were helpful for writing skills, in-class discussions provided opportunities to practice speaking, and course packet readings (especially excerpts from novels) were useful in testing and improving my reading skills. (spring 2019-20)

Overall this was a great French course even after having to move online – the professor adapted well and was very reasonable and understanding with the students. (Spring 2019-20)

I liked this course so much! I enjoyed readings the texts, watching the films, participating in class discussions, and writing essays. I feel that this class helped me to comprehend a lot more. (Fall 2019-20)

The readings and visuals were very relevant and presented different subjects relating to French culture and history, which helped expand my knowledge of French. They presented new ideas and perspectives which interested me.(Fall 2019-20)

The quality of the class overall was extremely good. The professor succeeded in raising topical, critical-thinking problems, in such a way that made the class comfortable speaking even when they might encounter difficulties. I felt very comfortable asking questions in class, and enjoyed going. (Fall 2018-19)

The readings and visuals were beneficial in understanding the subject matter, and they provided a deeper understanding for unfamiliar vocabulary as they were often accompanied with a short list of definitions to ensure reading comprehension. (Fall 2018-19)