

FREN 481-01: 'Urban Fictions of Montréal'
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Office Hours: W 1:30-2:30, F 11-12, or by appt.

OBJECTIVES

This seminar will present the historical and contemporary visages of Montréal as a way to understand the cultural evolution of contemporary Québec. The goal of this new course is to allow students to discover and explore the world's second largest Francophone city through literature and films that highlight its role as the cosmopolitan cultural and economic heart of Québec society. The course will cover the history of Montréal, examining the role of the city as a symbol of Québec's modernization and aspirations in the years following the Quiet Revolution, and will also focus on the socio-cultural and political issues that affect life in Montréal today. Topics to be covered will include rural migration to the city, cosmopolitan diversity and the question of Québec identity, women in the cityscape, and current economic and social realities. Texts will include works by Gabrielle Roy, Jacques Godbout, Monique Proulx, and films such as *Jésus de Montréal*, *A corps perdu*, *Zéro tolérance*, *Cosmos* and *Louis 19, roi des ondes*.

PRE-REQUISITES AND LEVEL

This course is open to French majors and other students having a strong background and fluency in French and having completed French 250-251. This course requires students to have significant facility in reading and writing, as well as the ability to conduct fairly sophisticated discussions in French.

COURSE CONTENT

The materials to be studied are listed in the detailed plan of study on the Blackboard website. All readings are to be completed by the week indicated, which means that students must come to class prepared to speak about what they have read in preparation for that week. The program includes novels, short fiction, articles, poems and films from Québec. The average reading will be 100-200 pages per week at the beginning of the semester, declining somewhat as the semester progresses.

METHODOLOGY

Students will read assigned material and formulate reactions to specific aspects of the texts, which will permit them to lead classroom discussion if called upon. **This is not a lecture course.** It is a seminar designed to allow students to explore the theme of 'Urban Fictions of Montréal' and discover for themselves the figurations and representations of the city in Québec's literature and culture. Active participation is thus essential; exchanges among students are strongly encouraged in order for the seminar to progress in an engaging and dynamic fashion.

EVALUATION

Students will be evaluated on the basis of two writing assignments and online blogs (50 + 10%), a collaborative oral presentation (5%) and their active classroom

participation demonstrating mastery of the primary texts (35%). There will be no final exam, but rather a final essay of approximately 15 pages in length.

All assignments must be submitted on the dates due. Late assignments are unacceptable unless the student has a prior arrangement with the professor or a written dean's or medical excuse. Grade points will be lost in daily increments if assignments are not submitted on time. Students are responsible for all work missed due to an absence. You must contact me or a classmate to procure notes and ensure your understanding of assignments. An absence is not an acceptable excuse for not handing assignments in on time.

Assignments must be prepared **independently**. All written assignments must be typed, double-spaced and include diacritical marks (accents). Accents should be generated with the computer, NOT added by hand afterwards. Should students need instruction in generating accents, they should either ask the professor (for Mac users) or seek the assistance of the UIS Helpdesk (for PC users). All use of sources (primary and secondary) must be documented appropriately, using the *MLA Handbook*.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

No outside help or collaboration is allowed unless expressly permitted by the instructor. This means you are not allowed to ask a native French speaker to look over your work. The only permissible computer-based tool is a spell-checker; **no translation programs** or websites should be used for any assignment for this course, although use of a bi-lingual dictionary or a thesaurus is acceptable. **All** sources consulted, including online resources, **must be referenced appropriately**. Infringement of any of the above principles constitutes **violation of the Honor Code** and **will be reported**. Please consult me if you are uncertain of what is required: "when in doubt, check it out"!