



BROWN

DEPARTMENT OF FRENCH STUDIES

GRADUATE STUDIES COURSES

2016-2017

*Fall 2016*

**FREN-2130 Corps et esprits libertins/*Lewis Seifert***

Throughout the 17th century, writers flouted religious, philosophical, political, sexual, and social norms/dogmas, provoking debate, censorship, and even persecution. This seminar will explore the themes and contexts of libertine thought and practice, as well as the attacks it occasioned in both philosophy and literature. We will study debates about skepticism, Epicureanism, sexual freedom, religious and political dissent, and will read, among others, Montaigne, Charron, Viau, Garasse, Gassendi, Cyrano de Bergerac, La Mothe Le Vayer, Ninon de L'Enclos, Pascal, Molière, La Fontaine, Saint-Evremond, and Deshoulières. Taught in French.

**FREN-2170L La Terre/*Gretchen Schultz***

This seminar explores representations of the agrarian, natural, material world, and the cultural politics at play in relation to region, terroir, and identity, during a rapidly modernizing period. Changing regimes and demographics, industrialization, and new modes of communication and transportation contributed to altering the rural landscape, its inhabitants, and its occupations. This seminar coincides with the annual Nineteenth-Century French Studies colloquium, La Terre, which comes to Brown in October 2016. Students will be asked to attend the conference and encouraged to participate in its organization. Authors studied include Balzac, Sand, Maupassant, Zola, Bazin, Barrès. Taught in French.

**FREN-2190I Littérature et écologie/Thangam Ravindranathan**

Recent humanist thinking on nature and environment – including materialist ecocriticism, posthumanist theory, geocriticism, animal studies and deep ecology perspectives as brought to the study of literature – has drawn and continues to draw richly from French/Francophone literature and theory. Reading contemporary “ecopoetic” writings (Rolin, Darrieussecq, Chevillard, Chamoiseau, Redonnet, Boyer) alongside key texts of critical theory and philosophy (Deleuze, Derrida, Latour, Bailly, Stengers, Despret, Westphal), we will consider what insights they offer for thinking human life ecologically, even as we face the verdicts of destroyed environments, climate change, and species’ vanishing. Taught in French.

*Spring 2017*

**FREN-2110G Savoirs et non-savoirs/Virginia Krause**

How were the lines between the known, the unknown, and the unknowable drawn for the Renaissance? This course examines the period’s “will to know” underlying humanism, Natural Philosophy, and demonology (the “science of demons”). It also tracks challenges to positive knowledge through madness and the rediscovery of Greek scepticism. Readings in Erasmus, Marguerite de Navarre, Rabelais, Montaigne, and Foucault, among others. Taught in French.

**FREN-2600J Modernity, Contemporaneity/Justin Izzo**

How do theorists and writers designate, periodize, and politicize the “now” as an object of critical reflection? What are the philosophical and historical antecedents of current pressures to define the contemporary, and how does this critical urgency generate anxiety about the “future” as an analytic category? Our course will examine the francophone world and global contexts, studying certain key concepts and periodizing impulses (modernism, post-modernism, the anthropocene, sovereignty, futurity, neoliberalism/globalization) in order to make theoretical interventions in debates on the contemporary and its historicity. Readings from Mbembe, Jameson, Benjamin, Césaire, Žižek, and others. Taught in English.