

UC Center French Language and Culture Program Courses - Summer 2014  
PCC 103. **Paris Landscapes: Literary and Visual Constructions of the City**

**Prof. William Bishop Lecture**

Tuesday/Thursday 15h00-17h00

**contact:** william.willbishop@gmail.com (**unless otherwise indicated**)

Wednesday – Visits (times will vary)

**Office Hours**

By appointment

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Paris is a city that has been constructed as much by the writers, philosophers and filmmakers who have inhabited, filmed and written about it as by the architects and city planners who collaborated with politicians to build it. This course will explore the interactions between the city of Paris and the ways it has been represented in art and in literature. Emphasis will be placed on the fact that the poems, books, paintings and monuments we'll be studying not only portray these interactions; they are themselves also the products of the kinds of interactions they portray. Paris is a city where interactions between art and society have been extremely rich, and we'll be touching on several key moments in their history. Our course will begin with readings of poems by Baudelaire and Walter Benjamin's discussion of these poems in the context of the history of capitalism. This introduction to Paris as a volatile palimpsest of different histories will help guide us through the rest of the course which is arranged with a first section that will consider the social stakes of Impressionist and Post-Impressionist paintings. In the second half of the course, we will investigate novelistic and cinematic representations of Paris in Balzac, Gary and Kechiche. Class and group visits are designed to help the social and artistic landscapes we're reading about and discussing in the classroom begin to come to life. **4.0 UC quarter units.**

Suggested subject areas for this course: *History / Comp Lit/ Art History*

### **Goals**

The overriding goal of this course is to provide students an historical and sociological overview of French culture as reflected in representations of Paris in the art and literature of the 19th and 20th centuries. In order to meet this goal, the course focuses on the following themes/topics/texts:

Texts:

- Selected works of Greuze, Manet, Degas, and Monet
- Literary selections of Baudelaire, Balzac, Romain Gary, and Marivaux
- Selected critical works of Benjamin, T.J. Clark, and Gerard Noiriel

Themes/Topics:

- Effects of Haussmannization
- Shifting geographies of class, gender, and race in Paris
- Immigration and the Republic
- Concepts of modernity in city-planning and in art and literature

### **Learning Outcomes**

The course also seeks to develop students' written and oral rhetorical skills as well as their analytical skills through the following activities and assignments:

- Class discussion
- Group presentations on paintings
- Visit journals

- Painting description/Literary Analysis Essay

The final exam tests students on how well they have engaged with the social, political and artistic questions raised over the course of the term and serves as an effective way for them to measure what they have gained from their experience of Paris.

**Required texts:**

Course Reader [CR]

Honoré de Balzac, *Old Goriot*

Romain Gary, *The Life Before Us*

**Class requirements:**

Your grade will be based on the following elements:

Visit Journals and Class Presentation 25%

Painting Description/ Literary Analysis 25%

Final Exam 25%

Class Participation 25%

The Visit Journals will be short two- paged, typed and double-spaced accounts of the visits we will be undertaking in Paris, either as a class or in assigned groups. Elements of class reading and discussion should be brought into interaction with observations of the site or exhibit you will have visited. The journal will be evaluated in terms of cohesiveness, logic, and originality.

The Painting Description/Literary Analysis is a longer paper (eight to ten typed and double-spaced pages) that will describe one of the paintings you have come across during the first part of our course or analyze an aspect of one of the novels you will have read in the second part of the course. It is due on Thursday, July 24. Papers topics will be discussed in class.

The Final Exam will be held on July 31 and will involve a choice between several possible essay topics. Class on July 29 will be a review session. You will be given the essay topics in advance, with the understanding that this demands a certain amount of preparation on your part.

Class Participation is required both in the classroom and on our group visits. As per the UC Paris Attendance Policy, excessive absences and tardies will result in a lowered final grade. Please refer to UC Paris Academic Handbook for the policy on absences and tardies.

A Note on Plagiarism: Plagiarism is a serious offense and could result in your dismissal from the program. All instances of suspected plagiarism will be reported to EAP for disciplinary action. If you borrow words or an idea from any source, whether it be a book, journal, magazine, the Internet, or a lecture, you need to indicate where the information came from. Diana Hacker's *A Writer's Reference* identifies three different acts that are considered plagiarism: "(1) failing to cite quotations and borrowed ideas, (2) failing to enclose borrowed language in quotation marks, and (3) failing to put summaries and paraphrases [of other texts] into your own words" (Hacker 261). (By both citing the source of this definition of plagiarism and by "enclosing borrowed language in quotation marks," this syllabus has avoided charges of plagiarism.) If you have any questions regarding plagiarism, please ask me.

A Note on Electronic Devices: As a courtesy to your instructor and fellow students, please do not use cell phones, laptops, tablets, e-readers, or other electronic devices during class, even to check the time. Make sure phones are turned off. Use of these devices will lower your participation grade. No recording (audio or visual) of class sessions will be permitted.

## **COURSE SCHEDULE**

Week 1

**Wednesday June 18** - Poems by Baudelaire [CR]

**Thursday June 19** – Continuation with Baudelaire, Benjamin, “Paris: Capital of the Nineteenth Century” [CR]

Week 2

**Tuesday June 24** – T.J. Clark, “The View from Notre-Dame” [CR]

**Wednesday June 25** – **Class visit to Musée d'Orsay**

**Thursday June 26** – Clark, continued; Michon, "Life of Joseph Roulin" [CR]

Week 3

**Tuesday July 1** – T.J. Clark, “Olympia’s Choice” [CR]

**Wednesday July 2** – **Assigned group visit to Musée d'Orsay**

**Thursday July 3** – Impressionists, group presentations of individual paintings [CR]

Week 4

**Tuesday July 8** – Balzac’s Paris: *Père Goriot*

**Wednesday July 9** – **Scavenger Hunt into Balzac's Paris**

**Thursday July 10** – Balzac’s Paris: *Père Goriot*

Week 5

**Tuesday July 15** – Romain Gary, *The Life Before Us*

**Wednesday July 16** – **Group Visit to Belleville**

**Thursday July 17** – Romain Gary, *The Life Before Us*; Noiriél, “Immigration, Amnesia and Memory” [CR]

Week 6

**Tuesday July 22** – Marivaux, *The Game of Love and Chance* [CR]

**Wednesday July 23** – **Screening of *L’esquive* by Abdellatif Kéchiche**

**Thursday July 24** – Interview with Kéchiche in *Cinéaste* [CR]

Week 7

**Tuesday July 29** – **Final Review**

**Thursday July 31** – **Final Exam**