French 4600, “Introduction to literary analysis,” Fall 2021, Professor Jerry Root, T/Th 2-3:20, Classroom: BUC 108

The goal of this course is to refine and develop your skills for analytical thinking, reading, and writing in French. Put another way, the course will help you build the base of knowledge and skills you need to express yourself coherently and intelligently in written and oral French. This base will serve you for all upper-division French classes and most upper division humanities classes. We will learn how to read texts and film, to understand what they say and what they mean. We will learn how to express our understanding of the same documents, orally and in writing, in a coherent and convincing manner. We will learn how to make a hypothesis and to support that hypothesis with evidence and to organize that evidence in a persuasive manner. We will study a broad selection of short excerpts of high points in French literature. Selections will vary. Past examples include selections from La Chanson de Roland, to Racine, Flaubert, Proust. We’ll study two or three films, including some combination of the following: Les Quatre Cent Coups by Truffaut, Le Havre by Aki Kaurismäki, Kassovitz, La Haine, Claire Denis, Chocolat, Goddard’s A bout de souffle. The quantity of reading is moderate to easy, but we’ll be reading very carefully. The quantity of writing is moderate to hard: 3 papers, two quizzes, weekly discussion responses, and a possible paper rewrite. This class is a fair amount of work but the reward is also substantial. We’ll do a lot of group work to make understanding the texts easier and to give you lots of chances to speak French. I think everyone will enjoy the materials we study.

Students will do best in this class if they have done well in French 3040 or 3060 – or if they have studied French rigorously in a foreign setting. I would be happy to respond to any questions about level or content. Jerry.root@utah.edu