

Fall 2019

French R1B, Section 2

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Monday, Wednesday & Friday 12:00–1:00 PM

Hall

Office hours: Monday 2:00–4:00 PM

Ty Blakeney

4310 Dwinelle

Social/Form: Representing the Social

Course Description

This course will explore the ways in which various aesthetic forms since the 19th century have become spaces for understanding the social world. We will begin with the nineteenth century “novel of manners” (Jane Austen’s *Emma*), exploring the status of the novel as a source of knowledge in distinction to philosophy and history. We will then trace the heritage of the novel of manners across the 20th century, through the modernist novel (Proust), documentary (Rouch and Morin, Marker, Varda), and reality television in the present day (*The Real Housewives*). In each case, we will ask how the specificity of the form of these texts makes certain aspects of the social world visible and renders others invisible, and what information about the social world aesthetic forms are able to convey that other modes of understanding the social (statistics, for example) miss.

Required texts (to be purchased online — please search using ISBN and get only these editions)

Jane Austen, *Emma* (978-0141439587) (Please buy a new copy.)

Marcel Proust, *The Guermantes Way* (978-0143039228)

Expectations

The first two weeks. Because of the limits on class size, attendance for the first two weeks of class is absolutely mandatory to guarantee your spot in the course. Any missed classes can result in being dropped from the course in order to make room for students on the waitlist. Waitlisted students should also attend class every day in case a spot opens up. (Your attendance counts more than your position on the waitlist in determining who will get any open spot.) If for any reason you must be absent during this time (illness or family emergency), **it is essential that you email me so that you are not dropped from the class.** If you decide to drop the class, please remove yourself on Cal Central and let me know **as soon as possible** so another student can be assured of their place.

Attendance. Attendance in the course is mandatory and makes up a substantial part of your grade. Absences are only allowed in the case of illness or family emergency. In these cases, you should write a double-spaced, two-page response to the readings for the day you missed in order

to make up the missed participation grade, equivalent to the comments you might make in class. Absences for any other reason cannot be made up and will count as a zero. You do not need a doctor's note for absence due to illness; lying about an illness to avoid the consequences of skipping class for a non-excused reason, however, is a violation of the university's honor code.

Participation. Participation in the course is also mandatory and assessed as part of your grade. Good participation starts by showing up prepared for class. Students should arrive having completed all reading and reflected on all discussion questions. In class, students should not only be awake and attentive, but participate in class discussion both as speakers and as listeners.

Office hours and email. Please come see me during office hours if you would like to discuss texts or discuss your writing further. If you cannot attend office hours, please email me to set up an appointment. Please note: I will respond to emails in a timely manner, but expect **at least 24 hours** for a response. **Substantive questions about writing, reading, or grades will not be answered over email and are best answered in person during office hours or by appointment.**

Grade overview

Essays*		60%
Diagnostic essay (4 pages)	0%	
Essay 1 (6-8 pages)	30%	
Essay 2 (6-8 pages)	30%	
Close readings (2 pages)		10%
Homework and comprehension checks		10%
Participation (attendance, reading, and active discussion)		20%

*N.B. Each "essay" category consists of multiple assignments: pre-writing assignments (100/600 points), a first draft (200/600 points), and a second draft (300/600 points).

Assignments

Deadlines, extensions and formatting. All written work should be submitted before midnight on the day it is due via bCourses. All written work should be 12 pt. in a legible serif font (e.g. Times New Roman), double-spaced, with 1" margins. Students may use either the Chicago notes and bibliography system or MLA formatting, but must be consistent throughout their essays in the semester.

Late work will result in a 50% reduction of the grade (thus an 88% would become 44%). Extensions can be granted ahead of time if the student has been diligently working on the assignment and needs more time to produce their best work. Extensions will not be granted solely based on the schedule

of other classes. Extensions will not be granted within 24 hours of when an assignment is due. No extensions can be granted for any kind of assignment besides essays (close readings or other short homework assignments).

Close readings. You will produce four short (2 page) close readings throughout the semester. You should write one close reading on each of the two novels we read in the first half of the course, and you can choose two films or television shows from the second half of the semester. These close readings should be turned in at the beginning of class on one of the days that we're discussing the text. The idea is that you can draw on these close readings during class discussion. They will be graded and you will receive limited feedback, but you can always drop by during office hours to discuss them more. Strong close readings may also serve as the basis for longer essays.

Close readings will be graded primarily on the degree to which the student engages in a detailed way with the **formal elements** of the text they are analyzing. These assignments are meant to be exploratory, so I don't expect them to be perfect. But, they should be readings rather than plot summaries. Close readings that are purely plot summaries will receive an F, since they do not fulfill the requirements of the assignment. You may choose one scene or passage, or trace a single motif or idea throughout the text.

Comprehension checks. Comprehension checks will be short-answer assessments given randomly at the beginning of certain classes at the instructor's discretion. No studying beyond doing the reading and reflecting on the discussion questions is required for these assessments. You cannot use the book during these quizzes, but **you can use any notes that you take while reading.**

Writing assignments. The goal of this course is to train you to write longer essays containing analysis of primary sources that also draws on secondary texts. You will submit a **diagnostic essay** in early in the semester, which will only count as a completion grade in the homework category. The **first essay** will deal with any of the texts we read or watch during the first half of the semester. The **second essay** will deal with one or several of the films we watch in the second half of the semester. Each essay will consist of several components, including a topic proposal, research notes, outline, paragraph, first and second draft.

Second drafts are expected to show significant and thoughtful improvements over the first, not just fixing cosmetic errors and quickly responding to the professor's inline comments; the grade for the second draft will reflect the degree of improvement and the intrinsic quality of the work. First drafts that receive As can be expanded by 3-4 pages if the author, in meeting with the professor, does not think that significant changes to the essay are necessary. The idea is to present your best possible work as

a starting point and then improve from there so that you can grow the most as a writer.

Essay conferences. Two times during the semester, students will meet with me one-on-one to discuss essay drafts or planning assignments. Students will sign up for conference times in class, and missed essay conferences will result in 10 percentage points being deducted from the grade of the essay.

Tutoring at the SLC. If you are having difficulty in the course or would simply like additional input, please go to the Student Learning Center for free tutoring and additional writing resources: <http://slc.berkeley.edu>.

Texts and film screenings. There are only a few texts that need to be purchased. Toward the end of the semester, we will have film screenings for each of the films the weekend before the discussion of that film. If you do not attend the screening, you will need to watch the film on your own. I will try to make copies of the films available on bCourses. Please watch the films in the best possible conditions that you can. Do not watch them at a higher speed, or without sound.

Plagiarism

Because one of the major goals of this course is to learn how to incorporate secondary sources into your writing, it is extremely important that you understand what defines plagiarism. All written work submitted in this course, except for acknowledged quotations or citations, is to be written in your own words. The University has a strict policy on plagiarism, which is defined in the code of conduct as the “use of intellectual material produced by another person without acknowledging its source, for example:

- the wholesale copying of passages from works of others into your homework, essay, term paper, or dissertation without acknowledgement;
- the use of the views, opinions, or insights of another without acknowledgement;
- or, the paraphrasing of another person’s characteristic or original phraseology, metaphor, or other literary device without acknowledgement.”

If you are copying three or more exact words from a text, or if you are using an idea that you found in another text even if you are using different language, you should cite this source. Any work found to be plagiarized will automatically be **given a zero**, and the student will be reported to the office of academic integrity. The instructor reserves the right to ask a student to submit any writing to an online plagiarism verification service such as turnitin.com.

Commitment to equality

As a scholar and an educator, I am committed to making higher education accessible to all, regardless of disability or background. If you have a disability that you think might require special accommodation, you should seek out an official accommodation as soon as possible:

<http://dsp.berkeley.edu>.

I also have a strong commitment to mental health. The University has a wide variety of mental health services available for students. As an instructor, I receive training in these resources; as a student, I have used these resources myself. If you are struggling and want to know more about these resources, please contact me by email. All communication is private, except that which I am legally obligated to disclose (information about a past or future crime, or expression of the intention to harm yourself or others).

Controversial topics and mutual respect

We will be reading and viewing material in this class that deals with potentially sensitive, controversial, or traumatic topics. While discussing these topics, remember that different students have different experiences. If you find something another student has said to be offensive, I encourage you to speak with them about it in a respectful way or to bring it to the attention of the teacher if you do not feel comfortable talking with the student yourself. **All students are required to be mutually respectful of the other students and the professor, and any student who is willfully making comments that they know to be offensive or hurtful to anyone else in the class (behavior that constitutes “trolling” or “bullying”) will be asked to leave immediately and be required to make up the participation grade in another way.**

I, _____ [print name], have read the above syllabus and understand the expectations of the class. I have particularly read the section on plagiarism and commit to not submitting plagiarized work or breaking the policies.