

**DEPARTMENT OF MODERN LANGUAGES  
AND CULTURAL STUDIES**

<https://uofa.ualberta.ca/modern-languages-and-cultural-studies>

**2017-2018** FREN 464 X01: Topics in 20<sup>th</sup> C. Lit.: Superheroes and Superheroines:  
Y a-t-il des Superhéros en France?  
(Fall Term)

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Time: M 5pm-8pm  
Place: HC 1 15  
Office Hours: M 3pm-5pm,  
or by appointment  
Course Website: /

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**Course Prerequisite:** Fren 301 & one Fren 3xx or consent of department

**Course-based Ethics Approval** in place regarding all research projects that involve human testing, questionnaires, etc.?

Yes       No, not needed, no such projects approved.

**Community Service Learning** component

Required     Optional     None

**Past or Representative Evaluative Course Material Available**

- Exam registry – Students' Union  
<http://www.su.ualberta.ca/services/infolink/exam/>
- See explanations below
- Document distributed in class
- Other (please specify)
- NA

**Additional mandatory Instructional fees (approved by Board of Governors)**

Yes       No

**Course Description and Objectives:**

Superheroes in general are thought to be American. And clearly statistically they are. However, other countries had and have superheroes. The typical French example is Astérix. Obviously, he is very different from Superman and other Batmen.

In this course, we are going to study the superheroes in their historical context (social, political, cultural) and try to understand what they stand for, how they are represented, who they are and for whom they were created.

**The main objective** of this course is to give a good introduction about what

contemporary French culture is and its connection with some Francophone countries like Belgium and their ex-colonies. We will use the specific superhero phenomenon to approach French culture and understand how French culture tends to re-interpret some foreign cultural products to try to define itself. We will survey French culture from the 1930s to today to learn about the key French historical dates, French institutions, French political events and main cultural trends.

### Outcomes

At the end of this course, successful students will be able to:

- understand the superhero phenomenon
- understand its specificity in French culture
- know how to give a good oral presentation in French
- know how to write a short essay about a specific issue while replacing it within contemporary French culture

### Texts:

#### Required

- 1) *Tintin, L'Etoile mystérieuse*, Hergé, (1942)
- 2) *Astérix, le Gaulois*, Goscinny & Uderzo, vol. 1, (1961)
- 3) *Fantômette*, Chaulet, vol. 1 (Les Exploits de Fantômette), 1960
- 4) *Superdupont*, de Loeb/Gotlib, vol. 1, 1975
- 5) *La Brigade chimérique*, Lehman, vol. 1, 2005
- 6) *Masqué*, Lehman, vol. 1, 2010
- 7) *Freaks Squeele*, Maudoux, vol. 1, 2010
- 8) *Les Premiers*, Xabi Molia, novel, 2017

#### Optional

- 1) *Mikros Photonik*, Mitton, 1980 + 2014
- 2) *Ms Marvel, Kamala*, Wilson & Alphona, vol. 1, 2010
- 3) *Astérix, Le Ciel lui tombe sur la tête*, 2005.

+ Some short essays will be distributed in class.

*All books are sold at the campus bookstore and one copy is on reserve at the Rutherford Library.*

### Grade Distribution (see “Explanatory Notes”):

Attendance & Participation		30 (one letter down for each absence)
Quizzes	5	20
Oral presentation	1	10
Midterm (Mon., Nov. 20)	1	20
Final project (due last class): -Written essay	1	20 20

OR -Creative option with shorter essay		OR 20 (10 + 10)
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**Date of Deferred Final Exam (if applicable): n/a**

**Explanatory Notes on Assignments:**

Attendance is very important in general but even more in a language course in order to practice, and even more so in this class since, first, the class is 3 hours, and second, assignments are short but emphasis is on participation (discussing these assignments in small groups and with the whole class).

There will be five quizzes; each one will be worth 4%; each one will have 4 short questions on the content of the assigned reading of the day.

Students will have to give one oral presentation on a topic related to the main topic (TBD by the end of the second class-Monday). It will be worth 10%.

Midterm will be on all the assigned textbooks and class discussions up to the day of the midterm; it will be 20% with ten open questions requesting a one full paragraph answer.

As for the final project, students will have the choice between 2 options; the first one is a regular essay (12 full pages, NYT 12, double space) on the topic of the course (more will be discussed in class and discussion with the instructor about the precise topic is requested); the second option is a creative project that will have two parts: the first one is a creative part such as a “comics,” (at least a 3-page storyboard); the second part is an essay-reflection on the first part (6 full pages, NYT, double space); this project will have to be discussed with the instructor at least three weeks prior to handing it over to the instructor, i.e., week 9 at the latest.

**Required Notes:**

“Policy about course outlines can be found in the [Evaluation Procedures and Grading System](#) of the University Calendar.”

***Academic Integrity:***

“The University of Alberta is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the Code of Student Behaviour (online at [www.governance.ualberta.ca](http://www.governance.ualberta.ca)) and avoid any behaviour that could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from the University.”

***Learning and Working Environment:***

The Faculty of Arts is committed to ensuring all students; faculty and staff are able to study and work in an environment that is safe and free from discrimination and harassment. It does not tolerate behaviour that undermines that environment. The Department urges anyone who feels that this policy is being violated to:

- Discuss the matter with the person whose behaviour is causing concern; or

- If that discussion is unsatisfactory, or there is concern that direct discussion is inappropriate or threatening, discuss it with the Chair of the Department.

For additional advice or assistance regarding this policy you may contact the [Office of the Student Ombuds](#). Information about the [University of Alberta Discrimination and Harassment Policy and Procedures](#) is described in [UAPPOL](#).

### ***Academic Honesty:***

**All students** should consult the information provided by the [Student Conduct & Accountability Office](#) regarding avoiding cheating and plagiarism in particular and academic dishonesty in general (see the [Academic Integrity Undergraduate Handbook](#) and [Information for Students](#)). If in doubt about what is permitted in this class, ask the instructor.

**Students involved in language courses and translation courses** should be aware that on-line “translation engines” produce very dubious and unreliable “translations.”

**Students in languages courses** should be aware that, while seeking the advice of native or expert speakers is often helpful, **excessive editorial and creative help** in assignments is considered a form of “cheating” that violates the code of student conduct with dire consequences.

An instructor or coordinator who is convinced that a student has handed in work that he or she could not possibly reproduce without outside assistance is obliged, out of consideration of fairness to other students, to report the case to the Associate Dean of the Faculty. See the [Academic Discipline Process](#).

### ***Recording of Lectures:***

Audio or video recording, digital or otherwise, of lectures, labs, seminars or any other teaching environment by students is allowed only with the prior written consent of the instructor or as a part of an approved accommodation plan.

Student or instructor content, digital or otherwise, created and/or used within the context of the course is to be used solely for personal study, and is not to be used or distributed for any other purpose without prior written consent from the content author(s).

### ***Attendance, Absences, and Missed Grade Components:***

Regular attendance is essential for optimal performance in any course. In cases of potentially excusable absences due to illness or domestic affliction, notify your instructor by e-mail within two days. Regarding absences that may be excusable and procedures for addressing course components missed as a result, consult sections [Attendance](#) and [Examinations](#) of the University Calendar. Be aware that unexcused absences will result in partial or total loss of the grade for the “attendance and participation” component(s) of a course, as well as for any assignments that are not handed-in or completed as a result.

**In this course**, attendance is required and participation will count for 30%. Each unexcused absence will result in a full letter down for the Attendance and Participation mark (supposing an active participation for the rest of the classes, one absence will result in a B, i.e., 85%; second absence, C = 75%; third absence, D = 60%; etc.) Participation means mainly to be actively involved in the regular small group

discussions and at the very least one serious intervention per class (not just a “oui” or “non”!).

***Policy for Late Assignments:***

Students should consult in advance with the instructor regarding contingencies preventing the timely completion of an assignment. If so, the instructor may grant an extension just one time throughout the course with no penalty. However, if a second excuse is granted, half of the mark assigned for this particular work will be deducted. Otherwise all assignments should be handed in on the stated deadline. Any assignment not handed in in time or unexcused late assignments will not be given any marks. Late excuses will not be accepted for any reason.

***Student Accessibility Services:***

If you have special needs that could affect your performance in this class, please let me know during the first week of the term so that appropriate arrangements can be made. If you are not already registered with [Student Accessibility Services](#), contact their office immediately (1-80 SUB; Email [sasrec@ualberta.ca](mailto:sasrec@ualberta.ca); Email; phone 780-492-3381).

***Grading:***

Assessment of the individual course components may be in the form of numerical marks or letter grades. The final letter grade will be based on "a combination of absolute achievement and relative performance in a class" (University Calendar, [Evaluation Procedures and Grading System](#)). The University Grading Procedure mandates that "a student’s level of achievement of the goals/outcomes of a course, their grade, and the descriptor of that grade must be aligned" (<https://policiesonline.ualberta.ca/>). The following guidelines have been adopted by the Department of Modern Languages and Cultural Studies:

**“MLCS Undergraduate Grading Scale”**

Descriptor	Letter Grade	Grade Point Value	%
<b>Excellent.</b> A+, A or A- is earned by work which is superior in content and form and demonstrates an exceptional grasp of the subject matter. The grade of A+ designates work that far exceeds course expectations. Grades in the A range are normally achieved by a small number of students.	A+	4.0	<b>97-100</b>
	A	4.0	<b>93-96</b>
	A-	3.7	<b>90-92</b>
<b>Good.</b> B+, B or B- is earned by work that demonstrates a thorough comprehension of the course material and a good command of relevant skills. Grades in the B range are normally achieved by the largest number of students.	B+	3.3	<b>87-89</b>
	B	3.0	<b>83-86</b>
	B-	2.7	<b>80-82</b>

<p><b>Satisfactory.</b> C+, C or C- is earned by work that demonstrates an adequate grasp of the course material and relevant skills. Grades in the C range designate work that has met the basic requirements of the course.</p>	<b>C+</b>	2.3	<b>77-79</b>
	<b>C</b>	2.0	<b>73-76</b>
	<b>C-</b>	1.7	<b>70-72</b>
<p><b>Poor/Minimal Pass.</b> D+ or D is earned by work that demonstrates minimal familiarity with the course material. Grades in the D range generally indicate insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the subject matter.</p>	<b>D+</b>	1.3	<b>65-69</b>
	<b>D</b>	1.0	<b>60-64</b>
<p><b>Failure.</b></p>	<b>F</b>	0.0	<b>0-59</b>