**French 737**

**Literary and Cultural Theory**

Spring 2009

TR 3:30-4:45

Dey Hall 210

Instructor: Hassan Melehy

Office: Dey Hall 224

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In this course we will read texts of several of the most important French philosophers and cultural theorists of the last fifty years: Gilles Deleuze, Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, and Jacques Rancière. We will focus particularly on their accounts of literary texts and the functions of literature. We will look at the affinities among these writers, their impact on literary criticism, and their value for current discussions of literature and culture.

The readings will be supplemented with related texts. Especially in the second half of the semester, I would like you to make connections between the material and your own work.

**Assignments:**

1. Your first assignment is to be prepared for active class discussion at each meeting.

2. Two papers: one of 6-8 pages, one of 8-10 pages. The due dates are below. For the first paper, I will ask you to explain a concept from the reading — I will provide further details on this and the subsequent two assignments in due time. Students in French will write their papers in French; students from other programs may write their papers in English.

3. You will also give a presentation on a subject of your choice; the topic may involve the research you are doing for the second paper. Your presentation will last 15 minutes and be followed by 15 minutes of discussion. *You are expected to distribute discussion questions in advance.* Please coordinate with others in the class to avoid duplication.

**Grading:**

Papers: 30% for the first, 40% for the second — a total of 70%

Presentation: 10%

Participation: 20%.

**Books:**

Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Kafka. Pour une littérature mineure* (1975)

Jacques Derrida, *Signéponge* (1988)

-----, *Le Monlinguisme de l’autre* (1996)

Michel Foucault, *L’Ordre du discours* (1971)

——-, *Ceci n’est pas une pipe* (1973)

Jacques Rancière, *La Parole muette* (1998)

**Tentative program :**

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| January 13 | Introduction |
|  |  |
| January 15 | Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Kafka*, 7-50 |
|  |  |
| January 20 | Deleuze and Guattari, 51-113 |
|  |  |
| January 22 | Deleuze and Guattari, 115-157 |
|  |  |
| January 27 | Reading/discussion |
|  |  |
| January 29 | Jacques Derrida, *Signéponge*, 9-48 |
|  |  |
| February 3 | Derrida, *Signéponge*, 38-84 |
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| February 5 | Derrida, *Signéponge*, 84-122 |
|  |  |
| February 10 | Reading/discussion |
|  |  |
| February 12 | Jacques Derrida, *Le Monolinguisme de l’autre*, 13-61 |
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| February 17 | Derrida, *Monolinguisme*, 63-136 |
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| February 19 | Reading/discussion |
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| February 24 | Reading/discussion |
|  |  |
| February 26 | Michel Foucault, *L’Ordre du discours*, 7-47 |
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| March 3 | Foucault, *Ordre*, 47-82  **Presentation** |
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| March 5 | Michel Foucault, *Ceci n’est pas une pipe*, 9-58  **First paper due, 6-8 pages** |
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| **March 9-13** | **Spring break** |
|  |  |
| March 17 | Foucault, *Ceci*, 59-90  **Presentation** |
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| March 19 | Reading/discussion |
|  |  |
| March 24 | Reading/discussion  **Presentation** |
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| **March 26** | **No class** |
|  |  |
| March 31 | Jacques Rancière, *La Parole muette*, 5-42  **Presentation** |
|  |  |
| April 2 | Rancière, 43-79 |
|  |  |
| April 7 | Rancière, 81-100  **Presentation** |
|  |  |
| April 9 | Rancière, 103-140 |
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| April 14 | Rancière, 141-176  **Presentation** |
|  |  |
| April 16 | Reading/discussion  **Presentation** |
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| April 21 | Reading/discussion  **Presentation** |
|  |  |
| April 23 | Reading/discussion  **Presentation** |
|  | |
| **April 28 — Second paper, 8-10 pages** | |