What do you do when you lose control of your body? What might your clothes say about you? What, exactly, is "body language?" Finally-- how might the answers to these questions have varied over time? This course will explore the representation of the body in French literature and culture from the sixteenth to the twentieth century. Each unit will focus on a different century, and will explore the ways in which the body appears repeatedly, and insistently, in conversations about gender, politics, medicine, love, science, and the relationship between self and society. We will have several occasions to consider the status of the body and its language(s) in our own time and place. Students will learn, both in writing and in class discussion, to make new connections across disciplines and to analyze and question the boundaries between the body and the self. Readings will be supplemented by illustrations, film clips and short creative writing assignments. In English -- no knowledge of French required.