
INTRODUCTION TO PARISIAN CULTURE AND CUSTOMS in Fall 2019 (FR1007)

Course Code	FR1007	Professor(s)	Raphael Bloch-Laine
Prerequisites	None	Office Number	SD-10
Class Schedule	M: 12:10-13:30 in SD-6	Office Hours	T R 12:00 – 13:30 by appointment
Credits	2	Email	rblochlaine@aup.edu
Semester	Fall 2019	Office Tel. Ext.	677

Course Description

In this course, you will become familiar with Paris and its residents, contributing to a global awareness and understanding of local habits, values, and way of life, as well as reflecting on your own. You will explore “the city of light” through a variety of in-class and outside activities and projects, including the study of various media, study trips to local places of interest and meeting Parisians from diverse backgrounds in different social and professional contexts.

One to two hours of homework per class is required, including a series of background readings, the writing of short response papers, analysis, and research. You will do presentations on selected topics and participate in group creative projects.

Course Learning Outcomes

learn basic facts about French history, society and culture

learn to use interdisciplinary analytical frameworks to interpret and reflect on cultural facts and artifacts.

learn to develop your analyses of culture through oral and written modes of communication

learn strategies to interact with French people.

General Education

Course Outline

Week I

Topics: Culture shock. Non-verbal communication. Foreigners in Paris.

Reading: Short texts from Gopnik, Adam. *Americans in Paris: A Literary Anthology*. New York: Library of America, 2004. Print. Excerpts from Platt, Polly. *French or foe?: getting the most out of visiting, living and working in France*. Culture Crossings, 2004.

Last day to drop/add courses online

Week II

Topics: Social barriers. Insiders and outsiders. What does it mean to be French?

Reading: Excerpts from Hall, E.T., and M. R. Hall, *Understanding Cultural Differences: Germans, French, Americans*. Intercultural Press, Boston. 1990.

Druckerman, Pamela, "How to be French." *The New York Times*. Dec 12, 2014.

Week III

Topics: French "high" culture. Bleak chic, "esprit bourgeois".

Viewing: Excerpts from Patrice Leconte, *Ridicule*.

Reading: "French Culture: Bleak Chic." *The Economist*. Dec 21, 201

Week IV

Topics: "Too good to be true". Heroes and anti-heroes.

Reading: English versions of Gaston Lagaffe, Achille Talon, Super Dupont.

Week V

Topics: French body language.

Reading: Wylie, Laurence William. *Beaux gestes: a guide to French body talk*. Undergraduate Press, 1977.

Week VI

Topics: Mid-term. In-class essay.

Week VII

Topics: Sit in a café, observe the French, describe them. Do they confirm French stereotypes?

Mid-semester grades due

Week VIII

Topics: Bilingual acting workshop.

Fall break

Week IX

Topics: Business or “affaires”? Money taboo.

Reading: Short texts by Weber, Thomas Aquinas, Proudhon.

Week X

Topics: French humour. Politics. Making fun of the French.

Viewing: Skits by Coluche, les Inconnus, les Deschiens, with English subtitles.

Materials (TV shows, movies, series, songs, comics...) brought to class by students.

Week XI

Topics: Parisian sexiness and gender stereotypes, with Pr. Nathalie Debroise.

Viewing: French music videos (Montand, Gainsbourg, Vartan, Bardot, Zaz, M.)

Week XII

Topics: Paris and the US: fascination and contempt.

Reading: Tocqueville, Tintin in America, Lucky Luke, speeches of French politicians.

Week XIII

Topics: Oral production. Act French. Presentation of movies, pictures or skits.

Week XIV

Topics: Final oral production. Screening of the short documentaries.

Textbooks

This course doesn't have any textbook.

Attendance Policy

Students studying at The American University of Paris are expected to attend ALL scheduled classes, and in case of absence, should contact their professors to explain the situation. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of any specific attendance policy that a faculty member might have set in the course syllabus. The French Department, for example, has its own attendance policy, and students are responsible for compliance. Academic Affairs will excuse an absence for students' participation in study trips related to their courses.

Attendance at all exams is mandatory.

IN ALL CASES OF MISSED COURSE MEETINGS, THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR COMMUNICATION WITH THE PROFESSOR, AND FOR ARRANGING TO MAKE UP MISSED WORK, RESTS SOLELY WITH THE STUDENT.

Whether an absence is excused or not is ALWAYS up to the discretion of the professor or the department. Unexcused absences can result in a low or failing participation grade. In the case of excessive absences, it is up to the professor or the department to decide if the student will receive an "F" for the course. An instructor may recommend that a student withdraw, if absences have made it impossible to continue in the course at a satisfactory level.

Students must be mindful of this policy when making their travel arrangements, and especially during the Drop/Add and Exam Periods.

Grading Policy

Mid-term: a four-page in-class essay on a French cultural fact, based on provided documents.	20%
Weekly short response papers.	10%
Oral production about cultural artifacts. Presentation, recording or skit.	20%
Final oral production: a short documentary about Paris	10%
Final written production: a four-page essay on a difference between an aspect of French culture and the student's own culture, based on the student's own material.	20%
Course involvement: participation in class (individual or group work); effort and improvement	20%

Other
