

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES & CULTURES

FALL 2015

FREN 120 – FRENCH CULTURE

Class Time: Mo.-We.-Fr. 12.10-1.00 Sloan Hall 161

Professor: Dr. Romain Chareyron

Office: 124 B

Office Hours: Tu.-Th. 9.00-10.00

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Course description

The goal of this course is to introduce students to some of the most significant historical, political, social and cultural aspects of French society. Although we will start the class with an overview of some of the founding events in French history, our focus will mostly on modern France, from WWII to the present time. Throughout the course of this semester, we will discuss topics such as (but not limited to): politics, immigration, religion, the arts, food or the welfare system.

Through selected readings, videos and presentations, students will gain knowledge of the specificities of French society, its assets as well as its drawbacks. We will also welcome guest speakers who will provide us with new insights on specific issues.

Required Texts

Nadeau, Jean-Benoit & Julie Barlow, *Sixty Million Frenchmen can't Be Wrong*, Sourcebooks, 2003.

All additional documents can be found on the website for this class.

Website for the class

I have created a website for this class where you will find a lot of extra information regarding the topics discussed as well as all the worksheets for each topic. This website should be considered as an extension of the textbook and you should access it on a weekly basis.

Link to the [French Culture Class](#)

| Goals | Outcomes |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Exploration of the historical, political, social and cultural life of France.• Focus on contemporary issues regarding French society.• Comparisons with US customs and values, identifying similarities and differences.• Gaining a better understanding of what defines “Frenchness”.• Enhance ability to read critically.• Enhance ability to summarize and present materials relevant to specific aspects of French culture.• Advance communicative skills, orally and in writing. | <p>By the end of the semester, students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Summarize key events in French history and assess their impact in today’s France.• Identify key differences between daily life in France and the US and evaluate them.• Express an informed and well-articulated opinion about various aspects of French culture.• Conduct research to identify appropriate sources related to French culture. |

Course evaluation

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| Attendance | 5% |
| Participation/Preparation | 15% |
| Presentation | 20% |
| Quizzes (4) | 20% |
| Final paper (<i>first draft 10%and final draft 30%</i>) | 40% |

Departmental and Course Grading System

Letter grades will be assigned as follows:

| | | |
|-------------------|-----------|-------------|
| A : 93% and above | B-: 80-82 | D+: 68-69 |
| A-: 90 – 92 | C+: 78-79 | D: 62-67 |
| B+: 88 – 89 | C: 73-77 | F: below 62 |
| B : 83 – 87 | C-: 70-72 | |

MOODLE: Students will have access to our class web site on Moodle; to access Moodle, go to: <http://www.forlang.wsu.edu>; click on Moodle on the right and enter your WSU student username and password. Then, click on your course: FL-FREN-308-01. You will find some course information there (syllabus and schedule) and will be able to check your grades after each test by clicking on ‘Grades’ in the left menu.

CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE: I want to stress out some important aspects regarding this class:

- **Cell phones are strictly forbidden!!!** Anyone using their phones during class will get their participation grade lowered by 1% each time.
- **There are no ins and outs during class!!!** Which means that anyone arriving more than 5 minutes late and/or leaving before the end of class will get a “0” for attendance on that day.

ATTENDANCE: Attendance is mandatory. Students must contact the instructor by email or phone when sick or unable to attend class due to an emergency situation (sickness, accident, family emergency). Absences for ANY other reasons will not be excused; you must schedule your medical appointments, advising sessions and job interviews outside of class time. No credit will be given for a missed test, or quiz due to an unexcused absence; **late homework assignments won't be accepted.**

PARTICIPATION/PREPARATION: Although I will sometimes offer you lectures on specific aspects of French culture, most of our sessions are designed as discussions, either in small groups or the entire class. In order for you to be prepared, you will have some assigned readings to do and, for each topic, a worksheet to complete that will help structure our discussions. It is essential that you do this work before coming to class. The quality of our discussions and the overall benefits you will get from this class greatly depend on your willingness to come prepared and ready to discuss and ask questions.

Keep in mind that I will randomly ask students to discuss the film and/or the article at the beginning of the class to start our discussion.

You will also have to post comments and/or questions on the forum on *Moodle*. These comments/questions will be connected to the assigned chapter(s) you had to read for the class. They will allow me to see that the readings have been done as well as help me figure out what might be the issues regarding specific topics. (see calendar for the dates when the comments/questions should be posted)

QUIZZES: You will have 4 quizzes, each one of them focused on one or more of the topics discussed in class. (see calendar for more information)

PRESENTATION: In groups of 2, you will give a 15-minute presentation on one of the topics discussed in class. Your presentation should discuss a specific aspect of a question/topic that we might have mentioned but didn't develop during class or bring out new information on a topic. Since the textbook offers many comparisons between the French and the US systems, this is also a method you can choose when researching for your subject. You will be graded according to the originality and quality of your research and the precision of the information you will provide us with. You should document your presentation by including critical sources and a bibliography.

FINAL PAPER: For this class, you will have to write a final research paper (7-8 pages) on a topic related to those discussed during the semester. **The final paper is due Monday, Dec.7th**

FORUM

Below are the dates **when you should have posted your comments and/or questions** regarding the topic discussed in class.

| Date | Post # |
|--------------------------------------|--------|
| Wednesday, September 9 th | 1 |
| Monday, September 14 th | 2 |
| Monday, September 21 st | 3 |
| Monday, September 28 th | 4 |
| Wednesday, October 7 th | 5 |
| Wednesday, October 14 th | 6 |
| Wednesday, October 28 th | 7 |
| Wednesday, November 4 th | 8 |
| Wednesday, November 18 th | 9 |

CALENDAR

Please note that this calendar is subject to change. If it need be, I will provide you with an updated version.

(W): Document on the website

(T): Text on the textbook *60 Million Frenchmen Can't Be Wrong*

| Week | Class | Homework |
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| 1. (Aug. 24, 26, 28) | <p>M. Introduction to class</p> <p>W. History of France (1): Prehistory</p> <p>F. History of France (2): Prehistory and the French Revolution</p> | <p>W. Read the chapter on French prehistory and the Gaul (W) and complete the worksheet (W).</p> <p>F. Read the text on French Revolution (W) and complete the worksheet (W).</p> |
| 2. (Aug. 31, Sept. 2, 4) | <p>M. History of France (3): The French Revolution and France from the Second Republic to the present.</p> <p>W. Geography of France: lab activity</p> <p>F. Quiz 1+ Geography of France</p> | <p>M. Gather information on France from the Second Republic to the present on the <i>Thinglink</i> document (W).</p> <p>F. (a) Review important facts about French history. (b) Complete the work sheet on the geography of France (W).</p> |
| 3. (Sept. 7, 9, 11) | <p>M. Labor Day</p> <p>W. The departments and regions of France</p> <p>F. The departments and regions of France</p> | <p>W. Read ch.2 (T) and complete the work sheet (W).</p> <p>F. Gather information on the departments and regions of France on the <i>Thinglink</i> document (W).</p> |
| 4. (Sept. 14, 16, 18) | <p>M. France and Europe</p> <p>W. France and Europe</p> <p>F. France and Europe: Quiz 2 + <u>Presentations</u></p> | <p>M. Read ch.23 (T) and complete the worksheet (W).</p> <p>W. Read the information about the EU and EU institutions (W).</p> <p>F. Review important facts about French geography and French regions/depts.</p> |

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| <p>5. (Sept. 21, 23, 25)</p> | <p>M. <u>French politics</u> <i>Talk by Pr. Steven Kale from the Dept. of History at WSU about French 5th Republic.</i></p> <p>W. French politics</p> <p>F. French politics: Presentations</p> | <p>M. Read ch.10 (T) and complete the worksheet (W).</p> <p>W. Read the information about French politics (W).</p> |
| <p>6. (Sept. 28, 30, Oct. 2)</p> | <p>M. <u>French education system</u></p> <p>W. French education system</p> <p>F. French education system: Quiz 3 + Presentations</p> | <p>M. Read ch.13 and 14 (T) and complete the work sheet (W).</p> <p>W. Gather information about French education system (W).</p> <p>F. Review important facts about French education system.</p> |
| <p>7. (Oct. 5, 7, 9)</p> | <p>M. <u>Workshop</u>: How to do an effective research for your evaluation papers.</p> <p>W. <u>World War II</u></p> <p>F. WWII</p> | <p>M. <i>TBA</i></p> <p>W. Read ch.7 (T) and “France During WWII” (W).</p> <p>F. Gather information on WWII (W).</p> |
| <p>8. (Oct. 12, 14, 16)</p> | <p>M. WWII: Presentations</p> <p>W. <u>The Algerian War</u></p> <p>F. The Algerian War</p> | <p>W. Read ch.8 (T) and gather information about the Algerian War (W).</p> |
| <p>9. (Oct. 19, 21, 23)</p> | <p>M. The Algerian War: Presentations</p> <p><i>Introduction to the topic of immigration</i></p> <p>W. Screening of the film <i>La Haine</i></p> <p>F. Screening of the film <i>La Haine</i></p> | |

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| <p>10. (Oct. 26, 28, 30)</p> | <p>M. Immigration in France: What are the issues? <i>Talk by Pr. Robert Eddy from the Dept. of English at WSU</i></p> <p>W. <u>Immigration in France</u></p> <p>F. Immigration</p> | <p>M. Read ch.21 (T)</p> <p>W. Complete the worksheet on immigration and religion (W).</p> <p>F. Gather information about immigration in France (W).</p> |
| <p>11. (Nov. 2, 4, 6)</p> | <p>M. Immigration: <u>Presentations</u></p> <p>First draft of research paper is due</p> <p>W. <u>Religions in France</u></p> <p>F. Religions in France</p> | <p>W. Gather information about religions in France (W) and the history of the Jewish population (W).</p> |
| <p>12. (Nov. 9, 11, 13)</p> | <p>M. Religions in France: Quiz 4 + <u>Presentations</u></p> <p>W. Veteran's day holiday</p> <p>F. French food</p> | <p>M. Review important facts about religion and immigration in France.</p> <p>F. Read text on French food (W).</p> |
| <p>13. (Nov. 16, 18, 20)</p> | <p>M. French food</p> <p>W. <u>The French welfare system</u></p> <p>F. The French welfare system</p> | <p>W. Read ch.17 and ch.18 (T) and complete the worksheet (W).</p> <p>F. We'll finish discussing the questions on the worksheet.</p> |
| <p>14. (Nov. 23, 25, 27)</p> | <p>Thanksgiving holiday</p> | |
| <p>15. (Nov. 30, Dec. 2, 4)</p> | <p>M. Welfare system: <u>Presentations</u></p> <p>W. <u>France and the arts</u></p> <p>F. France and the arts</p> | <p>W. Read the text on the Enlightenment (W).</p> |

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| 16. (Dec. 7, 9, 11) | M. French food/France and the arts: <u>Presentations</u> Research paper is due W. Wrap-up session F. Wrap-up session | <i>We'll use these sessions to finish discussing specific aspects of French culture.</i> |
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PRESENTATIONS' CALENDAR

| Date | Topics |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Friday, Sept. 18 th | 2 presentations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation #1 will focus on specific aspects of the departments and regions of France (specific depts./regions; their economy; etc.) • Presentation #2 will focus on specific aspects of France and/in Europe. |
| Friday, Sept. 25 th | 2 presentations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each presentation must focus on a different aspect of French politics. • One presentation can focus on specific aspects of the 5th Republic. • One presentation can focus on the political state of France today. |
| Friday, Oct. 2 nd | 2 presentations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each presentation must focus on a different aspect of the education system. • One presentation can focus on the current issues/debates surrounding education. • One presentation can focus on the current issues regarding <u>higher education</u>. • One presentation could focus on how the system favors inequalities within French society (regular education vs. “Z.E.P”, etc.) |
| Monday, Oct. 12 th | 2 presentations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each presentation must focus on a different aspect of WWII. • One presentation could focus more particularly on “Vichy France” (what it meant; how was political and social life organized, etc.) • One presentation could focus on one or more specific aspects of WWII. |
| Monday, Oct. 19 th | 2 presentations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each presentation must focus on a different aspect of the Algerian war or the French colonies. • One presentation could focus on the history of Algeria in relation to France and how the war had a lasting impact on the relationship between France and Algeria. • One presentation could focus on the history of the French colonies. |

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| Monday, Nov. 2 nd | <p>2 presentations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each presentation must focus on a different aspect of immigration. • One presentation could specifically focus on the history of immigration from North Africa. • One presentation could focus on the political, social and economic issues regarding immigration in today's France (focus on the <i>banlieues</i>). |
| Monday, Nov. 9 th | <p>2 presentations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each presentation must focus on a different aspect of religion. • One presentation could focus more specifically on the religion of Islam and the issues in French society. • One presentation could focus on the significance/relevance of Catholicism in today's society (focus on <i>laïcité</i>). |
| Monday, Nov. 30 th | <p>2 presentations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each presentation must focus on a specific aspect of the welfare system. • One presentation could focus more specifically on the evolution of the position of women in French society. • One presentation could focus on the economic issues regarding the French welfare system. • One presentation could offer a comparison of the French and the US system, highlighting their assets and drawbacks. |
| Monday, Dec. 7 th | <p>2 presentations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One presentation must focus on one aspect of French food (the significance of food in French society; the economy of food/French gastronomy; etc.) • One presentation must focus on one aspect of French arts (a specific type of art – cinema; literature; painting; etc – a specific movement in art history and its impact on society; etc.) |