



**CM/PO 320 - MEDIA AND CURRENT AFFAIRS IN FRANCE AND THE EUROPEAN UNION**  
IES Abroad Paris

**DESCRIPTION:**

The course will explore and critically analyze major institutions, actors, trends, and the coverage of current-affairs issues in contemporary French and European media as we try to situate them in the larger context of the “globalized” world-media-scene. We will examine the operational schemes, performances, and internal decisional and power structures of different branches of French media: written national and regional press, specialized magazines, the publishing industry, advertising, radio, television, and the internet. We will attempt a specific analysis regarding the international and French implications of the growing potential of social networks and “New Media.” We’ll critically review some aspects of the growing confusion—both in terms of competition and compatibility— between “new” and “old” media and their political, social, and cultural impacts.

In the domain of social and political presence, we will study and question practices of newsgathering, deontological principles and constraints, media performance under pressure of time, context, profit-making-structures, politics, violence, ethics, and ideologies. We will examine forms and styles of “information”, editorial policies, and the variety of notions of “democratic pluralism” across the French and European media landscapes. We will try to define and decode distinctions between “news”, “commentary” and “analysis” as they are being treated on the French and European media scenes. We’ll analyze what all these may mean, encourage, cultivate, or block in terms of politics, society, culture, and media during “high times” of political turmoil, violent crisis, or social unrest.

**CREDITS:** 3 credits

**CONTACT HOURS:** 45 hours

**LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION:** English

**PREREQUISITES:** None

**ADDITIONAL COST:** None

**METHOD OF PRESENTATION:**

The course will alternate traditional lectures and critical discussions and the analysis of written, illustrated, audio, visual, and virtual excerpts. There will also be class presentations, case studies, Moodle interactive exchanges, and field studies (to be announced during the second half of the semester).

**REQUIRED WORK AND FORM OF ASSESSMENT:**

- Class participation and active involvement in discussion - 10%
- Class reports - 20%
- Midterm exam - 35%
- Final exam - 35%

**Class Participation**

Students are expected to complete readings and homework outside of class and actively contribute to classroom discussions. Keeping up steadily with current French and European news is strictly required. Informed and challenging opinions are highly encouraged during class reports, presentations, and discussions.

**Class Reports**

Students will present a designated article from the course’s bibliography and submit a written synthesis (approximately 2 pages). Every session will include a compact set of oral presentations (10-12 minutes) of students addressing specific aspects of the assigned reading materials, previous class discussions, and special interest, ‘hot’, or current events in France and the EU.

**Midterm Exam**

Students will respond to several essay questions. Students will complete their midterm exam in class.



### Final Exam

Students will respond to several essay questions. Students will complete their midterm exam in class.

### LEARNING OUTCOMES:

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Analyze, compare, and critically evaluate media coverage, operational modes, and involvement in the French and European political, social, cultural, and 'mental' landscape.
- Evaluate the historical context and assess contemporary practices and trends in French and European and 'new' media.
- Compare European media characteristics with the US media sphere and integrate 'global considerations' into an overall analysis of modern media impacts.

### ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Attendance is mandatory for all IES Abroad Paris BIA courses, including internship placements, course-related trips and/or field studies. Failure to adhere to these rules will negatively impact your final grade. Any exams, quizzes, tests, presentations, or other work missed due to student absences can only be rescheduled in cases of documented illness with a doctor's note. Medical documentation must be presented to the academic office within two days of your return to class. If not rescheduled, they will be graded as 0. Exceptionally, you will be permitted one absence for illness without a doctor's note.

In excess of what is outlined above, your final grade will be lowered by one-third of a letter grade for each additional absence. For example: if you receive a final grade of an A- in a course meeting once a week (3-hour course), 2 absences = B+, 3 absences = B, etc.

Punctuality is very important in all IES Abroad Paris BIA courses and being tardy to class is disruptive for the faculty members as well as your fellow classmates. Being more than 15 minutes late repeatedly (4 times) will count as an absence. Students who miss more than 25% of class time will receive a failing grade (F). This is calculated as 3 absences in a course meeting once a week (3-hour courses), or 6 absences in a course meeting twice a week (1.5-hour courses).

### CONTENT:

| Week   | Content                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Assignments                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|--------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Week 1 | <p><b>Introduction: what shall we be looking for? How shall we proceed?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We will cover the bases of terminology and short-term/long-term definitions needed to deal with French and European media as well as political, social, and cultural "spheres"</li><li>• Students will be given a general introduction to the contrast between traditional media and the Virtual, the NET, Social Networks, and the challenges these pose.</li></ul> | <p><b>Reading:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Chalaby, Jean K. (2002). Reason of State and Public Communications: <i>De Gaulle in Context The De Gaulle Presidency and the Media</i>, Palgrave-Macmillan, ch. 9 p. 189-205.</li></ul> <p><b>Oral Report (1 student)</b></p> |

| Week      | Content                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Assignments                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|-----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Week 2    | <b>Mapping the Media &amp; Political Scenes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“Horizontal view” of French media scene: who’s who in the current written press, radio, television, the internet, publishing &amp; advertisement industries, as well as specialized press, “free-time”, leisure and magazine press</li> <li>We will consider media institutions of reference and try to establish notions of historical evolutions and ‘trends’</li> </ul> | <b>Reading:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kuhn, Raymond. (2011). Historical Development of the Media in France. <i>The media in Contemporary France</i>, McGraw –Hill Education, ch.1, p. 5-28.</li> <li>Margolis, Michael and Moreno-Riano, Gerson, 2013. “The internet and the decline of Euro-American democracy”, In: Nixon, Paul G. Rawal, Rajash &amp; Mercea, Dan (eds.), “Politics and the Internet in Comparative Context: Views from the Cloud”, Routledge, London &amp; New York.</li> </ul><br><b>Oral Report (1-2 students)</b> |
| Session 3 | <b>How do they function?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Media “machinery” and performance: how do they operate, compete, comply, survive, disappear, or flourish?</li> <li>We will consider instincts, ambitions, limitations, and constraints of media coverage and production, and explore the senses of editorial, production, and financial innovation facing the “New Media”</li> </ul>                                                          | <b>Reading:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nye, Joseph S. Jr. (2011). Soft Power, “The Future of Power”, Public Affairs, New-York, 2011, ch. 4 p. 81-109.</li> <li>Drezner, Daniel W.,(2022). The Perils of Pessimism: Why Anxious Nations Are dangerous Nations, “Foreign Affairs”, July/August 2022.</li> </ul><br><b>Oral Report (1-2 students)</b>                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Week 4    | <b>Media as Public Actors: Facts, Emotions, Analysis, Power, and Counter-power.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will look at varying approached and nuances related to notions of “media influence” in politics, society, and culture</li> <li>Dynamics and impacts of the “New Media”</li> <li>Notions of the local, the national, the European, and the global</li> </ul>                                                                         | <b>Reading:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vince, Natalya. (2010). France, Islam and Laïcité: Colonial Exceptions, Contemporary Reinventions and European Convergence. Chafer, Tony and Godin, Emmanuel [Ed.] <i>The End of French Exception? Decline and Revival of the “French Model”</i>. ch. 8. p. 153-170.</li> <li>Baubérot, Jean. (2009). Laïcité and the Challenge of ‘Republicanism’, Modern and Contemporary France, vol. 17, No. 2, p. 189-198.</li> </ul><br><b>Oral Report (1-2 students)</b>                                    |

| Week   | Content                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Assignments                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|--------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Week 5 | <b>"Civil Societies": French and European Political Landscape</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How does the media influence civil society?</li> <li>What is its effect on political awareness, participation, and electoral campaigning on the French internal scene and in the context of European and international positioning?</li> <li>Does media have a role in the European unification process?</li> </ul> | <b>Reading:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ibrahim, Yasmin. (2009). The Mediated 'Ummah' in Europe: The Islamic Influence in the Cultural Age. Charles, Alex, ed. <i>Media in the Enlarged Europe: Politics, Policy and Industry</i>, Intellect: 113-122.</li> <li>Harmsen, Robert. (2010). French Euroscepticism and the construction of National Exceptionism. Chafer, Tony and Godin, Emmanuel [Ed.] <i>The End of French Exception? Decline and Revival of the "French Model"</i>. ch. 6. p. 105-122.</li> </ul> <b>Oral Report (1-2 students)</b> |
| Week 6 | <b>Midterm Examination</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review for the midterm</li> <li>Midterm exam</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Week 7 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Debriefing of the midterm</li> <li>Introduction of the second half of the semester</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | <b>Reading:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dauncey, Hugh. (2010). "L'exception culturelle". Chafer, Tony and Godin, Emmanuel [Ed.], <i>The End of French Exception? Decline and Revival of the "French Model"</i>. Ch. 4. p. 72-84.</li> </ul> <b>Oral Report (1-2 students)</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Week 8 | <b>Media Business Models: Social and Commercial Realities and Constraints</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Political affiliations and sympathies</li> <li>Regulation and innovation</li> <li>Free media outlets, advertisement, free downloads, and copyrights</li> <li>We will attempt to answer the question "Who's really in charge: the Parliament, the Bureaucracy, or the Market?"</li> </ul>                | <b>Reading:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vedel, Thierry. (2009). Pluralism in the French Broadcasting System: Between the Legacy of History and the Challenges of New Technologies. Czepek, Andrea Hellwig, Melanie &amp; Nowak, Eva [Ed.], <i>Press Freedom and Pluralism in Europe: Concepts &amp; Conditions</i>. p. 261- 274.</li> </ul> <b>Oral Report (1-2 students)</b>                                                                                                                                                                       |

| Week    | Content                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Assignments                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
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| Week 9  | <b>The Media and French “Universal Claim”</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will look at “Francophile” and media using examples of overseas influence of French written press, as well as the case of TV5-Monde.</li> <li>Media is a tool that has revised the notions of “Soft Power”; it is a tool in electoral campaigning, diplomacy, and the “peaceful deployment of democracy”, often applied across borders with multi-directional impacts.</li> <li>We will make some comparisons between EU models: Northern “Rhine Model”, British traditions and “solidity”, Mediterranean Europe, and the Central European newcomers to the EU.</li> </ul> | <b>Reading:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kuhn, Raymond. (2011). The French Media On the World Stage. The media in Contemporary France, McGraw –Hill Education, ch.7, p. 143-163.</li> <li>Mason, Moya K. (1999). La Francophonie: The History, Structures, Organization and Philosophical Underpinnings; report to the "Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (excerpts).</li> </ul> <b>Oral Report (1-2 students)</b>                                                                                           |
| Week 10 | <b>“La République est une”: European Media and Identity Issues</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité and Laïcité</li> <li>What are the media’s contributions in the domain of national identity?</li> <li>Immigration, ethnic diversity, “communautisme”, cultural shocks, nationalism, patriotism, and xenophobia in media</li> <li>What controversies does it create?</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | <b>Reading:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fenton, Natalie. (2011). Drowning or Waving? New Media, Journalism and democracy; In Fenton, Natalie (ed.) New Media, Old News: Journalism &amp; democracy in the Digital Age; Sage, London, Los-Angeles, Part 1, Introduction , p. 3-15.</li> <li>Francis Fukuyama, Barak Richman, and Ashish Goel (2021), How to Save Democracy From Technology; Ending Big Tech’s Information Monopoly; "Foreign Affairs" January/February 2021.</li> </ul> <b>Oral Report (1-2 students)</b> |
| Week 11 | <b>Notions of Responsibility in Political and Media Behavior</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interactivity and confrontation between the traditional and the “new” media</li> <li>In-class analysis of case studies on electoral periods and extreme crisis situations</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | <b>Reading:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Baudrillard, Jean. (1995). The Racing Driver and His Double. TV Fantasies, Screened Out, p. 166-170.</li> <li>De Smaele, Hedwig. (2009). The Enlarged Audio-visual Europe: The Many faces of Europeanization; Media in the Enlarged Europe, Intellect, p. 13-19.</li> </ul> <b>Oral Report (1-2 students)</b>                                                                                                                                                                    |

| Week           | Content                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Assignments                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
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| <b>Week 12</b> | <b>Entertainment à la Française, à l'Européenne</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reality shows and voyeurism in France</li> <li>Through examples and a study of the evolution of entertainment "products", we will attempt to understand the problematic fascination with media violence, as well as consider the concepts of "elites" and "people" in French history, politics, culture, and mass media</li> </ul> | <b>Reading:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bollinger, Lee C. (2010). "Uninhibited, Robust and Wide-Open: A free Press for a New Century", Oxford University Press, Ch. 3: Regardless of Frontiers: p. 68-106.</li> <li>Dauncey, Hugh (1996). French 'Reality Television': More than a Matter of Taste? European Journal of Communication 1996; 11-83.</li> </ul><br><b>Oral Report (1-2 students)</b>                                                                                                                |
| <b>Week 13</b> | <b>What's Next?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where are we heading in terms of political, social, and cultural media coverage in France, within the "Francophonie", and in the European Union?</li> <li>We will review the balances and adversities between "New" and "Traditional" media, and attempt to summarize contextual relativities and rapidly changing criteria</li> </ul>                             | <b>Reading:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Drake, Helen. (2010). France, Europe and the Limits of Exceptionalism. Chafer, Tony and Godin, Emmanuel ed. The End of French Exception? Decline and Revival of the 'French Model'. ch. 10. p. 187-202.</li> <li>Tworzecki, Hubert. (2012). Political Communication and Media Effects in the Context of New Democracies of East-Central Europe. Semetko, Holli A. &amp; Scammell, Margaret [Ed.], The Sage Handbook of Political Communication (2012). Ch. 35.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Week 14</b> | <b>Review &amp; Final Exam</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Final Exam</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |

**COURSE-RELATED TRIPS:**

- Course-related trips will be determined before the beginning of the course based on current events.

**REQUIRED READINGS:**

- Baubérot, Jean. (2009). Laïcité and the Challenge of 'Republicanism', Modern and Contemporary France, vol. 17, No. 2, p. 189-198.
- Baudrillard, Jean. (1995). The Racing Driver and His Double. TV Fantasies, Screened Out, p. 166-170.
- Bollinger, Lee C. (2010). "Uninhibited, Robust and Wide-Open: A free Press for a New Century", Oxford University Press, Ch. 3: Regardless of Frontiers: p. 68-106.
- Chalaby, Jean K. (2002). Reason of State and Public Communications: *De Gaulle in Context The De Gaulle Presidency and the Media*, Palgrave-Macmillan, ch. 9 p. 189-205.
- Dauncey, Hugh (1996). French 'Reality Television': More than a Matter of Taste? European Journal of Communication 1996; 11-83.

- Dauncey, Hugh. (2010). "L'exception culturelle". Chafer, Tony and Godin, Emmanuel [Ed.], *The End of French Exception? Decline and Revival of the "French Model"*. Ch. 4. p. 72-84.
- De Smaele, Hedwig. (2009). *The Enlarged Audio-visual Europe: The Many faces of Europeanization; Media in the Enlarged Europe*, Intellect, p. 13-19.
- Drake, Helen. (2010). *France, Europe and the Limits of Exceptionalism*. Chafer, Tony and Godin, Emmanuel ed. *The End of French Exception? Decline and Revival of the 'French Model'*. ch. 10. p. 187-202.
- Drezner, Daniel W.,(2022). *The Perils of Pessimism: Why Anxious Nations Are dangerous Nations*, "Foreign Affairs", July/August 2022.
- Fenton, Natalie. (2011). *Drowning or Waving? New Media, Journalism and democracy*; In Fenton, Natalie (ed.) *New Media, Old News: Journalism & democracy in the Digital Age*; Sage, London, Los-Angeles, Part 1, Introduction , p. 3-15.
- Francis Fukuyama, Barak Richman, and Ashish Goel (2021), *How to Save Democracy From Technology; Ending Big Tech's Information Monopoly*; "Foreign Affairs" January/February 2021.
- Harmsen, Robert. (2010). *French Euroscepticism and the construction of National Exceptionism*. Chafer, Tony and Godin, Emmanuel [Ed.] *The End of French Exception? Decline and Revival of the "French Model"*. ch. 6. p. 105-122.
- Ibrahim, Yasmin. (2009). *The Mediated 'Ummah' in Europe: The Islamic Influence in the Cultural Age*. Charles, Alex, ed. *Media in the Enlarged Europe: Politics, Policy and Industry*, Intellect: 113-122.
- Kuhn, Raymond. (2011). *Historical Development of the Media in France*. *The Media in Contemporary France*, McGraw –Hill Education, ch.1, 7, p. 5-28, 143-163.
- Margolis, Michael and Moreno-Riano, Gerson, 2013. "The internet and the decline of Euro-American democracy", In: Nixon, Paul G. Rawal, Rajash & Mercea, Dan (eds.), "Politics and the Internet in Comparative Context: Views from the Cloud", Routledge, London & New York.
- Mason, Moya K. (1999). *La Francophonie: The History, Structures, Organization and Philosophical Underpinnings*; report to the "Organisation International de la Francophonie (excerpts).
- Nye, Joseph S. Jr. (2011). *Soft Power, "The Future of Power"*, Public Affairs, New-York, 2011, ch. 4 p. 81-109.
- Tworzecki, Hubert. (2012). *Political Communication and Media Effects in the Context of New Democracies of East-Central Europe*. Semetko, Holli A. & Scammell, Margaret [Ed.], *The Sage Handbook of Political Communication* (2012). Ch. 35.
- Vedel, Thierry. (2009). *Pluralism in the French Broadcasting System: Between the Legacy of History and the Challenges of New Technologies*. Czepek, Andrea Hellwig, Melanie & Nowak, Eva [Ed.], *Press Freedom and Pluralism in Europe: Concepts & Conditions*. p. 261- 274.
- Vince, Natalya. (2010). *France, Islam and Laïcité: Colonial Exceptions, Contemporary Reinventions and European Convergence*. Chafer, Tony and Godin, Emmanuel [Ed.] *The End of French Exception? Decline and Revival of the "French Model"*. ch. 8. p. 153-170.