



SO/PO 312 FRANCE TODAY: POLITICS AND SOCIETY

IES Abroad Paris BIA

DESCRIPTION: France has always fascinated foreign observers; on the one hand, it lays claims, through its revolutionary tradition to being a pioneer for change; on the other hand, imbued if not imprisoned by the weight of its history, it is viewed by many outsiders as a bastion of conservatism. To quote, Charles de Gaulle, reforms in France only come in the wake of a revolution.

This class aims to understand this France with all its exceptions and its peculiarities. It will take you on a journey through France's past and bring you to the present. It will analyze the effects of the various forces that today challenge France. We will look at the legacy of World War Two, of the post-war economic boom, of European integration. Given the context of the coming Presidential elections, we shall discuss the candidates, their political parties, their platforms as well as the issues that concern the French people and we will try and predict which way the French will vote. There will be a Presidential political debate, in which you will be allocated a candidate to defend. There will be a number of excursions, where we will see and later discuss certain features of France.

Using a thematic approach, this course will encourage students to engage in and discuss key issues that have challenged French society in the post-World War II era.

CREDITS: 3 credits

CONTACT HOURS: 45 hours

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION: English

PREREQUISITES: None

METHOD OF PRESENTATION:

- Lectures
- Class discussions
- Student presentations
- Class debates

REQUIRED WORK AND FORM OF ASSESSMENT:

Oral assessment:

- Discussion based on the readings and newspaper articles: 10%
- Oral presentation: 15%
- Presidential political debate: 10%

Written assessment:

- In class quizzes: 20%
- Midterm exam: 20%
- Final Exam: 25 %

1. Discussions based on the readings: (10%)

The theme for the discussion will be provided certain weeks. All the students must come to class ready to participate on these points. Certain weeks I shall be posting a newspaper article on Moodle. You will be required to read the article and be ready to discuss it in class.

2. Oral Presentation (15%): Check the dates for your presentation.

The presentation should be based on a specific law or decree that has in recent years affected French society. You cannot use the same topic of presentation from another class. The presentation needs to show a clear understanding of the topic.

3. Presidential political debate (10%)

You will be allocated a candidate whose platform you will debate in class. Students will be assessed on relevancy and pertinence of the topic they have chosen and or the research they had carried out.

4. In – class written test: two quizzes (20%) midterm (20%); last week of class: final (25%)



The format of the quizzes, midterm and the final will be knowledge-based short answer questions. I am looking for comprehension and the ability to recall the information that was acquired.

Class Policy:

- There are NO additional or make up assignments.
- Late assignments will not be accepted.

Academic Dishonesty:

Regardless of the quality of work, plagiarism is punishable with a 'failing grade' in the class. Plagiarism may be broadly defined as "copying of materials from sources, without acknowledging having done so, claiming other's ideas as one's own without proper reference to them, and buying materials such as essays/exams."

A note on electronic devices:

As a courtesy to your instructor and fellow students, please do not use cell phones, laptops, tablets, e-readers, or other electronic devices during class, even to check the time. Make sure phones are turned off. Use of these devices will lower your participation grade. No recording (audio or visual) of class sessions will be permitted.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

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

- Demonstrate an understanding of France's recent history
- Articulate the various political opinions within French society
- Evaluate some of the policies that the French government has adopted.
- Contextualize and compare where necessary the various concerns that affect French society today
- Discard some of the clichés that often exemplify France for the outsider

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

"IES BIA Attendance Policy: Since IES BIA courses are designed to take advantage of the unique contribution of the instructor and the lecture/discussion format is regarded as the primary mode of instruction, regular class attendance is mandatory.

Absences for documented medical problems or family emergencies will be excused.

Absences for any other reason will not be excused.

If a student shows a pattern in absences, in violation of this policy, students may be subject to an Academic Review including but not limited to a letter sent to their school and a probationary period or exclusion from the program."

CONTENT:

Week	Content	Assignments
<u>Week 1 Sessions 1 & 2:</u> January 23 rd & 25 th	<u>Monday</u> Introduction: Lecture topic: What is 'so French about the French'? Key Topics: How different is France to ? <u>Wednesday:</u> Discussion around the readings. Theme of discussion around the documents: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- What do the documents reveal about France?	Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Declaration of the Rights of Man, 1789 (Approved by the National Assembly of France, August 26, 1789)- Ernest Renan, excerpt from 'What is a Nation?' (<u>Ou'est-ce</u>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In what way do they point to differences between the United States and France? - What are the similarities between the two countries? 	<p><u>qu'une nation?</u>), Lecture at the Sorbonne, 11 March 1882</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - La Marseillaise, the lyrics - Alex Marshall, 'The Twist and Turn of the Marseillaise', <i>New York Times</i>, December 2016. - Olympe de Gouges, <i>Declaration of the Rights of Women</i>
<p>Week 2 Sessions 3 & 4: January 30th & February 1st</p>	<p>Monday Lecture topic: France, short history: continuity or change? (A power Point presentation) Key Topic: Why so many revolutions?</p> <p>Wednesday: Theme of discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is France the country of contestation? - Why do the French contest? - Is it different to other countries? <p>Discussion around the readings (Drake, chapter 1 : look at the questions on this chapter posted on Moodle , and Jenkins chapter 6 and 7) .</p>	<p>Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cecil Jenkins chapters 6 and 7 - Helen Drake chapter 1
<p>Week 3 Sessions 5 & 6: February 6th & 8th</p>	<p>Monday Quiz 1/ this will cover lectures and readings so far as well as Drake , chapter 1</p> <p>Lecture Topic: France: defeat, occupation and liberation (A power Point presentation) Key Topics: The effects of the Occupation on France; The Vichy syndrome: its effects on collective memory</p> <p>Wednesday Theme of discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The weight of history - Collective memory - A comparison with other countries - Charles de Gaulle, the man, the politician, the hero ... myth or reality <p>Your impressions of the film</p>	<p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Charles de Gaulle, Speeches broadcast through the BBC 18-19 -22 June 1940 - Charles de Gaulle, speech at the Paris Town Hall, 25 August 1944 - When Charles de Gaulle met Franklin D Roosevelt, <i>The Independent</i>, 23 March 1996 - Jenkins chapter 9 and 10 - Watch the film <i>The Round-up</i>, (<i>La Rafle</i>)

<p><u>Week 4</u> <u>Sessions</u> <u>7 & 8:</u> February 20th & 22nd</p>	<p><u>Monday:</u> <u>COURSE-RELATED TRIP: a walk around Paris looking at World War</u> <u>Two memorial sites</u></p> <p><u>Wednesday:</u> Lecture topic: France and the French</p>	<p>Reading: Helen Drake, chapters 2</p>
<p><u>Week 5</u> <u>Sessions</u> <u>9 & 10:</u> February 27th & March 1st</p>	<p>Lecture topic: Politics and political culture: liberty, equality and fraternity</p> <p>Discussion around the readings Themes of discussion;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - French motto: liberty, equality, fraternity: what do those words really mean? - Mottos from other countries - Race, religion, state, gender: comparison with the United States. 	<p>Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Helen Drake, chapters 3 - Jean Fabien Spitz, 'The Twilight of the Republic?' in Nadeau and Weinstock, <i>Republicanism: History, Theory, Practice</i> (2004) - Owen Connelly, <i>The epoch of Napoleon</i>, chapter 3 'Napoleonic France'
<p><u>Week 6</u> <u>Sessions</u> <u>11 & 12</u></p> <p>March 6th</p> <p>March 8th</p>	<p>Midterm</p> <p>Lecture topic: the institutions of the 5th Republic French political parties</p>	<p>Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Helen Drake, chapter 4 <p>Look at the following website</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - http://www.parti-socialiste.fr/ - http://www.u-m-p.org/ - http://www.frontnational.com/ - http://www.frontdegauche-alters.fr/ - http://www.mouvementdemocrate.fr/ - http://eelv.fr/
<p><u>Week 7</u> <u>Sessions</u> <u>13 & 14:</u> March 13th & 15th</p>	<p>Lecture topic: the institutions of the 5th Republic French political parties (contd); the coming presidential elections</p> <p>Theme for discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Political parties: What are the similarities and differences between the United States and France? <p>Wednesday: Presidential political DEBATE</p>	

Week 8 Sessions 15 & 16: March 20th & 22nd	<u>COURSE-RELATED TRIP</u> Wednesday: Quiz 2: covering lectures and readings on political parties and institutions including our visit. Lecture topic: the educational system and the welfare state	Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Helen Drake, chapter 5 - Eugene Weber, <i>Peasants into Frenchmen</i>, chapter 18 'Civilizing in earnest; schools and schooling'
<u>FRIDAY</u> <u>MARCH</u> <u>24TH</u>	<u>MANDATORY COURSE-RELATED TRIP: Visit the Senate</u>	
Week 9 Sessions 17 & 18: March 27th & 29th	Oral presentations Lecture topic: the educational system and the welfare state (continued) Check the following websites <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - https://www.polytechnique.edu/jsp/accueil.jsp?CODE=36392593&LANGUAGE=0 - http://www.ens.fr/?lang=en - http://www.sciencespo.fr/en - http://www.univ-paris-diderot.fr/english/sc/site.php?bc=accueil&np=accueil&g=m - http://www.english.paris-sorbonne.fr/?lang=en Themes for discussion : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The ideals of the French Republic, as seen through its constitution. - Based on your findings on the websites, comment on the French educational institutions. How do the French educational institutions differ / resemble the American ones? - How important is the welfare system? 	
Week 10 Sessions 19 & 20: April 3rd & 5th	Oral presentations Lecture topic: French cultural Politics Theme for discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The political importance of cultural diplomacy to France. 	Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Helen Drake, chapter 6

<u>Week 11</u> <u>Sessions</u> <u>21 & 22:</u> April 10th & 12th	Oral presentations Lecture topic: French Foreign Politics Theme for discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Does France play an important role in world affairs? 	Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Helen Drake, chapter 8
<u>Week 12</u> <u>Sessions</u> <u>23 & 24:</u> April 19th & 21st	Oral Presentations (any remaining groups) Lecture topic: French Economy and Business Theme for discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is the economy and business run differently to the United States? 	Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Helen Drake, chapter 7
<u>Week 13</u>	<u>Final Exam: TBA</u>	

As a way of a general introduction, students who choose this class are encouraged to purchase and read the following books.
 Cecil Jenkins, *France People, History and Culture: a brief history* Constable and Robinson, 2011
 And
 Rod Kedward, *La Vie en Bleu: France and the French since 1900*, Penguin, 2006

Required readings:

Text book:

Helen Drake, *Contemporary France*, Palgrave MacMillan, 2011

Other articles and documents assigned every week will be posted on Moodle.