



## HS/PO/SO 340 TRANSATLANTIC IDENTITIES: A HISTORY OF UNIVERSALISM AND COMMUNITY IN FRANCE AND THE UNITED STATES

IES Abroad Paris BIA

### DESCRIPTION:

This course examines the historical impact of the idea of universalism and its role in shaping French and American societies in the late modern era. Beginning with the notion of universal rights and the modern understanding of the citizen as articulated in the political philosophy of the Enlightenment and in the spirit of the American and French revolutions, we will trace the development of the relationship between individual, community and society on both sides of the Atlantic throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Reading a combination of original documents and academic works, we will address the systematic political and historical shortcomings of the universalist ideal, such as the practice of slavery and numerous forms of discrimination and exclusion, and elucidate how this ideal played a role both in sustaining and in abolishing injustice. We will also explore various challenges to universalism, from transcendentalism in 19<sup>th</sup> century New England to existentialism and negritude in mid-20<sup>th</sup> century Paris, which modified and sometimes diminished its importance, leading up to the demographical and intellectual transformations of the recent post-colonial past. Whereas the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century saw a gradual expansion of the universal and a struggle for inclusion, this fight subsequently partially gave way to a search for multiplicity and communal identities, a development that in many ways highlighted the historical and political differences between France and the United States. Finally, we will address the meaning and relevance of the universalist ideal today. Throughout the course, the shared history of France and the United States will be explored both as a gradual divergence along the Atlantic divide and as a series of frequent philosophical and political exchanges. Although structured as a comparative study of France and the United States, the syllabus will often place a stronger emphasis on events and developments relating to French history, which will be less familiar to American students.

**CREDITS:** 3

**CONTACT HOURS:** 45

**LANGUAGE OF PRESENTATION:** English

**ADDITIONAL COST:** None

**PREREQUISITES:** No prerequisite.

**METHOD OF PRESENTATION:** Lectures and class discussions.

### REQUIRED WORK AND FORM OF ASSESSMENT:

- Course participation – 10%
- Midterm Exam – 30%
- Final Exam – 30%
- Research Paper 1 – 15%
- Research Paper 2 – 15%

### Course Participation

Each class will be structured around a separate topic, which will be addressed with the help of one or more texts posted on Moodle beforehand. Students will be expected to prepare for class by reading and reflecting upon the assigned texts and to participate in class discussions, showing that they have understood and critically evaluated the authors' arguments. Students should expect to be called on if they do not actively participate in class.

### Midterm and Final Exams



The midterm and final exams will consist in a series of short essay questions with the dual purpose of testing students' knowledge of facts and evaluating their ability to critically analyze and contextualize historical events and philosophical trends. The final exam is mostly non-cumulative and focuses on material covered in the second half of the semester. Students should however also be able to integrate ideas discussed in the first half of the semester in their answers on the final.

### **Research Paper**

Students will write two short research papers, which are due on dates specified in the calendar below. Each paper should be 8–10 pages long and must develop a coherent argument with the support of textual sources to be cited according to MLA or Chicago standards. Students will be required to schedule a time to discuss their topic with the instructor before writing each paper.

### **LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

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

- Outline the shared philosophical and political heritage of France and the United States and major interactions between the two countries.
- Understand and analyze the historical impact of the notion of universalism and its development in France and the United States in modern times.
- Articulate some of the main differences in the relationship between individual, society and community in France and the United States in a historical context.
- Relate the development of key concepts to historical events.
- Reflect on their own presuppositions about French and European society based on shared transatlantic history.

### **ATTENDANCE POLICY:**

Attendance is mandatory for all IES Abroad Paris BIA courses, including course-related trips. Failure to adhere to these rules will negatively impact your final grade.

IES Abroad Paris BIA allows a number of absences with no impact on your final grade as follows:

- 1 absence allowed for courses meeting once a week.
- 2 absences allowed for courses meeting twice a week.

If you miss class in excess of what is outlined above, your grade will be lowered one letter grade point for each additional absence, for example A to A-.

Any exams, tests, presentations, quizzes or other work missed due to course absences will be given a grade of zero and can only be rescheduled in the case of a documented medical emergency. You must submit all documentation for medical absences to the academic office within 2 days of your return to class.

Excessive absences in any class will result in a final grade of F in the following cases:

- 3 absences in a course meeting once a week
- 6 absences in a course meeting twice a week

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.

You cannot be more than 15 minutes late to class.

Being more than 15 minutes late will count as an absence.

Arriving late, less than 15 minutes, to class 3 times will count as an absence.

**CONTENT:**

Class	Content	Readings
Session 1	Introduction	Jeremy Jennings, “Universalism”, <i>The French Republic: History, Values, Debates</i> , ed. Edward Berenson, Vincent Duclert & Christophe Prochasson (Ithaca & London: Cornell University Press, 2011), 145–153.
Session 2	The Enlightenment	Jean-Jacques Rousseau, From “The Social Contract”, <i>The Social Contract and Other Later Political Writings</i> , trans. & ed. Victor Gourevitch (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 41–81.  Johnson Kent Wright, “The Enlightenment”, <i>The French Republic: History, Values, Debates</i> , ed. Edward Berenson, Vincent Duclert & Christophe Prochasson (Ithaca & London: Cornell University Press, 2011), 11–18.
Session 3	The Noble Savage	Denis Diderot, “The <i>Supplément au Voyage de Bougainville</i> ”, <i>Denis Diderot: Political Writings</i> , trans. & ed. John Hope Mason & Robert Wokler (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 35–75.  Michel de Montaigne, “Of Cannibals”, <i>The Essays of Montaigne</i> , trans. E. J. Trechmann (London: Oxford University Press, 1927), 202–215.
Session 4	The American Revolution: The French Connection	Alexis de Tocqueville, From <i>Democracy in America</i> , trans. Harvey C. Mansfield & Delba Winthrop (Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 403–416 & 479–503.  William Howard Adams, “The Liberal, Literary, Scientific Air of Paris”, <i>The Paris Years of Thomas Jefferson</i> (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1997), 123–158.  Jack P. Greene, “Examinations: The European Response to the American Revolution, 1776–1800”, <i>The Intellectual Construction Of America: Exceptionalism and Identity From 1492 to 1800</i> (Chapel Hill & London: University of North Carolina Press, 1993), 130–161.
Session 5	The French Revolution: America Again?	Rogers Brubaker, “The French Revolution and the Invention of National Citizenship”, <i>Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany</i> (Cambridge & London: Harvard University Press, 1992), 35–49.  Miranda Spieler, “France and the Atlantic World”, <i>A Companion to the French Revolution</i> , ed. Peter McPhee (Chichester & Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013), 57–72.  Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen
Session 6	American Expansionism: Manifest Destiny	Frederick Jackson Turner, “The Significance of the Frontier in American History”, <i>The Frontier in American History</i> (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1962), 1–38.

		Reginald Horsman, "Racial Destiny and the Indians", <i>Race and Manifest Destiny</i> (Cambridge & London: Harvard University Press, 1981), 189–207.
Session 7	French Expansionism: The <i>Mission Civilisatrice</i> <b>First Research Paper due</b>	Jennifer Pitts, "The Liberal Volte-Face in France", <i>A Turn to Empire: The Rise of Imperial Liberalism in Britain and France</i> (Princeton & Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2005), 165–203.
Session 8	Transcendentalism	Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Self-Reliance", <i>Ralph Waldo Emerson: The Major Prose</i> (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2015), 127–150.  Henry David Thoreau, "Resistance to Civil Government", <i>Henry David Thoreau: Political Writings</i> , ed. Nancy L. Rosenblum (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 1–21.
Session 9	Emancipation in the United States	David Brion Davis, "The Emancipation of America I", <i>The Problem of Slavery in the Age of Revolution 1770–1823</i> (Ithaca & London: Cornell University Press, 1975), 253–284.  Frederick Douglass "The Color Line", <i>The North American Review</i> , vol. 132, no. 295 (Jun. 1881), 567–577.
Session 10	Emancipation in the French Caribbean	Laurent Dubois, "Making Slaves Citizens", <i>A Colony of Citizens: Revolution &amp; Slave Emancipation in the French Caribbean, 1787–1804</i> (Chapel Hill & London: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 171–188.
Session 11	The French Revolution of 1848	Alexis de Tocqueville, <i>The Recollections of Alexis de Tocqueville</i> , trans. Alexander Teixeira de Mattos (New York: Columbia University Press, 1949), 63–92.  Karl Marx, From <i>The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Napoleon</i> .
Session 12	The Road toward <i>Laïcité</i>	Steven C. Hause, "French Protestants, Laicization, and the Separation of the Churches and the State, 1802–1905", <i>Religious Differences in France: Past and Present</i> (Kirksville: Truman State University Press, 2006), 141–160.
Session 13	The Dreyfus Affair	Michael R. Marrus, "The Dreyfus Affair and the Politics of Assimilation", <i>The Politics of Assimilation: A Study of the French Jewish Community at the Time of the Dreyfus Affair</i> (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), 196–242.
Session 14	<b>Midterm Exam</b>	

Session 15	Women's Rights in France	<p>Steven C. Hause &amp; Anne R. Kenney, "France and the Question of Women's Political Rights", <i>Women's Suffrage and Social Politics in the French Third Republic</i> (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 3–27.</p> <p>Olympe de Gouges, "Declaration of the Rights of Woman and the Female Citizen"</p>
Session 16	The Third Republic	<p>Nicholas Hewitt, "Modern France: History, Culture and Identity, 1900–1945", <i>The Cambridge Companion to Modern French Culture</i>, ed. Nicholas Hewitt (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 17–40.</p> <p>Tony Judt, "America Has Gone Mad: Anti-Americanism in Historical Perspective", <i>Past Imperfect: French Intellectuals 1944–1956</i> (Berkeley &amp; Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1992), 187–204.</p>
Session 17	Imperial Identities	<p>Raymond F. Betts, "Origins and Growth of the French Doctrine of Assimilation", <i>Assimilation and Association in French Colonial Theory, 1890–1914</i> (Lincoln &amp; London: University of Nebraska Press, 2005), 10–32.</p> <p>Amy Kaplan, "Left Alone with America: The Absence of Empire in the Study of American Culture", <i>Cultures of United States Imperialism</i>, ed. Amy Kaplan &amp; Donald E. Pease (Durham &amp; London: Duke University Press, 1993), 3–21.</p>
Session 18	Existentialism <b>Second Research Paper due</b>	<p>Jean-Paul Sartre, <i>Existentialism and Humanism</i>, trans. Philip Mairet (London: Methuen &amp; Co. 1948), 23–56.</p> <p>Naomi Schor, "Anti-Semitism, Jews, and the Universal", <i>October</i>, vol. 87 (Winter, 1999), 107–116.</p>
Session 19	African-American Paris	<p>James Baldwin, "Stranger in the Village", <i>Notes of a Native Son</i> (Boston: Beacon Press, 1963), 159–175.</p> <p>Richard Wright, "I Choose Exile", <i>The Writer's Presence: A Pool of Readings (Fourth Edition)</i>, ed. Donald McQuade &amp; Robert Atwan (Boston &amp; New York: Bedford / St. Martin's, 2003), 288–295.</p>
Session 20	Negritude	<p>Gary Wilder, "Negritude I: Practicing Citizenship in Imperial Paris", <i>The French Imperial Nation-State: Negritude &amp; Colonial Humanism between the Two World Wars</i> (Chicago &amp; London: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 149–200.</p>
Session 21	Decolonization and the Algerian War	<p>Frantz Fanon, "Concerning Violence", <i>The Damned</i>, trans. Constance Farrington (Paris: Présence Africaine, 1963), 29–74.</p> <p>Declaration on the Right to Insubordination in the War in Algeria: The Manifesto of the 121</p>

Session 22	Civil Rights and Anti-Colonialism	<p>Martin Luther King Jr., “The Negro Revolution—Why 1963?” &amp; “The Sword That Heals”, <i>Why We Can’t Wait</i> (New York: Harper &amp; Row, 1964), 1–38.</p> <p>Audre Lorde, “The Master’s Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master’s House”, <i>Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches</i> (Berkeley: Crossing Press, 2007), 110–114.</p>
Session 23	From Colonialism to Immigration	<p>Gilles Bousquet &amp; Alain Pessin, "Culture and Identity in Postwar France", <i>The Cambridge Companion to Modern French Culture</i>, ed. Nicholas Hewitt (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 41–60.</p> <p>Rogers Brubaker, “‘Être français, cela se mérite’: Immigration and the Politics of Citizenship in France in the 1980s”, <i>Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany</i> (Cambridge &amp; London: Harvard University Press, 1992), 138–165.</p>
Session 24	Francophonie: A New Universalism?	<p>Margaret A. Majumdar, “Exceptionalism and Universalism: The Uneasy Alliance in the French-Speaking World”, <i>The French Exception</i>, ed. Tony Chafer &amp; Emmanuel Godin (New York: Berghahn Books, 2004), 16–29.</p> <p>Jean Bernabé, Patrick Chamoiseau &amp; Raphaël Confiant, “In Praise of Creoleness”, trans. Mohamed B. Taleb Khyar, <i>Calaloo</i>, vol. 13, no. 4 (Autumn, 1990), 886–909.</p>
Exam Week	<b>Final Exam</b>	

**FIELD STUDIES:**

Guided visit TBA.

**REQUIRED READINGS:**

Required readings for each class are listed in the calendar above.

**RECOMMENDED READINGS:**

Additional recommended readings will be posted on Moodle.