

FREN 1214 Advanced French Composition and Conversation

“Contemporary French Society through its Media”



Instructor : Chantal Philippon-Daniel

Course Description

This course, thematically organized around individual/national identity/ies, art and culture and current events, is designed to **develop your communicative skills by offering extensive oral and written practice in a variety of styles and forms**. It is also intended to **help you better understand contemporary French thought, culture and modes of expression and foster global competence**.

The specific language functions we will work on are narration, description, offering and soliciting advice and opinions, expressing feelings, critique, analysis and argumentation. Another major goal of the course is to enhance your ability to comprehend and interpret authentic materials (textual and audiovisual) and to understand French perspectives on current events. Additional goals are to **help you become more autonomous language learners** and to **develop habits of critical reflection**.

Outline of Assignments & Assessments

- **Contribution to communicative activities (20%)** Class preparation entails: reading and annotating texts, watching news video, preparing comprehension questions, making notes for a debate. During class sessions, you will actively develop your oral skills through communicative interactions with your peers in pairs/small groups.
- **Video recordings (15%)** Once a month, you will record a short presentation to be posted on Canvas.
- **Oral Interviews (15%)**. 2 individual interviews (presentation and discussion of an article from the French press) at mid- term and during final exam week.

- **Collaborative projects (15%)** One small group presentation of an article from the French press. One group research project focusing on culture. (*TBD*)
- **Writing (35%)** Three short papers (approx. 2 pages) with the opportunity to revise. The tasks will focus on specific genres: narration, editorial, film critique. Reflection journal: Two entries per month based on media material and/or topics discussed in class (approx. half a page each).

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Course Policies: Successful foreign language learning requires daily practice. Attendance will be taken for all classes and you may not exceed more than one week (3 absences). Please note that absences that exceed the limit may have a negative effect on your final grade. You are expected to attend class and complete assignments on time. If unable to do so, you need to contact the instructor and report absences through Path@Penn.

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The entire course content is available on Canvas (this includes a detailed syllabus and calendar of assignments for the whole semester). You will have access to a variety of authentic textual and audiovisual materials as well as additional useful resources designed to help you develop your linguistic skills and cultural understanding. In addition, you will have the opportunity to communicate via discussion board and use readily available tools for collaboration (wikis, Google Docs...)

As the course instructor, my goal is to provide optimal conditions for learning and assure that everyone has the opportunity to develop their language skills and broaden their cultural understanding in a positive collaborative space. Students' responsibility is to do the best they can to succeed. Everyone is strongly encouraged to seek help (academic or otherwise) whenever needed. My office hours also give everyone the opportunity to receive more personal attention and additional practice in French.

For additional information, please contact: chantalp@sas.upenn.edu