

FREN 3220 France and the European Union



Instructor : Chantal Philippon-Daniel chantalp@sas.upenn.edu

Course Description

The goals of this content-based language course taught entirely in French are twofold.

First, it aims to provide an understanding of the European Union as a complex entity, its history, its institutions, its challenges and its future. After reviewing the historical development of European integration and examining the Community's institutions, common programs and market, we will consider themes important to contemporary Europe (economics, immigration, social issues, the environment, education, and national and European identity). We will also analyze and debate the values of a Federal Europe vs. a Europe of nations, European social/cultural models vs. American liberalism, and relations between the EU and the rest of the world (particularly with NATO and the United States). Finally, in view of recent political events and ongoing challenges and tensions (terrorism, humanitarian and economic crises, populism, Brexit, increasing anti-EU sentiments) we will focus on current events and discuss their potential effects. Is the future of the European Union with its existing processes and structures in jeopardy? What will be the role of France within the EU in this decade?

Second, the course is intended to further develop language skills through the study of authentic materials (press articles, video news reports, official documents) and to give students practice in the **presentational**, **interpretive** and **interpersonal** modes of communication, both orally and in writing. Students will be actively engaged in discussions and debates, preparing questions and comments and occasionally leading the class. They will also have the opportunity to pursue substantive research on topics of their choice and to present their findings.

Expectations:

Although we will address substantive content in a variety of domains (economics, politics, ...) this course is not intended for specialists in these areas. While some students may be quite familiar with such topics, others are not. The goal is to provide an opportunity for everyone to contribute and share their specific expertise, allowing all to learn in the target language (content as well as style, new vocabulary and expressions).

At the end of the semester each student should have a good understanding of the history and organization of the EU and an ability to have meaningful conversations and debates in French on current issues related to the EU.

To attain these objectives, students will actively engage in the following activities:

- read a variety of primary and secondary sources
- analyze and discuss press articles and video news reports
- explore and reflect on the history of the EU and its institutions, its current situation and its future
- do research on specific topics related to the European Union and present their findings in class
- debate on important issues and controversial topics within the EU
- compare and contrast systems and cultural practices, both among the EU member states and between the EU and the United States

Outline of Assignments & Assessments

- **Contribution to communicative activities (30%)**

Most oral work will be based on the analysis and discussion of textual and audiovisual documents and the presentation of information and research findings, which will require at-home preparation.

- **Collaborative project (25%).**

‘*Revue de presse*’: Selection and presentation of current events pertaining to the EU. With their partners, students will prepare activities and lead the class discussion.

- **Written work (30%)**

There will be three writing assignments: a reflection and commentary on a broadcast news report (2 pages); a report (summary and analysis of a policy paper on the EU) (3 pages). Topics for these tasks will be selected from among audiovisual and textual documents posted on Canvas; a *dissertation* (5-6 pages) treating a controversial EU topic of your choice. There will be an opportunity to revise and improve the last assignment.

- **Exam (15 %)**

One end-of-the-semester interview (to reflect and comment on a topic of your choice and articulate your perspectives on questions pertaining to the EU).

Course Policies: Students are expected to attend classes and complete assignments on time. If unable to do so, they need to contact the instructor.

The entire course content is available on Canvas. Students will have access to extensive authentic textual and audiovisual materials as well as additional resources designed to help them develop an understanding of the EU and explore specific topics of interest on their own. Students also have the opportunity to communicate via discussion board and use readily available tools for collaboration.