CAS FR301
French Communication Skills
Fall 2015

Prerequisite: CAS LF 212, college 4th semester French, or placement test
Credits: 4

Instructor: Hanadi Sobh (hsobh@bu.edu)

Schedule: 15 two-and-a-half-hour sessions over 7.5 weeks
+ Individual preparation for the oral presentation in each student’s elective course
+ 2 language workshops (Franglish: language exchange event in Paris and language exchanges with French students at BUP)
+ Individual exploration of a Parisian neighborhood
+ 2 cinema outings to see a current French film in a Parisian theater
+ final exams

Course material
Course text: FARHI, Emmanuelle. Outils pour le français (2014), to be purchased at our partner printer’s shop
This textbook includes sections about grammar, common vocabulary, style, oral communication and professional vocabulary and phonetics.
Dictionaries: Students should also arm themselves with a good dictionary, making use of the non-bridged dictionaries available at the BU Center.
Press: L’Express (weekly news magazine), Pariscopé (parisian weekly about culture) (excerpts available on Blackboard)
Medias: video clip, songs, advertising, photographs, films

I. COURSE PRESENTATION

All Paris Internship Program French language courses are designed to work towards the same goal of allowing students to perform at their best while in Paris. In the context of this program, living in Paris means:

- acquiring daily survival skills,
- interacting with the French,
- studying academic subjects in French,
- working in a French environment.

Our language courses focus, both at the oral and written communication levels, on creating tools:

- to communicate in everyday interactions, with a focus on colloquialisms and language used in varied situations,
to discover and discuss cultural material and events (cinema, novels, etc.) and societal trends and issues (medias),
- to adapt oral and written expression to an academic context, in relation to the elective course(s),
- to know how to present professionally, and manage work-related situations such as interviews or face-to-face, email and phone communication.

All our courses take into account the diversity of language levels amongst our students, and adjust to these needs. Given this diversity of profiles and the fact that language acquisitions are also enhanced by students living, working and attending elective courses in French to different extents for each individual, the language outcomes in the four communication skills – speaking, writing, listening, reading - range from Intermediate Mid to Advanced Low proficiency according to the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines.

This course focuses on oral communication and is conducted entirely in French.

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES, APPROACH, AND OUTCOMES

The main objective of this course is to optimize students’ oral language skills in French, especially with regards to their internship and daily life in Paris so that they feel more at ease in a French environment.

Approach
The approach will be rooted in a consolidation of oral expression and comprehension, both formally and informally, through various activities:
- **Phonetics:** familiarization with the sounds and phrasing of French
- **Listening:** study of song lyrics and theatrical dialogues in context
- **Expressions:** acquisition of both professional and informal vocabulary
- **Debates:** discovery of and discussion about French culture through the performing arts
- **Presentations:** two structured oral exercises to put skills into practice
- **Guided visits of Paris** and cultural workshops

Objectives
Culture
This course aims not only to have students speak French, but also to live French in the context of contemporary French society. Therefore current events and political, cultural, social, and professional French life will be our basis for communication, exploration, and enrichment. We will analyze songs, go to the cinema, listen to the radio, study press articles, and debate social issues so that students may better understand, and integrate themselves into, their French environment.

Expression
During this course, oral expression will be improved into order to:
- Acquire new vocabulary and apply it in context: familiar, professional, and cultural language
- Improve and vary students’ style while speaking: know how to communicate in everyday professional settings, learn how to argue and debate, and speak publicly in an academic setting
- Facilitate aural comprehension of French and give more fluidity to students’ speech: popular language and slang, dialogues in context, familiarization with “French as it is spoken”

Phonetics
Since language is a vehicle for communication, it is essential to both understand and make oneself understood. Throughout the semester, this course will emphasize:
- Pronunciation and articulation of different sounds and phrasings in French
- Intonation of French phrasing
- Accentuation of syllables
- Rhythm and musicality of French phrasing

Participation
The primary objective of this course is to give students the tools necessary to understand and make themselves understood; but also to speak, converse, and exchange in the French language. This objective will only be reached if there is a true exchange among all of the participants (students and instructor) and an active participation of the class. Students must take risks and most of all have confidence in themselves and their abilities.

It is important to find a balance between spontaneity and thoughtfulness. The primary motive should be the desire to share oneself and one’s thoughts with others (otherwise learning another language has no point!). But the class is also a laboratory where one can self-correct and perfect their skills. Students should never be afraid of judgment or criticism!

Outcomes

- **Improve oral communication skills:** by the end of this course, students will be able to participate in conversations about daily life situations and experience, professional goals and experience, cultural and societal subjects; they will be able to ask and answer questions, narrate sequences of events, express their opinions and reactions.

- **Improve both pronunciation and intonation:** by the end of this course, students will be able to understand rhythm and musicality of French phrasing and to put it into practice. They will also be able to identify and distinguish the pronunciation and articulation of different sounds and phrasings in French.

- **Improve oral comprehension skills:** by the end of this course, students will be able to acquiring greater fluidity to speech (popular language and slang, dialogues in context, familiarization with “French as it is spoken”). They will also be able to understand conventional narrative and descriptive texts about past, present, and future events. Comprehension derives not only from situational and subject-matter knowledge, but also from an increasing overall facility with the language itself.

- **Adapt to various contexts:** by the end of this course, students will be able to adjust their communication skills to different situations; they will make the difference between written and oral correctness; they will also be able to make the difference between familiar, informal, professional and academic communication.
Develop a deeper understanding of French culture: by the end of this course, students will be able to live French in the context of contemporary French society by analyzing current events and political, cultural, social, and professional French life.

Develop a deeper understanding of professional French environment: by the end of this course, students will be able to have a much better understanding of the professional environment in order to adapt more closely to the reality. Students will have the opportunity to dealing with native speaker about professional issues in France, with linguistic ease, confidence, and competence. As a future interns, they will be able to handle successfully tasks and social situations requiring an exchange of information related to their work and areas of competence.

Enrich and diversify vocabulary according to needs: by the end of this course, students will have enriched their vocabulary through strategies involving identifying needs and distinguishing familiar, general and specialized vocabulary; they will have gained autonomy in vocabulary acquisition.

Elaborate style: by the end of this course, students will be aware of and able to resort to different devices allowing them to improve their oral style, such as using logical connectors, avoiding repetitions by diversifying synonyms and limiting the use of basic verbs, building complex sentences in the limits of elegance.

III. Assessment and grading

Exams (2): 25%
Midterm and final exams will cover concepts and activities from class. Each is an oral exam conducted individually with the professor and lasting about 12 minutes per student. Their format and content will be discussed in advance. If a student is absent from an exam, they receive an automatic grade of zero.

Exposés (2): 30%
Two graded oral exercises will allow the students to put their language skills to use in structured presentations and debates.

Social debates: in groups of 2, students will choose a current social issue and present it to the class. The presentation will be informed by a survey of French people conducted in the streets of Paris. The presenters will then lead a debate in class. The objective of this project is to help students learn to give an opinion and justify it in French, as well as to learn how to interest an audience on a topic and inspire participation in a debate.

Article presentation: working in teams, students choose an article from the weekly news magazine L’Express (available online at www.lexpress.fr) and present it to the class, leading a discussion on the subject of the article. The objective of this project is to allow students to engage with a subject that they find personally interesting, to enhance specific grammar and vocabulary skills, and to expose students to current events and affairs in France and Paris.
Participation, effort, and progress: 20%
This grade takes into account the quality of a student’s presence in class, their energy, relevance of their comments in class, effort and progress on oral proficiency, and attendance and punctuality. A midterm evaluation of this grade will be given to students during the midterm exam.

Expression: 10%
This grade takes into account students’ efforts in oral comprehension, clarity of expression, and progress made throughout the course in these domains.

Phonetics: 10%
This grade takes into account students’ efforts in pronunciation and articulation, clarity of discourse, and progress made throughout the course in these domains.

Preparation for elective oral presentation: 5%
Each student in the Paris Internship Program must complete an oral presentation in one or two elective courses. Before each presentation in class, students must meet with Hanadi privately to practice and prepare for the presentation, with special attention paid to linguistic aspects and clarity of expression. This grade takes into account linguistic preparedness and effort to self-correct and make progress during the preparation session.

Attendance Policy
1 absence (class session or activity) = -1 point on the overall grade
4 or more unexcused absences = grade of F for the course
Missed assignment or test = grade of 0 for the assignment
Plagiarism on an assignment = grade of 0 for the assignment

NB: Excused absences must be justified by a doctor’s note or a scheduled internship interview.

Plagiarism (BU Policy)
All students are responsible for having read the Boston University statement on plagiarism, which is available in the Academic Conduct Code. Students are advised that the penalty against students on a Boston University program for cheating on the examinations or for plagiarism may be ‘expulsion from the program or the University or such other penalty as may be recommended by the Committee on Student Academic Conduct, subject to approval by the dean.’ Read the full Academic Conduct Code online at http://www.bu.edu/academics/policies/academic-conduct-code/.
## IV. Calendar

The following schedule is tentative and may be changed as a function of students’ needs and interests. Homework will be assigned in class each day.

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<th>Session 1: Tuesday, Sep 8</th>
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<td>Presentation and introduction</td>
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<td>Phonetics: overall concepts and principles</td>
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<td>Phonetics: &lt;l&gt; and &lt;r&gt;</td>
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<th>Session 2: Thursday, Sep 10</th>
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<td>Introduction to first film (TBD)</td>
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<td>Preparation for internship interviews – Introductions</td>
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<td>Mock interviews in groups</td>
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<td>Expressions: coming and going (<em>Outils</em> p. 172)</td>
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<th>Session 3: Friday, Sep 11</th>
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<td>Expression workshop</td>
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<th>Saturday, Sep 12: Discovery of a Parisian neighborhood</th>
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<th>Monday, Sep 14: Cinema outing no. 1</th>
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<th>Session 4: Tuesday, Sep 15</th>
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<td>Cinema: group discussion and reactions to first film</td>
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<td>Mock article presentation with instructor</td>
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<td>Phonetics: &lt;t&gt;/&lt;d&gt; and &lt;i&gt;/&lt;é&gt;/&lt;è&gt;</td>
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<th>Session 5: Thursday, Sep 17</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mock social issue debate with instructor</td>
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<td>Presentation of neighborhood visits</td>
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<th>Session 6: Tuesday, Sep 22</th>
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<tr>
<td>Phonetics: &lt;i&gt;/&lt;u&gt; and &lt;ill&gt;/&lt;ui&gt;/&lt;oi&gt;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Article presentation no. 1</td>
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<th>Franglish: language exchange event in Paris (19h-21h)</th>
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<th>Session 7: Thursday, Sep 24</th>
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<td>Phonetics: accented syllables (<em>Outils</em> p. 198)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Music: comprehension and debate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social debate no. 1</td>
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Session 8: Tuesday, Sep 29
- Review for midterm exam
- Phonetics: <e>/<eu> and <o>/<ô>/<ou>
- Expressions: asking, refusing, excusing, thanking (Outils p. 173)

Session 9: Thursday, Oct 1
- MIDTERM EXAM

Session 10: Tuesday, Oct 6
- Phonetics: disappearing sounds and familiar language
- Article presentation no. 2

Session 11: Thursday, Oct 8
- Introduction to second film (TBD)
- Expressions: speaking on the phone (Outils p. 178-181)
- Social debate no. 2

Thursday, Oct 8: Cinema outing no. 2

Session 12: Tuesday, Oct 13
- Debate: group discussion and reactions to second film
- Phonetics: liaisons and enchaînements
- Article presentation no. 3

Session 13: Thursday, Oct 15
- Music: comprehension and debate
- Social debates nos. 3 and 4

Language workshop n°2
- Language exchanges with French students (18h-20h30 at BUP)

Session 14: Tuesday, Oct 20
- Oral comprehension exercise: TV news in French
- Office vocabulary
- Article presentation no. 4

Session 15: Thursday, Oct 22
- Review for final exam

FINAL EXAM: Friday, Oct 23
V. ADDITIONAL BIBLIOGRAPHY

Oral communication

- *Exercices d’oral en contexte* – Niveau intermédiaire (Hachette)
- Jacques Delcos, *Français des relations professionnelles; guide de conversation*, Didier
- Alan Chamberlain, Ross Steele, *Guide pratique de la communication*, Didier
- *Vocabulaire progressif du français* – Niveau intermédiaire, CLE international

Phonetics

- François Wioland, *Prononcer les mots du français*, Hachette
- Dominique Abry, Marie-Laure Chalaron, *Phonétique – 350 exercices*, Hachette FLE
- *Phonétique progressive du français* – Niveau intermédiaire, CLE international
- Monique Léon, *Exercices systématiques de prononciation française*, Hachette

Culture and civilization

- Paul Verlaine, *Poèmes saturniens*, Gallimard, 2010
- Odile Grand-Clément, *Savoir-vivre avec les Français* – Collection Outils, Hachette
- Gérard Mermet, *Pour comprendre les Français*, Larousse *Francoscopie*, 2005
- Raymonde Carroll, *Evidences invisibles*, Seuil
- Olivier Magny, *Dessine-moi un Parisien*, 10-18, 2010
- Pierre Saka, Yann Plougastel, *La chanson française et francophone*, Larousse, 1999
- Jacques Pessis, Emilie Leduc, Charles Aznavour, *Chronique de la chanson Française*, 2003