“A fish discovers its need for water only when it is not in it. Our own culture is like water to a fish. We live and breathe through it. What one culture may regard as essential – a certain level of material wealth for example – may not be so vital to other cultures.” -- Fons Trompenaars, 2012

Instructor: Dr. Jean-Pierre Bernard

Total number of Contact hours: 6

Instructor: Dr. Michelle Mielly
Telephone: +33 645611475 Email: michelle.mielly@grenoble-em.com after working hours
Office hours: By appointment (best before or after class, but other days possible)

Total number of Contact hours: 6

Instructor: Véronique Rostas
Telephone: +33 671 966 688 – Email: veronique.rostas@gmail.com
Email: after working hours
Office hours: By appointment (best before or after class, but other days possible)

Total number of Contact hours: 6

Location and Meeting Times
Lectures: Fridays 9.45 a.m. to 1.00 p.m., room B007 of the DLST building, Wednesday, May 4, 9.45 a.m. to 1.00 p.m.

Course Description:
This course takes an interdisciplinary approach from the social sciences, particularly cultural anthropology, to explore intercultural issues and cultural theory in the contemporary context of globalization. With the larger goal of dealing with culture and its elusive definitions, this class will introduce students to the study of culture through the work of anthropologists, cultural historians, philosophers, economists, psychologists, and contemporary popular culture. It hopes to provide students with an appreciation for the diversity of the human experience, particularly in the French-American comparative context.

The course aims to develop a deeper understanding of cultural differences in general, with emphasis on the Trans-Atlantic context and the French culture in particular. Students will become familiarized through practice with fundamental tools of anthropologists and sociologists, namely ethnography, native informant interviews, and participant observation in order to examine and analyze the impact of culture in everyday life and the ways in which societal values impact cultural practices. Through practical field exercises, numerous readings, field trips, field journal writing, and seminar debates, students shall gain an overview of French lifestyles, customs, values and practices with a focus on recent societal trends in France. The end of the course opens up to a broader discourse on globalization, its relation to students’ study abroad experience and the acculturation process, and the implications it holds for their own identity and values.
Course Objectives:

This course is designed to help students cultivate:

- Awareness of similarities and differences between the home and target culture and comparative reflexes
- Greater self-awareness (emotional & cultural intelligence) through the acculturation process experienced during study abroad
- Analytical tools facilitating cultural dialogue and comparison (cultural models & theory; ethnography)
- Recognition of cultural variables and universal dimensions of culture, and ability to elaborate and describe the communication norms, rituals, and taboos of other cultures.
- Understanding of how communication processes differ among cultures to identify challenges that arise from these differences in intercultural interactions and learn ways to creatively address them.
- A holistic view of the French and their culture and a better sense of what it means to be French today
- To challenge current views on globalization and to engage in critical discussions around the topic

Terms and conditions:

Plagiarism
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 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.”

Participation & Preparation
Active oral participation and homework preparation is evaluated and factored into the final grade.

Attendance is obligatory for all classes and fieldwork assignments. Students must prepare all assignments before coming to class. Arriving late will not be tolerated. If you are repeatedly late, your instructor may turn you away or count you absent.

Absences:
If you are absent, you are responsible for contacting the teacher and submitting your work on time. All absences must be justified in writing by a doctor’s note. Unjustified absences will result in the reduction of your final participation grade by 25%.

Primary Course Activities:

- Readings, Group Discussions based on readings from book and packet
- Presentations of 2 Chapters from Sixty Million Frenchmen can’t be wrong
- Current news in France: Individual oral presentations at the start of each course session 3-5 minutes
- Ethnographic Field Journal & Assigned Observations (EFJ). 18 entries total due, minimum 2 entries (required) per week, on separate days + weekly discussions of critical incidents, of observations, etc. By the time you turn in the EFJ and report on March 18th 2016, you should have accumulated a total of 18 entries minimum. Please read ‘Notes on the Ethnographic Method’ further in packet for more information on ethnography and observation.
- Midterm: EFJ summary of progress to date. Due March 18th. 3-page report on your current status in the acculturation process and working knowledge of French culture, summarized in the findings and observations contained in your ethnographic field journals. Typed, double-spaced, min. 3 pages max 4 pages, 10 to 12-point font (TNR).
- Field trips and visits
- French Native Informant Interview
- Final Paper due Monday, May 9th, 2016. Paper based on French Native Informant Interview, on a given aspect of French culture/expertise (topic chosen is subject to approval by professor). 5 pages min.; 6 pages...
max, double-spaced, 10 to 12-point font (Arial or TNR), use of citations and references, plus bibliography (or ‘Works Cited’ list) at end (please see instructions page further in packet).

**Grading:**

The final grade is comprised of:

- 10% Attendance, Participation & Pertinence including homework completion, active and informed participation in seminar discussions, taking the lead and initiatives in all class activities, and attitude
- 20% Pair presentations/games of Chapters from *Sixty Million Frenchmen can't be wrong*
- 10% Individual news presentations on a subject pertaining to France/the French
- 30% (20 + 10) Ethnographic Field Journal + 3 page report on acculturation process to be turned in for midterm
- 30% Final Paper: -based on French Native informant interview + written report on a given aspect of French culture.

**Bibliography:**

Books and Articles consulted:

- Bryson, Bill. *I’m a Stranger Here Myself. Notes on returning to America after 20 years away* (New York: Broadway Books, 1999).
- Rifkin, Jeremy *The Empathic Civilization – the race to global consciousness in a world in crisis* (New York, Tarcher/Penguin, 2010).

**WEBSITES**

For additional readings, excellent definitions and historical overview of Ethnography:


Marshall University’s Brian Hoey’s website on Ethnography
Course book:

- **Sixty Million Frenchmen Can't Be Wrong** by Jean-Benoit Nadeau & Julie Barlow (Naperville: Sourcebooks Inc., 2003). You will each present two chapters from this book (sign-up below).

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**Information on Writing Final Papers**

**BU Grenoble Spring 2016**

Your final paper for the semester needs to cover a given aspect of contemporary French culture that you choose to examine, and which you can explore using first and secondary research on the topic. You are required to interview someone—at least 1 person, best 2 to 3—whom you have identified as having knowledge in this area—you may learn a lot from the discussion; French people (as most) are very open to talking about their culture to a non-French person if you show interest in them, and it can enhance your ideas, give you a wholly other perspective, and make you think differently about the subject.

You are free to be creative in writing & organizing these reports, but I do ask that you include at least 2 sections based on the following:

**A. Your observations (empirical work) and your personal limitations:**
This is the part of the paper where you describe your own reactions/observations in relation to the subject—what motivated you to study this aspect of culture personally, and how do your own cultural values influence this interest?

Since no one lives in a cultural vacuum, you need to look closely at how your own culture has shaped your view of France, motivated your interest in the subject, and affected your own perspective. **What are your cultural biases, stereotypes, or natural prejudices** that have influenced how you view this subject and the French in general? **What are the experiences you have had since arriving in Grenoble which have impacted you the most in taking interest in this topic?** Of course for this section you may refer to the Trompenaars, Hofstede, or Hall cultural models as reference points, or any other theoretical framework on culture.

**B. Perspective of your Interviewee/Native informant.**
Since you have studied and examined a given aspect of the culture for this paper, and discussed specific questions prepared on the topic with a French native who is knowledgeable on the topic, you must now present that person’s perspective through direct quotations from the interview.

- Please transcribe at least one of the interviews you conducted (questions and answers)

- Please quote elements of the interview to either refute or support findings from other sources used in the research you’ve done on the topic
Checklist for Writing your Final papers

- _____ Length of paper itself: 4 pages (min) (6 pgs. max.), (2 000 to 3000 words) double-spaced not including the interview transcription(s)
- _____ Numbers: Please put page numbers & names in the footer at the bottom of your page.
- _____ Make sure you have put your name on front page
- _____ Use theoretical/research references in a bibliography (list of work cited at end of document; not counted in total number of pages)
- _____ Keep your Paper On Target. Remember that this is a paper based on contemporary French issues and intercultural adaptation for American students in France, in an applied context (how can what you observed be applied in terms of behavioural strategies?). Therefore, when writing the report you must keep this clearly in mind: your report will be focused on Intercultural/social/cultural/environmental/political issues in France and not on other issues of interest. You may briefly mention correlated factors, but the majority of your paper should reflect a strong focus and understanding of Intercultural management/cultural differences/Cross cultural communication/acculturation as you perceive it from the interview if you choose to do one; your observations, and from the literature on the subject we have read for the class.
- _____ Spell Checking and Grammar Checking is obligatory: you must run a grammar and spell check (until the Tools menu in Word).
- _____ Self-Editing/Rereading your papers. A fundamental aspect of good academic writing is the editing process; in other words the ability to carefully select the information essential to include in your final papers. Since for this particular paper you should assume in-depth knowledge on the part of the reader (myself) then you should definitely spend none of your precious space describing or defining any of the theories you include, since I clearly know those theories. In other words, be selective about what you write.
- _____ General Organization. You can organize the paper in any order you choose, this is up to your discretion. However, it is important that you use sections to show the general organization and progression of the paper.
- _____ Citing Sources & Compiling a List of Works Cited is a fundamental requirement of responsible research. Otherwise it is plagiarism and results in a ‘0’. You may use footnotes, endnotes, or annotations directly in the text, but whatever you do, make sure you note precisely in your text when you are making reference to another person’s ideas, and cite these ideas come from (interview, book, article, web page, television or radio recording, etc.) Page numbers are necessary if you are citing an article or book. At the end of your paper you should have a bibliographic list (in alphabetical order of Author’s name) under the title ‘Works Cited’.
- Please include the transcript of at least one interview you conducted at end of your paper in a section marked ‘Appendix’ (required).
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<thead>
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Commented [AA1]: I could take an additional class on 4 March if you wanted/need me to
Syllabus

Approaches to Contemporary French Society and Culture

M. Mielly/V. Rostas/JP Bernard

Spring 2016 Boston University in Grenoble

Seminars

Culture and the Intercultural Adventure in the land of the Gauls

Seminar 1 Fri, Jan 15th, 9.45 – 1.00 p.m. Course Introduction, Description of Assignments, Theme:
Dimension of culture, cultural models, approaches towards a working definition of culture, stereotypes.
Read for the class:
* Bennett’s Model for Intercultural Sensitivity
* Summary of Hofstede’s Dimensions & relation to cultural practices,
* Trompenaars’ 7 dimensions
* HBR “Lost in Translation”

Attribution of dates for presentations and assignments for rest of semester.
Ethnographic Field Journal and assignments for Prof. Mielly.

Homework for next class:
Read:
* Gladwell’s “Rice paddies and Math Tests”
* “Letter from India” & “groups and gossip drove the evolution of human nature”

Seminar 2 Fri, Jan 22nd, 9.45 - 1.00 p.m. Theme: Levels of Cultural Awareness, Adjustment & Culture Shock.
Introduction to Hofstede’s and Trompenaars’ models

Homework for next class:
Read:
* Culture’s Unacknowledged Iron Grip
* Reading American fat in France: Obesity & Food culture
* Re read chap 1 & 2 from Sixty Million

NEWS 1: Rachel
NEWS 2: Gracie

French Identity, & Grasping what it means to be American in France

Seminar 3 Fri, Jan 29th, 9.45 – 1.00 p.m. Theme: How do cultures evolve and change?
Examining the impact of deep seated values and behaviors on contemporary social trends.

Homework for next class:
Read:
* Barsoux & Schneider: The Story of French, Chap.3
* Re read chap 5 & 12 from Sixty Million
* Presentation on 60 Million Frenchmen can’t be wrong
  Chaps. 1 & 2 (Meet the Aborigines, the Land on their Mind):
  Presentation #1 [chap 1]: Sarah & Rachel
  Presentation #2 [chap 2]: Gracie & Marie-Elis

NEWS 3: Katarina
NEWS 4: Raz

Syllabus: Approaches to Contemporary French Society and Culture
M. Mielly/V. Rostas/JP Bernard
Spring 2016 Boston University in Grenoble
Seminar 4, Fri, Feb 5th, 9.45 -1.00 p.m.

Theme: Discussion: Grasping French identity through the enterprise of the language, the project of Francophonie, the civilizational ends of the language & colonial projects, and living today in France as a non-native speaker.

Homework for next class:
Read: Chapters 1 ('Good Returns') and 2 ('The Peacock and the Panda') from Adam Grant’s Give and Take. Half of the class will present Chapter 1 together and the other half will present Chapter 2 (20 minutes max per presentation).

Presentation: on 60 Million Frenchmen can’t be wrong
Chaps. 5 & 12 ('The art of eloquence', 'Strong Language'):

Presentation #3 (chap 5): David W. & Jake
Presentation #4 (chap 12): Bonnie & Rebecca

NEWS 5: Sam
NEWS 6: Ryan

Seminar 5, Fri, Feb 12th, 9:45 - 1.00 p.m.

Theme: Discussion of Reciprocity styles as discussed in Adam Grant’s Give and Take: a look at how international experience and exposure may have an impact on one’s reciprocity style. Drivers of altruism, drivers of self-interest, and how we can identify our behaviors as effective or not.

Presentations of each chapter by groups.

Discussion of EFJ observation of politeness-related behaviors, norms of polite behavior in France, and identifying social requirements for cultural adaptation to politeness norms.

Homework for next class:
Read: * Chapter 6 in Sway (‘In France the Sun Revolves around the Earth’)
* Article: "The Economist": ‘French Culture: Bleak Chic’
* French Secularism-Laicité + short articles on ban of Muslim scarves in France,
Short piece on Holidays
* Re read chap 3 & 17 from Sixty million

NEWS 7: Nathaniel
NEWS 8: Jake
NEWS 9: Marie-Elle
FEB 19: NO CLASS  
FEB 26: MID TERM BREAK

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Going into the Field: Understanding the Natives of France, Understanding oneself

Seminar 6, Fri, March 4th, 9:45 - 1.00 p.m.  Theme: the unique place of culture in France. How this impacts France’s approach and take on globalization.  
Read: * Re read chap 7 & 8 from Sixty Million

Presentation on 60 Million Frenchmen can’t be wrong  
Chap. 3 & 17 (‘Private Space’ and ‘The choreography of protest’)

Presentation #5 (chap 3): Riccardo & Joe  
Presentation #6 (chap 17): Eric & Zach

NEWS #10: Sabrina
NEWS 101: Alejandra
NEWS 12: Sarah

Presentation on 60 Million Frenchmen can’t be wrong  
Chap. 3 & 17 (‘Private Space’ and ‘The choreography of protest’)

Presentation #3:

Seminar 7 Fri, Mar 11th, 9:45 - 1:00 p.m.  Theme: Work, Society, and Political Life in France. Dealing with questions of religion, immigration, and shifting cultural values in political life of France

Homework for next class with Professor Mielly:  
* Re read documents on Hofstede & Trompenaars models

Homework to prepare: “Observing Table Behaviors in France”.
Please purchase a notebook (small enough to easily carry around for travel) in which you will manually take field notes for the ethnographic field journal assignments. Using this journal, please observe behaviors at the table in France in both your host family and in restaurants/cafés. Note down clearly what you have observed and how it may differ from or resemble your own behaviors around meals and food-related activities taking place at the table. You are taking the role of the ‘participant-observer’ meaning you partake in an activity while you observe it simultaneously. Please refine your notes and come in ready to present the following:

- What are the observable behaviors that I witness at the table in France?  
- What do I recognize as familiar table behaviors from my perspective?  
- What do I recognize as different table behaviors from my perspective?  
- Did I notice anything ritualistic (repetitive action)?  
- What are the surprises I observed if any?

Syllabus: Approaches to Contemporary French Society and Culture  
M. Mielly/V. Rostas/JP Bernard  
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What are the adjectives I would use to describe my observations?
How did my presence perhaps affect the behaviors I observed (in other words, what was my own role at that table?)
Which cultural dimensions, as discussed in the course readings on Trompenaars or Hofstede, could be identified or perceived as manifested in the behaviors observed?

Presentation on 60 Million Frenchmen can’t be wrong
Chap. 7 & 8 (‘World War II: The Unforgotten war’, ‘Algeria: The unacknowledged war’)

Presentation #7 (chap. 7): David B. & Nathaniel
Presentation #8 (chap. 8): Katarina & Raz

NEWS 143: Bonnie
NEWS 144: Rebecca

Seminar 8 Fri, March 18th, 9.45 – 1.00 p.m. with Professor Mielly:
Theme: Introduction to Ethnography & Culture
discussion of EFJ (Ethnographic Field Journal), Ethnographic Field Work, the use of Native Informants, field studies, participant observation, the dilemmas of observation, the difficulties of representation, identity construction through exposure to new cultures, and the personal development goal of increasing one’s self-reflexivity through the EFJ.
Discussion of the EFJ observations on table behaviors in France and potential implications for your period of residence in France.

Homework for next class: Observation Assignment for EFJ: Norms of politeness (‘la politesse’) and proper behavior (‘la bienséance’) in France. You have now been interacting with French students, professor, and a family, and you are equally meeting people daily in the public domain outside of your home and university, in shops, restaurants, cafés, and administrations. Write down all of the impressions and observations you have on what it means to be polite (or not), to have the right reaction or behavior at the right time, observed or perceived expected norms of ‘propriety’, etc. and then please refine your notes and come in ready to present the following:
• What are the observable behaviors that I witness around politeness or expected demonstrations of polite behavior?
• What do I recognize as familiar polite behaviors from my perspective?
• What do I recognize as different polite behaviors from my perspective? (you may mention what also could be perceived as impolite behaviors from your perspective)
• Did I notice anything realistic (repetitive actions occurring, seemingly familiar events occurring at clear intervals)?
• What are the surprises I observed, if any?
• What are the adjectives I would use to describe my observations of polite behaviors?
• How does my presence perhaps affect the behaviors I observe (in other words, do I have an impact on the way people behave around me?)
• Which cultural dimensions, as discussed in the course readings on Trompenaars or Hofstede, could be identified or perceived as manifested in the politeness-related behaviors observed?

Read: “The observation of participation and the emergence of public ethnography” – Barbara Tedlock

NEWS135: David W.
NEWS 146: Joe
Seminar 9 Fri, March 25, 9.45 – 1.00 p.m. with Professor Mielly

**Theme:** Ethnography: understanding the dilemmas facing the anthropologist as he or she begins to represent the other, otherness, foreignness, and difference in everyday life. Exploration of theories of alterity & cosmopolitanism: Who is the other? When is it that I become the uncanny stranger to myself?

**Homework for next class:**
- Read:
  - France’s Grand Illusion
  - Dossier on Health Care
  - The Health Care System Under French National Health
  - Re read chap 20 & 23 from *Sixty Million*

*Presentation on 60 Million Frenchmen can’t be wrong*
Chap. 3 & 17 (‘Private Space’ and ‘The choreography of protest’)

**Presentation 3:**
- **NEWS 157:** Vivian
- **NEWS 168:** Eric

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**France’s Challenges for the Future**

Seminar 10 Fri, April 1st; 9.45 – 1.00 p.m.

**Theme:** the place of France in Europe & the world

**Homework for next class:**
- Read:
  - Short piece on French Education System,
  - Introduction & Conclusion of “Dreaming in French”
  - Re read chap 13 & 14 from *Sixty Million*

*Presentation on 60 Million Frenchmen can’t be wrong*
Chap. 20 & 23 (‘The world according to France’ and ‘The meaning of Europe’)

- **Presentation #9 (chap 20):** Ryan & Sam
- **Presentation #10 (chap 23):** Sabrina & Rachel

- **NEWS 129:** Jessica
- **NEWS 1420:** Ricardo

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Seminar 11 Fri, April 8th, 9.45 - 1.00 p.m.  Theme: The French Education system and how it is challenged by 21st Century technologies & globalization.
Discussion of proposals for final paper: each student presents (5 min. max) his/her final paper project and theme, as well as person selected for interview.

**Homework for next class:**
Read:
"Finalize the topic and identify the interviewee(s) for your final paper presentation"

**Presentation on 60 Million Frenchmen can’t be wrong**
Chap. 13 & 14 (‘The Enarchy’ and ‘Elite Education’)  
*Presentation #511 (chap. 13): Jessica & Vivian*  
*Presentation #12 (chap. 14): Anthony & Alejandra*  

**NEWS 1921: Anthony**  
**NEWS 220: Rachel**  

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**Engineering in France**

Seminar 12 Fri, April 15th, 9.45 – 1.00 p.m.  Theme: Intercultural & Engineering Work Culture: a French Perspective  

**Summary**
The Engineering profession in France has a certain historical prestige being associated to glorious “Ingénieurs” like Louis Pasteur or Gustave Eiffel. Since many French engineering companies are becoming multinational and engineering teams are more and more international, the traditional French management has to adapt itself toward a more cross-cultural one. This lecture describes the main features of the French “Ingénieur” in traditional French companies and its evolution toward a more international model. A comparison between French, US and German models will be discussed.

**Contents of the two sessions:**
1. Engineering and innovation culture in France  
2. The French “Ingénieur”: a job but a social position  
3. The French Engineering Management: the “Grandes Ecoles” attitude  
4. Project Management versus traditional French Management  
5. Comparison Germany/USA/France  
6. Internationalization of French engineering teams  

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Spring break – No Class on April 22, 2016

Seminar 13 Fri, April 29th, 9.45 – 1.00 p.m. with Professor Jean-Pierre Bernard – session 2

Seminar 14 Wed, May 4th, 9.45 – 1.00 p.m. Theme: Bringing it all together: tradition vs modernity: the French model as an attempt to reconcile the two

Any final questions on the final paper should be addressed in class today.

NEWS 23: Zach
NEWS 24: David B.

Presentation on 60 Million Frenchmen can’t be wrong Chap.

Bon retour aux Etats-Unis, Bonne continuation et bon courage pour tout! Keep in touch (restez en contact !)