CAS PO 240 Paris Politique

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

Schedule: 16 two-and-a-half-hour sessions over 7.5 weeks
(2 weekly sessions + 2 additional sessions)

Course visits (examples):
• Walking tour of Parisian political sites and institutions
• Visit to different Paris revolutionary sites
• Attendance at political rallies / social protests (when applicable)

Course material:
• Course pack with all required and suggested readings to be purchased by the student.
• Websites to read regularly:
  - www.vie-publique.fr; www.ladocfrancaise.fr, Cairn (academic articles)
  - Le Monde Diplomatique (monthly); Revue Française de Science Politique (bi-monthly); Raison Politique (quarterly)
  - Radio France (France Culture; France Inter)
  - Le Monde, Libération, le Figaro, MediaPart, 20 Minutes, (daily)
  - Le Canard Enchaîné ; Charlie Hebdo (satirical)

Assessment for the course:
- Contribution and Press Review (20%)
- Midterm exam (20%)
- Oral presentation (20%)
- Essay and Round Table (40%)

Out-of-class workload:
- Mandatory readings for each session. About 10 pages in French per session.
- Press review on topical event for one session out of two.
- In-depth research for the oral presentation
- In-depth research for the essay

In-class sessions alternate between lectures illustrated with slides, group discussions about readings and press reviews, students’ presentations, and are supplemented by commented group visits.

The course is accessible to students with no previous experience in Political science. The course, including seminars and visits, is conducted entirely in French.
I. COURSE PRESENTATION

It is often said that “everything is political”. This is particularly true in France where political debates, discussions, controversies are everywhere, from places of power to cafés, not to mention social media. So one of the best ways to integrate French society is to understand French politics, and in turn be able to participate in discussions about politics.

Thus the very goal of this course is to encourage and allow students to think France politically, here and now. This encompasses three major approaches: knowledge, experience, reflection.

Knowledge
Throughout this course, students will deepen their understanding of French society through learning about its political institutions and its civil society today. But since culturally all political or public debates in France refer to history, students will also get familiar with historical landmarks which have constituted paradigm’s shifts of France history and have had lasting repercussions: their effects can still be felt today. Thus, this course will be divided according to three aspects of the country’s life, associated with four major historical landmarks:
- Institutional → The French Revolution (1789)
- Social → The Paris Commune (1871) and The Popular Front (1936)
- Societal → May 1968

Experience
This course also aims to encourage students to get involved in current political life. This will be done empirically through visits of political sites or areas in Paris where political life happens, but also through the regular use of media. Students will get familiar with all types of French most common media, use them regularly for press reviews, learn about their political orientations, analyze political biases and uncover implied meanings. Special emphasis will be placed on the current main events related to the French political and social calendar. Students will thus become active in their approach of current political, social as well as societal debates in France.

Reflection
In the light of the above, students will examine the notion of a much-cited “crisis of democracy.” To what extent are French political institutions dysfunctional? Is there a growing divide between the French government and the French people? In this context, how do we understand the great difficulties experienced by the last Presidencies? This reflection will be facilitated by regular comparison with the political and social conceptions students are used to, be it in the United States or other countries they have lived in.

II. OUTCOMES

By the end of this course, students will have developed:
- a general knowledge of the French political system: the major stages of constitutional history since 1789, the specificities of a constitutional system, striking aspects of political life (parties, elections, voters), the French “service public” (Welfare State) as well as contemporary issues (LGBT and women’s rights, police brutality, xenophobia, racism);
- an understanding of French political current events and their implications and familiarity with French political press, through regular oral press reviews discussed in class.
- the ability to analyze the advantages and limitations of French democracy and to evaluate the state of democracy through a comparative approach;
- a multidisciplinary insight of political science; the ability to compare American and French systems in their political function and in the ideals of democracy they promote, thus the capacity to view the American political system under a new light;
- the ability to read, understand and critically analyze political science academic texts written in French and in English;
- the ability to formally present a thorough critical and structured analysis of a political issue, be it written or oral, based on sources and concepts requiring basic research.
III. ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

Contribution & Press Review: 20%
Included in this grade is weekly homework, which involves following current news and events in Paris and France and participating in discussions on current events during each session.

Midterm exam: 20%
The midterm exam will focus on knowledge and understanding of the French institutional political system and will consist of specific factual questions.

THEMATIC WORK
At the beginning of the semester, each student will choose a theme related to French political life, on which to focus during the whole course by remaining informed of its current treatment in the press and public opinion. This theme will be the subject of both the oral presentation and the essay. Students’ findings and reflections will be shared during a final round table consisting of a collective political discussion.

Oral presentation: 20%
Each student will prepare a 10-15 minute presentation responding to a given question on a current political reality of contemporary France. This assignment aims to relate the theoretical themes of the session to current events. Presentations will serve as an introduction of the theme studied on that day to the class.

Essay & Round table: 40%
The essay will build on the topic studied for the oral presentation, developing a critical analysis on a specific focus and complementary research, determined with the professor’s guidance, in a 600-word paper. The essay also allows students to develop their written French in an academic context. In order to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the contradictory stands on a subject, students are required to convey academic references but also collect throughout the semester articles from the mainstream press. Essays thus will have theoretical introductions and analytical conclusions, which will be collectively shared during a final round table and discussion.

Grading conversion (out of 100)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FINAL GRADE FOR THE COURSE</th>
<th>GRADES FOR INDIVIDUAL COMPONENTS/ASSIGNMENTS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>93-100:</td>
<td>A+ = 97 B+/A- = 89,5 C+ = 79,5 D+/C- = 69,5</td>
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<tr>
<td>90-92,5:</td>
<td>A- = 96 B+/B+ = 86,5 C+/C+ = 76,5 D+/D+ = 66,5</td>
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<tr>
<td>87-89,5:</td>
<td>B+ = 95 B = 85 C = 75 D = 65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83-86,5:</td>
<td>B = 91 B- = 81 C- = 71 D- = 61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80-82,5:</td>
<td>B- = 89,5 B-/C+ = 79,5 C-/D+ = 69,5 F = 55</td>
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BU Paris Attendance Policy

Our program is subject to French student visa laws where an active student status is mandatory. As the sponsor of your visa, Boston University has the legal obligation to ensure that you comply with visa requirements. If you do not attend classes or your internship as required, you will be considered to be in breach of your visa and can be deported. Any student who does not comply with this policy may be sent home from the program at the discretion of the program director, and may, as a result, forfeit credit and program costs for part or all of the semester.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 absence</th>
<th>= -1 point on your final grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(courses* or internship**)</td>
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<tr>
<td>More than 3 unexcused absences</td>
<td>= F for the course</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unsubmitted written work</td>
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<tr>
<td>Absence for a presentation or exam</td>
<td>= F (0 points) for the assignment in question</td>
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<tr>
<td>Plagiarism</td>
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*Courses: class sessions, exposé preparation, in-class presentation

**Internship: EUSA meetings, BU Paris workshops, work placement schedule

EXCUSED ABSENCES = - Absence for illness excused by the certificate of a French doctor
- Internship interview
- OFII medical visit (must have convocation)
- Professional imperative that conflicts with academic workshop

Documentation to be submitted to buparis@bu.edu the day following the absence

TARDINESS
- The professor reserves the right to not admit a tardy student to class or to count a tardy arrival as either a half or whole unexcused absence.
- Late arrivals to class will impact the class participation grade.
- Leaving class before it ends is considered as tardiness.
- Late submission of written work will entail a penalty on the assignment grade.
- Written work submitted more than a week late or after final exams will not receive credit (grade = F).

Students who do not complete a course on time will be given an F.
There are no withdrawals from classes, the internship nor the internship course.

PLAGIARISM – OFFICIAL BU POLICY
Simply stated, plagiarism is taking another’s work and presenting it as your own. It is, in fact, intellectual theft. It is one of the most serious forms of academic misconduct. Plagiarism committed by a student will certainly result in course failure and may result in suspension or dismissal. It can take many forms, including reproduction of published material without acknowledgement, or representing work done by others as your own. This includes the increasing common practice of purchasing and downloading work from the Internet “paper mills”. Plagiarism applies to all media – printed matter of all kinds, video, audio, and oral presentation. Even unacknowledged paraphrasing or use of another’s methodology, structure or management of material is plagiarism. You must use quotation when quoting even if you do the translating yourself.

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. INDICATIVE CALENDAR – Readings will be specified in the updated syllabus students will receive once in Paris.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Assignments and Activities</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>PART ONE: The French Revolution and Institutions in France</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Session 1</td>
<td>VISIT Guided walking tour of Parisian political institutions and revolutionary sites</td>
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</table>
| Session 2 | Introduction of the course and its goals The French Revolution and its outcomes  
- France’s Republican regime  
- Democracy in France  
- Constitutional history of France  
Methodology:  
- how to read a political academic article  
- press review techniques | Group activity: practice of reading and press reviewing  
« Républicanisme, libéralisme et Révolution française » (R. Monnier) |  |
| Session 3 | Political notions of Left and Right in France  
- Left and Right in political institutions  
- Left and Right in the media  
Methodology:  
- how to read a mainstream press article | - Current events (group 1)  
« L’opposition gauche-droite dans la vie politique française » (M. Winock) |  |
| Session 4 | The Fifth Republic  
- Major phases of the Fifth Republic  
- Presidential power  
Methodology:  
- the oral presentation | Group activity: oral presentation workshop  
« La présidentialisation contre les partis ? » (F. Sawicki) |  |
| Session 5 | The party system  
- Introduction to political parties in France  
- Party politics in the Fifth Republic  
- Gender in French Politics  
- The National Assembly of 2022  
- Is a Sixth Republic around the corner?  
Methodology:  
- the essay: research and writing | - Current events (group 2)  
- Essay: Choose your theme  
Group activity: analysis of campaign posters and presidential portraits  
« Immuable Cinquième république » (G. Carcassonne) |  |
| Session 6 | MIDTERM EXAM Followed by a VISIT (the Center area and its recent political meaning) |  |
| **PART TWO: Social Uprisings and Conquests** |
| Session 7 | A Brief History of Social Uprisings in France  
- The Paris Commune and its legacy  
- The Popular Front  
- The culture of streets’ politics | - Current events (group 1)  
- Oral presentation 1: Political Uprisings in France (choice of one uprising OR synthesis of main uprisings)  
« La Commune de Paris, 1871 : événement local, événement global » (Quentin Deluermoz) |  |
| Session 8 | Legacies of 1936  
- The French social system  
- The Trade Unions | - Current events (group 2)  
- Oral presentation 2: The social system: France vs US (comparison of welfare system OR of trade unions)  
“La Sécurité sociale, une assistance ou un droit ?” (M. Bulard) |  |
| Session 9 | The Père Lachaise Cemetery (Mur des Fédérés) | VISIT:  
« Les Gilets jaunes et la question démocratique » (S. Hayat) |  |
| Session 10 | The French Social System confronting Neoliberalism  
- The Paris 1979 riots  
- The Great Strike of 1995  
- The CPE student riots (2006)  
- The Yellow-Vest Movement (2018 - ) | - Oral presentation 3: Presentation of one of the riots or strikes  
- Essay: hand in excerpt and first bibliography |  |
### PART THREE: Societal Shifts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Current events (group 1)</th>
<th>Oral presentation 4:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Session 11</td>
<td>1968</td>
<td>Worker and student’s strikes</td>
<td>a choice of events or aspects of May 68</td>
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<tr>
<td>Session 11</td>
<td>May’s outcomes</td>
<td>- Worker and student’s strikes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Session 11</td>
<td>The student movement</td>
<td>- The student movement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Session 12</td>
<td>French Post-68 Society</td>
<td>Current events (group 2)</td>
<td>Oral presentation 5:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Session 12</td>
<td>Changes in the School System</td>
<td>- Current events (group 2)</td>
<td>French values in a globalized world</td>
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<td>Session 12</td>
<td>Value changes</td>
<td>- Value changes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Session 12</td>
<td>French values and globalization</td>
<td>- Value changes</td>
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<td>Session 12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Session 13</td>
<td>VISIT and discussion (TBD)</td>
<td>Essay: 1st draft due</td>
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<td>Session 14</td>
<td>Recent Issues</td>
<td>Recent Issues</td>
<td>Oral presentation 6:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Session 14</td>
<td>“Race” and racism in French society</td>
<td>Recent Issues</td>
<td>French universalism</td>
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<td>Session 14</td>
<td>Republican Universalism versus Culturalism</td>
<td>“Race” and racism in French society</td>
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<tr>
<td>Session 14</td>
<td>(non-exhaustive list)</td>
<td>Republican Universalism versus Culturalism</td>
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<tr>
<td>Session 15</td>
<td>Recent Issues</td>
<td>Recent Issues</td>
<td>Oral presentation 7:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Session 15</td>
<td>Subjects to be determined by current events</td>
<td>Recent Issues</td>
<td>Choice of a current debate in French society</td>
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<tr>
<td>Session 16</td>
<td>CONCLUSION &amp; ROUND TABLE</td>
<td>Oral presentation of essays and political discussion about the state of democracy in France</td>
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<tr>
<td>Last Friday</td>
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<td>FINAL ESSAY DUE</td>
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</table>

### V. ADDITIONAL BIBLIOGRAPHY


