



CAS LF 320 Living French in Paris: Practical Communication and Current Culture (level 2)

Prerequisite: College 5th semester French, or placement test equivalence

Credits: 4

Instructor: Elisabeth Montfort-Siewert (siewert@bu.edu)

Schedule: 15 two-and-a-half-hour sessions over 7.5 weeks
+ Methodology seminar (during orientation week)
+ Individual preparation for the oral presentation in each student's elective course
+ Cooking class
+ Individual exploration of a Parisian neighborhood
+ Final exam

Course material

Course textbook: 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 have a good dictionary, or make use of the non-abridged dictionaries available at the BU Center.

Press: 20 minutes, Métro, Direct Matin

I. COURSE PRESENTATION

All Paris Internship Program French language courses are in essence embedded in the Program as a whole and are designed to work towards the 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 (media),
- to adapt oral and written expression in 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 and written communication and is conducted entirely in French.

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES

Course objectives and methodology

From Culture to Language

Students who choose the Paris Internship Program have the ambition to speak, to write, to live, and to work with, and like, French people. This course aims to help them to rise to a rare challenge, that of harmonizing the various parameters that make language and culture inseparable.

Improved language skills facilitate cultural discovery, which in turn facilitates language improvement. This course aims to be at the center of this virtuous circle which does not distinguish between the written and the spoken, the practical and the theoretical, the professional from the academic, the individual from the group, or spontaneous discoveries from guided explorations. Everything will inspire reflection: grammar exercises, but also an investigation into the media and French humor; everyday expressions but also the realities of a professional environment; French manners and customs but also the discovery of interesting sites in Paris and its surrounding region; pronunciation but also an ease of speech and writing in various situations.

In this class, we will work and learn in context; the streets or the museums of Paris will become classrooms, while the classroom will remain a space for structured learning to accelerate and optimize what we learn elsewhere.

From Language to Culture

Written competencies will be improved through systematic grammar instruction (theoretical overview and structured exercises completed in class and at home) alternating with three written assignments that will be self-corrected throughout the course. These assignments will often be linked to a cultural observation and/or to readings: newspapers, humorist essays, song lyrics, literary texts, advertisements, etc.

Oral practice will focus on increased fluidity and ease of conversation, enriched vocabulary, improved pronunciation, and preparation for immersion into a professional environment. Oral participation in class is therefore a priority, and will be structured in various ways: spontaneous discussions, prepared presentations, interview simulations, and language games. Speaking in class will be strongly encouraged and facilitated by guided phonetics exercises. We will focus specifically on pronunciation and speaking difficulties faced by Anglophones.

Outcomes

- **Improve oral communication skills:** by the end of this course, students will be able to participate in many informal and some formal conversations on topics related to school, home, leisure activities and about some topics related to employment, current events, politics, economics, and arts. They will be able to narrate and describe, explain and ask, express their opinions and reactions. They will be able to use communication strategies such as rephrasing to feel more confident and free in their personal, social and professional life. They will be able to understand TV news, humor, radio interviews, slang in the metro as well as in a movie. They will be able to interview a colleague about a specific topic, to talk on the telephone and take a message.
- **Improve written communication skills:** by the end of this course, students will be able to write texts comprised of several paragraphs, such as narrative and argumentative essays as well as formal professional presentation. They will control the most frequently used language syntactic structures and a range of general and specific vocabulary. They will be able to read and understand the daily press, short modern novels, French advertisements, and specialized documents related to electives. They will be able to write 500-word structured and argumentative essays related to professional or academic matters, emails and SMS, articles for blogs, professional letters.
- **Improve cultural knowledge:** by the end of this course, students will have acquired historical, social, aesthetic, religious, geographical, and media benchmarks which will allow them to better understand and communicate with the French, and also better position themselves and thrive in French society.

III. ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

Exams (2): 30%

Midterm (15%) and final (15%) exams will cover concepts and activities from class, including vocabulary, grammar, and culture. The format of each exam will be given in advance, and will include both fill-in-the-blank and short answer exercises.

Compositions (3): 25%

These compositions (500 words each) are an opportunity to work on the quality of written French (grammar, spelling, structure, style). The objective is to have the student self-correct increasingly as the weeks go on as well as to improve written language level.

Oral presentations (3): 25%

Three types of graded oral exercises aim to enrich the students' cultural and linguistic competencies through various subjects and themes:

- Presentation on a Parisian neighborhood (10 minutes, 5%)
- Presentation on a visit to a site in Ile-de-France (15 minutes, 10%)
- Three 2-minute individual presentations related to professional life (10%)

Participation, effort, and progress: 15%

This grade takes into account the quality of a student's presence in class, energy, relevance of comments in class, notably during debates, effort and progress in language proficiency, and attendance and punctuality. A midterm evaluation of this grade will be given to students during the midterm exam.

Preparation for elective oral presentation: 5%

Before each presentation in class, students must meet with Language Development Coordinator Hanadi Sobh 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 in class, a required activity or in-class presentation	=-1 point on your final grade
More than 3 unexcused absences	= F for the course
Unsubmitted written work Absence for a presentation or exam Plagiarism	= F (0 points) for the assignment in question

*Excused absences = *absence for illness excused by the certificate of a French doctor or an internship interview
Documentation to be submitted to Renée 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.*
- *Late submission of written work will entail a penalty on the assignment grade
Written work submitted more than a week late will not receive credit (grade =F).*

Plagiarism - Official 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/>

Grading conversion (out of 100)

FINAL GRADE FOR THE COURSE		GRADES FOR INDIVIDUAL COMPONENTS/ASSIGNMENTS							
93-100 : A	77-79,5 : C+	A+ = 97	B+/A- = 89,5	C+/B- = 79,5	D+/C- = 69,5				
90-92,5 : A-	73-76,5 : C	A/A+ = 96	B+ = 88	C+ = 78	D+ = 68				
87-89,5 : B+	70-72,5 : C-	A = 95	B/B+ = 86,5	C/C+ = 76,5	D/D+ = 66,5				
83-86,5 : B	69-60 : D	A/A- = 92,5	B = 85	C = 75	D = 65				
80-82,5 : B-	59,5-0 : F	A/A- = 92,5	B/B- = 82,5	C/C- = 72,5	D/D- = 62,5				
		A- = 91	B- = 81	C- = 71	D- = 61				
		A-/B+ = 89,5	B-/C+ = 79,5	C-/D+ = 69,5	F = 55				

IV. CALENDAR

The following schedule is tentative and may be changed as a function of students' needs and interests.

Session 1

- Presentation of the course
- Personal introductions

First Weekend: Discovery of a Parisian neighborhood

Session 2

- Professional : 2-minute oral presentation
- Grammatical focus: the nature and function of words
- Grammar: interrogatives (overall principles)

Session 3

- Lettre de motivation - Cover letter: Composition 1 due
- Grammar: *passé composé* and *imparfait*
- Professional : Oral mock internship interview
- Phonetics

Session 4

- Culture: Presentation on neighborhood visits
- Grammar: *passé composé* and *imparfait*
- Vocabulary: current terms nuances

Session 5

- Grammar : In-class correction of Composition 1
- Grammar: *pronoms relatifs*
- Phonetics

Session 6

- Professional : 2-minute oral presentation
- Grammar: *pronoms relatifs, cont'd*
- Professional vocabulary: around the office

Session 7

- MIDTERM EXAM
- Phonetics

Session 8

- Récit d'un souvenir d'enfance - Tale of a Childhood Memory: Composition 2 - First version due
- Overview of first half of the semester
- Oral : Language activities

Session 9

- Grammar: *discours indirect* and *concordance des temps*
- Phonetics

Session 10

- Visits in Paris : Paris Story and Fragonard perfume museum

Session 11

- Composition 2: final version due
- Grammar: *le conditionnel*
- Phonetics

Session 12

- Pariscoop (collective cultural blog): Composition 3 - First version due
- Professional : 2-minute oral presentation
- Grammar: *le conditionnel*
- Professional: speak on the telephone (*Outils* p. 193-195)

Session 13

- Grammar: *le subjonctif*
- Phonetics

Session 14

- Pariscoop: Composition 3 - Final version due
- Culture: Presentation on Ile-de-France visit

Session 15

- In-class correction of the BU Paris placement test
- Review for final exam
- Phonetics

FINAL EXAM

V. ADDITIONAL BIBLIOGRAPHY

A l'écoute des sons, (Clé international)

Phonétique progressive du français, (Clé international)

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GREEN, Julien, *Paris* Seuil Essais (1983)

HALL, E.T. *Les différences cachées* Stern Magazin (1971)

MIZIO, Francis, *L'agence tous-tafs* Le livre de poche (2000)

ORSENNA Erik, *Les chevaliers du subjonctif*, Stock (2004)