



IFE COURSE SYLLABUS

COURSE TITLE: **La Politique Française d'Hier à Aujourd'hui**
"The Political Life of France Yesterday and Today"

COURSE TAUGHT BY:

This course is in two parts by Pascal Cauchy. Pascal Cauchy is the Administrative Director of the Center for Contemporary History, a research institute of the Institut d'Études Politiques of Paris ("Sciences Po"), where he also teaches contemporary French history. Pascal joined Sciences Po after nine years of research and teaching in Moscow. His research specialty is the history and historiography of communism.

PURPOSE OF THE COURSE:

The purpose of this course is to help students grasp fundamental notions of French society today by studying the roots and the development of the main institutions and concepts of French political life. This course in turn contributes to the overall purpose of the IFE preparatory session which is to equip students to participate as fully as possible in French professional life and social and political discussion. It should be seen as a companion course to "French Society: Issues and international context". The course aims at a thorough familiarity with the politically and institutionally constitutive elements of contemporary France by examining how history shaped institutions and outlooks which in turn shape France today.

DESCRIPTION OF THE COURSE:

The course is taught in two parts, or "modules", one entitled "The State" and the other "State and institutions in France from the end of the 19th century to today".

The first module is in turn comprised of two "lessons": an introductory history of the State in France, and an examination of the unfinished nature of the French Revolution and the ongoing quest for the best form of government, from 1789 to 1914. Major topics include political representation, suffrage, and citizenship, as well as limits on State action and the role of State symbols. This part of the course is designed to offer a vantage point on the creation and the metamorphosis of a politically unstable society.

The second module aims to introduce the fundamental phenomena of French political life with an emphasis on the interplay between a long and rich institutional past and the forces of change and transformation today. The high and low moments of French republicanism will be examined as a basis for understanding the originality of the 5th Republic, the nature of the modern State, and the struggle to adapt institutions to new challenges and new misgivings.

COURSE FORMAT:

The format of this course has been designed for maximum pedagogical effectiveness in light of the constraints of a course offered intensively over a short period of time. Accordingly, the course comprises two types of sessions. The morning session is given over to a largely lecture format (although the small size of the group makes it possible for students to ask questions and for teachers to engage students). The lecture session also reflects a European approach to university education whereby lecture material is as important or more so than reading. In the afternoon, a shorter session adopts a workshop format, with the emphasis on assimilating lecture material through discussion, debate, reading of the press and other student participatory exercises. Student participation is both

informal (debate and discussion) and more structured methodologically (oral exposés, press reviews, and other presentations).

Each course of the preparatory session also includes appropriate site visits. Visits linked to this course include The Senate, Paris City Hall, and the regional government of the Ile-de-France Region.

This course meets approximately 45 hours, not including site visits.

COURSE OUTLINE:

The State

- A. History of the State in France
 - 1. principles of sovereignty, defense, justice, and coin
 - 2. principle of "Territoire"
 - 3. missions and instruments of the State
- B. Finishing the French Revolution
 - 1. revolution and empire, the birth of the citizen, first taste of republicanism
 - 2. The era of imbalance: constitutional monarchies; another try for the Republic; the imperial temptation again; the pragmatic Republic.

State and Institutions in France from the end of the 19th century to today

- A. Establishing the Republic
 - 1. birth of the Republic and affirmation of " republican values "
 - 2. the Republic threatened from without
 - 3. Death, rebirth, failure (1940-1958)
- B. The 5th Republic
 - 1. French institutional heritage
 - 2. the institutions of 1958
 - 3. institutional change
- C. The State between continuity and transformation
 - 1. organization of the State, "à la française"
 - 2. decentralisation: a new form of political and territorial organization
 - 3. The French State in the construction of Europe
- D. Decline, crisis, or tradition: the era of doubt
 - 1. the French social model called into question
 - 2. the republican model called into question
 - 3. politics and policies called into question

Readings:

First module

➤ Texts:

- *Histoire des Institutions et des Régimes politiques de la France de 1789 à 1958*; by Jean-Jacques - Chevallier, Armand Colin (9th Ed.) 2001

➤ Required reading (see "course format"): daily newspaper reading is required; in the workshop sessions students are assigned short readings for discussion or presentation, are required to read daily newspapers, and prepare press revues on specific topics.

- Suggested reading:
 - *Le Colonel Chabert*, by Honoré de Balzac
 - *Souvenirs*, Alexis de Tocqueville
 - *Réflexions sur la Révolution Française*, by Edmund Burke
 - *Le 18 Brumaire de Louis Bonaparte*, Karl Marx
 - *Mémoires d'outre-tombe*, François-René de Chateaubriand

Second module

- Texts:
 - *La France de 1914 à Nos Jours*; by M. Agulhon, A. Nouchi, R Schor – Nathan, 2001
- Required reading: *same as for first module*
- Suggested reading:
 - *Nouvelle Histoire de la France Contemporaine*, Seuil (any recent edition)
 - *La Politique en France XIX-XX siècle. Régimes, institutions, élections, courants, partis, groupes de pression, médias*, by H. Néant, Hachette, 1991
 - *La République, vol. 2 (Nouveaux Drames et Nouveaux Espoirs)* by M. Agulhon, Hachette 1987
 - *La France d'un Siècle à l'Autre, 1914-2000*, Hachette, 1999

GRADING:

Student work is evaluated on the basis of a written examination at the end of the course the grade for which is averaged with grades received for oral presentations, reading reports, and press reviews prepared for the afternoon workshop, as well as student's level of participation in the workshop.

EQUIVALENT IN AMERICAN UNIVERSITY COURSE OFFERINGS:

This course is pluridisciplinary by design. Nonetheless it roughly corresponds to a Political Science Department course in Comparative Politics or Politics and Government of France or French Political Institutions, or a History Department course such as Citizenship in France since 1789.