



## **IFE COURSE SYLLABUS**

***COURSE TITLE:* La Société Française et ses Rapports avec le Monde  
"French Society: Composition, Problems, and Place in the World"**

***COURSE TAUGHT BY:***

This course is team-taught in three parts by Dominique Agostini, Jérôme Poggi, and Pierre Grosser. Dominique Agostini is Professor of Sociology at the University of Paris XII. Besides a doctorate in sociology, Dominique earned the French National "Aggregation" (highest State qualification) in Social Science as well as the "Diplôme" of the prestigious Ecole Normale Supérieure. Jérôme Poggi holds a degree from France's Ecole Centrale and is working on a doctorate in the area of contemporary art and its market. Pierre Grosser is Professor of International Relations and Contemporary History at the Institut d'Etudes Politiques in Paris ("Sciences Po") and Director of the Diplomacy Institute of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Pierre Grosser is well known for his work on the Cold War, the causes of World War II, and for recent work on War and Crisis in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

***PURPOSE OF THE COURSE:***

The purpose of this course is to provide students the necessary keys for deciphering contemporary French social issues as well as the structure of contemporary French society. Keys include current pressures and trends towards change seen against a backdrop of the modern social establishment, as well as the interplay between France's overseas involvement -- past and present -- and current social phenomena.

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 "The Political Life of France Yesterday and Today". The course aims at a familiarity with the forces that have shaped French society in the modern era, the structure and main tenets of that society, and recent phenomena and emerging trends that are forcing change. Culture, politics and international affairs add meaning to and provide the context for this exploration.

***DESCRIPTION OF THE COURSE:***

The course is taught in three parts, or "modules": "French Society"; "Cultural Politics/Policy and French Society"; "French Society in the World". In the first module Dominique Agostini presents a selection of sociological themes chosen to illustrate key aspects of modern French society (see course outline). These themes are presented and analysed in a context of contemporary social history, politics and economics. In historical terms, this module takes students from the republican model and the rise of industry through to the pressures of European integration and globalization, demonstrating the validity of the notion of a "second French revolution", a social one, occurring in the last two decades.

In the second module Jérôme Poggi explains the unique rôle culture has played and still plays in shaping French society through an introduction to the history of the inextricable notions of State, nation, art and culture (e.g. the "cultural exception"), on one hand, and on the other using the case of the fine arts to examine the nature of the cultural field and its relation to the individual. Finally, culture in these terms is seen as pivotal to French debates on globalization, European integration and divergent visions of the world (technological, economic, humanist, cultural...). This module includes lecture-visits,

led by the professor, of important cultural and urban sites from a political perspective. Sites include the new development zone in southeast Paris, Palais Royal and the Tuileries, and other sites. In the third module Pierre Grosser introduces France's foreign policy tradition, the history of France's actions and position on the world stage, and their implications for French society both in terms of its colonial past and in the face of globalization.

### ***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 Paris' Belleville district, public housing site in Romainville (blue-collar city on Paris' outskirts), and Sciences Po.

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

### ***COURSE OUTLINE:***

#### **French Society**

- A. Social stratification in France
  - 1. from a society of orders to a society of classes
  - 2. the socio-professional categories
  - 3. social mobility
- B. French demographics
  - 1. change in the French population since the ancien regime
  - 2. immigration
  - 3. family and family transformation
- C. Work, leisure, culture
  - 1. social time
  - 2. transformation of the working day and of the firm
  - 3. cultural consumption
- D. Urban problems
  - 1. France's urban model
  - 2. exclusion
  - 3. urban policy

#### **Readings:**

##### ➤ Texts:

- *L'Etat de la France 2005-2006*, La Découverte 2005
- *La France en Mutation*, D. Culpepper, ed.; La Presse de Sciences Po, 2005

➤ 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 reviews on specific topics. Students are also required to read and prepare a report on a book selected with the help of one of the professors for the course. Recent choices include *Kiffe Kiffe Demain* by Faïza Guen, *Ni Pute ni Soumise* by Fadela Amara, *La France qui tombe* by Nicolas Baverez, *Journal d'Hirondelle*, by Amélie Nothomb, *Noir et Blanc* by Serge Bilé, *Le malade imaginaire* by Molière, *Les mains sales* by Jean-Paul Sartre, *La Vie devant Soi* by Romain Gary.

➤ Suggested reading:

- *Le Ghetto Français*, Eric Maurin, République des Idées 2004
- *La République et sa Diversité*, Patrick Weil, Seuil 2005
- *Les Classes Moyennes à la Dérive*, Louis Chauvel, Seuil 2005
- *Le Capitalisme Total*, Jean Peyrelvade, Seuil 2006

## Cultural Politics/Policy and French Society

- A. Art and Power in French history
- B. Art, Culture, Heritage: 19<sup>th</sup> century upheavals
  - 1. the invention of heritage ("patrimoine") and museums
  - 2. divorce between art and State
  - 3. the beginnings of cultural policy
- C. Towards a mixed economy: 1936 to present
  - 1. reconciliation of Art and State
  - 2. artist, institution and market
- D. Cultural politics and policy in the context of globalization
  - 1. the limits of cultural administration
  - 2. the new liberalization of the arts
  - 3. from cultural exception to cultural diversity

### **Readings:**

➤ Texts:

- POULOT, Dominique, *Musée, Nation, Patrimoine*, Gallimard, 1997
- MONNIER, Gérard, *L'art et ses Institutions en France*, Gallimard, 1999

➤ Required reading: Same as for first module, above.

➤ Suggested reading:

- SCHNAPPER, Antoine, *Curieux du Grand Siècle*, Flammarion, 1989
- BRESC, Geneviève, *Mémoires du Louvre*, Découvertes-Gallimard, 1989
- CHOAY, Dominique, *L'Allégorie du Patrimoine*, Seuil, 1992
- MALRAUX, André, *La Politique, la Culture*, GALLIMARD, 1996

## French Society in the World

- A. French foreign policy traditions (power, identity, balance, and consultation)
- B. Foreign policy decision making, political context, social impact
- C. France's colonial past and present, or other special topics by student choice
- D. Will and means: France and globalization

### **Readings :**

#### ➤ Texts:

- PERVILLE, Guy. *De l'empire français à la décolonisation*. Hachette, 1991
- SOUTOU, Georges-Henri. "La France et le Concept d'Equilibre Européen au XXe Siècle: Entre géopolitique, concert de l'Europe et construction européenne" in CONZE, -
- Eckart, SCHLIE, Ulrich & SEUBERT, Harald (Hg) *Geschichte zwischen Wissenschaft und Politik*. Nomos, 2003

#### ➤ Required reading: Same as for first module, above.

#### ➤ Suggested reading:

- BANCEL, Nicolas, BLANCHARD, Pascal, VERGES, Françoise. *La République coloniale*. Albin Michel, 2003
- ALLAIN, Jean-Claude & alii. *Histoire de la diplomatie française*. Perrin, 2005
- "Quelle place pour la France dans le monde" *La Revue internationale et stratégique*. Automne 2006
- GABAS, Jean-Jacques (dir.). *L'aide publique française au développement*. La Documentation française, 2005.
- LAÏDI, Zaki. *La grande perturbation*. Flammarion, 2004
- AGRİKOLIANSKY, Eric, FILLIEULE, Olivier et MAYER, Nonna. *L'altermondialisme en France*. Flammarion 2005

### **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 broadly pluridisciplinary by design. In addition it reflects French university traditions of disciplinary divisions, with its emphasis on contemporary history as a major social science discipline, almost a method for the other social sciences. The other European academic tendency it reflects is that of a socially and culturally contexted approach to international affairs, an approach which this course puts to use to link domestic and international aspects of the contemporary stakes facing French society.