

FREN 3032
Text, Image, Culture
MW 2-3:15
French House 102



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Course description

How do we express ourselves in the world? How is culture constructed, experienced, and understood? What can you do with your French now that you have learned all about French grammar (*jamais!*), and found your voice in French 3031? In "Text, Image, Culture," we explore expressions of culture through text, image, and language. We discover a variety of French and Francophone cultural artifacts, representing different genres, time periods, approaches, and media. Through presentations, role-plays, creative writing, debates, cultural interpretation, and literary analysis, we discuss, debate, and interpret these cultural texts and images while still developing your spoken and written communication skills in French. Once you finish this course, what can you do? Take any course in the major or minor! Read a novel in French! Study abroad for a semester or a year in an immersion setting! Talk to your friends (*en français*) about French and Francophone culture! Explore and make cultural discoveries on your own!

Course is conducted entirely in French.

Course Objectives

In this course, you will

1. develop your proficiency in oral and written French and discover texts, images, and other cultural documents
2. develop methods to effectively summarize, interpret, and analyze cultural products with precision and clarity in the target language
3. create and present your own texts, opinions, and interpretations in the target language
4. consider different cultural perspectives, products, and practices and compare, contrast, express opinions on these topics, and critically reflect on how culture and language are constructed
5. self-edit and self-correct speaking and writing in target language
6. share your own knowledge and curiosity with the class by presenting your own discoveries of French poems, songs, articles, art objects, and more

Assessments of Learning

The goal of this course is to engage with and interpret French and Francophone culture and to improve your communication in French. We will employ many different types of activities to develop three modes of written and spoken communication: interpretive, presentational, and interpersonal.

Engagement (20%)

In this class, we will grapple with large questions about the nature of language and culture, and how to interpret texts and cultural artifacts. A large part of learning in a language class takes place in the classroom through our engagement with the texts and with one another. Preparation outside of class helps you to optimize your learning in class and to engage fully with the material and the class. Work at home will include listening to podcasts, reading texts (essays, poems, images, short stories), and completing preparation activities. Work in class will include individual, pair, and group activities such as creative writing, role-playing, debates, and lively discussions of texts and images.

On a **typical day** in class, you will **prepare** for class by engaging with new vocabulary and reading a text or viewing an image and recording your initial thoughts in your cultural journey blog. In class, we will begin by **sharing** homework with partners and putting the new language skills (vocabulary and/or grammatical structures) into practice. Then we will break into **small groups** to **formulate and express** our thoughts on the image or reading of the day, reporting back to the larger group. At the second half of class, we will **synthesize** the material with broader questions of interpretation and understanding of culture through **creative activities** such as debate, role-playing activities, or collaborative writing. After class, your work at home will include **expanding** the creative activity in class by **revising or developing** your thoughts from a different angle, and preparing for the next text/reading.

Cultural Journey (20%)

As you discover the many cultural artifacts that we will study this semester, you will keep a blog to record your reactions, to reflect on different cultural products, perspectives, and practices, and to compare your culture with French and Francophone culture. This is a chance to collect your thoughts informally before class and to expand your thoughts in an unstructured way after class. In this blog, you will engage with cultural artifacts that we will discuss collectively and reflect on new discoveries that you have made individually.

→ The more you do, the more you earn! Each blog entry is worth up to 9 points, and you must do between 8 and 12 entries.

Language in Context (30%)

One of the goals of this class is to improve your written communication in French and to prepare you for further studies in advanced literature and cultural studies courses. In

class and as preparation for class, you will engage in a variety of informal, ungraded writing activities such as rewriting the ending to a fairy tale or imagining a city in the next century. To develop your writing skills and to practice formal literary and cultural interpretation, you will write three compositions. In the first paper (5%) you will describe and analyze a French or Francophone painting. In the second paper (10%), you will engage with a literary text in a creative way. In the third and final paper (15%), you will write a longer essay analyzing a short French novel from multiple cultural perspectives. Each essay will be written in two drafts, the first of which will be corrected for grammar, peer-reviewed, and commented on before you revise and submit a final version.

Language in Action (30%)

Another goal of this class is to improve your spoken communication in French. To practice and demonstrate your proficiency in spoken French, you will engage in informal, ungraded activities in class such as debating a controversial topic or sharing with the class a cultural artifact (text or image) that you have discovered and written about in your blog. To showcase your progress in spoken French through the semester, you will produce your own series of enhanced podcasts (audio podcasts with images). In the podcasts, you will create with language, engage with cultural artifacts, and tell your story to your classmates. At the end of the semester, we will have a “viewing day” in which you will share a favorite episode of your podcast.

Schedule

Questions to Ponder	Theme	Learning assessments
Weeks 1-2: What is culture?	Culture shock	Podcast 1 (series title, episode title and script)
Weeks 3-4: Why do we have heroes?	Sports and Society	Podcast 1 (production)
Weeks 5-6: What is beauty?	Social Expectations	Paper 1 (draft 1) Podcast 2
Weeks 7-8: How are we changing?	Stages of life	Paper 1 (final)
Weeks 9-10: Are we animals?	Human nature	Podcast 3
Weeks 11-12: Are we living in a material world?	Mass culture	Paper 2 (draft) Podcast 4
Weeks 13-14: Do others define us?	Family	Paper 2 (final) Podcast 5
Week 15: How do I express who I am?	Identity	Sharing of Podcasts Paper 3 (draft) (Final paper due in exam week)

Creating with Language: The Enhanced Podcast Project

Imagine that you host a podcast that is produced for TEEJ.fm, a network of podcasts from WTJU Radio at UVa. Using the Cité-U podcast as a model, you will create your own enhanced podcast series (audio podcasts accompanied by still images—photos, drawings, etc.) to showcase your progress in French this semester. In the podcasts, you will create with language, engage with cultural artifacts, and present your personal and personalized story to your classmates.

How to create an enhanced podcast

Here are some tutorials for creating enhanced podcasts:

1. <http://itunesu.utah.edu/tutorials/general/enhanced.pdf>

For creating a podcast on Audacity (<http://www.audacityteam.org>)

2. <http://www.wikihow.com/Record-a-Podcast-with-Audacity>
and then adding photos in Windows <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BLunKLy6rPw>
or adding photos with Garageband

3. <http://smallbusiness.chron.com/add-photos-garageband-podcasts-28488.html>

You can also visit the Language Commons for help in this project.

The Series

Each podcast will last two minutes. You will write a one-page script, and choose a minimum of five images for each podcast. You could add music or sound effects to enhance your podcast further. **This is a college radio podcast. Your audience is other college students. You want your friends, and friends of your friends, and friends of their friends to listen to you!

Podcast 1: Introduce yourself (you, your friends, your family, your life)

Podcast 2: Talk about a childhood memory (use “Le Chandail” as a model)

Podcast 3: Take a virtual trip to a museum in a Francophone city. Choose one work of art by a Francophone artist and tell your listeners about it and why you think it is interesting.

Podcast 4: Interpret or reinterpret a film, short story or poem that we have studied. (Tell it from a different point of view, rewrite the ending, imagine the next chapter, write a parody, critique it, etc.)

Podcast 5: Conclude your podcast series. Reflect on what you have learned this semester and what you will do next with your French.

Evaluation

Each of the podcasts will be evaluated out of 20 points according to the following criteria.

- Language (precision, fluidity, pronunciation, use of new vocabulary), 8 points
 - few to no errors, variety of vocabulary and structures, fully comprehensible 7-8 pts
 - some errors, some variety of vocabulary and structures, but still comprehensible 4-6 pts
 - difficult to understand at times, repetitive 2-3 pts
 - excessive errors that impede comprehension 0-1 pt
- Content (response to the prompt, interaction with cultural artifacts), 8 points
 - goes beyond requirements of assignment 7-8 pts
 - fully responds to prompt 4-6 pts
 - responds to prompt but lacking or insufficient in some aspects 2-3 pts

- does not respond to prompt in meaningful way 0-1 pt
- Quality (choice of accompanying images and music, overall quality), 4 points
 - Thoughtful images, goes beyond basic requirements 4 pts
 - Good images, fulfills basic requirements 3 pts
 - Missing or incoherent images 0-2 pts