



## IFE course syllabus

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### Course title

#### Applied French Practicum

### Course taught by

Sylvie Clémence

After graduating in English and American literature, Methodology, Phonetics and Grammar from the University of Picardie and the University of Paris – La Sorbonne, Sylvie Clémence lived in the UK for two years where she taught in the French department at the University of Lancaster. Upon returning she co-founded a training company for management professionals in French as a Foreign Language, running intensive programs for expatriate directors from various worldwide companies. Sylvie has always been interested in cross-cultural issues, teaching at Accent Paris for various American universities (University of California Berkeley, UCLA, Washington University in Saint Louis, to name a few), as well as at ESCP Europe, a top business school whose students come from all around the world.

### Purpose of the course

This course is a central element of The Paris Gateway Program curriculum, combining individualized experiential learning and daily language practice with a classroom framework for phonetics, structured conversation, writing and methodology. The overriding purpose of the course is to provide students the means and the support to make very significant progress in oral comprehension and expression. Secondly, the structure of the Applied French Practicum reinforces the content of the Paris Gateway Program on the subject of contemporary Paris and France.

### Description of the course

The Practicum is composed of two principal parts:

- A. The Activity Plan**
- B. The Language Workshop**

#### A. The Activity Plan

The Activity Plan provides students the opportunity to apply French beyond the classroom. **Students choose one of three activity plans** to form an individualized learning experience. Each activity plan includes an oral and a written component:

##### I Conversational internship

*Oral Component.* A part-time internship, taking place four half-days per week (a total of sixteen hours spent weekly at the workplace as well as the noon meal time wherever possible). Placement for this type of internship focuses on dynamic, interactive work places, such as not-for-profit social organizations, public schools, cultural centers, and NGOs to name the most common type of placement. Students will be placed broadly in their area of interest, but the placement strategy focuses on host organizations where student-interns will have ample opportunity for interaction.

*Written Component.* Students complete the conversational internship by writing an internship report, working with the professor of the Language Workshop.

##### II Volunteer work + research on a related subject of French society or culture.

*Oral Component.* In this activity plan, conversational opportunities are provided by a part-time volunteer placement with a social organization. Students also pursue research on some aspect of French society or culture of interest to the student

and related to their volunteer work. The research plan includes conducting interviews and attending events, as well as documentary research. (For example, a student volunteering with a cultural center might become interested in the role of culture in peoples' lives in Paris and France.)

*Written Component.* Students produce a research report, planned and written under the tutelage of the professor of the Language Workshop.

### III Field research on a current events topic.

*Oral Component:* In this activity plan, students work with an IFE advisor to define a topic based on a current issue in French society. They establish a research plan involving a number of interviews, surveys, visits to and contact with related organizations, etc. (Example: Paris after recent attacks and the government's public security policy in the light of civil rights.) Students attend meetings and events related to their topic, conduct regular reviews of news media, as well as carrying out documentary research. The student's base for work is the IFE Paris Center (a lively Francophone environment) when not in the field or working at a library or archives.

*Written Component:* Students produce an independent field study research paper under the tutelage of a research advisor.

## B. The Language Workshop

The language workshop involves student participation in discussion, oral presentations, structured conversational practice and phonetics. The workshop is linked in content with the course Paris-France-Paris, while providing methodological support for the written component of the three action plans.

### Course format

The activity plans follow the formats listed above. The language workshop meets once weekly for 90 min. The workshop format features discussion, group work on phonetics, writing exercises, and methodology training. At the beginning of the workshop there are two 90-minute oral expression workshops led by an actor trained in the use of theater techniques to encourage oral expression in another language.

### Course outline

(The workshop "parts" presented below are taught more or less concurrently, with emphasis on one part or another at different stages in the semester.)

#### I Introduction to French society / conversation workshop

During the orientation phase of the program, students are presented with introductory material on France today. This material serves as the basis for discussion and debate on Parisian and French society.

#### II Theater workshop for oral expression

Timidity and fear of expressing oneself are common problems in learning another language. This workshop, meeting twice at the beginning of the semester, is designed to help students overcome this obstacle to their linguistic progress. Led by a member of the theater group Théâtre de l'Opprimé which has developed theater-based techniques for solving social and group communication difficulties, this workshop focuses on voice exercises, reaching out to the Other, physical movement and gesture as part of oral expression, role-playing, the use of mirrors, group discussion, and more.

#### III Phonetics

This part of the course helps students improve their pronunciation of the French language, concentrating in particular on difficulties typically encountered by English speakers. Course material includes the French phonetic alphabet; the "triangle vocalique"; situations which call for an articulation of consonants; and other similar material. Several class meetings

are devoted to the theme “rhythm and intonation”, emphasizing the tonic accent, insistent accent, expressive intonation, rhythmic groups, liaisons, “dropping the ‘e’”, etc. Attention is paid to the sonorous effects of French poetry. Other sessions focus on practicing correct articulation with emphasis on oral and nasal vowels and silent consonants.

#### **IV Written report methodology**

This part of the workshop focuses on writing exercises and standard French methodology for organizing material to be presented in written form.

Writing exercises include the use of standard terms of discourse, the use of synonyms, coordinating verb tenses, integrating examples into a sentence, etc. Methodology training focuses on both structure and form, how to stay on subject, and developing an argument.

### **Bibliography**

#### ■ **French society introduction and discussion**

CHOVELON B., MORSEL M.-H. *Lire la presse*, Grenoble. PUG, 2005. 170p.

HEU E., MABILAT J.J. EDITO *Méthode de Français*. Didier, 2008. 223p.

PECHEUR J. *Civilisation progressive du Français*. CLE International, 2010. 223p.

#### ■ **Internship report - written expression**

ABBADIE C., CHOVELON B., MORSEL M.-H. *L'Expression Française écrite et orale*. PUG, 2003. 243p.

BOULARES M. *Grammaire progressive du Français*. CLE International, 1997. 192p.

CHEVALIER-WIXLER D., DUPLÉIX D., JOUETTE I., MEGRE B. *Réussir le DALF*. Didier, 2007. 239p.

LARGER N., MIMRAN R. *Vocabulaire expliqué du Français*. CLE International, 2004. 287p.

#### ■ **Phonetics**

ABRY D., VELDEMAN-ABRY J. *La phonétique audition, prononciation, correction*. CLE International, 2007. 175p.

CHARLIAC L. *Phonétique progressive du Français*. CLE International, 2006. 128p.

LEON M. *Exercices systématiques de prononciation française*. HACHETTE, 2003. 144p.in:inbox

### **Grading**

Student's final grade for the Applied French Practicum is assessed on the following basis:

- Assiduity, engagement and initiative in carrying out the action plan – **40%**
- Written report and its oral defense – **40%**
- Preparedness for and participation in the Language Seminar – **20%**