



American University European Union Program Fall 2015

SYLLABUS *LIVING IN FRENCH* (FREN-224-001S)

This course will help you learn French by using your experiences from living in Brussels. Its primary objective is to build upon your previous French courses and improve your oral communication and aural comprehension skills. To accomplish this goal, you will use French to explore various aspects of life in Belgium and the experiences you encounter here.

Ideally, a student taking this course should have already mastered the basics of French grammar at least to the intermediate level. However, the course is open to beginners as well. In order to accommodate the differences in the students' background in French, the class is divided into three groups. One group is for more advanced students with a good background in French grammar. The second is for students with little or no background in French. The third is for students in between. A "test" will be given during the first week of the semester to place you in the level that is appropriate for you. You will receive one academic credit hour for this course.

Course Structure

This course is taught for AU's Brussels Center by the CLL Centre de Langues. This language school is associated with UCL and it is located on campus. This semester, CLL will send two professors to teach the course: one for students with some background in French, one for students with a less or no background. The course will normally meet on Monday evenings at CLL, although sometimes it will meet on Thursday evenings. The class normally begins at 17.00 and will end at about 18.30.

The primary purpose of this course is to improve your aural and oral comprehension skills. Instruction at all levels, including the beginning level, will take place only in French. The idea behind this approach is to immerse you in the French language so that you will learn in context the vocabulary you need for the situations you will encounter in Belgium. This approach is quite different from the one used in American classrooms where instruction at the beginning level is in English. Therefore, sometimes students with no background in French find it difficult to adapt to this method at first. However, this teaching method is quite common in Europe and it is an effective way to acquire a language. We also hope that you will make the effort to meet Belgian students to practice the French that you learn in this manner.

Optional French Discussion Practice

For those students enrolled in the course who would like additional practice in using their French, Bénédicte Debray can offer weekly one-hour meetings for conversational practice. Whether or not these discussion sessions will take place depends entirely on student interest. If a sufficient number of students are interested in these practice sessions, please inform Professor Sheridan and he will make the necessary arrangements. If held, these discussion sessions would be entirely voluntary, and will not affect your final grade.

Course Requirements

Since the objective of this course is to improve your comprehension and oral expression skills, you will be graded on the basis of the progress that you make in these areas. Accordingly, your final grade will be based on two criteria:

- 1) **Attendance, Participation, and Conduct:** This course will only succeed in meeting its objectives if you attend class and actively participate in the classroom activities. You cannot expect to sit back and learn from this experience through passively watching others speak French. You must participate to learn. Therefore, attendance and participation is mandatory and will constitute 40% of your final grade.
- 2) **Final Examination:** You will have one final examination for the course on **Monday, 7 December**. This exam will test your improvement in fluidity, pronunciation, clarity of expression, vocabulary and knowledge of grammar as learned during the semester. It will constitute 60% of your final grade and will normally have both a written and an oral component.

Textbooks and Readings

Given the nature of the course, there is no textbook. However, you are required to read French periodicals in addition to any material given to you by your professor. Furthermore, you are required to watch francophone television and listen to francophone radio stations. It's fun and it's the only way you'll learn the language!