

**Georgetown University**  
**Department of French**  
**French 161-01 “Topics for Oral Proficiency”**  
**Main Pre-Session: May 18 – June 12, 2020**

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**Section number: 161-0**

**Time: 10:45–12:45pm M, T, W, Th, F**

**Room: 204B**

Professor: Géraldine D. Simonnet

**Office: 429A**

**Email: gds44@georgetown.edu**

**Office Hours: 9:30–10:30 T&TH and by appointment**

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## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course aims to improve students’ oral proficiency in French. The course covers a variety of current events, all of which will shed light more globally on French politics, culture, and society. Reading materials will include articles from mainstream French magazines and newspapers, such as *Le Monde*, *Libération*, *Le Figaro*, *L’Express*, *Le Nouvel Observateur*, *Le Point*, *Jeune Afrique*, etc.

Topics for Oral Proficiency (FREN 161) prepares students to take the SFS/MSFS Oral Proficiency Exam, but this class is not restricted only to SFS students.

**Prerequisites for this course are Advanced French II (FREN 102) or Advanced Grammar and Writing (FREN 151).**

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## **COURSE GOALS**

- to train students to better express themselves;
- to provide students with the necessary tools to understand, discuss and debate current political, economic, sociological and cultural issues and trends in France;
- to develop analytical skills through the study of primary documents in the target language;
- to acquire a better knowledge of the language, culture and politics of French-speaking countries;
- to prepare students for the French Oral Proficiency Exam.

There is no systematic review of grammar in this class. Students are encouraged to refer to their favorite grammar book used in previous classes.

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## **COURSE ORGANIZATION**

This course introduces students to the mainstream media in France, and to a lesser extent to the Francophone press at large. The topics studied in class are, most of the times, related to French or Francophone issues, but international news, as they appear in French-language media, will also be discussed in their relationship to France.

External links on Canvas provide links to daily, weekly and monthly French newspapers and magazines.

Each week, we will focus on a specific subject. Detailed homework will be provided on Canvas every Thursday.

During the course of the semester, students will be asked to give (at least) two oral presentations: an individual presentation of an article and a group presentation. Articles should be sent 4 days in advance to the professor for approval and to the whole class to give students enough time to read and prepare the article. All students are responsible for reading the article of the day, researching the vocabulary, and for identifying and asking questions on difficult points of the article. Group presentations (PowerPoints) must be sent to the professor a week in advance for review and corrections if needed. Each presentation will be followed by a discussion and a debate. After each presentation, students will meet with the professor for an evaluation during office hours. Students will find Guidelines of the presentations and more details on Canvas.

**Students are encouraged to consult their professor during office hours, to discuss their class performance.**

## COURSE MATERIALS

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Please note that there's no required book for this course. Materials, from different sources, (newspapers, magazines, websites, news broadcasts, documentaries, films, etc.), will be provided by your professor and posted on Canvas. Daily newspaper reading is required in order to acquire a better knowledge and understanding of current events.

### Recommended

- A verb reference source, such as Bescherelle's *Complete Guide to Conjugating French Verbs* or online: <http://bescherelle.com>
- A good bilingual French dictionary, such as *Collins Robert French Unabridged Dictionary* or online: <http://www.larousse.fr/dictionnaires>
- A good monolingual (French-French) dictionary, such as *Le Petit Robert*

The topics that will be studied during the semester will cover the following themes:

### I. La France

#### La vie politique

- La République Française et ses institutions politiques
- Les partis politiques
- Les élections et leurs modalités

#### La vie sociale

- L'Immigration
- Les religions et la laïcité
- La protection sociale
- Le système de l'enseignement
- L'organisation du travail et la vie professionnelle

### II. L'Union Européenne

#### Histoire et les objectifs

- Les institutions Européennes
- Les pays membres de l'UE
- La Zone Euro
- L'UE aujourd'hui

### III. La Francophonie

- L'histoire de la Francophonie
- L'organisation de la Francophonie et son rôle
- Etude Critique de la Francophonie

## GRADING AND ASSESSMENT

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<i>Course requirements and exams</i>	<i>max %</i>
Participation & Class Discussion & Homework	20
Oral Presentations	25
Quizzes, tests and midterm exam	25

Journal	10
Final Exam	20

### **Journal**

You will post a brief reaction--a short paragraph--to each article and PowerPoint presented in class by 10 p.m. before the next class. You will do so by using the Discussion feature on canvas. Late submission will result in an F.

### **Quizzes (2 types)**

#### **a. Vocabulary**

Short vocabulary quizzes throughout the semester on the new vocabulary compiled by students and on the vocabulary studied in class or provided by your professor. There will also be a question about "les actualités" of the week.

#### **b. Content**

Short quizzes to test your understanding of the content and the subjects studied in class.

### **Tests**

On both vocabulary and content.

### **Midterm exam**

The midterm exam is an oral- individual exam. Your professor will inform you about the date and time.

### **Exam final**

The final exam, an oral- individual exam, will take place at the end of semester. Your professor will inform you about the date and time.

### **Participation and attendance**

To learn French and become a confident and fluent speaker you must practice it frequently both in and out of class. **Your presence and active class participation** are therefore essential for this course. Participation will be evaluated in terms of preparedness, contributions to class discussion and involvement in the learning process. Please note that the only way to learn to speak a foreign language is to speak it, which, in turn, involves making mistakes and learning from them. You should, of course, aim for a high degree of grammatical accuracy and fluidity in prepared presentations, but do not be afraid to ask questions and seek clarifications in class and during office hours.

Every student is entitled to **three unexcused absences** per semester. Additional absences will be excused only for serious circumstances discussed with the instructor and verified by the proper written notification (Dean's note, doctor's excuse, etc.). Without such notification, absences exceeding 3 will lower your grade in this class. Six unexcused absences or more will result in an F in the course.

Students are also expected to arrive on time: for every three times a student arrives **more than 5 minutes late to class**, he/she will be assessed one unexcused absence.

<i>Number of absences</i>	<i>Attendance Grade (%)</i>
0-3	10
4	6
5	2
6 and more	0

## **FRENCH DEPARTMENT GRADING SCALE**

A (93-100)	A- (90-92)	
B+ (87-89)	B (83-86)	B- (80-82)
C+ (77-79)	C (73-76)	C- (70-72)
D+ (67-69)	D (63-66)	F (<65)

**Students need to respect all deadlines for homework, oral presentations, quizzes and exams as NO EXTENSIONS or MAKE-UPS will be given. Students will receive no credit (a score of zero) for all assignments that are not completed on time unless accompanied by a university-sanctioned excuse.**

### **HONOR CODE**

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Unless otherwise indicated, **all work is to be yours alone**, and you are expected to adhere to the **Honor Code** (<http://honorcouncil.georgetown.edu/system/policies>) at all times. Using online translators is not allowed. Please note that copying from any source, including internet, newspapers, and books without attribution constitutes plagiarism, which **will result in failure of the course and will be reported to the university Honor Council.**

### **STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES POLICY**

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Students with disabilities should contact the Academic Resource Center (Leavey Center, Suite 335; (202) 687-8354; [arc@georgetown.edu](mailto:arc@georgetown.edu); <http://ldss.georgetown.edu/index.cfm>) before the start of classes to allow their office time to review the documentation and make recommendations for appropriate accommodations. If accommodations are recommended, you will be given a letter from ARC to share with your instructors. You are personally responsible for completing this process officially and in a timely manner. Neither accommodations nor exceptions to policies can be permitted to students who have not completed this process in advance.

### **INSTRUCTIONAL CONTINUITY POLICY**

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In compliance with the university's Instructional Continuity Policy, all course activities will be maintained in the event of a university closure or delayed opening. Students will receive instructions from their professor by email detailing the manner in which such a disruption is to be handled.