Contemporary French Studies Program, Paris, France

Course number and name: ANTH 3001 PCFS/FRST 3003 PCFS  Intercultural Communication

Language of Instruction: English. French will also be used on occasion. Students have the option of doing their final paper in French.

Course Meeting times and place: Wednesday 3:30-6:30. Centre parisien d’études critiques. Classes with French students may be held at other settings. Tba.

Professors: Hannah Taieb.

Contact Hours: 45

Recommended Credit: 3 units (semester) / 4.5 units (trimester, quarter)

Course Description

This course is an introduction to the basic concepts in the field of intercultural communication, including the concepts of discourse, narrative, identity, and values; verbal and non-verbal communication; stigma and stereotypes. The focus is on the Franco-American context. Selected themes will include cultural differences in conceptions of the home, of food and drink, of self and other. Several class sessions will involve the participation of French students.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the semester:

1) Students should be able to define in a critical way the key concepts used in the class, including culture, communication, intercultural communication, cultural analysis, discursive practices, discourse, cultural identity, values, stereotypes.

2) Students should be able to analyse everyday conversation and everyday non-verbal communication in intercultural terms, with knowledge of French and American norms and practices.

1) Students should be able to identify and analyze intercultural encounters and misunderstandings, and have practical strategies to respond to them.

1) Students should be able to identify the mobilization of stereotypes, and have strategies for responding.

1) Students should be able to use role-playing and improvisation to tease out cultural issues.

2) Students should be able to identify the discourses evoked in France and the United States concerning food and gastronomy and at least one other theme.

3) Students should have developed strategies for dialogue in the context of intercultural differences.
4) Students should have a critical reflexive approach to their own study-abroad experience and goals.

**Course Prerequisites**

None.

**Course Requirements**

Readings must be done prior to each class.

A significant part of the grade is based on participation, which includes attendance, alert attention, and active engagement in all class activities, group work and work in pairs with French students, writing assignments, student presentations, skits and workshops. Students will be required to lead and co-lead class activities on occasion.

**Methods of Instruction**

The class will meet once a week for fourteen weeks, with several class sessions involving discussions with French people. Pedagogical approaches will be varied. Some class time will consist of lectures and class discussion on reading. Communication strategies will also be explored through class activities using techniques such as skits, improvisation and role-playing. Students will be expected to reflect on their own experience, not only during class but outside of class, through note-taking, diary writing, and other creative activities such as compilation of images. The organized interactions with French students will be designed to elicit reflection and critical analysis for the American and French students both. Some classes and assignments will involve reflecting on subjective experience and developing critical reflection on the study-abroad experience.

**Assessment and Final Grade**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance &amp; active involvement in all class activities</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay on identities</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral presentation and paper on research project</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NB: If you have a disability that necessitates special arrangements please contact the professor during the first week of class.

Reading

Reader (see bibliography).

WEEK-BY-WEEK

Week I  Wednesday January 21.
Introductions to the class and to each other.
&
Cultural conceptions of the home, of public and private.

Reading: Carroll, the Home (pp13-21).
Polly Platt, Six Codes.

Week II  Wednesday January 28.
Creating identities, questioning identities.

Reading: Maalouf, Amin. Section from “In the Name of Identity.”
Said, Edward. Section from “Out of Place.”
Killian, Caitlin, and Cathrun Johnson. Section from “I’m not an Immigrant.”

Video to be seen in class: Mon pays, Faudel Belloua.

Written assignment, due in two weeks: an essay on your own identities.

Week III  Wednesday February 4.
Study abroad, travel and tourism.

Readings: Talya Zemach-Bersin, “American students can’t be global citizens.”

This class session will end early and we will go to Henri IV to meet conversation exchange partners.

Week IV  Wednesday February 11.
The communications approach to culture. The notion of cultural analysis.
Regards croisés: how the French and the Americans see each other.

**Reading:** Carroll, Introduction (pp 1-12).
Section from Killian, Culture on the Weekend.

**Essay on identities due.**

**Week V**  **Wednesday February 18.**
The Franco-American context: a cultural approach to talking.
Discursive practices.
High context and low context cultures.

**Reading:**
Carroll: Conversation/La Conversation.
Baudry: Explicitness/L’explicite.

**Discussion of themes for research project.**

**WINTER BREAK.** February 23-27.

**Week VI**  **Wednesday March 4**
Stereotypes and how to go beyond them.

**Reading:**  
Dyer, The Role of Stereotypes  
Lustig and Koester, Cultural Biases  
Rosello, Declining the Stereotype

**Assignment:**  
In class: questionnaire on stereotypes and intercultural misunderstandings that will be used as a basis for groups for class workshop.  
During the week: meet with your group to prepare class workshop.

**Week VII**  **Wednesday March 11**
Class workshop on stereotypes.

**Week VIII**  **Wednesday March 18**
Guest speaker: Christy Shields
Franco-American discourses of food and gastronomy.
The notion of discourse.
Franco-American images of the other.
**Reading:** Christy Shields articles.

**Week IX**  **Wednesday March 25**
The Franco-American context: non-verbal communication.

**Reading:** Reading packet on non-verbal communication. Bateson: “Why do Frenchmen?” Metologue.

**Week X**  **Wednesday April 1**
Exam

**Week XI**  **Wednesday April 8**  Joint class with French students. Tba. & Students work on research project.

**Week XII**  **Wednesday April 15**  Joint class with French students. Tba. & Students work on research project.

SPRING BREAK. April 20-24.

**Week XIII**  **Wednesday April 29**  Student presentations.

**Week XIV**  **Wednesday May 6**  
Student presentations. Final papers due.

**Bibliography** Texts in the course reader will be selected from this list.


Shields-Argelès, Christy, "Imagining the Self and the Other: Food and Identity in France and the United States." *Food, Culture and Society* (Journal of the Association for the Study of Food and Society), Fall 2004.


Talya Zemach-Bersin, “American students can’t be global citizens.”

Information on the research topic is provided below and will be complemented later in the semester based on student interests.

The research project will be based on a theme of the students’ choosing from the following list. Students may also propose their own topic.

1. Notions of identity, which could mean:
   1. Gay identity/sexuality and identity, ”LGBTQ” as seen from France
   2. Race and identity, how do French people talk about race, skin color, racism
   3. Religious identity, how and when do French people identify themselves
according to religious belonging, how does this differ from the American norm

4. Immigration and identity, the idea of “national origins”: how are these issues talked about in France, how does this compare to the American norm

ii. Gastronomy. Since we are covering this in class, if you do it as a research project you have to choose a particular question to explore. For example:

1. Vegetarianism and Veganism in France, attitudes about meat and vegetables, the organic movement in France
2. The notion of terroir
3. Gastronomy in French film (le festin de Babette, la Grande Bouffe…)
4. Notions of food and health, what does it mean for food to be “good for you”, how are normative definitions of what is “good for you” different in France and the US

iii. Wine and alcohol, which could mean

1. A cultural approach to drinking, where do people drink, how does drinking link people/separate people from each other, what is the cultural significance of certain drinks
2. Wine in French society, wine and taste, is there a standardization of taste

iv. Health and the body, which could mean:

1. Notions of ability and disability, disability and identity, disability and difference
2. Body image, gender and body image
3. Norms in the medical world
4. Humor, jokes, comedians, humorous images.

a. Possible questions could include: Does it make sense to talk about “a French sense of humor” or “an American sense of humor”? Are the norms for what is funny different in the two contexts? Are the norms for what is appropriate and inappropriate humor different? How? Why are some American comedians (eg Jerry Lewis, Buster Keaton, Woody Allen) more popular in France than in the US?

Student presentations should consist of a 20 minute – half-hour activity in which the students either guide an open discussion towards certain conclusions, or launch a workshop-style interactive activity such as a skit or role-playing. They should NOT be powerpoints based on google research.

The final paper will also be based on the research project.

**Bibliography for student presentations.** More to be provided once students have indicated their choices.
1. French and U.S. discourses on wine, alcohol and drinking

2. Discourses of identity (national identity, ethnic identity, gay identity…)
   ⊗ On gay identity:
   ⊗ On race and ethnic identity
     ⊗ Epstein, Beth. Race, Culture and Community in a State-planned City in France.