Contemporary French Studies Program, Paris, France

Course number and name: POLI 3001 PCFS/ HIST 3002 PCFS — Postwar France
Semester: Fall 2013
Language of Instruction: English
Course meeting times: Tuesday & Thursday 11:00-12:30
Office hours: by appointment
Professor: Arun Kapil
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Recommended Credit: 3 semester units, 4.5 quarter units

Course Description

This course will survey the evolution of French politics and society from the Third Republic to the present day, with particular attention to the postwar period. The course will proceed more or less chronologically, though will be mainly organized thematically. As for the particular topics we will focus on, see the Schedule below.

Learning Objectives

The learning objectives of this course are simple: to learn about modern French history, politics, and society. By the end of the course you will know much more about this subject than you did before you took the course, than you ever thought you would know, and likely more than anyone else you know. Learning about this subject will also help you understand this country better—and you have presumably come here with this goal in mind—and will enable you to make sense of your environment here and what you read/hear about in the media, as well as from French people you meet.

Course Prerequisites

There are no particular prerequisites for this course, except for a genuine interest in the subject.

Course Requirements

You are required to come to class and do the readings (from the assigned texts and handouts). The written requirement for the course will consist of six take home essays of some 1,300 words each—corresponding to the topics covered in class—and which you will have nine days to complete. The essay question(s) will be handed out on October 1, October 15, October 29, November 12, November 26, and December 10.

Methods of Instruction

This is a lecture course (with use of PowerPoint): I talk, you listen (and presumably take good notes). I do, however, strongly encourage questions, comments, discussion, and debate. There will be ample time for this. And if you happen to disagree with any subjective comment I may make, do not hesitate to speak up! Active participation in discussions will have a favorable impact on your grade.

There will be a field trip that will take place outside of class time but at a time agreed to by everyone. There are several places to visit and things one can do that are related to the subject of the course. Where we go will depend on the particular interests of the class. Possible places to visit: Mémorial de la Shoah, Historial de Gaulle (aux Invalides), Assemblée Nationale, an electoral rally of a political party.
Assessment and Final Grade

Take-home essays: each one = 15% of grade
Class participation and general preparedness: 10%

Readings

The readings for each topic are listed in the schedule. I have created an account on Yahoo to stock assigned readings. To access the account, go to Yahoo.com, click Mail, Yahoo ID: cfs.kapil. The password will be communicated in class. Books are on reserve. Articles, book chapters, and other readings will be e-mailed, handed out in hard copy, or put on the Yahoo site (as PDF files, that may either be printed or read on the screen). N.B. There may be modifications to the readings in the course of the semester.

Main text (available at the Center):
Maurice Larkin, *France Since the Popular Front: Government and People, 1936-1996*

Schedule

N.B. The course is organized by topic, each one of which will take one to three weeks to cover. The weekly schedule is approximate.

**TOPIC 1: THE FRENCH REPUBLICAN MODEL: LAÏCITÉ**

[weeks 1-3]


Further reading:
T. Jeremy Gunn, "Religious Freedom and Laïcité: A Comparison of the United States and France," read the sections on France

Optional films:
La Marseillaise [VHS] — dir: Jean Renoir
L’Anglaise et le Duc (The Lady and the Duke) — dir: Eric Rohmer
Danton [VHS] — dir: Andrzej Wajda
Le Grand Voyage — dir: Ismaël Ferroukhi
La Désintégration — dir: Philippe Faucon

**TOPIC 2: THE FRENCH REPUBLICAN MODEL: THE NATION, CITIZENSHIP, SOCIAL RIGHTS**

[weeks 4-5]

Ernest Renan, "What Is a Nation?," 14 pp.
Patrick Weil, "Être français: les quatre piliers de la nationalité"

Further reading:
Cécile Laborde, "The Culture(s) of the Republic: Nationalism and Multiculturalism in French Republican Thought," 20 pp.

Optional films:
Française — dir: Souad El-Bouhati
L’Esquive (Games of Love and Chance) — dir: Abdelatif Kechiche
La Haine — dir: Mathieu Kassovitz
100% Arabica [VHS] — dir: Mahmoud Zemmouri
Ressources humaines (Human Resources) — dir: Laurent Cantet
Germinal — dir: Claude Berri
Potiche (Trophy Wife) — dir: François Ozon
Louise Wimmer — dir: Cyril Mennegun
Entre les murs (The Class) — dir: Laurent Cantet

**TOPIC 3: L’ÉTAT: THE FRENCH STATE**

[week 6]

Anne Sa'adah, *Contemporary France: A Democratic Education*, 161-190.

Further reading:

Optional film:
L’Arbre, le maire, la médiathèque [no s/t] — dir: Eric Rohmer
L’ Exercice de l’Etat (The Minister) — dir: Pierre Schoeller
La Conquête (The Conquest) — dir: Xavier Durringer
10e chambre, instants d’audience (10th District Court) — dir: Raymond Deypardon

**TOPIC 4: CHARLES DE GAULLE AND HIS ERA**

[weeks 7-8]

Larkin, 1-150.
Several articles from the archives of *The New York Review of Books*.
Watch the movie "Allies at War" (on DVD).

Optional films (please try to watch at least one or two):
Au Revoir, les Enfants — dir: Louis Malle
La Rafle — dir: Roselyne Bosch
Lacombe Lucien — dir: Louis Malle
L’Armée des ombres (Army of Shadows) — dir: Jean-Pierre Melville
Lucie Aubrac — dir: Claude Berri
Les Hommes libres (Free Men) — dir: Ismaël Ferroukhi
Le Chagrin et la pitié (The Sorrow and the Pity) [4 hours, documentary] — dir: Marcel Ophuls
TOPIC 5: FRANCE & ALGERIA  
[weeks 9-10]

Larkin, 223-241
Watch the movie “The Battle of Algiers” (on DVD)
Dossier of articles on the movie “The Battle of Algiers”

Further reading:
Jean-Paul Sartre, “Preface to Frantz Fanon’s ‘Wretched of the Earth’,” 15 pp.
David Schalk, War and the Ivory Tower: Algeria and Vietnam: “This New Dreyfus Affair’: French
Intellectuals and the Algerian War,” 61-111.

Optional films:
La Question — dir: Laurent Heynemann
Nuit noire : 17 octobre 1961 [no s/t] — dir: Alain Tasma
Indigènes (Days of Glory) — dir: Rachid Bouchareb
L’Ennemi intime (Intimate Enemies) — dir: Florent Emilio Siri
Harkis [no s/t] — dir: Alain Tasma

TOPIC 6: FRANCE DURING LES TRENTE GLORIEUSES, WITH PARTICULAR FOCUS ON MAY ‘68  
[week 11]

Larkin, pp. 151-222, 238-327.
Stanley Karnow, Paris in the Fifties

Further reading:
David Caute, Sixty-Eight: The Year of the Barricades, 51 pp

Optional films:
Hiver 54, Abbé Pierre [no s/t] — dir: Denis Amar
Le Signe du lion [no s/t] — dir: Eric Rohmer
Breathless (À bout de souffle) — dir: Jean-Luc Godard
The 400 Blows (Les 400 Coups) — dir: François Truffaut
Pierrot le Fou — dir: Jean-Luc Godard
Grands soirs et petits matins : Mai 68 au Quartier Latin [documentary, no s/t] — dir: William Klein

TOPIC 7: POLITICS AND SOCIETY SINCE 1969  
[weeks 12-14]
Larkin, 328-440
Philip Gordon & Sophie Meunier, *The French Challenge: Adapting to Globalization*

Further reading:
Dossier of articles on the 2005 riots
Articles on the French presidential elections of 2007 and 2012