Contemporary French Studies Program, Paris, France

Course number and name: POLI 3001 PCFS/ HIST 3002 PCFS — Postwar France
Semester: Spring 2016
Language of Instruction: English
Course meeting times: Tuesday & Thursday 12:30-14:00
Office hours: by appointment
Professor: Arun Kapil
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Contact Hours: 42
Recommended Credit: 3 semester 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 a week to complete. The essay question(s) will be handed out on February 4, February 18, March 10, March 24, April 7, and April 21.

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]

Ahmet Kuru, Secularism and State Policies Toward Religion, pp. 103-158

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

TOPIC 2: THE FRENCH REPUBLICAN MODEL: THE NATION, CITIZENSHIP, SOCIAL RIGHTS [weeks 4-5]

Patrick Weil, “Être français: les quatre piliers de la nationalité”

Further reading:
Rogers Brubaker, Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany, 35-49, 75-113, 138-164.
Cécile Laborde, “The Culture(s) of the Republic: Nationalism and Multiculturalism in French Republican Thought,” 20 pp.

**TOPIC 3: L’ÉTAT: THE FRENCH STATE**
[week 6]


Further reading:

**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.
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

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
More articles TBA