France and Europe: History, civilization and institutions

Course syllabus 2025

1. Description

This course introduces students to French history and culture, with a focus on what makes French legacy unique from political and cultural point of views. It also deals with the creation and development of European institutions.

1. Organization and method

This is a lecture course in which topics are presented in English by a French teacher. Written, audio, video documents and slideshows will allow to discover the History of France and major cultural trends. Assigned readings (summaries, press articles, videos, songs) may be required to deepen the knowledge presented during the lessons. Students will take part into the course through oral participation and exercises.

Students will have to do a presentation and a written exam at the end of the course (see *Grading Plan*).

1. Course topics

* **Ancient and medieval History**: the Gauls and Romans, the feudal period and the extension of the royal power, Middle Ages (with the example of Troyes city), the power of Christendom, Renaissance and wars of religions, absolute monarchy (Versailles castle)
* **Modern and Contemporary History**: the French Revolution and its influence, Napoleon Bonaparte, the fight to build a Republic, WW1 and WW2 in France and Europe, the foundation of the 5th Republic by general de Gaulle (visit of the Memorial), France today
* **Europe**: the origins of the European projects, the European Economic Community, EU new members, the European institutions today, European issues
* **International relations**: France/Europe and the USA
* **Discovery of French culture**: painting, literature, comics, cinema, music and sciences

1. Grading plan

Coursework will be weighted as follows:

-Final exam= 40%

-Presentation= 40%

-Attendance/presence in class= 20%

a) Final exam

The final exam consists of a written exam to test the knowledge gained during the course. It will be divided between multiple-choice questions and short essays

b) Presentation

The presentation will consist of a topic of French History or culture (student choice) in groups of 2 or 3.

20%= individual mark (oral presentation), 20%= group mark (summary)

c)attendance/presence in class

Attendance will be graded as follows:

-full attendance= full mark

-1 to 3 absences= 10%

-more than 3 absences= 0%

Absences for which an excuse is provided will not figure in the attendance grade. Any significant tardy or early departure from class will be counted as a half absence. The quality of presence of students will also be taken into account.