



SYLLABUS

Fall Quarter

FRENCH POLITICS

Instructor: Sophie Enos-Attali

Contact Hours: 40

Language of Instruction: English

ANGERS, FRANCE

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Taking both a thematic and comparative approach, this course will explore France's main political institutions and the French conception of politics, as well as the customs, mentality, and value systems of French people today.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Instructional Goals: the aim of this course is to encourage students to engage in and debate the key issues that challenge French society in the XXIst century, as well as to compare the French system to the American one.

Student Outcomes: students who successfully complete this course will have a deep understanding of French history, contemporary way of life, and culture, and will be able to follow easily what's going on in the country.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODOLOGY

The course relies on a book, as well as on a booklet prepared by the professor. All classes will be a mixture of lecture and class discussion.

METHOD OF EVALUATION

For this course, students should:

- come to class prepared to discuss the readings and ask frequent and intelligent questions, what accounts for classroom participation (10 %);
- make one short (5-7 minutes / about 1,000 words) oral presentation to the class, on one of the topics listed in the booklet (15 %): to prepare for this, the professor will provide some guidelines as well as discuss proposed topics and outlines with individual students;
- write two essays (about 1,700 words each), on the topics listed in the booklet (20 %);
- take the mid-term exam (20 %);
- take the final written exam (25 %);
- take the final oral exam (10 %).

COURSE OUTLINE

I. The French political culture

Week 1: The Gaullist legacy: from the advent of the Vth Republic to May 68

Readings: in the booklet, “A historical perspective”, an article on the French Sixties in “Recent event”, and “The constitutional framework”

> Homework: 1 page written reflection

Week 2: Public and private life in French politics: François Mitterrand and his secrets

> In class written assignment

Week 3: Chirac’s turbulent terms

> Reading: an article on the elections of 2002, in “Recent events”+ chapters 1 and 5 of the book

> Oral presentation on “French women in politics. From the right to vote to the fight for parity”

Week 4: Nicolas Sarkozy, a new type of President?

> Reading: chapters 2, 3, and 7 of the book

> Assignment: an essay on “Nicolas Sarkozy as a president”.

II. France and the world

Week 5: France and the United States: admiration or rivalry?

> Reading: chapter 15 of the book

> Oral presentation on “Americans and French: mutual perceptions”

France, a driving force of Europe?

> Reading: chapters 4 and 16 of the book

> Homework: a short essay on “Sarkozy’s conceptions regarding foreign policy”

III. The French way of life

Week 6: French people in their everyday life: demographic indicators

> Reading: two articles on the PACS, in “French society’s profile”

> Mid term exam

Week 7: The French social security system, an object of pride and anxiety

> Reading: an article on the French welfare State, in “French society’s profile”, and chapter 14 of the book

> Quiz

Week 8: French young people at school

> Homework: personal research on French economy

Week 9: French people at work

> Reading: chapters 12 and 13 of the book

> In class assignment

IV. France between republicanism and multiculturalism

Week 10: Violence in French suburbs, the symptom of a social unrest?

> Reading : chapter 6 of the book

> Oral presentation on Suburbs’ unrest

Welcoming immigrants: from assimilation to integration

> Oral presentation on the debate on ethnic statistics

> Assignment: an essay on Immigration and integration in France

Week 11: La laïcité or secularism à la française

> Assignment : an essay on “Religions and secularism in France”

Final Exam

COURSE READINGS

Textbooks

Cole, Alistair, and Le Galès, Patrick, and Levy, Jonah, Developments in French Politics 4, Palgrave Macmillan

Course Reader

BIBLIOGRAPHY AND RECOMMENDED READINGS

Gildea, Robert. France since 1945. Oxford University Press, 2002

Howarth, David and Varouxakis, Georgios. Contemporary France. An Introduction to French Politics and Society. Arnold, 2003

Knapp, Andrew, and Wright, Vincent. The Government and Politics of France

Sa'adah, Ann. Contemporary France: a Democratic Education. Rowman & Littlefield Publ., 2003.

Safran, William. The French Polity. Longman, 2003.

Stevens, Anne. Government and Politics of France. Palgrave, 2003.