

Syllabus

French 121

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I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

French 121, 122, 123 is a sequence designed to provide students with elementary through intermediate knowledge of spoken and written French. It is viewed as a series and as such has a goal of structuring the load throughout an academic year rather than from quarter to quarter. This course focuses on developing speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills. [Satisfies Humanities distribution area E requirement or specified elective for the AA degree: 5 credits]

II. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The goals of this course are to improve students' performance in the areas listed below; the letters cited after the individual outcomes refer to Grays Harbor College's five desired student abilities (*D: Disciplinary Learning - L: Literacy - C: Critical Thinking - S: Social/Personal Responsibility - I: Information Use*). In this course, you are expected to work toward improving your demonstrated ability to :

- acquire, recognize, and recall extensive French vocabulary DL
- employ vocabulary and grammar effectively in creating French conversation DLC
- discover and describe parallels among language patterns (within French and between French and English) DLC
- analyze and apply various language paradigms DCS
- critically examine and translate texts, assessing differences in vocabulary, usage, and grammar DLCSI
- develop a perspective to view foreign cultures, languages, and customs DS

III. TEXTS

- Panorama 1, Girardet & Cridlig, 2004 edition
- a good French dictionary
- recommended: Bescherelle La Conjugaison 12,000 Verbes, Hatier

IV. METHODS

Solid understanding of the theory and application of French can be accomplished when we apply ourselves wholeheartedly to a few types of honest work:

- careful reading, discussion and understanding of assigned reading in the text;
- regular, prepared attendance in class;
- thorough and critical exploration of grammatical concepts;
- diligent acquisition (memorization) of new vocabulary.

Something you should trust me on:

Your active participation in all class activities is absolutely crucial to your success, and to the success of your classmates. When you have questions or are unsure about a course concept, you cannot "hide in a corner" in the classroom and wait for a classmate to ask: you are the only person you can count on to ask the right questions. The successful student in this course will be dedicated, responsible, and self-motivated.

A word of caution:

I will come to class every day prepared to work with you on your French skills. You will need to come every day prepared to handle the new material in class. While I will do my best to help you understand and use the French language, it will be your responsibility to work systematically outside the classroom to be ready to absorb each day's new information and prepare the material we will be working on the following day.

Just a touch of philosophy:

A foreign language -- while great fun to have -- does not come to one by osmosis. The process of language acquisition, though rewarding for most people, may at times be painful and frustrating. It is a good thing.

V. CLASS ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING CRITERIA

You will be evaluated on the following elements of your performance in this class:

biweekly tests	50%	[5@100 points each]
in-class writing assignments	20%	[2@100 points each]
pre-test exercises	15%	[5@30 points each]
final exam	15%	[150 points]* (see <i>Policies: Attendance</i>)

Grading scale

A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C
1000-950	949-900	899-850	849-800	799-750	749-700	699-650
		C-	D+	D	F	
		649-600	599-550	549-500	>500	

VI. POLICIES

Office hours: I hold those daily from 2:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. I try my best to be in my office during that time available to any students. If you need to see me at other times, I can usually arrange an appointment time to fit your schedule. Feel free to contact me.

Attendance: This is a skill-based course in which you learn by participating in class sessions and interacting with your classmates and your instructor. Therefore, you are expected to be in class, on time, every day. You may help yourself and your classmates make up any emergency absences by taking good class notes and exchanging phone numbers or e-mail addresses with each other for immediate catch-up. (*) Your attendance in this class is noted. Perfect attendance throughout the quarter will exempt you from having to take the final exam. Missing class sessions will naturally hurt your performance (and grade) as proven by my long experience with teaching this discipline.

Deadline/Makeup policy: There will be 12 (13*) days on which you have work due in this course in form of pre-test exercises, tests, in-class writing, or a final exam. Deadlines in this class are serious, and I reserve the right not to accept any late work or schedule make-up tests. If something prevents you from meeting a deadline, you will need to exercise excellent judgment and deal with the situation professionally. Should you need to propose a change to our established schedule, you will need my consent prior to the due date. Remember that simply leaving me a message about missing a deadline does not solve the problem. In order to be fair to others, I prefer not to make judgments on the validity of any particular student's excuses.

Academic Integrity: All forms of cheating, falsification, and plagiarism are against the rules of this course and of Grays Harbor College. Students who are unsure what constitutes academic dishonesty are responsible for asking the instructor for clarification. Instances of intentional academic dishonesty will be dealt with severely.

Conduct/Decorum: Out of respect for the discipline, the instructor, the fellow students, and yourself you shall refrain from slothful lounging, sleeping, chattering, eating, or otherwise masticating during our class sessions. All cellular phones/beepers must be turned off during class sessions. Repeated offense may result in arbitrary loss of points. I make every effort to start the class on time and keep it to its dedicated 50 minutes; therefore, tardy arrivals and early departures are strongly discouraged for their disruptive nature and may be subject to penalty.

VII. ADVICE ON PREPARING FOR CLASS

Students don't always know what teachers mean when we say it's important to come to class prepared. The first thing you should know is that preparing for class every day is the single most important criterion in assuring genuine academic success. The second thing you should know is that preparing every single day takes a reasonable, but not inordinate, amount of time, and it keeps your stress and frustration levels low -- compared to ignoring your work for several days and then attempting to cram, which is time-consuming, unpleasant, and stressful. Beyond these general principles, you need to know how to prepare effectively, so here's my advice:

- Each day after school, analyze the material we covered in class that day. Quiz yourself on all the vocabulary be it from texts, sentence examples, or exercises. At the end of the day, you should have the conviction that you have done your absolute best to memorize all that vocabulary, although you may not be able to retain 100% of it. Your analysis should also include any grammar/sentence structure that was introduced that day. You should think about which elements might not be clear to you so you can ask specific questions about them the following day.
- Each day, prepare the pages we will be covering during the next class session. Familiarize yourself with all the vocabulary in them; ideally, try to memorize as much of it as possible -- at the least, make sure you look up all the new words and translate the sentences we may be working with, so you are not surprised at what is going on in class. Pre-read the grammar needed for the new section -- even though I will explain it to class, you will be much more successful in grasping the new concepts if you have already tried to absorb them on your own. Claim your own knowledge. Do not expect your classmates to do your learning for you.
- If we have covered a new text in class, reread it at home several times out loud -- it is my general practice to ask comprehension questions about such texts.
- If a new text is coming up, make sure you translate it. If new exercises involve creative responses, write down some ideas and look up necessary vocabulary that you might want to use for them.
- Keep good notes during class as well as during your out-of-class studying and write down comments and specific questions about any "muddy points." You should be able to use those in class the following day to ask me for clarification.
- Come to class every day, even if you do not feel that you are well prepared.

Finally, the word *prepared* comes from Latin: *pre + paratus* means "ready ahead of time." That's ready to work with the material, not forewarned of it and eager to be surprised by it.