

DUKE ELLINGTON SCHOOL OF THE ARTS

Course Syllabus

Course: French I
Credit: 1
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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course develops students' ability to communicate thoughts and ideas related to their identity and immediate environment in all four language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing). It emphasizes the use of basic language structures and vocabulary to promote oral communication so that students are able to function in a variety of real-world situations. To this end, lessons are based on a single theme, *My Life*, a broad enough subject that promotes discussions on various topics of interest to young adults while allowing them to explore- through cross-cultural comparison- the cultures of the French-speaking world, its geography and history. Upon completion of the course, students are expected to achieve the Novice Low-Mid proficiency level described in the *Proficiency Guidelines* of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL).

Instructions to students will be given first in French to promote familiarity with the vocabulary and structures of the French language and then repeated in English to facilitate understanding. This method of instruction enables students to assimilate vocabulary related to classroom routines and procedures, words and idioms related to the theme they are learning and the proper use of syntax in the target language through repetitive usage. Moreover, great emphasis is put in this early stage of second language acquisition on students' recognition of phonemes and graphemes to facilitate respectively correct pronunciation and orthography of words in the target language. The goal of this approach is to foster students' confidence in their own ability to communicate in the target language, albeit with limitation, from the moment they are introduced to it. Within this methodological context, the course provides students with multifaceted opportunities to accomplish the goals outlined below.

COURSE GOALS:

Students will...

- Respond to and give oral directions and commands and make routine requests in the classroom and in public places;
- Understand and use appropriate forms of address in courtesy expressions and talk about daily routines and events;
- Ask and answer simple questions and participate in brief guided conversations related to their needs and interests;
- Read isolated words and phrases in a situational context, such as menus, signs, and schedules;
- Comprehend brief written directions and information;
- Read short narrative texts and poems on simple topics; and

- Write familiar words and phrases in appropriate contexts and respond in writing to various stimuli.

Additionally, students will learn:

- About nonverbal communication, such as gestures and body language;
- About the use of circumlocution to express themselves with a limited vocabulary;
- About awareness of current events in the culture;
- The major holidays and geographical features of the countries being studied;
- Greeting and leave taking behaviors in a variety of social situations;
- The appropriate way to respond to introductions and use courtesy behaviors; and
- Appropriate etiquette in a variety of social settings.

TEXTBOOK and MATERIALS

- *Discovering French Bleu* and accompanying *Workbook* as well as handouts of poems and simple short stories
- copy of *Procedures & Routines* in the classroom
- a folder/binder in which to store neatly handouts
- a separate composition notebook for note taking in class
- a dictionary (students with access to the Web can use the following link in lieu of a dictionary) www.granddictionnaire.com
- students are encouraged to use as additional resources the following websites: www.laits.utexas.edu/tex/gr/overview.html and www.quizlet.com

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Reading & Writing: Students will be required to read and write both in English and in French. They will learn writing strategies that enable them to write short compositions in French and brief constructed responses in English. They will also read short narratives and poems in French on simple topics (children stories and *comptines*).

Reading selected texts and writing are incorporated in the curriculum to help students develop the habit of writing grammatically correct brief constructed responses and short compositions. Moreover, since writing clarifies thinking by helping students to synthesize what they read and because reading selected texts provide students effective models for developing good writing techniques, the process of reading and writing in English and in French facilitates students' ability to practice these two important skills while at the same time it enables them to learn about French and Francophone culture.

Homework: Homework assignments must be completed on the due date. Failure to do so will result in a zero for the assignments.

Journal: Writing in French on a regular basis constitutes an invaluable method of putting into practice the acquisition of new words and rules learned in the course. Because students of French I will not have a large enough vocabulary in the first advisory, they will keep a journal of daily activities, thoughts and plans in English during this time. Beginning with the second advisory, students will begin to do so in French. The composition notebook, which students are to use for class notes, will also function as their diary. At a minimum, students are **REQUIRED** to have a substantial, one paragraph entry in their journal per each class period. Nevertheless, they are encouraged to write as much as possible and not limit themselves to the required one paragraph. Journal entries must be written in complete, grammatical sentences, and I expect students to make every effort to incorporate in their entries what we learn in class. I will request to see students' journals on short notice, so be diligent!

Students are expected to make their journal entries during the first ten minutes of class as their warm-up routine.

GRADE DISTRIBUTION/SCALE:

Homework	15%
Journal and note-taking	15%
Class participation*	25%
Quizzes & tests	45%

* Classroom rules that will affect students' class participation grade include the following: failure to be punctual consistently; disruptive behavior; failure to comply with the prohibition against combing/brushing hair and applying make-up in class; disregard for the rule against chewing gum, eating and drinking in the classroom; and failure to observe the school's policy against using ipods, cell phones and all other electronic devices, including laptops, in the classroom.

COURSE OUTLINE

The following theme, topics and related sub-topics will be emphasized to maximize the acquisition of vocabulary and the appropriate use of grammatical structures.

Theme: *My life*

Topics/sub-topics: greetings and introductions, expressing likes and dislikes, school and schedules; leisure and sports; weather and seasons; food; health, family celebrations, traditional festivities; house layout, inside the house; family life; family chores; neighborhood and town places, things to do in the community; and frequently used means of transportation.

Grammar

Verbs:

Infinitive, present tense and imperative of regular –er, ir and –re verbs and of the irregular verbs: *aller, avoir, être, venir, faire, mettre, prendre, vouloir* and *pouvoir*..

Structures:

Negation, subject pronouns, positions of adverbs, gender of nouns and indefinite articles, definite articles, possessive adjectives, agreement of adjectives, irregular adjectives, position of adjectives, the partitive article, demonstrative adjectives, comparative of adjectives.

Emphasis will be placed on identifying the parts of speech before presenting to students the grammatical structures of the French language.

APPROACHES TO REALIZE THE GOALS OF THE COURSE

To realize the goals set forth above the following methods will be used to help students achieve their potential. They will:

- Work on oral and written exercises in the classroom.
- Practice listening comprehension as teacher models correct pronunciation.
- Participate in educational games that reinforce lessons on particular topics, including structures and vocabulary.
- Take dictations to improve listening comprehension and use of acquired vocabulary.
- Learn how to use a French dictionary.
- Read short literary passages, plays, poems and stories in French as many times as necessary without the help of a dictionary and when they are finished they will be asked to write down everything they remember from the text in English. This method of testing comprehension provides the teacher student generated data for future lesson plans that address the cultural, conceptual and grammatical features that seem to interfere with comprehension.
- Write compositions both in English and French on assigned topics.
- Learn songs and occasionally watch documentary films about historical France and other selected films that bring to life the Francophone culture in all its diversity.

TECHNOLOGY IN THE CLASSROOM

Students' use of technology will be encouraged for the following activities:

1. Use of the Internet for practicing pronunciation, learning vocabulary and looking up word definitions on Web dictionaries.

2. Research a historical person, a city, a historical monument, a region, fashion, cuisine, a holiday, and so on.
3. Inclusion of correct accent marks on French writing assignments typed on word processing programs.
4. Listen to real time audio from a Francophone area.
5. Research the weather in various Francophone areas.
6. Research the exchange rates of the U.S. Dollar versus the Euro.
7. Study current events or situations using web resources.
8. Study traditions and customs surrounding French holidays.

CONTENT STANDARDS:

Communication:

1.1: Students engage in conversations, provide and obtain information, express feelings and emotions, and exchange opinions.

1.2: Students understand and interpret written and spoken language on a variety of topics.

1.3: Students present information, concepts, and ideas to an audience of listeners or readers on a variety of topics.

Cultures:

2.1: Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the practices and perspectives of the culture studied

2.2: Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the products and perspectives of the culture studied

Connections:

3.1: Students reinforce and further their knowledge of other disciplines through the foreign language

3.2: Students acquire information and recognize the distinctive viewpoints that are only available through the foreign language and its cultures

Comparisons:

4.1: Students demonstrate understanding of the nature of language through comparisons of the language studied and their own

4.2: Students demonstrate understanding of the concept of culture through comparisons of the cultures studied and their own.

Communities:

5.1: Students use the language both within and beyond the school setting

5.2: Students show evidence of becoming life-long learners by using the language for personal enjoyment and enrichment.