

# DUKE ELLINGTON SCHOOL OF THE ARTS

## *Course Syllabus*

**Course:** French I  
**Credit:** 1  
**Phone:** (202) 282-0123

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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 can function in a variety of real-world situations. To this end, lessons are based on five themes, *Myself and My Family, Home and Family, Community and Hobbies, Clothes and Weather* and *Food*. These subjects promote 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 language and then repeated in English to facilitate understanding. This method of instruction makes possible students' ability 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 PRE-REQUISITE:**

**There is no pre-requisite for this course.**

### **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.

#### **MATERIALS:**

- a folder with ruled loose paper in which students will keep warm-ups, exit tickets and classwork. This folder will be kept in the classroom.
- a separate composition notebook (provided by Ms. Schreiber) for note taking in class and keeping handouts. This notebook will be their main source for studying.
- The handouts of anything covered in class, including readings, practice papers, poems and simple short stories.
- 2 writing instruments: a pencil and a pen or any combination of those.

#### **NEW DCPS GRADING POLICY:**

The DCPS Grading and Reporting Policy for secondary schools implemented during the school year 2015-16 specifies three different grade categories for all secondary subjects: Participation, Practice & Application and Assessments. Late submissions of student work resulting from **unexcused absences**, or student work that is not submitted on time for any reason other than a “verified excused absence” will be subject to the following grading policies and/or penalties depending on which of the following categories it falls under. Under separate headings below are listed the grading criteria, late work policy, grade distribution scale, along with guidelines related to attendance and grade in the DCMR and other specific references to help students fulfill their academic responsibilities.

## **LATE WORK POLICY:**

Please note that the above DCPS grading criteria are applicable ONLY to verified excused absences. Late work (i.e., work not submitted by the due date) for reasons other than a verified excused absence will be subject to the grade penalties outlined for each criterion below. Moreover, students will incur grade penalties in the participation & practice/application categories for failing to communicate in the target language when directed to do so. This stipulation is an essential component of the new DCPS world language curriculum whose aim is to increase proficiency in the target language by mandating 90% use of it in the classroom.

**I. PARTICIPATION** –This category includes demonstration of active participation through listening, speaking, individual and group leadership during class discussions or group cooperative activities and overall contribution to student learning. When considering attendance, excused absences will not count against the participation grade.

### PARTICIPATION POLICY

Students are expected to come to class prepared and ready to work. This means that they will have all required classroom materials with them (notebooks, pencils, pens, handouts, etc.) upon entering the classroom so that they are ready to begin assigned tasks promptly. They are expected to put away all distractions (phones, food, drinks, make-up, ipods, comb & brush, etc.) that interfere with their ability to focus and fully participate in lessons and class discussions.

- Students will receive 0% credit with no chance to make-up missed work if they do not earn credit for classroom participation as a result of unexcused absences or tardies.
- Warm-up assignments not submitted due to an excused absence will receive an “E” grade. Assignments missed due to an excused absence will receive an “E” and will not be counted toward a given students’ participation grade in class.
- Students will lose participation points if they do not speak Italian when directed to do so during specific class activities.
- Participation points will also be lost if students do not bring their materials to class (writing instrument, paper, binder containing handouts, etc.)

**II. PRACTICE & APPLICATION** – This category includes all student-work products that practice and apply discrete skills acquired from individual lessons throughout a unit. Assignments should allow students to practice skills and concepts in order to successfully integrate the skills and acquire the content through application. Work in this area should increase in complexity over the course of a unit, building toward cumulative assessments. Assignments could be started and completed in class or at home (e.g. homework).

### PRACTICE & APPLICATION POLICY

- Students who submit practice and application assignments late due to unexcused absence(s) are only eligible to receive a maximum of half credit (50%) on said assignments. Late homework assignments will only be accepted up to 7 consecutive days from the due date. After that an assignment will be considered missing and the grade will remain “0”. Homework assignments and projects are

considered on time when they are presented upon the teacher's request. Homework assignments and projects completed in class after the teacher's request to check them will be considered late.

- Assignments missed due to an excused absence will be eligible to receive full credit when submitted in class upon a student's return and are subject to the DCPS Grading and Reporting policy with the caveat that assignments assigned prior to an excused absence must be submitted upon student's return to class to avoid a late work penalty. On the other side, if a student was absent (excused) when the homework was assigned, he/she will have 7 consecutive days to turn in the assignment after he/she returns to school.
- Students will lose points if they do not speak Italian when directed to do so during practice and application.

**III. ASSESSMENTS** – This category includes all forms and mechanisms that formally evaluate individual student progress and mastery. Interim assessments can range from traditional tests and quizzes to performance-based tasks that demonstrate student integration and application throughout an entire unit. Final products or exams assess student understanding of skills and concepts practiced and learned over time across multiples units in a semester. They can be administered by the district or be teacher created.

In the world language department students will be evaluated informally and formally throughout the advisory by means of periodic quizzes to gauge their individual progress. At the end of each advisory they will complete a project that integrates the thematic vocabulary and the structures they have learned. Thus, each project has the twofold benefit of: 1) allowing students to demonstrate in a practical way the level of proficiency they have attained; and 2) creating the additional opportunity to review broadly the material they must master for their advisory exam.

#### ASSESSMENT POLICY

- Tests and quizzes missed as a result of unexcused or excused absences can be made up without penalty.
- Other assessments assignments (projects, papers, etc.) will receive a 10% grade penalty for each business day that they are late, with the maximum deduction being 50% of the total points earned by the assessment assignment.

#### **GRADING CRITERIA :**

In accordance with the foregoing grading policy, no one assignment shall be worth > 10% of a student's grade per term. The grade distribution for all academic course work is as follows:

- Participation = 10% (Minimum of 4 assignments per term)
- Assessment = 40% (Minimum of 4 exams/assessments per term)
- Practice & Application = 50% (Minimum of 5 assignments per term)

The grading scale for all academic courses is as follows:

Marks Values	Numerical Equivalent	Credit	GPA	Grade Point Values		
Letter Grades				On Grade (Unweighted)	Honors	AP or IB
A	93% to 100%	Yes	Yes	4.0	4.5	5.0
A-	90% to 92%	Yes	Yes	3.7	4.2	4.7
B+	87% to 89%	Yes	Yes	3.3	3.8	4.3
B	83% to 86%	Yes	Yes	3.0	3.5	4.0
B-	80% to 82%	Yes	Yes	2.7	3.2	3.7
C+	77% to 79%	Yes	Yes	2.3	2.8	3.3
C	73% to 76%	Yes	Yes	2.0	2.5	3.0
C-	70% to 72%	Yes	Yes	1.7	2.2	2.7
D+	67% to 69%	Yes	Yes	1.3	1.8	2.3
D	64% to 66%	Yes	Yes	1.0	1.5	2.0
F *	63% & Below	No	Yes	0	0	0

\* No credit is earned for a mark of F; the mark is included in the calculation of the GPA.

### APPLICATION OF THE DCMR IN THE WORLD LANGUAGES CLASSROOM

The DCMR emphasizes the connection among attendance, work ethic and students' academic success. Below is a detailed description of the way in which each DCMR grading criterion will be applied in the World Languages classroom.

**HOMEWORK:** Assignments must be completed on the due date. Late homework will NOT be accepted one week after the due date. DCPS grading & reporting policy guideline states that "students have one day for each day missed (up to one week) from the last day of the absence to submit make up work."

Homework assignments give students the opportunity to review lessons presented in class and gauge their level of understanding through hands-on practice that lead to mastery. To achieve this goal, students must complete all homework at home or some other location away from the classroom. This aim cannot be achieved when students attempt to complete homework assignment in the classroom during lessons. Therefore, homework completed during lessons in class on the date due will not be accepted for full credit.

*It should be noted that it is the student's responsibility to initiate make-up work. In the absence of individualized arrangements necessitated by special circumstances, all deadlines specified in this syllabus will apply generally.*

## **COURSE OUTLINE:**

**The following themes will be emphasized to maximize the acquisition of vocabulary and the appropriate use of grammatical structures.**

### **Theme 1`:** Myself and My School

Students will learn basic classroom expectations and routines in the target language and investigate the benefits of learning another language. Students will review proficiency levels, targets, and understand course goals. Students will explore how to provide and interpret basic information about themselves and their school in the target language.

### **Theme 2:** Home and Family

Students will explore the concepts of friendship and family by learning how to describe physical and personality characteristics of themselves and the people who are important to them. Students will examine various living situations through the lens of how families and individuals traditionally live in the target culture.

### **Theme 3:** Community and Hobbies

Students will learn about typical pastimes in the target culture. Students will also learn about locations around a community where people gather to participate in extracurricular activities, and consider the similarities and differences between communities in their own and other cultures.

### **Theme 3:** Clothes and Weather

Students will learn how to describe the weather and explore the climate of countries where the target language is spoken. Students will also identify clothing items and explore clothing options in their own and other cultures.

### **Theme :** Food

Students will explore food choices, likes and dislikes, and traditional target culture food in addition to key vocabulary related to restaurant dining.

#### **First advisory**

1. Phonetics - French alphabet & accents
2. Basic classroom commands
3. Greetings & introductions
4. Names & titles (mister, miss, misses)
5. Classes and subjects (math, science, English, Italian, Spanish, French, history, arts, physical education)
6. Cardinal numbers 1-100
7. Days of the week
8. Adjectives (interesting, boring, hard, easy, mean, strict, responsible, prepared, hard-working, respectful, creative, nationality adjectives)
9. School supplies (pen, pencil, notebook, binder, calculator, ruler)
10. Places at school (cafeteria, classroom, office, gym)

11. Roles of people at school (teacher, student, counselor, principal, custodian)
12. Ordinal numbers (first, second, third)
13. Forms of verb “to be” (am, are, is)
14. Other important verbs (have, do, need, like, go)
15. Prepositions (from, to, at, near, far, next to, across from)
16. Interrogative words (who, what, when, where, why, how)

### **Second advisory**

1. Physical descriptions (hair/eye color, height, etc.)
2. Personality traits (nice, patient, interesting, mean, etc.)
3. Hometown
4. Adjectives and their opposites
5. The verb “to like” (first, second and third person sg.)
6. Introduction to verb conjugations
7. Daily activities in the infinitive (to read, to swim, to eat, to watch TV, to go to school, etc.)
8. The present tense of regular verbs ending in “*er*” “*ir*,” & “*re*.”
9. Family relationships (mother, father, sister, brother, grandparents, aunt, uncle, cousin, pet...)
10. Adjectives to describe homes (big, small, modern, traditional, etc.)

### **Third advisory**

1. The present tense of most used irregular verbs.
3. Past times and hobbies.
4. Clothing
5. Introduce verb “to want” and “to be able” to do something and why.
6. Rooms in the house
7. Furniture & household items
8. Describe one’s room
9. Recycle: time, dates, family members, activities

### **Fourth advisory**

1. Weather/ seasons/dates
2. Activities done in seasons, dates, weekend, vacation)
3. Holidays celebrated (when, with whom, how, etc.)
4. Accepting invitation
6. Excuses and reasons for turning down invitation
7. Geography (north, south, etc., rivers)
8. Holiday items (candles, fireworks, etc. based on customs & holidays)

**Grammar:** The grammar points are introduced as tools, and not as stand-alone topics, to facilitate open-ended communication about the theme and sub-themes learned throughout the year.

***Verbs:***

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

***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 in the course of 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.
- Listen to authentic dialogues & practice listening comprehension as teacher models correct pronunciation of words.
- Explore the French speaking world via the Internet to complete assignments aimed at reinforcing new grammatical structures & vocabulary.
- Take dictations to improve listening comprehension and spelling of acquired vocabulary.
- Learn how to use a French dictionary.
- Read short texts, short poems and children stories in French as many times as necessary without the help of a dictionary. Afterwards, students will be asked first to write down in English everything they remember from the text. Then, they will answer questions in French posed to them in French about the text. 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 short descriptive compositions in French on assigned topics.
- Learn songs and occasionally watch documentary films about history of some French speaking countries and other selected films that bring to life the French culture in all its diversity.

**PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENTS:**

Students will have many opportunities to demonstrate competence in French at this level by integrating the speaking, listening, reading and writing skills through practical

applications of the three communicative modes addressed in the Standards (interpretive, interpersonal and presentational). These opportunities include informal assessments in the interpersonal mode with a focus on the listening and speaking skills and formal assessments in the interpretive and presentational modes that integrate three or all of the four skills outlined in the DCPS World Language Cornerstones.

### **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 in French.
5. Research the weather in various areas of the Francophonie.
6. Research the exchange rates of the U.S. Dollar versus the Euro and other currencies.
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.