

### Business Culture in the Francophone World

**Course Description:** This course is an introduction to the culture of business and professional relationships in the Francophone world. Through the analysis of authentic texts from French and Francophone business contexts, students will better understand the global marketplace and its current socio-economic and cross-cultural issues. Students will leave the course with the linguistic, intercultural, and critical thinking skills necessary to pursue work or internship opportunities in a French-speaking country.

#### **Course Goals and Student Learning Outcomes:**

Students will:

- Examine the administrative and governmental structures of France and of key Francophone regions and their relationship to the business world.
- Examine the most important sectors of the French economy and the structures and juridical statutes of French companies.
- Thoughtfully compare and contrast French and American business practices.
- Demonstrate their understanding of the global marketplace through case studies of French and Francophone companies and the development of a marketing campaign for a French market.
- Demonstrate their understanding of the cultural and linguistic particularities of professional communication in French and reflect on their own status as a global citizen by: a) preparing a CV and cover letter for a position in a French company; b) participating in a (mock) job interview for a position in a French company.
- Demonstrate their understanding of the importance of intercultural competency in the business world by practicing the resolution of business “problems” related to linguistic or cultural misunderstandings.
- Learn and integrate in their daily classroom practice and written work appropriate French vocabulary related to economics, finance, accounting, marketing, and human resources.

The course is taught in French, and all course texts will be written in French. Exceptionally, some supplemental readings may be written and discussed in English.

#### **Required Texts:**

All required texts will be distributed electronically on Moodle or in class. I strongly recommend a grammar review guide such as *The Ultimate French Review and Practice* for consultation. It costs under \$15 on the web and can serve as a resource for all of your future French studies. E-book: *Au contraire: Figuring Out the French* by Gilles Asselin.

#### **Grade Distribution:**

Daily homework	20%
Preparation and Participation	10%
Mini-presentation: Comparaison d’entreprises	5%
Professional Portfolio (CV, cover letter, thank you letter, recommendation request)	20%
Job Interview	15%
Case Study & Oral Presentation of Marketing Campaign (group)	15%
Intercultural Problem Solving Simulation + Reflection (group)	15%

### **Assignment Descriptions:**

**Daily Homework:** Will include contextualized grammar and vocabulary exercises and responses to readings about the business world. Comprehension questions, reflection questions, short answers, etc. You should expect to spend 1-3 hours on your homework between class periods.

**Preparation and Participation:** You should be an active participant in our classroom community, and I expect you to have read and studied the appropriate content before coming to class. Your classroom participation should demonstrate that you have done the necessary preparation.

**Mini-Presentation:** You will choose one French or Francophone company and one American (or other, with approval) company whose activities belong in the same economic sector to research and present to your classmates. Your presentation should demonstrate your capacity to complete basic research in French, identifying reliable sources and digesting information that you will share with your classmates. Each student will prepare a “key idea” comprehension question that will gauge classmate comprehension of his/her presentation.

**Professional Portfolio:** Will include the preparation of a CV, cover letter, thank you letter, and various other forms of professional communication appropriate for the French job market.

**Job Interview:** You will participate in a recorded mock job interview in French. 10% of your grade will be for the interview itself. 5% of your grade will be for a reflective self-evaluation of the process. You should treat this interview as if it were an actual interview for a position in a French company.

**Case Study & Marketing Campaign:** You and your group members will create a new product and develop a culturally appropriate marketing campaign, including a print advertisement, a 30-second television commercial, and an oral overview (“pitch”) of the general marketing strategy.

**Intercultural Problem Solving Simulation:** On the last day of class, you will be given the profile of a French or Francophone business and a general context for your “problem” that is related to a cultural and/or linguistic misunderstanding. This could be in the realm of interpersonal relations (human resources), a marketing failure, a problematic business model, etc. During the final exam period, you will be presented with the actual problem. You will be given 1 hour and 15 minutes to work with your group to write a five-minute skit simulating the presentation and possible resolution of your problem; you will then have 5-10 minutes to set up and present. Finally, you will have 45 minutes to write a reflection about the process of attempting to problem-solve in French in the business context. What challenges did you face? How did you resolve them? How were your attempts to resolve the problem anchored in your understanding of the French approach to the issue?

**The Grading Policy of this Course:**

A grade in the “A” range indicates distinguished performance in a course (A 93-100; A- 90-92).

A grade in the “B” range indicates very good performance in class (B+ 88-89; B 83-87; B- 80-82).

A grade in the “C” range indicates average performance in which a basic understanding of the subject has been demonstrated (C+ 78-79; C 73-77; C- 70-72).

A grade in the “D” range indicates passing performance with deficiencies (D+ 68-69; D 63-67; D-60-62).

A grade in the “F” range indicates failed performance (0-59).

**E-mail/Moodle:** We will use Moodle daily this semester. **All homework assignments will be posted on Moodle under “Devoirs” and the appropriate chapter or unit, and students are expected to consult Moodle daily.** I will also use it for announcements, additional explanations and clarifications, supplemental materials, etc. Homework will typically be posted by 1:00 on class days for the following class day, but may be posted as late as 4:30 pm if I have meetings directly after class. Any assignments posted after that time will be signaled to you by email.

**Other opportunities for further practice with French or participation in French cultural events:****French at Elon**

Did you know that Belk library has over 200 international films in French? Check them out on week-ends! Although class time is limited, there are many other ways to develop and maintain your communicative skills. I urge you to get together with peers for film viewings and discussions outside of class! Definitely join Elon’s dynamic *French Club* and participate in the weekly *Table Française* for informal conversation at Irazu café with other francophones and francophiles on campus. In addition, be sure to check out the *Maison Française* living-learning community. See me for more information and read more about French on campus under our “quick links” at <http://www.elon.edu/french>.

**Additional Support & Tutoring:**

I encourage each person to meet with me outside of class. I truly enjoy it, and I am here to be helpful. No need to make an appointment if you plan to come by my office hours—I am here waiting for you (but feel free to let me know in advance if you have something specific you want to work on ☺) If my office hours don’t work for you, I am available for appointments in person or via Skype.

In addition, I strongly encourage our (free) peer tutoring at Elon for conversation practice and/or French grammar review. Below are the tutors’ names and contact information. For future reference, all of this information is located under “Tutoring Services” through Belk library once you log onto the secure site: <http://www.elon.edu/web/academics/support/tutoring/by-apt.xhtml>

- Astrid Adriaens (French and International Business major): [aadriaens@elon.edu](mailto:aadriaens@elon.edu)
- Madeline Monaco (French and Strategic Communications major): [mmonaco@elon.edu](mailto:mmonaco@elon.edu)
- Caleigh Erickson (French and Psychology major): [cerickson2@elon.edu](mailto:cerickson2@elon.edu)
- Flore Ravaud (French native speaker here from the Dual Degree program in International Business): [fravaud@elon.edu](mailto:fravaud@elon.edu)

**Attendance** is taken at the beginning of class. A student is expected to arrive on time and be present for the entire class period. **Take care of personal needs (bathroom break, phone calls, etc.) prior to class. All electronic devices must be turned off and stored prior to the start of class. Failure to comply with this policy will negatively impact your participation grade.** Three late arrivals or three early departures or a combination thereof constitute one absence. **To**

allow for illness or other unforeseen situations, students in a semester-long 4 s.h. course are allotted the equivalent of one week's worth of class in absences before a penalty is imposed (e.g. 3 absences for a class that meets three times a week; 2 absences for a class that meets twice a week; fewer absences are allotted for winter and summer courses and for half-semester courses). Excused and unexcused absences count the same. **Each absence beyond the limit will result in your final course grade being lowered by 3 points per absence (e.g. from 90 to 87 for one excessive absence).**

Excessive absences caused by serious health problems will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Participants in official Elon special programs, including intervarsity athletics, music and theatre, should consult the following policy:

**Special policies for participants in Elon-sponsored events, including intervarsity athletics, music and theatre, which require frequent absence from class, and for absences due to religious observances:**

- 1) Participants in intervarsity athletics and other sponsored activities must provide a copy of the travel schedule at the beginning of the semester. Students are expected to be in class on a travel day if the class meets before the scheduled departure time.
- 2) Other activities (training, practice, physical therapy, rehearsals, etc.) must NOT be scheduled during class time.
- 3) For any absence, students are responsible for making up tests at a time that is convenient for the professor and for turning in any assigned work in a timely manner (preferably before departure). Surprise quizzes cannot be made up at all.
- 4) Students are expected to make up for their lack of class participation during travel days by being extra-prepared and especially active during the days when they are present.

All travel-related absences together count as one absence. This allows student-athletes or participants in other college activities that require travel a maximum of one or two other absences without penalty.

**The necessary form for absences due to religious observances can be found at the following website, and must be completed before February 24<sup>th</sup>:** [http://www.elon.edu/e-web/students/religious\\_life/ReligiousHolidays.xhtml](http://www.elon.edu/e-web/students/religious_life/ReligiousHolidays.xhtml)

#### **Honor Code:**

An Elon student's highest purpose is academic citizenship: Giving first attention to learning and reflection, developing intellectually, connecting knowledge and experiences, and upholding Elon's honor codes. This course recognizes and adheres to the principles of the Elon Academic Honor Code. Students are expected to be familiar with the code and follow it consistently. If you have any questions about your responsibilities within this course, please do not hesitate to consult with me. You are also encouraged to refer to the Elon Academic Honor Code at the following website:

<http://www.elon.edu/e-web/students/handbook/honorcpp.xhtml>

**NB: If you are using secondary sources in your work, cite them according to MLA guidelines. Using translation programs for any written work constitutes a violation of the Honor Code.**

#### **Disabilities:**

Special accommodations can be made for students with a documented disability or medical condition, provided that they inform the instructor either at the beginning of the semester or when the condition is diagnosed (whichever comes first). Information about the Elon's services and policies for students with disabilities can be found at the following website: <http://www.elon.edu/e-web/academics/advising/ds/>

You must register with the Office of Disabilities (Duke Building, Room 108 (278-6500)) in order to receive accommodations.