

## French Politics and Power

Prof. Michael Bosia

**French language skills are not Required**

Course Description – Beyond Freedom Fries:

When the U.S. initially decided against mediating a peace agreement ending the war last month in the Middle East, France stepped in. With French leadership encouraging American cooperation, the UN Security Council, Israel, and Lebanon crafted a cease fire, and French troops will lead an international force to secure southern Lebanon.

France's international leadership is a sharp contrast to just a year ago, when young people rioted in the suburbs, and to the massive demonstrations that forced the government to withdraw a proposed law in the spring. It also contrasts with French opposition to U.S. intervention in Iraq, because this time the French were able to pull the Americans along.

Is this the same France where the head of a peasant union demolished a McDonald's with a bulldozer? Or the France whose leading automaker – until recently state-owned – might buy General Motors? Or another France, where the son of an immigrant and the daughter of a colonial official born in Africa are the top candidates to lead the two dominant parties in this spring's presidential and National Assembly elections?

France is a nuclear power with a permanent seat and veto on the UN Security Council; a former colonial power that occupied parts of North and West Africa, South East Asia, the Pacific islands, the Caribbean, and South America; one of the most important world powers in Africa with extensive economic, cultural, and military ties. For 100 years, France was the first destination of immigrants in Europe; French leadership established the foundations of the European Union and pushed every step toward greater integration. Socialist governments have moved France closer to the American model of economic globalization though almost every politician still expresses some measure of hostility to free market capitalism.

How do we understand the complicated nature of French politics? This course examines the connections between France's past and present, France's role in the world and domestic politics, French culture and the economic system, the often aloof political leadership and a frustrated citizenry. France today remains one of the most influential countries in terms of political, cultural, economic, and even military power. Understanding France requires us to delve into French history, the values and habits that shape political leadership, activists, and the citizenry, and the goals of French politics today and in the past. In the process, we will learn about Europe and the West, the responsibilities of political power at home and abroad, and the legacies of the past and the preludes to the future.

**Texts and Materials:**

Course Packs: available at the Bookstore. Indicated by CP on the outline

All other articles: Electronic, distributed by email; or library reserve (RES)

**Assignments and Evaluations:**

Our goal is to learn about and begin to understand France. Reading, lecture, and discussion are the most important activities, with brief writing assignments. In class, we will also examine films, music, television, websites, literature, and other resources.

No late assignments will be accepted, except in cases of emergency as determined by college policy. Papers with evidence of plagiarism or significant grammatical errors will not be accepted, and no resubmissions are allowed in such cases. Please see the college policy on plagiarism, and if you have any questions about grammar, contact the college writing center. Word Processing programs include spell and grammar checkers – pay attention to the red and green lines!!! Email submissions require prior approval.

*Note on sources for written work:* Online encyclopedias and dictionaries are helpful for retrieving facts (statistics, institutions, leaders), but are not legitimate sources for research projects. You typically do not need to cite these sources for facts that are generally known (the president of a country, for example); only cite them for more obscure information (the percentage of citizens of foreign birth, for example). Moreover, Wikipedia is a complicated resource and there is no guarantee of its accuracy – handle with a critical perspective. Legitimate research sources are academic books and articles, editorials and opinion articles, and political speeches or proclamations that express an argument or perspective. Ask a librarian about online searches through JSTOR and other databases. Using or quoting other works or another's ideas without citation is plagiarism.

*Participation (20 points)*

In class time will be devoted to lecture, questions, discussion, documentaries, films, news, supplemental short readings, and other material. In a seminar format, each session will include as great a variety of activities as possible, with a break approximately half way through.

Participation includes attendance and discussion or activities. In addition, each student must bring 3 questions from the readings or 2 questions from the readings and a news item to bring out in class discussion.

*Weekly Assignment: Notes or Response Paper (35 points; 7 weeks at 5 points each)*

Seven times during the semester, you will submit either a 2-2.5 page response paper (NO LONGER) for a weekly topic, or 3-4 pages of notes (NO LONGER) for weekly readings. You will sign up for 6 of these assignments based on availability during the second week of class, BUT everyone is required to submit a weekly assignment for Week 2. If class discussion falters, additional weekly assignments can be required.

*Notes:* Bullet points – NOT narrative. Identify the author's key argument, then outline supporting arguments and important information. Move on to the next author. Make sure the notes proceed evenly through the readings.

*Response Paper:* Begin with what troubles/interests you about the week's topic and the readings. You can do this by focusing on one aspect, then discussing how each author addressed that aspect. Do comment on all the readings.

*Take Home Midterm (25 points):* Short essay(s). Questions to be announced.

*Final (20 points):* Short essay(s). Will cover current events; another reason you should monitor the news in any French or English language source.

### Course Outline:

1. Understanding France Today

Film: *Caché* (Hidden)

Golson, "Memory's *bombes à retardement*," *Journal of European Studies*,  
March-June 1998, pgs 1-10 (10)

2. Preludes in the form of Race, Revolution, and Authority (90)

Furet, "The *Ancien Régime* and The French Revolution," *Realms of Memory*,  
pgs 79-108 (30) cp

Grimaldi Grigsby, "Girodet's Revolt of Cairo," *Extremities*, pgs 105-165  
(60) cp

Image: [http://www.histoire-image.org/photo/zoom/vers79\\_girodet\\_001f.jpg](http://www.histoire-image.org/photo/zoom/vers79_girodet_001f.jpg)



3. The Problem of France (78)

Weber, "A Famous Victory," *The Hollow Years*, pgs 147-182 (35) cp

Hoffmann, "The Effects of World War II on French Society and Politics,"  
*French Historical Studies*, Spring 1961, pgs 28-63 (35)

Hoffmann, "Thoughts on the French Political Community Today," *Daedalus*,  
Summer 1993 (8)

## Optional Reading:

Hoffmann, *In Search of France*, “Paradoxes of the French Political Community,” pgs 1-60 (60 – This is an extended version of the 1961 article) RES

## 4. Republican Nation-Building (87)

Hazareesingh, “The Société d’Instruction Républicaine and The Propagation of Civic Republicanism in Provincial and Rural France,” *Journal of Modern History*, June 99, pgs 271-307 (31)

Offen, “Depopulation, Nationalism, and Feminism,” *The American Historical Review* 1988, pgs 648-676 (28)

Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* RES

Between Vice and Crime, pgs 79-89 (10)

The Dreyfus Affair, pgs 89-117 (28)

## 5. Elites, Development, and the Nation-State (78)



Loriaux, “The French Developmental State as Myth and Moral Ambition,” in Meredith Woo Cumings, *The Developmental State*, pages 235-276 (41). cp

Kudlick, “The Culture of Statistics and the Crisis of Cholera in Paris, 1830-1850,” *Recreating Authority in Revolutionary France*, pgs 98-124 (26) cp

Rudolph, “Domestic Politics: The Cité Experimentale at Noisy le Sec in Greater Paris,” *Modern & Contemporary France*, 2004, pgs 483-494 (11).

## 6. French Civilization and Algeria (85)

Lorcin, “Imperialism, Colonial Identity, and Race in Algeria, 1830-1870,” *Isis*, December 1999, pgs 653-679 (23)

Gosslin, "A Colonial Scale of Frenchness," *The Politics of Frenchness in Colonial Algeria*, pgs 140-179 (39) cp  
 Alexander and Kieger, "France and the Algerian War: Strategy, Operation, Diplomacy," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 2002, pgs 1-24 (23)

7. Colonialism, Civilization, and Africa (80)

Conklin, "Colonialism and Human Rights, a Contradiction in Terms? The Case of France in West Africa," *American Historical Review*, April 1998, pgs 419-442 (24).

Chafer, *The End of Empire in French West Africa* "Turning the Colonial Clock Back: The Second World War in AOF," *The End of Empire in French West Africa* , pgs 37-50, "The New Political Context, 1944-46," pgs 55-78 (36). Cp

Martin, "Continuity and Change in French African Relations," *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, March 1995, pgs 1-20 (20)

8. Midterm Due (take home)

9. (Fifth) Republicans (106)

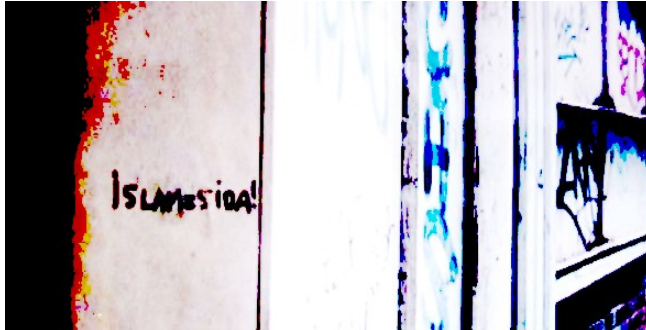
Johnson, "De Gaulle and the Founding of the Fifth Republic," *History Today*, June 1983, pgs 5-11 (6)

Frank Wilson, "Gaullism without de Gaulle," *The Western Political Quarterly*, September 1973, pgs 485-506 (21)

Ross, "Establishing Consensus: May 68 in France as seen from the 1980s," *Critical Inquiry*, Spring 2002, pgs 650-676 (26)

Tiersky, "Legacies," *François Mitterrand: the Last French President*, pgs 271-399 (28) RES

Hellman, "Wounding Memories: Mitterrand, Moulin, Trouvier, and the Devine Half-Life of Resistance," *French Historical Studies*, Autumn 1995, pgs 461-486 (25)

10. Who's French? The Politics of Citizenship and *Exclusion* (117)*Nationalism*

Davies, "The 'Nation' in FN Ideology: 'France for the French,'" *The National Front in France*, pgs 65-105 (40) cp

*Race and Immigration*

Gafaiti, "Nationalism, Colonialism, and the Ethnic Discourse in the Construction of French Identity," *French Civilization and its Discontents*, pgs 189-210 (21) cp

Stovall, "From Red Belt to Black Belt: Race, Class, and Urban Marginality in 20<sup>th</sup> Century Paris," *The Color of Liberty: Histories of Race in France*, pgs 351-363 (12) cp

*Gender*

Wallace, "Citizens but not Individuals: The Vote and After," *Only Paradoxes to Offer: French Feminists and the Rights of Man*, pgs 161-175 (14) cp

Chiennes de garde of the World, Unite! *Beyond French Feminisms*, pgs 93-95 (2) cp

*Sexuality*

Bosia, "National Anxieties, Sexuality, and AIDS in France," pgs 109-137 (28)

## Suggested Reading:

Noiriel, "Immigration: Amnesia and Memory," *French Historical Studies* 1995, pgs 367-380 (13).

11. Who's French? The Politics of Citizenship and "*Integration*" (72+)*Under a Veil*

Ezekiel, "Magritte meets Maghreb: This is not a Veil," *Australian Feminist Studies*, July 2005, pgs 232-241 (9)

Gaspard and Khosrokhavar, "The Headscarf and the Republic," *Beyond French Feminisms*, pgs 61-67 (6) cp

*In the Salle des Mariages*

E. Fassin, The Politics of PaCS in a Transatlantic Mirror: Same Sex Unions and Sexual Difference in France Today," *Beyond French Feminisms*, pgs 26-36 (10) cp

*In the Halls of Power*

Danielle Haas Dubosc, "Sexual Difference and Politics in France Today," *Feminist Studies*, Spring 1999, pgs 183-207 (24)

Daniel Sabbagh, "Affirmative Action at Sciences Po," *Race in France*, pgs 246-258 (12) cp

*On the Streets*

Herrera, "Three Moments in the French Revolt," *Monthly Review* 2006, pgs 13-24 (11)

<http://riotsfrance.ssrc.org/>

Wieviorka, "Violence in France."

Roy, "The Nature of the French Riots"

## 12. France as a "Great Power" (100)

Bryant, "French Foreign and Defense Policy: Exception in Methods and Rhetoric?" *The French Exception*, pgs 121-139 (18) cp

Robie, *Eyes of Fire: The Last Voyage of the Rainbow Warrior*, Chapters 7&8, pgs 92-128 (36) cp

Baum, "The Maastricht Treaty as High Politics," *Political Science Quarterly*, 1995-96, pgs 605-624 (19)

Utley, "Franco-African Military Relations: Meeting the Challenges of Globalization?" *Modern & Contemporary France* 2005, pgs 25-38 (13)

Wall, "The French American War over Iraq," *British Journal of World Affairs*, Winter Spring 2004, pgs 123-137 (14)

## 13. Thanksgiving

## 14. France and Globalization(s) (82)

Meunier, "Anti-Americanism in France," *French Culture, Politics, & Society*, Summer 2005, pgs 126-140 (14)

Kuisel, "Coca Cola and the Cold War, The French Face Americanization, 1948-53," *French Historical Studies*, Spring 1991, pgs 96-116 (20)

Gopnik, "The Balzar War," *Paris to the Moon*, pgs 228-238 (10) cp

Gordon and Meunier, "The French Response: Managing Globalization," *The French Challenge*, pgs 97-119 (23) cp

Josselin, "Between Europe and a Hard Place: French Financial Diplomacy from 1995-2002," *French Politics, Culture, & Society*, Spring 2004, pgs 57-72 (15)

## 15. France Alternatives (90)



- Gemie, “Anti-Le Pen Protests: France, April-May 2002,” *Journal of Contemporary European Studies*, November 2003, pgs 231-249 (18).  
*Contemporary French & Francophone Studies* Winter 2004:  
 Oscherwitz, “Pop Goes the Banlieue: Musical Métissage and the Articulation of a Multiculturalist Vision,” pgs 43-50 (7)  
 Marx-Scouras, “Rock the Hexagon,” pgs 51-59 (8)  
 Ancelovici, “Organizing against Globalization: The Case of ATTAC in France,” *Politics & Society*, September 2002, pgs 427-455, (28)

*Interviews*

- “José Bové: A Farmers’ International?” *New Left Review* 2001, pgs 89-91 (10)  
 “Bernard Cassen: On the Attack?” *New Left Review* 2003, pgs 41-60 (19)

## Useful Weblinks:

- Libération – left leaning newspaper – [www.liberation.fr](http://www.liberation.fr)  
 Le Monde – the New York Times of France – [www.lemonde.fr](http://www.lemonde.fr)  
 Le Figaro – conservative paper – [www.lefigaro.fr](http://www.lefigaro.fr)  
 Algérie Presse Service – [www.aps.dz/fr](http://www.aps.dz/fr)  
 Le Soleil, Sénégal, government owned – [www.lesoleil.sn](http://www.lesoleil.sn)  
 Le portail de l’afrique – [www.afrik.com](http://www.afrik.com)  
 English language news sources –  
<http://news.yahoo.com/fc/World/France>  
[www.iht.com](http://www.iht.com)  
[www.wneurope.com](http://www.wneurope.com)  
[www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/](http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/)  
[www.expatica.com](http://www.expatica.com)  
[www.ttc.org](http://www.ttc.org)  
[www.afrol.com](http://www.afrol.com)  
[www.rfi.fr/langues/statiques/rfi\\_anglais.asp](http://www.rfi.fr/langues/statiques/rfi_anglais.asp)  
 Agence France Presse is available in English through the Library at LexisNexis.

[www.parti-socialiste.fr](http://www.parti-socialiste.fr)

[www.desirsdavenir.org](http://www.desirsdavenir.org) – Ségolène Royal

<http://www.mjsfrance.org> – Mouvement des jeunes socialistes

[www.u-m-p.org](http://www.u-m-p.org)

<http://www.interieur.gouv.fr> - Interior Minister Nicolas Sarkozy

[www.frontnational.com](http://www.frontnational.com)

[www.confederationpaysanne.fr](http://www.confederationpaysanne.fr)

<http://previon.typepad.com/hebdo>

[www.communautarisme.net](http://www.communautarisme.net)

[www.motive-e-s.org](http://www.motive-e-s.org)

[www.actupp.org](http://www.actupp.org)