French 316: French for Business

Prerequisite: Two years college French or equivalent, plus FR 309 and FR 305

Instructor: Lynni Weibezahl
Office: EJCH 235 G  Phone: 682-8919  E-mail: Lynni@fizzbyn.com

Required Textbooks:
Federico and Moore: Cas pratiques pour le français des affaires, 2nd ed., McGraw-Hill, 1997 (available as a xerox and as hardcopy in library)

Stanger, Ted: Sacré Français! Un Américain nous regarde, Éditions Michalon, 2003 (available on e-reserves and as xerox in library)

Documentation Française: France 2008. Ministère des affaires étrangères, 2008 (available on e-reserves and as xerox copy in library)

Course Description
French 316 will teach you critical French business vocabulary and the macroeconomic context of doing business in France. The handout from France 2008 is an overview of French economics, politics, education, and culture, a working knowledge of which is essential to understanding the context of French business and to give you the necessary background for our classroom discussions. Selected readings from Ted Stanger's Sacré Français! reveal an American's perspective on and reaction to specific issues concerning the French economy, educational system, social issues and political ones. Our Cas pratiques (Case Studies) textbook will help us to build an extended working vocabulary in business French. Since this class is intended to be fairly topical, I will also provide you with readings/handouts on issues we have studied in class and that are also "in the news" during the semester.

In the new Silver Core, this course will satisfy CO11 (Global Contexts). This Core Objective requires you to apply and evaluate modes of academic inquiry and creative expression in historical and contemporary global contexts, in this instance specific to France. You will articulate connections among local, national, and international contexts and evaluate the ways that historical and contemporary global influences affect their current state. A detailed description of how the course satisfies this core objective follows.

As a course which puts equal emphasis on both written and oral skills, it will also seek to develop a discipline-specific competency in CO1 (Effective Composition and Communication), but of course in French.

What the class is not: This class is not entitled "French Business" but "French for Business". Thus, while we won't be learning extensively about the internal workings of Michelin, l'Oreal, or Renault, we may talk about certain businesses but in a context that reflects something about the French economy, politics, and/or culture.

What the class is: By the end of the semester, I will have given you enough information and practice in the aforementioned areas that you could easily go to France and work for a French company. You would have enough knowledge about French politics, economics, and their particular habits that you would "blend in" with your French co-workers and not be caught off-guard because of a lack of vocabulary, general knowledge, or cultural understanding.

Over the course of the term, we will be devoting time to gaining a working knowledge of the following topics:

- French political parties and their influence on the social and economic climate in France
- Their respective positions on topics such as free market economics and state interventionism, labor markets and the 35-hour workweek, immigration, the European Union, ecology and the environment, and globalization
Towards the middle of the semester, armed with our knowledge in the above areas, we will take a look at the French wine-making industry as a case in point illustrating the effects of globalization, the impact of California winemaking methods, agricultural subsidization, generous social benefits, global climate change, and overproduction. Which châteaux are doing well? Which ones have failed or are failing, and why? Along with readings I will give you on the topic, we will watch and discuss the film "Mondovino" and hold an offsite class at Whispering Vines, where we will discover first-hand the meaning of "terroir".

**Student Learning Outcomes:**
- Students will be able to demonstrate command of business French vocabulary
- Students will demonstrate knowledge of some of the main macro-economic and social issues facing France today as one of the world's major economies
- Students will find examples of macroeconomic policy in France and compare and contrast them with their American equivalents
- Students will be able to describe some of the main cultural issues that distinguish French and American interactions and business practices
- Students will apply their knowledge of these areas in semester-long analysis of topical articles in French newspapers and from the French business press
- Students will produce a detailed analysis of an article of their choice, including a presentation of new vocabulary/expressions and a discussion of the relevance of the article to course concepts

**The Textbook and Handouts:**
The main textbook used in the class (Cas Pratiques) is a selection of fictitious case studies relating to French business. The cases will allow us to begin building a Business French vocabulary in a real context, at the same time exploring many areas of business (marketing, management, import-export, banking, etc.). The cases will also help us to see some of the relationships between the macro- (i.e., institutional) and micro- (i.e. interpersonal and behavioral) aspects of the business environment in France today.

The France 2008 handout is a broad overview of several areas of interest to us in studying the environment of business in France: Political Institutions, Society, Education, Culture, and the Economy. To aid you in reading the France 2008 handout, I have prepared a "guide à la lecture" which will help you to focus on the more salient points and new vocabulary.

Another aim of this course is to enable you to read, understand, and analyze articles from the French business press. To this end, along with assignments from the textbook, I will regularly hand out and assign short business articles from the French press that we will either discuss extemporaneously in class, or which will constitute assigned reading for the next session.

**Homework and class notes:**
Each week there will be assigned homework from the France 2008 or the Sacré Français! handouts, the Cas Pratiques textbook and/or from news articles handed out in class. I expect you to have typed-up notes on what has been assigned so that we can have meaningful, in-depth class discussions about the topic at hand. I will collect
your typed-up notes at the end of each class meeting. If you have no typed-up notes, your participation grade for the day will be "0". If your notes are clearly incomplete, you will also lose some credit.

Please note:  
- I do not accept late homework, nor do I accept e-mailed homework.  
- I do not accept hand-written homework (although you may make hand-written additions during class on your typed-up notes for purposes of future study)  
- Use double-spacing in your homework so that I can add comments if necessary.

Over the course of the term I will ask you to write complete responses to five or six of the homework assignments which I will use to give you a homework grade, worth 15% of your final grade. I will let you know which homework I expect you to write up fully (as opposed to merely preparing notes for discussion) so that you can devote more time to composing well thought-out, grammatically accurate full sentences. Avoid minimalism in your answers, except for questions that clearly are asking for a number, or a very short response. I also expect your homework to be typed, and double-spaced. I will not accept handwritten homework, and NO LATE/E-MAILED HOMEWORK WILL BE ACCEPTED.

The grade I assign to these 5 or 6 written homework assignments will be based on two components:  
1) the quality of your written French and  
2) the quality of your answers.

In other words, your written French itself may be very good, but if you don't develop your answers adequately, you will lose points. On the other hand, you may struggle somewhat with your written French, but if I am impressed with the quality and insight evident in your answers, you may still get a good grade.

Quizzes:  
From time to time I will give short vocabulary quizzes (worth 10% of your grade) at the beginning of class. Any vocabulary covered in class, that is in your Cas pratiques book, or that I put on the board is fair game for quizzes. You should be able to translate this vocabulary from English to French and from French to English. For instance, if I gave you the term "un prêt à taux zéro" you could tell me that means "a zero-rate interest loan" and vice-versa. Much of this vocabulary will re-appear on the midterm and the final, so it will serve you well to integrate these terms into your French mental data base early on.

Team Project:  
In groups of two, you will be required to read and analyze an article of your choice from the Courrier International (or any other source). If you are having trouble choosing a topic or finding an article, I have an abundant supply from which you may choose. With your teammate, you will do an analysis of your article including a presentation of new business vocabulary that you encountered while reading it, plus the main ideas expressed in the article, relating them wherever possible to what we've learned in the France 2008 or the Sacrés Français handouts and to your general knowledge about France. I will assign points for your presentation as follows:

40 points - presentation of new vocabulary/expressions/terminology from your article  
40 points - article summary  
20 points - relevance to course concepts

Your team project will be due no later than May 8th. Your presentation should be typed, double-spaced, with 1" margins. The length of your project will probably be about 3-1/2 to 4 pages, but could be longer, depending on the length of your article.
**Midterm/Final:**
There will be one midterm and one final during the course. The midterm will primarily cover the subjects covered in our France 2008 discussions and related articles, while the final will focus on material covered after the midterm.

**Participation:**
The class is taught in French and will require significant oral participation from students. Since this is intended to be a hybrid conversation/composition course, as much weight will be placed on participation as there is on collected homework. You are expected to arrive to each class session prepared to actively discuss the assigned readings either in the format of a general classroom discussion, or in small breakout groups. Your participation grade for the day will be "0" if you are absent.

**Attendance and classroom code of conduct:**
You are allowed two unexcused absences during the term. Excused absences for medical reasons require a note from the health center or a physician. If you miss class for any reason, you will need to get the homework assignment from another student (including photocopies from any handouts I may have given out) in order to be prepared for the next class session. I do not accept students telling me "I wasn't here last time" as an excuse for not having the handouts from the class they missed in their possession, and read, at any class meeting. For this purpose, you should obtain the phone numbers and e-mails of two or three other classmates right away.

Bear in mind that absences have a very negative impact on your grade: when you miss a class,
- your participation for that day is "0"
- if I have collected homework on that day, you get a "0" since you're not there to hand it in
- you miss material and vocabulary that will surely show up on exams
- since our discussions build on each other, missing a class can impact your ability to participate at the next class (which lowers your participation grade)

Given that homework is worth 15% of your grade, and participation is another 15%, it is obvious that accumulating absences is a very dangerous practice.

**Do not come to class late.** I take note of any late arrivals and they will lower your participation grade for that day.

While I welcome e-mails which address questions that you might have about a topic we discussed in class, I do not answer e-mails concerning work you missed while you were absent from class. This is not because I don't wish to communicate with you; it's simply an administrative nightmare to try to answer as many e-mails as I get from students across many sections of French who have missed class on any given day. Develop a "buddy" system with two or three other students in class who can give you the homework and copies of handouts should you have to miss class.

Please turn off your smartphone before the beginning of class, or leave it at home. I do not allow texting during class, nor do I allow laptop computers to be on.

**Grading:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Midterm</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collected homework</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team project</td>
<td>15% (due May 8th)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation/class notes</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Grades will be assigned as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Below 60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: If this class is being taken on a S/U basis, the student must achieve a C in order to pass. A C- is no longer considered passing.

The Department of Foreign Languages is committed to equal opportunity in education for all students, including those with documented physical disabilities or documented learning disabilities. University policy states that it is the responsibility of students with documented disabilities to contact instructors during the first week of each semester to discuss appropriate accommodations to ensure equity in grading, classroom experiences and outside assignments. The instructor will meet with the student and staff members of the Student Services Center to formulate a written plan for appropriate accommodations, if required.