

FREN 411 / Summer 2014

STUDY ABROAD

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Prerequisite: none

Course Description:

During study abroad, students will be immersed in French through classroom instruction, family homestay, and cultural activities. The Shepherd University portion of FREN 411 is designed to help students maximize their study abroad experience by providing specific strategies for improving their language and culture learning.

Course Objectives:

- To create an awareness of yourself as a language learner (learning styles and strategies).
- To develop a set of strategies that will help you to better understand spoken and written French.
- To develop a set of strategies that will help you to communicate in French in a culturally appropriate way.
- To encourage self-reflection about yourself as a culturally diverse person.
- To expand your understanding of Quebecois culture (values, customs, politics, history, art, literature, music, etc.)
- To provide you with tools and activities to continue learning French after the end of your study abroad.

Required Materials:

- *Maximizing Study Abroad*. 2nd ed. Minneapolis, MN: CARLA, 2007.
- a French-English dictionary
- a composition book or other materials (digital camera, etc.) for journaling
- a small-format notebook (for jotting down names, places, and overheard speech)

Course Requirements:

- **PRE-DEPARTURE**
 - students must prepare **by completing all assigned readings and activities** in *Maximizing Study Abroad*
 - students must come each day with one piece of information about Quebec they found on the Internet (see list of topics on p. 56 *Maximizing Study Abroad*)
 - students must purchase and organize their journal
- **IN COUNTRY**
 - students must attend all scheduled classes at the Centre Linguistique in Jonquière
 - students must make an entry in their journal every day
 - students must make an effort to **speak French at all times**
- **AFTER RE-ENTRY**
 - students must write a “thank you” note to their host family in French
 - students must turn in their journal
 - students must write and submit a **4-5 page reflection paper**

- students must complete the following **post-study abroad activities**, documenting them using the format indicated by the instructor
 - a listening activity (see p. 186 *Maximizing Study Abroad* for ideas)
 - a vocabulary activity (see p. 201 *Maximizing Study Abroad* for ideas)
 - a speaking activity (see p. 203 and p. 224 *Maximizing Study Abroad* for ideas)

Journal:

Keeping a journal during your study abroad will serve many functions. The journal will be a record of your experiences. It will also provide a way of tracking your language and culture learning. It may also help you cope with your emotions while going through cultural adjustment. In terms of this course, your journal will be the primary source of information for me about your time in Quebec. So do not include anything you would not want me to know.

How to keep your journal

- Two ways of keeping a journal are suggested on pp. 119-123 of *Maximizing Study Abroad*. Pick the one you prefer or come up with an alternative (blog, scrapbook, home movie, etc.)
- The key is to **make at least one entry every day**.
- Those students who have had only one year of French before departure can keep their journal in English. However, the first paragraph of every entry must be in French.
- Those students who have had two or more years of French before departure must keep their journal in French.

Sections of your journal

- You are free to make your journal entries as you please. However, there are three components that must be submitted in writing:
 - *but*s personnels
 - vocabulaire
 - activités obligatoires
- Create the **“but**s personnels” section on the first page of your journal. There, list at least four goals for your time abroad. Consider language- and culture-learning goals, as well as personal aspirations (see p. 3 *Maximizing Study Abroad*)
- In the **“vocabulaire”** section, you will list five new words each day (pick words that are important for you and will help you achieve your personal goals). To maximize your learning, try to review these words daily and to include them in your writing / conversation.
 - Each word should have the following format:
 French term: English definition. Model sentence.
être partant pour: to be up for (doing something) Je suis partant pour un voyage à Montréal.
- In the **“activités obligatoires”** section, you must complete the following activities while in Quebec:
 - Cultural diversity: getting to know your hosts
 - Although all people have multiple layers of identity, it is easy to limit them to one identity. But not all Quebecois are alike. Pick one member of your host family and try to learn about four different aspects of his/her identity (refer back to the exercise on p. 44 in *Maximizing Study Abroad*). Then write about what you learned.
 - Exploring the iceberg: identifying aspects of culture
 - Pick some observable element of Quebecois culture that intrigues/confuses you. Then, try to determine the deeper meaning of what you observed, i.e. the values, norms, and beliefs that underlie it. You may need to ask native speakers for help (refer back to the iceberg analogy, p. 46 ff in *Maximizing Study Abroad*). Then write about what you learned.

- Differentiating cultural from personal and universal
 - It is sometimes hard to determine what normal cultural behavior is. The longer you are abroad, the better you will be able to distinguish between what is universal, what is specific to the culture of Quebec, and what is a personal preference.
 - Spend some time watching the Quebecois around you. Take notes on what you see in your journal. Then try to categorize your observations. What actions/emotions seem universal? uniquely Quebecois? idiosyncratic? You may need to ask native speakers for input.
- “Quebec French is weird!”: deconstructing stereotypes
 - One reason to travel is so that you can test and revise your ideas of the target culture. Take one stereotype you had about the Quebecois before going abroad and change it to a generalization. Next, transform the generalization into a hypothesis by formulating a question with an observable component (see p. 58 *Maximizing Study Abroad* for an example). Finally, test your hypothesis by collecting more information or consulting with a native speaker. Then write about what you learned.
- Quebec vs the US: core cultural values
 - Before beginning this activity, review the section on core cultural values in *Maximizing Study Abroad*. Review where your personal values fall on the nine continua pp. 64-67. Then review the dominant cultural patterns of US Americans, pp. 68-70.
 - Now, with that information in mind, observe the Quebecois around you. Where would you place the Quebecois on each of the nine continua? Why? Explain your placement, providing a specific example for each continuum.

Assessment:

The various course components will be weighted as follows:

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|--------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| Daily participation in pre-departure activities: | 15 % |
| Journal: | 40 % |
| Reflection paper: | 30 % |
| Post-study abroad activities: | 15 % |

*** NOTE: The homework assignments are to prepare you for class discussion.
So you should do the homework for July 2nd BEFORE class, not after it.**

| | <i>preparing for study abroad</i> | <i>French conversation</i> | <i>homework</i> |
|---------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| July 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> personal goals departure tips discovering your styles keeping a journal | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> participating in a conversation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> use the Internet to find info about Quebec (see <i>MSA</i> p. 56 for topics) read pp. 1-2 <i>MSA</i> complete the Learning Style Survey, pp. 10-19 <i>MSA</i> complete the Language-Strategy Use Inventory, pp. 21-28 <i>MSA</i> complete the Culture-Learning Strategies Inventory, pp. 29-35 <i>MSA</i> |
| July 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> defining culture culture-learning strategies cultural values cross-cultural adjustment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> making plans expressing feelings and opinions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> use the Internet to find info about Quebec (see <i>MSA</i> p. 56 for topics) read pp. 39-42 <i>MSA</i> (introduction to culture-learning strategies) read pp. 63-67 <i>MSA</i>, placing yourself on the continua of core cultural values read about cross-cultural adjustment, pp. 91-95 <i>MSA</i>; do activity p. 97 |
| July 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> language-learning strategies: listening and vocabulary language-learning strategies: speaking and translation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> telling stories talking about current events | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> use the Internet to find info about Quebec (see <i>MSA</i> p. 56 for topics) read about listening strategies, pp. 173-180 <i>MSA</i>; do activity p. 181 read about vocabulary learning, pp. 187-188 <i>MSA</i>; do activity pp. 188-190 read about speaking strategies, pp. 203-211 <i>MSA</i> read about translation strategies, pp. 247-251 <i>MSA</i>; do activity p. 250 |