

IDSC 260: Cross-Cultural Studies
FRANCE (Strasbourg and surrounding region + Paris)
MESSIAH COLLEGE
May 25 - June14, 2021

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Course Description

The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the richness, depth, and diversity of the French culture. We will focus on three questions: What does it mean to be Alsatian? What does it mean to be French? What does it mean to be European? Each of these strands of identity, shaped by overlapping geographical boundaries, produces distinct cultural influences.

While this course will focus on common elements of the broader French culture, the majority of our time will be spent in Strasbourg and its surrounding region of Alsace. The region of Alsace is particular in that it has been influenced by outside forces yet remains true to “French” culture. Bordering Germany, Alsace has changed hands between the Germans and French numerous times. Strasbourg is a symbol of the violent rivalry between the two countries, but also of an enduring process of peace building since World War II. Thus, Strasbourg, and Alsace more largely, have had a distinct and unique regional history.

Today’s French culture can be characterized by its love for the past and its respect for the present. The French are immersed in their own history as they live with daily reminders of it through architecture, museums, parks, and monuments. Literature, art, and philosophy remain as important knowledge for all French citizens. The French “joie de vivre” is a testament to the pride they have for their culture and a symbol of their resilience.

Located on a border that has many times been contested, Strasbourg is sometimes referred to as the “capital of Europe,” as it is the seat of the Council of Europe and the European Parliament. The formation of international and supranational governments has been characterized by the challenge of collaborating across cultural difference and often patterns of historical conflict. In order for these institutions to be effective, individuals across Europe must be able to see a common identity beyond the particular country in which they live and be willing to give up some freedoms in exchange for greater economic cooperation and security.

Course Objectives

By the completion of the program the students will demonstrate the ability to;

a. (Cognitive) *identify the most relevant information about the host culture's history, traditions, politics, geography, including relevant regional differences, if applicable.*

France is rich in a variety of cultural traditions, from the hustle and bustle of a cosmopolitan city like Paris, to the majesty of medieval Christianity seen in its cathedrals throughout the country, and the relatively recent emergence of Islam. Strasbourg is unique with its European Union institutions and proximity to Germany. Our goal is to participate in many cultural activities throughout the region including local festivals, artistic performances, and a cooking class. Students will visit churches, museums, castles, and spend the night in a Protestant convent. Additionally, students will visit the Council of Europe and the European Court of Human Rights. Students will attend Dr. Alex Neff's Religion in France course where they will explore the evolution of religion in France, from Antiquity to today's secularization and rise of Islam. Students will be asked to reflect on key lectures, activities, and events through a digital journal and a cultural exploration assignment, which will focus their attention on their observations.

b. (Intrapersonal/ Reflective) *discuss facets in which the host culture differs from their own.*

Exploring how different cultures in France interact and experience life will be a critical part of the course. Participation in group discussions, personal reflection through journaling as well as engaging in the readings will provide ample opportunities for gaining increased cultural awareness and understanding of diversity.

Europe is a multilingual environment and with Strasbourg within walking distance of Germany as well as the home of European institutions, students will have an opportunity to examine what it is like to live in a multilingual environment and to consider the influence of these factors as they examine the daily life of the French in this region. Students will interact with their host families as well as well as engage with their immediate environment as they take various forms of public transportation, make purchases, participate in a service project, and visit important historical sites. With this awareness and knowledge in hand, students will then be encouraged to examine the priorities of Americans in their daily lives. The students will then reflect on these experiences, focusing on the differences they find, and write in their journals.

c. (Intrapersonal/ Reflective) *discuss facets in which the host culture is similar to their own.*

A central part of the course will be to encourage students to consider how social, cultural, political, and economical factors influence the way people in France organize and live their lives. While students are observing differences in their host culture, the students will also be directed to look for similarities. Finding similarities is often more difficult than differences. Students will also identify similarities, whether they are in their homestays and seen in family interaction and household divisions of labor, or in their daily experiences outside of their home. The students will then reflect on these experiences, focusing on the similarities they find, and write in their journals.

d. (Interpersonal/ Interactive): explain insights that they learned about themselves or their own relationships by directly interacting with individuals and groups from the host culture.

France for centuries has been known as the keeper and defender of the French language and the leader in high culture. Although at times they have been perceived by many other cultures, especially Americans, as impolite and overly proud because of their perceived behaviors, students will experience firsthand French values in their homestay, during our two days of service, and organized visits. Our students will be able to observe and participate in a family unit and observe the manner in which the French express themselves and communicate. They will also have the opportunity to directly interact with the host culture during our two days of service, during excursions, and in their daily activities, for example, commuting on public transportation. Students will also witness the influence of outside cultures on the French and the reaction of the French to those influences. It is those values and patterns of interaction that we hope to explore and reflect upon through journaling, assigned readings (esp. Barlow and Nadeau), group discussion, and personal interactions. Students will be asked to look for ways these daily interactions influence the way they perceive the world around them. They will be assessing their growth through journal entries, discussion, and other course work. At the end of the course, students will write a 2 page reflection on the gains made in each of these areas. Appendix B provides a list of questions that students are to consider. The group digital journal project allows another avenue for students to examine the ways the French practice their faith and to assess its effects on their faith.

e. Articulate the distinct influences of Alsatian, French and European identity evident today in Alsace.

Visits to historical sites such as Le Struthof (the only Nazi-built concentration camp on French territory), European Union institutions, churches, châteaux, and museums combined with lectures, a lengthy home stay experience, a one-day service project, and interaction with locals will provide students an opportunity to explore firsthand the deeply-rooted historical, cultural and social elements that define the multi-faceted identities of the French today.

Course Textbooks:

Barlow, Julie and Jean-Benoît Nadeau. *The Bonjour Effect: The Secret Codes of French Conversation Revealed*. St. Martin's Press, 2016. ISBN 978-1250051851

Smith, Steve and Rick Steves, Rick Steves France 2021. Rick Steves, 2021. ISBN TBD (not yet published)

Online Readings:

Note: We recommend accessing and downloading or printing copies before departure to ensure appropriate access.

Council of Europe. "Who We Are." *Council of Europe*, 2021. Read all items in "What We Do" drop

down menu, accessible [here](#).

European Union, "About the EU." *European Union*, 2021. Read the following sections accessible [here](#). –The EU in Brief – What the EU Does for Its Citizens- History – Institutions and Bodies.

Leichtfried, Laura. "Alsace: Culturally not quite French, not quite German." *British Council*, February 23, 2017. Access article [here](#).

Nelsen, Brent, and James Guth, Religion and the Struggle for European Union: Confessional Culture and the Limits of Integration. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2015. Ebook Available through Murray Library Ebooks. - EBSCO Ebooks; search by author or title. Unlimited borrowers. May download the full book or solely the assigned chapters.

Rottner, Therese. "The Alsatian Identity Crisis 1871-1913" *The Bubble*, March 26, 2016. Access article [here](#).

Stumm, Albert. "Double Identity: Strasbourg on the French-German Border," *AP News*, October 23, 2017. Access article [here](#).

Popova, Zora. "Promoting Minority Rights Through Education: ECMI Working Paper #66," European Centre for Minority Issues, 2013. Available through Murray Library Databases / Subjects . - Columbia International Affairs Online; search by author or title. PDF is available to view online, download or print.

Course Requirements

1. *French language*

The students' knowledge of French is preferred but is *not* required.

2. *Readings and History Quiz*

Readings will be available for purchase during Spring Term 2021. The students are expected to complete the readings before departure in May. A few days after arriving in France, students will be quizzed on their understanding of the readings in *Rick Steves France 2021*.

3. *Participation*

It is of utmost importance that the student be involved in every activity related to the France Cross Cultural. These will include: spring orientation meetings, a debriefing shortly after returning to Messiah and all the activities during the trip. The professor reserves the right to lower the overall grade significantly if the student does not participate fully. Participation includes asking questions during presentations and tours, attentiveness, consideration for others, respect, courtesy, being polite and punctual, and demonstrating cultural sensitivity. We also expect you to submit to all efforts at resolving

conflicts should the need arise.

4. Class/Trip Organization

Each day of the trip will include three aspects. 1) meetings and/or lectures, 2) tours or special activities and 3) cultural exploration in small groups. During the class sessions, the student will be expected to take notes, participate in discussions, ask questions and generally behave as expected in any class at Messiah College. The tours and special activities will vary in content and form. The student is expected to be attentive, show interest, ask questions and reflect on the experience in their journal. The third aspect, cultural exploration, is where students are sent out into the community to learn about everyday life by taking transportation, making purchases, locating important buildings of government, social services, education, etc.

5. Journaling

The journal is a significant aspect in processing the experiences and the readings of the course. A schedule of journal topics is located in Canvas. Students will consider cultural similarities and differences, insights about their own identity, course content from the readings and visits, as well as reflection after attending a church service in Strasbourg. Students are expected to make entries faithfully during the entire process... *The journal will be collected twice during the course in order to assess the students' progress on June 3, 2021 and June 11, 2021. For more details on this assignment, see Canvas.*

6. Experiential Learning Initiative (ELI) personal learning objectives, reflection questions and career application

Students will design and submit a first draft of their personal learning objectives pursuant to the themes of the Experiential Learning Initiative (ELI) on or before May 19, 2021. Specific learning objective categories are located in Appendix B.

Students will complete the reflection questions as their final journal entry while in Strasbourg. Journal entries will aid students in reflecting on the gains they have made in the learning objective areas of personal growth, professional growth, academic growth, and community engagement (the learning objective categories).

Students will write a cover letter (the deliverable) to a potential employer highlighting the skills and competencies acquired during this cross-cultural experience. The student will demonstrate thoughtful reflection on the outcome questions found in Appendix C. Students will also separately submit a self-assessment of their learning objectives. Letters and self-assessments must be submitted electronically to Canvas by June 18, 2021. Additional details for these assignments appear on Canvas.

8. Identity Photo Journal

For this culminating assignment, you will create an identity photo journal, with supporting academic analysis. During your time in France, evaluate interactions with place and culture and record photos that apply one or more layers of Alsatian, French, European identity. Students should incorporate a

minimum of 10 photos that balance representation across the layers of identity. For each picture, write 1-2 paragraphs in which you identify and discuss which identity (-ies) you see; for each picture also write 1-2 paragraphs that explicitly connect the images to the themes that we have engaged in the readings, lecture and course visits. Additional details for the assignment appear on Canvas. **The photo journal project is due on Friday June 18, 2021.**

Course Evaluation:

UPON THE CONCLUSION OF THE CROSS-CULTURAL EXPERIENCE, STUDENTS MUST COMPLETE A COURSE EVALUATION. FAILURE TO DO SO WILL RESULT IN AN INCOMPLETE.

	<u>Percentage of Total Grade</u>		
Identity Photo Journal	20%		
Journal	30%		
Readings Quiz		15%	
Participation and Collaboration		15%	
ELI Reflection Questions		10%	
ELI Cover Letter			10

Grading Scale:

94% - 100%	A	77% - 79%	C+	66% - 69%	D+
90% - 93%	A-	74% - 76%	C	60% - 65%	D
87% - 89%	B+	70% - 73%	C-	59% or less	F
84% - 86%	B				
80% - 83%	B-				

Appendix A: ELI Learning Objective Categories

Students will submit learning goals based on the following prompts no later than May 15, 2021. Students are encouraged to modify them throughout the cross-cultural and will submit their revised objectives to the instructor.

1. **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:** Regardless of whether or not your experience relates explicitly to your career goals, what specific skills do you hope to develop/enhance that would be transferable to your professional goals?
2. **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:** What do you hope to learn about community or do as a member of a community from your experience? “Community” can be understood differently depending on the context of your experience. It could be a local or international community, society at large, the community within Messiah College or another academic context, a professional community within a workplace, organization or field/industry, or a community within a team of individuals.

Consider using the **SMART** goal setting method as you draft (or revise) your objectives:

Specific - What exactly is it that I want to learn or accomplish?

Measurable - How will I demonstrate that I learned or accomplished it?

Achievable - What steps will I take to learn this?

Relevance - How is this related to my personal and professional growth?

Time bound - By when will I complete this?

OUTCOMES

At the conclusion of the experience, students will document the outcomes of their learning goals:

Did you achieve what you hoped to learn or be able to do, as stated in your learning goals? If so, provide supportive evidence of this. If not, provide rationale for why you did not achieve your goal(s).

Appendix B: ELI Outcome Reflection Questions and Assessment Rubric for Career Application

Regardless of the type of experience, students participating in an ELI-approved experience must respond to the following reflection questions at the conclusion of the experience:

- 1. What knowledge and skills were you able to hone or gain in this ELI experience that you could apply within a professional context? Describe and give examples from your ELI experience of at least two transferable skills you gained/honed from the experience. For example, communication (speaking, listening, interpersonal), adaptability, creativity, team work, leadership, problem solving, critical thinking, conflict resolution, decision making, and time management are all valuable, transferable professional skills. Describe how or why those skills might benefit you in a professional setting in the future.*
- 2. What did “community” look like in your particular experience, and how did your engagement in this experience further shape your understanding of community? As you reflect on your experience, what is one specific way you foresee your future self engaging in and contributing to community? Your answer could relate to areas such as: purposeful influence in church and society; the work of reconciling individuals with God, each other, and/or creation; or demonstrating the love of God in service to others.*

Assessment Rubric for All ELI Experiences

Student Name: _____ Experience Category: Internship/Practicum Service Learning Off-Campus Prog Leadership Research

***In order for students to successfully fulfill the ELI Requirement, they must obtain at least nine (9) points on this rubric.**

Item evaluated	Dimension & Mapping	Exemplary 4	Proficient 3	Basic 2	Below Basic 1
Reflection Question 1	Professional Development Self-Awareness ULO	Student articulates at least two transferable skills, connecting the demonstration of that skill in the ELI experience to its value as a professional skill. Student demonstrates advanced ability to articulate the value of their transferable skill in a professional context.	Student effectively articulates at least two transferable skills, connecting the demonstration of that skill in the ELI experience to its value as a professional skill.	Student's identification and description of their transferable skills are not adequately connected to the ELI and/or the skill's value in a professional context.	Student does not identify two transferable skills and/or does not connect them to the ELI and a professional context.
Reflection Question 2	Community Engagement Social Responsibility ULO	Student articulates with particular depth, insight, or detail the meaning of community in their ELI context, what s/he learned about community from the experience, and ways they envision engaging in/contributing to community in the future	Student effectively articulates the meaning of community in their ELI context, describes what s/he learned about community from the experience, and identifies at least one way they envision engaging in/contributing to community in the future	Student's response does not adequately connect their description of community to the ELI experience or does not adequately describe one way they envision engaging in/contributing to community in the future	Student does not articulate the meaning of community in their ELI context, or does not describe what s/he learned about community, or does not describe future contributions to community
Career Application	Professional Development Self-awareness ULO	Student demonstrates advanced ability to articulate transferable skills from the ELI and present them compellingly in the career application format	Career application effectively articulates professionally transferable skills gained in the ELI and presents them in a format appropriate to the application type (resume, portfolio, etc.)	Career application either does not effectively articulate professionally transferable skills or does not present them in a format appropriate to the application type (resume, portfolio, etc.)	Career application does not articulate professionally transferable skills, does not present content in a format appropriate to the application type (resume, portfolio, etc.)

**Appendix D: Sample Schedule
IDCC 260 France Cross Cultural
May Term 2019**

DATES in MAY 2021: May 25-June 14, 2021

	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
Morning	24 May 2019	25 Arrival in France	26 Classroom Time: Orientation and Overview Classroom reserved	27 Service project Ecomuseum Reichstett	28 Bus reserved Josy, RDV 8:45 Daytrip: Struthof visite libre 10h concentration camp	29 Free day	30 Free morning See list of church services
Afternoon	Departure from US	Train arrives from CDG 17:01 Move in with host families Dinner with families	Activities in downtown Strasbourg: "jeu de piste" and religious inventories work Dinner with families	Dinner with families	Le Mont Sainte Odile, hike Dinner with families	Students on their own for dinner 20h30 Bal folk Illkirch	15:00 Canal boat ride Historical museum (open until 18:00, free 1st Sun of month.)
Morning	31 Classroom reserved	1 June Free morning Train 11h51STR-12h21 COL. 12h44 COL - 13h16 MUN 12 jeunes + 2 adults train tickets. Alex takes 3 students by car and shuttles to Hohrodberg	2 Day Hohrodberg monastery 8h Prière du matin 8h30 Breakfast Activities in area, Hike to Le Linge WWI battlefield Packed lunches. JOURNAL #1	3 8h Prière du matin 8h30 Breakfast Alex pickup 10:00, shuttle to gare, 3 home in car. Train 11h36 MUN - 12h01 COL 12h37 COL - 13h09 STR	4 Train Stras 8:51-9:21 Colmar with Alex 10:00 Unterlinden museum visite libre with audioguides Lunch free in Colmar	5 Train 8:15-9:45 Without Alex Daytrip to Nancy 10:30 Musee ecole de Nancy guided tour in English, pre-paid by check guide Marianne Vallois	6 Free day See list of church services Suggestion: rent Velhop bicycles and ride Canal de la Bruche to Molsheim
Afternoon	14:30 Visit Council of Europe Dinner with families	Classroom reserved QUIZ 18:30 Prière du soir 19h Meal with Soeurs Night at Hohrodberg 17 beds	18:30 Prière du soir 19h Meal with Soeurs Night at Hohrodberg 17 beds	Free afternoon Dinner with families	Train 14:34 Colmar-14:46 Séléstat 16:00 guided visit Maison du Pain with tasting 17:52 Train Sele- 18:12 Stras Dinner with families	Afternoon free in Nancy Return train 17:15-18:41 Students on their own for dinner.	Dinner with families
Morning	7	8	9	10 JOURNAL #2	11	12	13

		Visit to EU Parliament	Classroom reserved	Train to Paris 10h43 - 12h33	Paris Museum passes 2 days Metro passes	Paris	Fly to US
Afternoon	Dinner with families	20h Ballet at opera Dinner with families	12h15 Cooking class Cuisine-aptitude 17h mosque visit Dinner with families	check into hostel 1 quad, 1 10-bed, 3 twins			

	ELI Reflection Questions Due
6/19 Friday	Identity Photo Journal Due <i>and</i> ELI Cover Letter (Career Application) Due

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

1. The course fee for this cross-cultural course is \$4300 less the \$200 deposit. (Due to the variability of international currency, please note that final course fees will be published in the fall.)
2. Cross-cultural course fees will be included as part of regular spring semester billing and will be assessed to your Messiah account. (If you are a part-time student, you will be billed for three credit hours of tuition in addition to the course fee.)
3. Your financial aid will apply to this course. Be sure to include the cost of this course in your FAFSA application for the upcoming academic year. (Individual student or group fund-raising is not permitted.)
4. Students are also eligible for the following rebates:
 - a. Student living on-campus will receive a \$200 housing rebate.
 - b. Students with an ultra (unlimited) meal plan will receive a \$300 board rebate.
5. Following is the refund policy for cross-cultural courses:
 - a. The initial \$200 deposit is non-refundable.
 - b. Because payments on your behalf are typically made months in advance to travel agencies, airline companies, and assorted accommodations, many payments are non-refundable. ***Therefore, if you withdraw from participation in the trip for any reason or are removed from participation by the College after September 15th, you will be billed for any non-recoverable or non-transferable expenses incurred on your behalf. The exact amount of recovered monies can generally not be established until the trip has been completed.***

SPECIAL NOTES

1. **Passports** – You must have a valid passport that is not within 6 months of expiration.
2. **Luggage** – Typically you are limited to one piece of checked luggage and one carry on. Airlines have a carry-on weight in many cases begin at 15 pounds and a checked baggage

weight limit of 50 pounds. This varies from airline. Please check with your airline for their baggage restrictions.

3. **Shots** – Be sure immunizations are up to date and that you receive any vaccines recommended for travel
4. **Medical Information Form** – Be sure to return your Medical Information Form. You will need to also submit your insurance information in the event you need emergency medical attention. You should carry your insurance card if you have one.
5. **Telephones** – Remind significant others that telephones may be few and far between, so you won't be calling often.
6. **Medication** – All medication, both over-the-counter and prescribed, should be in its properly labeled container.
7. **Student Conduct** – Messiah College Standards for Student Conduct, as outlined in the Community Covenant and Student Handbook, apply to cross-cultural courses. Should it become necessary to send a student home early because of behavioral problems, the additional expense will be paid by the student being expelled from the class. Students are also required to sign a study abroad contract which outlines expectations on behavior and conduct.
8. **Information for Students with Disabilities who may Require Accommodation** - Messiah College makes reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities who are otherwise qualified to participate in its activities and programs. However, the Americans with Disabilities Act does not govern accessibility standards in other countries. The College does not discriminate on the basis of disability in admissions for study abroad programs, but is not responsible for assuring accessibility in international locations and cannot guarantee that accommodation will be available. While the College will try to arrange accommodation for special needs, students with disabilities must understand that some international experiences may not be appropriate for them. In order to address this concern, College policy requires students with special needs who require accommodation to self-identify at the time of application for participation in an international experience. These students must notify the Disability Services office of their interest in participating in an international experience and of their need for accommodation. The Director of Disability Services will meet with the student and sponsoring faculty member to determine whether the student's needs can be accommodated.
9. **Alcohol Policy** - Messiah College prohibits the manufacture, possession, use, or distribution of illegal drugs and alcohol by all students. It is expected that while students are enrolled in course work (including breaks during the academic year, i.e., Christmas break, Spring Break) they will not use alcohol or illegal drugs both on and off campus.

EXCEPTIONS:

Of-age students may responsibly consume alcohol:

1. When they are with their parents or guardians.
2. When the occasion is consistent with celebrations, rituals, or religious traditions (i.e., toasting at weddings, taking communion) associated with family or a host family.

If you have questions concerning the alcohol policy and/or its application to certain situations, you are encouraged to contact the Office of Community Development in Eisenhower 204, (717) 796-5239.

Violation of this policy may result in sanctions ranging from a letter of reprimand to expulsion.

10. **Insurance Policy** - The current international travel assistance insurance for which students and faculty pay when they travel abroad specifically excludes liability (i.e. refuses to pay) for losses occurring as a result of certain ultra-hazardous activities. These activities include motorcycle driving, scuba diving, skiing, mountain climbing, sky diving, professional or amateur racing, and piloting an aircraft. The insurance is not intended to cover these activities or others of the like (bungee jumping, flying in private aircraft, etc.). Faculty is not to include such activities in course curriculum or to otherwise authorize students to participate in them.