



EAT, PRAY, LOVE: SACRED SPACE AND THE PLACE OF RELIGION IN 21ST CENTURY FRANCE

Fall 2016 Wednesdays: Oct 5, Oct 12, Oct 19, Oct 26, Nov 2, Nov 9, Nov 16, Nov 30, Dec 7
3:35-5:15pm in Carlton 209

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GBL 167 1 s.h. Required pre-departure course for GBL 267 Winter Term in France.

Course description: With time spent in Paris, in the vibrant medieval city of Montpellier, France, just ten minutes from the Mediterranean Sea, and in cities and towns nearby, this course will explore both historical and current notions of sacred space and perceptions of religious experience in French culture through the palate of gastronomy, art, architecture, and popular music. In so doing, students will examine France's paradoxical relationship to itself and study this country's shifts in national identity vis-a-vis organized religion due to decolonization and immigration during the last century. Course facilitation will include cultural studies texts, journal articles, French/Francophone literature in translation, video news reports and podcasts, films, documentaries, popular music, and on-site visits to places such as restaurants, cafés, cathedrals, abbeys, castles, the Papal palace in Avignon, mosques, a medieval synagogue and Jewish ghetto.



The Great Mosque of Paris

From the Holy Land to Hagia Sophia and Mt. Fuji to Mecca, why do we experience some places as more special than others?

- What makes a sacred space feel like hallowed ground?
- What precisely do we mean by *holy*?
- How do various subcultures express their understanding of self and world in the location and design of certain spaces that they consider sacred?

From Paris to Montpellier

Both Paris and Montpellier afford a rich variety of ancient and contemporary sites, Jewish, Christian, Buddhist, Muslim and prehistoric, where we can explore the meaning of the sacred as it is set forth in geographical and architectural forms. And yet, not every location we visit may strike you as religious in the traditional sense. Imagine, if you will, le Louvre as a temple of visual art, le *Stade de France* as the high church of soccer, the Cordon Bleu as the cathedral of haute cuisine.

Paris breathes intellectual air, ethnic and religious diversity, artistic appreciation, and culinary excellence at every corner: with its open-air markets, bistros, and *boulangeries*, its myriad of museums, historic landmarks and countless places of worship— all these spaces are deemed sacred by different people, and thus Paris embodies an ideal location to learn about cultural cohabitations in a multi-ethnic and multi-faith society.

The city of Montpellier is located in south central France 10 minutes from the Mediterranean. It was established around 985CE as a village of merchants importing spices from the Levant. With the imports came the medical uses of their products from the knowledge of Arabic medicine. By 1000CE, many Arab and Jewish trading partners were teaching merchants and students there. The school of medicine founded at this time is the oldest in Europe and still a prestigious medical school today. Montpellier is a vibrant, animated medieval city with a diverse population.



Why France?

In the US, France is beloved by many, despised by some, and all too often misunderstood. Yet France has long been a valuable partner of the US, politically and militarily, and its culture wields extensive influence over American arts, fashion, and food.

Students seeking to become global citizens stand to learn a great deal about their own cultural assumptions from first-hand experience of French politics, customs, and mores.

Moreover, exposure to the history and current state of relations among the many and varied religious communities in France will provide a rich source of information and possible options for how the United States might move forward into an increasingly multi-cultural future.



The Catacombs, Paris

In this course we will:

- Express ourselves in our own words on a variety of topics, some perhaps controversial or quite foreign to our own cultural conditioning;
- Explore French points of view on culture, space, place, privacy, and religion, and draw cultural comparisons;
- Establish links/make connections between the study of French culture and perspectives and other academic disciplines;
- Extend the study of French culture, French-American relations, and the concept of sacred space beyond the classroom and into larger communities.

Course expectations for students and professor:

The student will:

- come to class having checked the Moodle site for assignments and announcements.
- come to class having read and completed the assigned work.
- come to class prepared to engage in active class discussion and small group or pair activities, volunteering often.
- answer and ask questions frequently.
- demonstrate effort throughout the term.
- adhere to the Elon academic and social honor codes.

The professors will:

- be enthusiastic and rigorous about teaching and learning.
- provide opportunities for discussion, reading, and writing throughout the course.
- make every effort to answer student questions in a timely manner.
- be available to help students who are having difficulty.
- conduct the course with integrity and be exemplary ambassadors abroad.

Growth on Many Levels

Study abroad offers an amazing opportunity to grow in various ways. Please see below for examples of our high expectations for your experience this semester, which will ultimately inform and enhance your time in France. Consider adding your own goals below and explore this syllabus as well as the Winter Term itinerary to start planning how to achieve them!

Academic Course Goals

- To study, question and analyze: a) the nature of religion and its many cultural manifestations; b) the history and current status of religious culture in France; c) how perceptions of sacrality are embodied and expressed in art and architectural styles, and d) contemporary religious expressions and activities in non-traditional forms.
- To strengthen socio-linguistic awareness;
- To experience and develop writing, speaking, reading, critical thinking and reflection skills.

Global Engagement Goals

- Critically evaluate one's own culture and biases.
-Student Learning Outcome: The student will convey a complex understanding of national self-identity in comparison with French national identity.
-Assessment medium: Learning Journal with specific prompts.
- Understand the multiple dimensions of human experience within and across cultures and environments (also Core Curriculum goal #5).
-Student Learning Outcome: The student will convey an informed understanding of the increasing tensions of a staunchly secular society confronted by issues of religion rooted in its colonial past as embodied in a largely Muslim immigrant population primarily of Northern African descent.
-Assessment medium: Group presentation on particular sacred sites in the course itinerary while abroad.

Other global engagement goals for this course include a) analyzing the interconnectedness of global systems, and b) examining one's responsibilities as an active global citizen informed by multiple cultural perspectives.

Individual goals

- _____
- _____
- _____

Course and University policies

Success: *The most important thing you must do to succeed in the class is to inform us of anything that you do not understand immediately. You can meet with us during office hours or contact us via e-mail. We truly enjoy the student contact and are here to be helpful. Please let us know in advance if you plan to come to office hours or if you would like to meet at another time/day.*

The way to get the most out of any course is by doing assignments to be prepared for each class session, and then attending class and participating actively. But you will get more out of the course if you go above and beyond with suggestions under "Useful Resources" (see page 6). This course is largely discussion based and will revolve around assigned readings and personal experiences. It promises to be engaging, enlightening and even entertaining, but everyone must do his/her part in order for the whole to function at its best.

Attendance: *Attendance is mandatory. Attendance is taken at the beginning of class. A student is expected to arrive on time and be present for the entire class period during the fall semester. To allow for illness or other unforeseen situations, students in this once per week pre-departure course are allotted 1 absence total no questions asked. Two late arrivals or two early departures (or a combination thereof) constitutes one absence.*

Showing up for classes/events is not sufficient to receive full participation credit. It is only fair to your classmates that you display a positive attitude and serious interest in what we are doing. Complaining and other such behaviors spoil experiences for everyone, so keep a positive attitude and trudge on even under adverse conditions. Remember: we're all in this thing together!

Technology: Please turn off and store all cell phones, tablets and laptop computers prior to entering class (unless I have asked you to use your laptop for a particular activity). Having them on your desk or in your lap is not acceptable. **Failure to comply with this policy will negatively impact your participation grade.**

Grading Policy: *Final grades are NOT rounded up. Please be aware of this policy, and take responsibility for your performance in the course.*

A= 93-100 A-= 90-92.99	"A" indicates <i>distinguished</i> performance in a course.
B+= 87-89.99 B= 83-86.99 B-= 80-82.99	"B" indicates <i>above-average</i> performance in class.
C+= 77-79.99 C= 73-76.99 C-= 70-72.99	"C" indicates <i>average</i> performance in which a basic understanding of the subject has been demonstrated.
D+= 67-69.99 D= 63-66.99 D-=60-62.99	"D" indicates <i>passing</i> performance with deficiencies.
F= 59.99-0	"F" indicates <i>failed</i> performance.

Grade calculation: Pre-departure

Pre-departure

35%	Active Participation in pre-departure course
45%	3 Learning Journals
<u>20%</u>	Group Presentation on one course Destination
100%	

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/eweb/students/conduct/violations.xhtml>

HONESTY: *Be truthful in your academic work and in your relationships.*

INTEGRITY: *Be trustworthy, fair and ethical.*

RESPONSIBILITY: *Be accountable for your actions and your learning.*

RESPECT: *Be civil. Value the dignity of each person. Honor the physical and intellectual property of others.*

NOTE: The legal drinking age is 18 in France. Wine is an important part of French culture and viticulture is a sacred art and science there. Though we will be visiting vineyards and wine bars as well as tasting wines and consuming some with meals while in France, excessive drinking is not acceptable. Excessive use of alcohol results in an inability to meaningfully participate in scheduled activities or assignments. It poses a risk to your own safety (be it through accidents or increased vulnerability), and to the safety of others. It also poses a risk to the integrity of the course as inappropriate student behavior may result in canceling of agreements with hotels, transportation companies, guides, guest lecturers, etc.

Furthermore, as binge drinking is not common or acceptable in France, it reflects poorly on our own culture and prohibits the development of cross-cultural alliances. Students may not consume alcohol before or during any course-related activities. Missing events due to alcohol-related illness or showing up hung-over or with alcohol on one's breath is also unacceptable. Violation of these policies will negatively affect your class participation grade. Repeated violations will result in a loss of all engaged participation credit (20% of your overall WT grade). Professors will report all breaches of this policy or excessive use of alcohol outside of class time to the Isabella Cannon Centre for Global Education. *Any alcohol use that results in endangering the well-being of the student or of other students, or affects any course activities, will result in the student being sent home at his/her own expense and being terminated from the course with a grade of F. Students who violate this policy will also face honor code violation charges upon return to Elon.*

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/support/disabilities_services.xhtml

Counseling Services: For Elon students, faculty, and staff, Counseling Services is always available as a resource for consultation at www.elon.edu/e-web/students/counseling_services/ or (336) 278-7280 during business hours.

Useful resources

Your classmates: It is often useful to meet up with a classmate outside of class to discuss readings, to watch French films, to attend worship services, or to get additional notes if you have been absent. Please meet a couple of classmates and note their name and phone numbers here for your future reference:

Student : _____ Student: _____

French at Elon: Although class time is limited, there are other ways to develop and maintain your communicative skills.

- Like the *All Things French at Elon* Facebook page to stay up to date on opportunities on campus.
- Get together with peers for reading and discussion groups outside of class!
- Join Elon's dynamic French Club.
- Participate in the weekly *Table française* for informal conversation with other Francophones on campus each week.
- Check out the language living-learning community, the Polyglot House in the Global Neighborhood.
- Read more about "French on campus" under our "quick links" at <http://www.elon.edu/french>
- Attend film showings at our annual French Film Festival. See Moodle for a schedule of films.
- Our library has more than 600 films in French. Check them out!
- Listen to French music! France's music is as diverse as its population. Did you know that France is the 2nd largest producer of Rap and Hip-hop music after the US? Just tell us what genres you like, and we'll be happy to help make you an intro playlist!

Religious Studies at Elon: There are many opportunities to get involved in academic, cultural and religious communities at Elon. How can you learn more?

- Take REL 110 Religion in a Global Context, which satisfies one of your civilization requirements for General Studies, or one of the many other courses offered by the Department of Religious Studies.
- Attend religious services from different faiths whether on or off campus (see below).
- Watch films that feature interfaith conflict and understanding as themes, many of which will be shown on campus this semester. http://www.elon.edu/e-web/students/religious_life/
- Visit and/or volunteer at the Truitt Center for Religious and Spiritual Life. http://www.elon.edu/e-web/students/religious_life/upcomingevents.xhtml
- Visit the Elon Center for the Study of Religion, Culture, and Society in the Numen Lumen Pavilion or online.

The Elon Center for the Study of Religion, Culture, and Society highlights and promotes the interdisciplinary study of religion, culture, and society. This faculty-led center draws together faculty from disciplines across Elon's campus, with students, staff, community members, and experts from the region and beyond. The Center will work to foster research, teaching, and dialogue that inform community knowledge and action. <http://elon.edu/e---web/academics/studyofreligion/default.xhtml>



Pre-Departure Course Calendar The course calendar below is subject to change. It is the student's responsibility to check email and Moodle before each class for all assignments and announcements.

- Wed, Oct 5** "Coffee with the profs" in our classroom (Carlton 209)
 Why'd you sign up for this course? How was the course born? Discussion of course identity
 Read: FRENCH OR FOE Ch 1-2 + Secret Language of Sacred Spaces Ch 1-2
 Language: Greetings and the 10 Magic Words
 Business: Itinerary/Syllabus/PASSPORTS/Feeder space
 Assignment of student presentations on itinerary destinations (rubric to be posted on Moodle)
- Wed, Oct 12** *Intro: Welcome to France!*
 Read: 60 million Frenchmen intro + ch 1-2 and Sheldrake ch 1 (on Moodle) and Religions in France article (on Moodle)
 DUE: Learning Journal 1 (prompt posted on Moodle)
- Wed, Oct 19** *Stereotypes, student perceptions of France as a country, Religion in general, Islam as a religion*
 Read: 60 million Frenchmen ch.3- 4...+Living Religions Intro Chapter (on Moodle)
 Language: Food in cafés and restaurants (tipping, seating, timing, etc)
 Presentation 1: Synagogue of Avignon
- Wed, Oct 26** *France Today: The Colonial Past's Link to the Present--day Population*
 Read: 60 million Frenchmen ch 8 + Watch: *Battle of Algiers* (on Moodle)
 Language: Food in stores and open air markets
 Presentation 2: Lerab Ling Buddhist Center
 DUE: Learning Journal 2 (prompt posted on Moodle)
- Wed, Nov 2** *Cultural embeddedness and embodiment of religion: France's conventional religious traditions: Catholicism, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism & the concept of sacred space*
 Read: Secular Pilgrimage + Un Monument Durable
 Language: Transportation, directions and help
 Presentation 3: St Guilhem le Désert

Wed, Nov 9	Read: 60 million Frenchmen ch 20-21 + Transnational Islam in Interwar Europe (on Moodle) Presentation 4: Great Mosque of Paris DUE: Learning Journal 3 (prompt posted on Moodle)
Wed, Nov 16	Janelle Papay visits to present on issues of mental and physical health, personal safety/security, etc. Language: health and security basics Presentation 5: Sacré Cœur Basilica
Wed, Nov 30	Read: Maximizing Study Abroad (on Moodle) Presentation 6: Papal Palace of Avignon
Wed, Dec 7	Last day of course: Essential language, cuisine, navigation, communication Academic and behavioral expectations abroad + Honor Code Logistics, Final Itinerary, What to bring, not to bring, Q&A