

Advanced French: North African Francophone Literature

FREN 3003-3503 (3 Credits / 45 hours)

SIT Study Abroad Program:
Tunisia and Italy: Politics and Religious Integration in the Mediterranean

PLEASE NOTE: This syllabus represents a recent semester. Because courses develop and change over time to take advantage of unique learning opportunities, actual course content varies from semester to semester.

Course Description

This intensive course aims to extend and strengthen previously acquired competencies necessary for French speech, comprehension, reading, and writing, through integrating traditional classroom instruction, field-based activities, and homestay practice with a focus on local Francophone literature and media. The course is primarily designed to develop student's communicative proficiency in French. While emphasis is placed primarily upon oral comprehension and developing conversational competencies (i.e. listening and speaking), reading and writing are also highlighted as crucial to the reinforcement of those skills.

The bilingual cultural contexts of Tunisia and the Maghreb are built into the course and introduced through a variety of readings, audiovisual materials, and experiential activities. These materials and exercises augment the course textbook, which has been specifically designed for the program by SIT Tunisia language instructors. While the previous language levels focus on daily life through an emphasis on conversational and communicative approaches, Advanced French: North African Francophone Literature addresses increasingly complex issues related to culture, politics, society, religion, and gender, amongst other topics. The structural and grammatical usages of French are, at this level, emphasized as necessary linguistic tools enabling students to critically analyze French and Francophone texts and discourses and to express ideas in French at an appropriate level.

An integrative focus on textual readings from magazines and newspapers, fiction and poetry, music, and film/television aims to foster an enlightened, sophisticated, and sensitive understanding of the bilingual phenomenon in the postcolonial culture of Tunisia and North Africa.

Language Levels and Placement

Students are placed into appropriate language course levels based on estimated-ACTFL oral proficiency interviews and written exams (placement tests) conducted during orientation in Tunisia.

Course Objectives

Advanced French: North African Francophone Literature has an interdisciplinary and experiential focus, encompassing 45 class hours (3 credits). Its main objectives are to:

- Gain advanced proficiency in spoken French;

- Explore a variety of local Francophone literary and media sources in Tunisia and their specific usage of French;
- Employ French confidently and effectively in everyday situations and in reading sophisticated prose in literature and the media;
- Acquire insight into the role of French language within Tunisian and Maghrebi life and culture.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the program, students will have mastered the following linguistic competencies in French:

- Read short stories or novellas in French with ease and confidence
- Read and comprehend complete news items from local print media sources
- Compose an elaborate personal letter to relatives and friends about North Africa
- Write at some length and about one's personal experiences in Tunisia
- Write suitably and at some length about hobbies, interests, and academic plans
- Meaningfully discuss one's ISP
- Describe the homestay and SIT neighborhoods in detail
- Conduct full-fledged interviews in French
- Understand TV weather reports, news, and chat-shows
- Initiate conversation with the AD and SIT staff
- Narrate an intricate event of daily life in Tunisia
- Summarize a local film, play, or novel
- Tell jokes in French
- Narrate a day on the program, including an educational excursion

Course Requirements

Students will be placed in small groups according to the results of the in-country placement test. Each group will be assigned specific reading materials corresponding to its level. Readings will serve as the basis for oral presentations in class and written commentary to be submitted periodically to the language instructor. Students are responsible for all required readings and should be prepared to bring them to bear on discussions in class. The readings will help you to place the classes in context, challenge and engage lecturers, generate questions for class discussions, and deepen your knowledge of particular aspects discussed in class. Students will be sent out to perform field-based exercises and activities and will be required to give oral presentations and write detailed narrative accounts of these experiential drills. In addition to regular communication in French-speaking homestays, field activities include visits to local Francophone radio stations, print media facilities, and French instruction classes in neighboring schools. Students will also be assigned newspaper and magazine articles, short stories, and films for explication and comment, either in class or as individual homework.

Required Readings

In addition to a reading packet prepared by the program's French instructors, readings for Advanced French: North African Francophone Literature include:

Bescherelle. *La grammaire pour tous*, éd. Hatier, Paris, 2002. ISBN: 978-2218717185.

Chraïbi, Driss. *Le passé simple*, Paris, 1986 [1954]. ISBN: 978-0785920311.

Djebar, Assia. *Femmes d'Alger dans leur Appartement*, Livre de Poche, Paris 2004. ISBN-10-2253068217

Ghachem, Moncef. *Mugelières*. éd. Apogée, Paris 2010. ISBN-10 2843983703

Memmi, Albert. *La statue de sel*, éd. Flammarion, Paris, 1972. ISBN: 978-2070362066.

Supplementary texts include:

- films, television, and other audiovisual materials
- magazines and newspapers

Evaluation and Grading Criteria

Evaluation takes into account the combined testing results from regular homework assignments, oral tests, and regular oral and written presentations of field activities and assigned readings. Timely completion of all French assignments is expected. Late hand-ins will be penalized. All assignments are evaluated according to organization, analytical quality, depth of understanding, argumentation, and presentation of evidence. Tests will not be repeated for absentees. Only certifiable and verifiable absences from tests will be accepted.

Oral Grade

Final oral exam	25%
In-class presentation of field assignments	10%
In-class presentation of assigned readings	10%
Class participation	5%

Written Grade

Final written exam	25%
Written skills in regular class tests	10%
Written skills in <i>rédaction</i> test	10%
In-class <i>dictée</i>	5%

Grading Scale

The grading scale for all classes is as follows:

94-100%	A
90-93%	A-
87-89%	B+
84-86%	B
80-83%	B-
77-79%	C+
74-76%	C
70-73%	C-
67-69%	D+
64-66%	D
below 64%	F

Grading Criteria

Grades are assigned fairly, rigorously and in accordance with the system charted below. French instructors also take into account the student's efforts expended to achieve specific learning goals and outcomes specified at the start of the semester by the academic director, the language instructor, and the student. An "A" letter grade reflects superior or exceptional work, indicating mastery of the competencies expected in that particular assignment. A "B" grade demonstrates that the student has some possession of the required competencies but is not entirely in control of them. A grade of "C" reflects work that is satisfactory, while a "D" reflects insufficiency. In terms of class participation, an "A" grade refers to full attendance, punctuality, attentive listening, and active engagement in all discussions, classroom exercises, field trips, and other activities. It also means polite and respectful behavior. The level, frequency, and quality of student participation will be monitored and taken into account.

Our French instructors prefer to give numerical grades on a scale of 1 to 20. They generally tend to be more conservative in their grade assignments than US teachers. The following chart shows the equivalencies between the instructors' numerical grades and their alphabetical counterparts:

A = 19 or 20/20	B- = 12/20	D+ = 8/20
A- = 17 or 18/20	C+ = 11/20	D = 7/20
B+ = 15 or 16/20	C = 10/20	D- = 6/20
B = 13 or 14/20	C- = 9/20	F = 5/20

*Note that all written assignments should be presented in typed format. Assignments submitted by email will not be accepted

Additional Information

Homestays

As a complement to language classes, homestays provide students with the opportunity to learn from different people and to use their language skills continually in a multilingual learning environment. Students will be placed in French-speaking host families to facilitate everyday interactions and bolster continued language learning. Our goal is to help students develop the necessary communication tools which they can use with their host families, neighbors, and Tunisians on the street.

Student Expectations

Class Participation

Class participation reflects regular attendance, punctuality, attentive listening, and active participation in all program activities: lectures, language instruction classes, educational excursions, and field activities. Any absence will have to be justified. In pursuit of clear academic objectives and learning outcomes, students are expected to be polite, respectful of their teachers and program staff, and responsible and sensitive toward the host culture.

Please note that the syllabus, course content, lecturers, and readings may be modified by the academic director in order to better suit the needs of the course and its participants. Should any change of class topics or lecturers be necessary, students will be promptly notified.

Expectations and Policies

- Show up prepared. Be on time, have your readings completed and points in mind for discussion or clarification. Complying with these elements raises the level of class discussion for everyone.
- Have assignments completed on schedule, printed, and done according to the specified requirements. This will help ensure that your assignments are returned in a timely manner.
- Ask questions in class. Engage the lecturer. These are often very busy professionals who are doing us an honor by coming to speak.
- Comply with academic integrity policies (no plagiarism or cheating, nothing unethical).
- Respect differences of opinion (classmates, lecturers, local constituents we engage with on site visits). You are not expected to agree with everything you hear, but you are expected to listen across difference and consider other perspectives with respect.

Academic Policies: SIT prides itself on providing students with an experientially based program; we hold ourselves, and our students, to the highest of academic standards. Students are asked to refer to the **SIT Study Abroad Handbook** for policies on academic integrity, ethics, academic warning and probation, diversity and disability, sexual harassment and the academic appeals process.

Disability Services: Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact Disability Services at disabilityservices@sit.edu for information and support in facilitating an accessible educational experience. Additional information regarding SIT Disability Services, including a link to the online request form, can be found on the Disability Services website at <http://studyabroad.sit.edu/disabilityservices>.