Course Syllabus

Intermediate French:
French in Tunisian Contexts
FREN 2000-2500 (3 Credits / 45 class hours)
SIT Study Abroad Program:
Tunisia: Emerging Identities in North Africa

Course Description
This intensive course aims to develop sophisticated skills in speaking, understanding, reading and writing French, through traditional classroom instruction, field-based activities, and continuing homestay practice. 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. Thus the course is designed to help the student acquire French language and to grasp cultural practices in the Francophone world. Tunisian and North African cultural context is built into the course and introduced through audiovisual materials and experiential activities accompanying the textbook that has been specifically prepared by SIT language instructors. French skills in Tunisian context are further reinforced through regular communication with members of French-speaking host families, and activities including excursions to local francophone radio stations, print media facilities, and French instruction classes in local schools. This more advanced language level gives students an in-depth background on everyday life, enabling the mastery of critical language skills necessary for performing a variety of activities. The objective of the course is to review and expand on topics including: travel, relationships, ceremonies, services (especially public administration), speaking about one’s career (personal achievements), talking about oneself (autobiography), and cultural and literary subjects specific to Tunisia and North Africa more broadly (including films, books, favorite TV programs).

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
Intermediate French: French in Tunisian Contexts has an interdisciplinary and experiential focus, encompassing 45 class hours (3 credits). Its main objectives are to:
- Enhance proficiency in spoken French;

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• Develop strong oral/written comprehension and writing skills;
• Employ French confidently and effectively in everyday situations and addressing a broad range of topics;
• 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:

• Explain in detail what they are studying and their life in general in Tunisia
• Order in a café or restaurant and take a complicated message on the phone
• Speak about themselves and their friends and families
• Use idiomatic expressions spontaneously in connection with specific situations
• Give a fairly detailed description of their hometown and their neighborhood
• Talk about their ISP
• Describe, in a fairly detailed fashion, a public or religious event or ceremony
• Conduct an interview in French
• Understand weather reports and news items on French TV
• Formulate requests to SIT staff and members of host families
• Narrate an event and summarize a film or novel
• Detail an episode from an educational excursion
• Analyze an article from a Tunisian French daily: La Presse, Le Temps, etc.

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
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 or write detailed narrative accounts of these experiential drills. In addition to regular communication in French-speaking homestays, outside activities include visits to local francophone radio stations, print media facilities, and French instruction classes in local schools. Students will also be assigned newspaper and magazine articles and short stories for explication and comment, either in class or as individual homework.

Required Texts
In addition to a Reading Packet prepared by the program’s French instructors, readings for the Intermediate French: French in Tunisian Contexts level include:


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Supplementary texts include:
- Films, television, and other audiovisual materials
- Magazines and newspapers

**Please note:** Course contents, lecturers and readings may be modified as needed. Should any change of class topics or lecturers be necessary, students will be promptly notified.

**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 "rédaction" test 10%
- In-class "dictée" 5%

**Grading Scale:** The grading scale for all classes is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>94-100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>84-86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>74-76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67-69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>64-66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>below 64</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**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,

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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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Numerical Grade</th>
<th>Alphabetical Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A = 19 or 20/20</td>
<td>A = A+ = 19 or 20/20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A- = 17 or 18/20</td>
<td>A- = 17 or 18/20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+ = 15 or 16/20</td>
<td>A- = 17 or 18/20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B = 13 or 14/20</td>
<td>B+ = 15 or 16/20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+ = 11/20</td>
<td>B+ = 15 or 16/20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C = 10/20</td>
<td>C+ = 11/20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C- = 9/20</td>
<td>C = 10/20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+ = 8/20</td>
<td>B = 13 or 14/20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D = 7/20</td>
<td>D+ = 8/20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D- = 6/20</td>
<td>D = 7/20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*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 with French-speaking host families to further augment formal 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 FSS 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, as well as responsible and sensitive toward the host culture.

Please refer to the SIT Study Abroad handbook for policies on academic integrity, ethics, warning and probation, diversity and disability, sexual harassment and the academic appeals process. Also, refer to the specific information available in the program dossier given to you at orientation.

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