

TENNESSEE TECH UNIVERSITY
Department of Foreign Languages
3020-001 Oral Communication in French
3 credit hours
Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays
11:15am – 12:10pm
Oakley Hall 214

Instructor: Dr. Elena Kazakova

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Office Hours: Tuesdays, Thursdays 12:00pm – 2:00pm [over Zoom \(no appointment needed\)](#)

If you would like to speak with me at a different time, please schedule an appointment over email.

Texts and References:

There are no books to buy. All texts will be available online with links posted on iLearn.

Course Description:

In this course, the students will practice spoken French on different topics and in a variety of contexts. The focus will be on oral expression and communication tactics, accompanied by a review of appropriate grammatical structures, acquisition of a more nuanced vocabulary, and practice of essential rules of the French phonetics.

Course Objectives:

Through their efforts on homework assignments, in-class communicative activities, presentations, skits, and debates the students will work towards the following goals:

1. Ask and answer oral questions on a variety of topics with minor grammatical and lexical errors that do not impede communication.
2. Maintain a spontaneous conversation on a variety of topics, using appropriate communication tactics and avoiding long pauses that impede communication.
3. Present information on a variety of topics, using connected sentences with minor grammatical and lexical errors that do not impede communication.
4. Identify and articulate the main idea and specific details of a written text and oral presentation.
5. Speak with pronunciation sufficiently accurate as not to impede communication.
6. Demonstrate mastery of the essential phonetic rules of French in their speech.
7. Maintain a regular speaking pace and use intonation to enhance communication.

Methodology:

The course is in-person. We will meet every scheduled day of the semester in the classroom. Social distance and other safety precautions will be respected during our in-person meetings. Masks are required at all time.

Students are expected to come to class, having completed preparatory work on vocabulary and grammar, including completing assigned readings and worksheets. Class time will be used for oral practice through dialogs, skits, debates, and presentations, as well as review of more challenging elements of grammar and vocabulary.

Materials:

Course materials, including links to al readings, will be available on iLearn. All materials for the week will be available by the end of the day on Friday of the previous week.

Grading criteria:

20% - presentations and debates
15% - responses to presentations and debates
15% - class participation
15% - written homework
15% - VoiceThread activities
10% - midterm diagnostic
10% - final diagnostic

Grading scale:

A = 92.51 – 100
A- = 89.51 – 92.50
B+ = 86.51 – 89.50
B = 82.51 – 86.50
B- = 79.51 – 82.50
C+ = 76.51 – 79.50
C = 72.51 – 76.50
C- = 69.51 – 72.50
D = 60.00 – 69.50
F = 0.00 – 59.99

Attendance Policy:

Due to the ongoing pandemic, attendance will be taken, but will not affect the final grade in the course. Students are strongly encouraged to stay home if they don't feel well. Absences and tardiness will not negatively affect the final grade in the course.

HOWEVER, due to the communicative nature of the course, it is important that students be able to participate even when they are not able to be in class.

If you are unable to be in class, contact me as soon as possible to discuss alternatives for participation.

Participation:

Students are expected to participate each class. This includes coming to class having completed all assigned readings, worksheets, and any other homework, actively participating in all activities during the class period, and showing respect towards all people present. Please make an effort to address your peers by the names and pronouns that they prefer.

The use of electronic devices is allowed for class-related purposes, such as consulting the readings, consulting materials on iLearn, consulting an online dictionary, completing any online activities as instructed by the professor, and taking notes. Unauthorized use of electronic devices during class includes but is not limited to: browsing the Internet when not instructed by the professor, accessing social media, texting, accessing any materials that are not related to class. Using electronic devices for non-class-related purposes will constitute disruptive behavior and will negatively affect your participation grade. **The instructor reserves the right to see, at any time, the screen of any electronic device used in class.**

A participation grade of 0-2 will be assigned after each class meeting. A score of 2 is assigned when a student comes to class prepared and participates in all activities. A score of 1 is assigned when a student comes to class unprepared but still participates in all activities or comes prepared but doesn't participate in all or some of the activities. A score of 0 will be assigned for any day when a student does not come to class and does not contact the professor to discuss alternatives OR when a student is present but does not participate in any class activities.

If you are unable to come to class on any day, please contact the professor as soon as possible to discuss alternatives.

The final participation grade will be the percentage of the earned participation points / total possible participation points.

Written homework:

To minimize physical contact during the pandemic, all written homework will be electronic. It will include articles from contemporary French media, videos, worksheets that accompany the readings and the videos, and grammar review. Links to all readings and videos and electronic versions (in Microsoft Word) of the worksheets will be posted under the corresponding day in the Table of Contents on iLearn.

Worksheets will be turned in on iLearn. Students can either complete them on their computers, save, and attach them to the corresponding assignment, or print them, complete them by hand, take a picture, and attach the picture to the corresponding assignment. Students are encouraged to have the worksheets – either in printed form or on their computers – available in class to be able to check their answers and to use the vocabulary and grammar during class.

VoiceThread activities:

Oral communication includes understandable pronunciation. We will spend some time on learning essential rules of the French phonetics. Phonetics is different from the accent; phonetics is rules, such as when to keep a letter or a combination completely silent, when to make – or not make – liaisons, when an -S makes a -Z sound, etc.

We will practice these rules implicitly in class activities and other oral assessments.

We will also practice these rules explicitly through read-aloud activities. The objective is not to have to think about grammar and vocabulary, and focus on the phonetics, intonation, and general comprehensibility of your speech.

Students will record their pronunciation activities on VoiceThread, a program that allows to make video and audio comments. The program is free for the students, but requires that students create an account with an email and a password. An email invitation to join VoiceThread should come via email before our first class meeting.

These activities will also serve as practice before the two diagnostics.

Presentations and debates:

Two times during the semester each student will prepare a more formal presentation on a topic and two times each student will participate in a debate, once on the “for” side and once on the “against” side. Both the presentations and the debates will involve some research on the topic outside of class and, for the debates, preparation of the arguments and possible counter-arguments to use during the debate. Preparation will be part of the evaluation.

Dates for all presentations and debates are available in this document. All presentations and debates will take place in class on Fridays. Specific topics for all presentations and debates will be available on iLearn by Monday, January 25. Specific requirements and evaluation rubric for each will be available one week before each presentation or debate.

The goal of these activities is to demonstrate the ability to present information in a comprehensible manner, oral comprehension needed to understand and respond to the questions and the other side of a debate, and general ability to communicate orally.

Responses to presentations and debates:

Four times during the semester each student will participate in presentations and debates as an audience member. During presentations, the audience members are required to ask one question to each presenter; the question must invite further elaboration or clarification on the presenter’s part (questions with “comment” and “pourquoi” are especially useful).

During debates, the audience members are expected to take notes on the arguments and support, presented by each side, and then write a short paragraph that briefly summarizes each side’s arguments and support and then states which side convinced the author more and why. The paragraphs will be due on Monday after the debate.

No particular preparation is expected of the audience members before class. But active listening is required during presentations and debates.

The goal of these activities is to demonstrate oral comprehension skills, ability to ask questions (during debates), identify and articulate the main idea and specifics of an oral presentation, and general ability to communicate orally.

Midterm and final diagnostics:

Each student will complete two individual diagnostics with the professor: once before the Spring Break and once on the day of the scheduled final exam for the course. The goal of the diagnostics is to assess the student's progress toward the following course objectives: mastery of the essential rules of the French phonetics, maintaining regular speaking pace and using intonation, identifying and articulating the main idea and specifics of a written text, and ability to maintain a spontaneous conversation on one of the general topics covered during the semester, including asking questions.

Each diagnostic will have four parts: 1) reading a short prepared text; 2) sight-reading a short text on one of the topics covered in class; 3) briefly summarizing the second text; 4) conversation with the professor about the topics of the two texts.

Each diagnostic will last 12-15 minutes. They will take place individually with the professor in the professor's office or, if necessary, over Zoom. The final diagnostics will take place during the scheduled final exam period. The midterm diagnostics will take place the week before the Spring Break. There will not be a regular class meeting on Friday, March 12.

Sign-up sheet for both diagnostics can be found in this document. Students can sign up by writing their name next to their chosen time directly in the document.

Late and missing work:

Due to COVID-19, late work will be accepted under the following conditions:

1) Written homework and VoiceThread activities can be turned in at any point with no penalty for the assignment itself. However, not submitting your work before class implies that you are not prepared and thus will affect your participation grade for the day. Late VoiceThread submissions will not receive narrative feedback, only a score.

2) Late written responses to a debate will be accepted with no penalty. However, they will not receive narrative feedback, only a score.

3) Missed presentations and/or debates can be made up only by participating in one of the remaining presentations or debates after a discussion with and consent from the professor.

4) If you miss a diagnostic, you must contact the professor.

Academic Misconduct Policy:

Maintaining a high standard of academic integrity in every class at Tennessee Tech is critical to the reputation of Tennessee Tech, its students, alumni, and the employers of Tennessee Tech graduates. The Student Academic Misconduct Policy describes the definitions of academic misconduct and policies and procedures for addressing Academic Misconduct at Tennessee Tech. For details, view Tennessee Tech's Policy 217 – Student Academic Misconduct at [Policy Central](#).

In addition to all provisions in Policy 217, the following rule applies to the definition of academic misconduct for FREN 3020:

Any use of an unauthorized outside source to produce coursework will result in an immediate charge of academic misconduct, and a grade of zero on the assignment in question.

The term “unauthorized source” includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Online translators
- Fellow students
- Native French speakers
- Family members who speak or may have studied French
- Other professors
- Any outside source not previously and specifically authorized by the professor

Anything where you input more than an individual word (that is, a sentence, an expression, a phrase, etc.) and receive an equivalent in French counts as an online translator and is **unauthorized**.

“Authorized sources” for FREN 1010 are the following:

- English-French dictionaries, paper and/or electronic
- All materials available on the course's page on iLearn
- All materials provided by the professor in class
- Professor for the course

If you are not certain if a source is authorized, assume that it is not and contact the professor for clarification.

Disability Accommodation:

Students with a disability requiring accommodations should contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS). An Accommodation Request (AR) should be completed as soon as possible, preferably by the end of the first week of the course. The ODS is located in the Roaden University Center, Room 112; phone 372-6119. For details, view the Tennessee Tech's Policy 340 – Services for Students with Disabilities at [Policy Central](#).

COVID – 19

1. Students must take personal responsibility in following the recommended CDC COVID-19 guidelines. Students are expected to follow all COVID-19 directives published by Tennessee Tech including, but not limited to, notices on Tennessee Tech's webpage, building and facilities signage, and similar publications. The university's Return to Campus Student Handbook can be found at <https://www.tntech.edu/return/index.php>.
2. According to Tennessee Tech University's protocols, face coverings must be worn (covering the mouth and nose) by students in the classroom at all times.
3. Students must abide by predetermined social distancing guidelines and seating arrangements. Movement during class sessions should be limited as to not endanger other students or faculty. Students should be conscious and respectful of others and their health concerns.
4. Students who refuse to comply with university protocols on these matters will be reported to the Tennessee Tech Dean of Students.
5. Students should direct all requests for excused class absences related to COVID-19, regardless of where the COVID-19 testing is performed, to Tennessee Tech's Health Services. The Office of Student Affairs will provide notifications to faculty members of student absences and the expected length of the absence.