

FREN S999: French for Reading Knowledge

Instructor: Rachel Watson

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Office Hours: Before and after class and by appointment on Zoom. Please email me to arrange a meeting time.

Teaching Assistant: Jeanne Sauvage

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Office Hours: By appointment only.

Course description:

French for Reading Knowledge is a synchronous online non-credit course intended primarily for graduate students who need to conduct research in French, to pass French translation exams, or to fulfill departmental second-language requirements. It assumes no previous study of French and since it presents a strictly text-based approach to the French language, there will be little emphasis on pronunciation. We will instead focus on learning the structural essentials of French grammar and syntax, as well as acquiring basic vocabulary for a variety of academic fields. You will gain practice in close reading and translation of texts written in journalistic, literary, and scholarly styles on a variety of topics.

Because of the compressed time frame of the course and our limited number of contact hours, students are expected to spend significant time outside of class reading, building vocabulary, and studying grammar. Becoming a competent and attentive reader in any language is an ongoing process. While this course provides an introduction to the basics, in order to be truly proficient, you will need to continue reading in your field and acquiring vocabulary after the class ends. You should keep a running list of frequently used words and phrases in your discipline and quiz yourself on them regularly.

Students are expected to skim the assigned chapters *before* coming to class. Our time together on Zoom will be devoted to presenting and explaining the new grammar that students will work on until our next class meeting. Unfortunately, due to our tight schedule, there will be limited opportunity to ask questions during online class time. However, I am always happy to meet with students individually or in groups outside of class to provide additional help and answer questions.

Required Texts:

1. Karl C. Sandberg and Eddison C. Tatham, *French for Reading*, 1997 (Prentice-Hall) – any edition (print or electronic)
2. A good French-English dictionary (print or electronic). If you plan to take a translation exam where you will be required to use a hardcopy bilingual dictionary, you should invest in one now and use this course as an opportunity to become comfortable with using it. Otherwise, there are several options for online dictionaries such as linguee.com and wordreference.com. If English is not your first language (or you speak other Romance languages), it can also be useful to purchase a bilingual dictionary between French and whichever language you prefer.

Recommended Texts and Resources:

1. Mary E. Crocker, *Schaum's Outline of French Grammar*, 7th edition, 2018 (MacGraw Hill)
2. Jacqueline Morton, *English Grammar for Students of French*, 7th edition, 2013 (Olivia and Hill Press)
3. Clozemaster online vocabulary trainer and app: <https://www.clozemaster.com/>

Course requirements:

Attendance: This is an intensive course, and presence in class every day is essential. No absences are permitted. Since this is an online class, you should still attend class even if you are feeling a bit under the weather. I do not expect you to be at your best (or even feeling fully prepared) every single day, but I do want you to be present. You are allowed one excused absence for observance of a religious holiday, medical emergency, or other unavoidable situation that prevents you from attending class. If you miss two classes, you will be asked to withdraw from the course.

Homework: Daily homework consists of skimming beforehand the chapters in the textbook that will be presented in class and then studying the explanations and working through the exercises for all assigned chapters before the next class meeting. Exercises are self-graded so you can check your work as you go. You should also read the passages and complete the accompanying comprehension questions at the end of each chapter.

Tests, Midterm Project, and Final Project:

Tests: (due June 10, June 17, and June 24) There will be 3 tests throughout the course, which will be administered as “take home” exams to be written outside of class time.

Midterm Project: (due Monday, June 17) A 1-page translation of an excerpt from an article or chapter of a text in your field of study chosen in consultation with the instructor.

Final Project: (due Friday, June 28) Your final project will be a combination of a summary and translation of an article or chapter in your field. You may continue working on the text you selected for the midterm project or choose a new one in consultation with the instructor.

Grading:

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| 1. | Attendance | 20% |
| 2. | Tests | 20% |
| 3. | Midterm project | 20% |
| 4. | Final project | 40% |

Syllabus:

All homework assignments are from *French for Reading*.

Date	Main topics presented in class	Homework
Class 1	Class introduction and presentation; Cognates, nouns, adjectives, verbs ending in –er, prepositions, definite articles, <i>être</i> , <i>avoir</i> , negation, possessive adjectives	Chapters 1-3
Class 2	Verbs ending in –ir and –re, past participles, <i>passé composé</i> (past indefinite), <i>pouvoir/vouloir, qui, que</i>	Chapters 4 & 5
Class 3	<i>Faire</i> , demonstrative pronouns, passive & impersonal constructions, <i>savoir</i> , reflexive verbs (past and present), <i>falloir, venir</i>	Chapters 6-8
Class 4	Negation, <i>ne...que, suivre, passé simple</i> (past definite), present participles	Chapters 9 & 10 Test 1
Class 5	Test 1 due at start of class Imperfect, <i>plus-que-parfait</i> (past perfect), past anterior, present and past subjunctive, idioms with <i>mettre</i>	Chapters 11 & 12
Class 6	Object pronouns, imperative, <i>aller</i> , relative pronouns, idioms with <i>venir</i>	Chapters 13 & 14 Test 2
Class 7	Test 2 due at start of class Midterm project due at start of class Interrogatives, future, conditional, <i>devoir</i>	Chapters 15 & 16
Class 8	Future conditional perfect, imperfect and past perfect subjunctive, review of all verb tenses, <i>prendre</i> idioms; possessive pronouns,	Chapters 17 & 18 Test 3
Class 9	Test 3 due at start of class Expressions of time; <i>servir</i> and <i>sentir</i> , prepositional modifiers, review of <i>que</i>	Chapters 19-20
Class 10	Chapter 21: Review of <i>que</i> ; presentation and discussion of final projects	
Class 11	Final project due by 11:59 PM	