



## IFE course syllabus

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### Course title

**French Politics and the Evolving State, since Napoleon**

### Course taught by

Thérèse Krempp

Holding degrees from the Sorbonne and the Institute for Advanced Studies in the Social Sciences (EHESS), Thérèse Krempp is a specialist of the First World War and the societal upheavals resulting from four years of war. Currently she is researching wartime discovery of difference and otherness, drawing on the model of military-scientific expeditions of the 19th century. A recognized expert in her field, Thérèse publishes her findings in specialized journals as well as being called upon for expertise in museum exhibits or publications for the general public.

### Purpose of the course

This course presents a multifaceted France constructed by the juxtaposition of diverse spheres. The history of this construction is an arduous one of conflict and constant change. By focusing on evolving institutions, the course helps students grasp the political struggles out of which the French State arose and developed its current form.

Class discussion plays an important role in this course, as students are encouraged to interact with the material not only to consolidate their grasp of the subject but also as a way to analyze events, explore causality and therefore discover the complexity and subtlety of historical analysis.

### Description of the course

Since French political institutions today can only be understood in the light of an inherited past, this course pays particular attention to fundamental developments during the 19th century, using a novel approach to study of that period. The years 1815-1870 is an essential, groundbreaking period for French political life not only in terms of the rise of a parliamentary system but also due to the new emphasis placed on social questions and on economic development. After the French-German war of 1870, the Third Republic founded the "*modèle républicain*" and the attendant political culture and crises lasting until WWI. From 1918 this model was fully established, and the rest of the century saw the impact of the major figure of DeGaulle as the savior of the nation and its independence on the world stage, the modernization of the State, the effects of social upheaval after 1968, and the advent of economic crisis and inequality in France under François Mitterand despite hopeful beginnings when he came to power. The current century has seen inequality and economic strain increase resulting from and in an unraveling of the republican model inherited from the era of Resistance and Liberation.

### Course format

The format of this course has been designed for maximum pedagogical effectiveness in light of the constraints of a course offered intensively over a short period of time. Accordingly, the course comprises two types of sessions, with lecture/seminar meetings alternating with discussion sections. Students are expected to participate in both informal debate and discussion as well as formal presentations (oral exposés, press reviews, and the like).

Each course of the preparatory session also includes appropriate site visits.

This course meets approximately 32 hours, including mandatory site visits.

### Course outline

#### **1815-1871: Inheritances, political instability, economic development**

- Gaining perspective on the inheritance of the past
- A difficult political construction
- Economic development

### **1871-1914: The founding of the Republic**

- Domestic political life: establishing and consolidating the Republic
- International politics (colonization and international relations)
- France of the *Belle Époque*

### **1914-1939: The Republic takes root**

- The first world war
- The inter-war period

### **1939-1958: Military disaster and weak institutions**

- France during WWII
- The Fourth Republic and its uncertainties
- Economic prosperity and political weakness

### **Since 1958: The Fifth République**

- The contradictions of an established system
- World crisis and political consequences
- The Fifth Republic showing its age

### **The Jacobin model and centralization**

- The Jacobinism of the French Révolution and its applications
- Jacobinism partially called into question: Decentralization

### **Laïcité: The question of religion in France**

- Inheritance and contributions from the French Revolution
- The Third Republic and the separation of Church and State
- The stakes of *Laïcité* in the 21st century: The French model in the face of the European Human Rights Court

### **Suggested bibliography**

*Atlas de l'histoire de France*, Aurélie Boissière, Paris, Belin, 2012, 480 pages.

*Histoire de l'Europe contemporaine : de l'héritage du XIXe siècle à l'Europe d'aujourd'hui*, Serge Berstein et Pierre Milza, Paris, Hatier, 2002, 447 pages.

*Les cultures politiques en France*, sous la direction de Serge Berstein, Paris, Seuil, 1999, 407 pages.

*Histoire de la France au XXe siècle*, Serge Berstein et Pierre Milza, Bruxelles, Editions Complexe, 5 volumes, 1990-1995.

*Manuel d'histoire politique de la France contemporaine*, Frédéric Bluche, Paris, puf, 2008, 296 pages.

*La France de 1914 à nos jours*, Jean-François Sirinelli, Paris puf, 2004, 576 pages.

*La France de 1848 à 1870*, Jean Garrigues, Paris, Armand Colin, 2002, 192 pages.

*La France et les débuts de la IIIe République (1870-1896)*, Frédéric Lejeune, Paris, Armand Colin, 2011, 240 pages.

*La France de la Belle Époque 1896-1914*, Dominique Lejeune, Paris, Armand Colin, 2011, 240 pages.

*La Grande Guerre des Français 1914-1918*, Jean-Baptiste Duroselle, Paris, Perrin, 2003, 515 pages.

*La France dans la Deuxième Guerre mondiale*, Yves Durand, Paris, Armand Colin, 2011, 224 pages.

*Histoire politique de la France depuis 1945*, Jean-Jacques Becker, Paris, Armand Colin, 2011, 280 pages.

*La France du temps présent : 1945-2005*, Michelle Zancarini-Fournel, Paris, Belin, 2010, 653 pages

### **Grading**

Student work is evaluated on the basis of a mid-term essay and a written examination at the end of the course, the grades for which are averaged with the participation grade based on oral presentations, press reviews and discussion participation.

### **Equivalent in American university course offerings**

Political History of Modern France, History of the French State