

THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO
DEPARTMENT OF FRENCH STUDIES
FR1001B Unlocking Paris
Winter 2026

Instructor: Chris Roulston

Lecture times: Tuesdays 10:30-12:30; Thursdays 10:30-11:30

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Office Hour: Thursdays 1:00-2:00 OR by appointment on Zoom

Course Description:

This course is a 1000-level French course, taught in English, and open to all students. It will offer students an interdisciplinary approach to the city of Paris, through literature, visual culture, film, history and myth. From its seventeenth-century reputation as the first modern city to its current role as the city of fashion, from the French Revolution to the 2023 riots, from the Louvre to the Eiffel Tower, and from its popular cultural associations as the city of romance, Paris will be explored in all its richness and diversity. We will take a journey through this quasi-mythical global city, asking what makes Paris "Paris", and why it has attracted admirers from across the world.

Prerequisites: There are no prerequisites for FR1001B

Course Materials

All course materials will be available on OWL BRIGHTSPACE under 'Course Readings' and under 'Content' for each week

OWL Brightspace

Students are responsible for checking the course site on a regular basis for news and updates.

This is the primary method by which information will be disseminated to all students in the class.

Students may access the OWL Brightspace Learner Support site for assistance:

<https://brightspacehelp.uwo.ca/> For IT related issues, they may contact Western Technology Services Helpdesk directly: <https://wts.uwo.ca/helpdesk/>.

Assignments:

Presence	10%
In-class Test (1.5 hours)	20%
In-class Written Assignment (50 mins)	15%
In-class Essay (1.5 hours)	25%
Final examination (2 hours)	30%
Total	100%

Dates for Assignments

Assignment	Percentage value	Date Assigned
In-class Short Assignment (50 mins, 350 words)	15%	Thursday 29 January
In-class Midterm Test (1.5 hours)	20%	Tuesday 10 February
In-class Long Assignment (1.5 hours, 700 words)	25%	Tuesday 24 March
Presence	10%	Ongoing
Final Examination (2 hours)	30%	April 2026

Statement on the Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI)

In this course, the use of AI (automatic translation tools, grammar checkers, ChatGPT...) is prohibited. If AI use is suspected, the instructor will ask for research notes, rough drafts, essay outlines, and other materials used in preparing assignments. Students are expected to retain these materials until after final grades have been entered. In the unlikely event of concerns being raised about the authenticity of any assignment, students may be asked to produce these materials; an inability to do so may weigh heavily against them.

Unlocking Paris at a glance:

Date	Topic
Week 1: Tues 6 January (2 hours) Thurs 8 January (1 hour)	Week 1: Introduction: What is a City? Walking in Paris
Week 2: Tues 13 January (2 hours) Thurs 15 January (1 hour)	Week 2: Historical Beginnings: Medieval to 17 th Cent. Roland Barthes: The Eiffel Tower
Week 3: Tues 20 January (2 hours) Thurs 22 January (1 hour)	Week 3: Enlightenment Paris (18 th Cent.) Enlightenment Café and Salon Culture
Week 4: Tues 27 January (2 hours) Thurs 29 January (1 hour)	Week 4: Paris: City of Revolution (1789, 1830) IN-CLASS SHORT ASSIGNMENT (350 words)
Week 5: Tues 3 February (2 hours) Thurs 5 February (1 hour)	Week 5: Haussmann and Rebuilding of Paris (19 th Cent.) Baudelaire, “The Swan”
Week 6: Tues 10 February (1.5 hours) Thurs 12 February (1 hour)	Week 6: MIDTERM TEST Sex and the City
Week 7: 16-20 February	Week 7: READING WEEK (NO CLASSES)
Week 8: Tues 24 February (2 hours) Thurs 26 February (1 hour)	Week 8: Paris and the Impressionists (1860s-90s) Paris and la Belle époque (1880s-1914)
Week 9 : Tuesday 3 March (2 hours) Thurs 5 March (1 hour)	Week 9: Paris, Existentialism and Interwar Period Guest Speaker: Paris and Fashion
Week 10: Tues 10 March (2 hours) Thurs 12 March (1 hour)	Week 10: Black Americans in Paris Guest Speaker: Paris and Song
Week 11: Tues 17 March (2 hours) Thurs 19 March (1 hour)	Week 11: Paris and Urban Terrorism Paris’s <i>Banlieues</i> , Hip Hop and Rap
Week 12: Tues 24 March (2 hours) Thurs 26 March (1 hour)	Week 12: IN-CLASS LONG ASSIGNMENT (700 words) Paris in the Millenium
Week 13: Tues 31 March (2 hours) Thurs 2 April	Week 13: <i>Lupin</i> TV episode/Intro to <i>Les Misérables</i> CLASS CANCELLED
Week 14: Tues 7 April Thurs 9 April	Week 14: FILM: <i>Les Misérables</i> (2019) Discussion of film/Revision

This course will:

- * Enable students to analyse and critically approach the idea of the city and urban space
- * Provide an interdisciplinary understanding of the city of Paris
- * Develop an understanding of French history and culture
- * Develop critical thinking, and analytical oral and writing skills

Course Policies

Participation and Attendance: Students are expected to attend both weekly lectures. Should a student need to miss class, a courtesy explanatory email is appreciated.

NOTE: If a student misses 2 weeks of classes (4 classes altogether, either a 1-hour or a 2-hour class) without a proper reason (e.g. illness, bereavement), they will receive a zero grade for Presence and Participation.

E-mail Policy: Emails by the instructor will be responded to within 48 hours.

Academic Consideration Requests

For procedures on how to submit Academic Consideration requests, please see the information posted on the Office of the Registrar's webpage:

<https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/academicconsiderations/>

All requests for Academic Consideration must be made within 48 hours after the assessment date or submission deadline.

All academic consideration requests must include supporting documentation; however, recognizing that formal documentation may not be available in some extenuating circumstances, the policy allows students to make one Academic Consideration request **without supporting documentation** in this course. However, the following assessments are excluded from this, and therefore always require formal supporting documentation:

- Examinations scheduled during official examination period
- Midterm Test

Absences at Final Examinations

Special Examination is any examination other than the regular or Supplemental Examinations, and it may be offered only with the permission of the Dean of the Faculty in which the student is registered, in consultation with the instructor and Department Chair. Permission to write a Special Examination may be given on the basis of compassionate or medical grounds with appropriate supporting documents.

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/exam/definitions.pdf

If you miss the Final Exam, please contact the Academic Advising office of your Faculty of Registration as soon as you are able to do so. They will assess your eligibility to write the Special Examination (the name given by the University to a makeup Final Exam).

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/exam/definitions.pdf

Academic Offenses

Scholastic offences are taken seriously, and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, here:

<http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academicpolicies/appeals/scholasticdisciplineundergrad.pdf>

Plagiarism: "Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offense (see the 'Scholastic Offense Policy' in the Western Academic Calendar). Plagiarism checking: The University of Western Ontario uses software for plagiarism checking. Students may be required to submit their written work in electronic form for plagiarism checking." - U.W.O. Senate statement on plagiarism.

Statement on the use of plagiarism-checking software

All required papers are subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

Policy on Accommodation for Religious Holidays

Students should review the [policy for Accommodation for Religious Holidays](#) . Where a student will be unable to write examinations and term tests due to a conflicting religious holiday, they should inform their instructors as soon as possible but **not later than two weeks** prior to writing the examination/term test. In the case of conflict with a midterm test, students should inform their instructor as soon as possible but not later than one week prior to the midterm.

Academic Accommodation and Accessible Education

Academic Accommodation is “a means of adjusting the academic activities associated with a course or program of student in order to permit students with disabilities to participate in those activities at the University and to fulfill the essential requirements of a course or program.”

<https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academicpolicies/appeals/Academic%20Accommodationdisabilities.pdf>. Students with disabilities are encouraged to register with **Accessible Education** at the earliest opportunity. “Accessible Education plays a central role in Western's efforts to ensure that its academic programs are accessible for all students”

http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessibleeducation/index.html

Link to Accessible Education:

accessibleeducation.uwo.ca

Special Examinations

A Special Examination is any examination other than the regular examination, and it may be offered only with the permission of the Dean of the Faculty in which the student is registered, in consultation with the instructor and Department Chair. Permission to write a Special Examination may be given on the basis of compassionate or medical grounds with appropriate supporting documents. To provide an opportunity for students to recover from the circumstances resulting in a Special Examination, the University has implemented Special Examinations dates. These dates as well as other important information about examinations and academic standing can be found [here](#).

Support Services

Academic Advising

Your Home Faculty's Academic Advising Office will support or refer whenever you have an issue that is affecting your studies, including information on adding/dropping courses, academic considerations for absences, appeals, exam conflicts, and many other academic related matters. Do not hesitate to reach out to them if you are struggling and unsure where to go for help. Contact info for all Faculties is here: <https://registrar.uwo.ca/facultyacademiccounselling.html>

Mental Health Support

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western (<https://uwo.ca/health/>) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Gender-based and sexual violence

Western University [is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence](#) (GBSV) and providing compassionate support to anyone who is going through or has gone through these traumatic events. If you are experiencing or have experienced GBSV (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at the following website:

<https://www.uwo.ca/health/studentsupport/survivorsupport/get-help.html>. To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact support@uwo.ca.

Learning Development and Success

Counsellors at the Learning Development and Success Centre <https://learning.uwo.ca> are ready to help you improve your learning skills. They offer presentations on strategies for improving time management, multiple-choice exam preparation/writing, textbook reading, and more. Individual support is offered throughout the Fall/Winter terms in the drop-in Learning Help Centre, and year-round through individual counselling.

USC

Additional student-run support services are offered by the USC, <https://westernusc.ca/services/>.

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Statement of Recognition

“Western University is situated on the traditional land of the Anishinaabeg, Haudenosaunee, Lenape and Attawandaron peoples who have longstanding relationships to the region of southwestern Ontario and the City of London. In close proximity to Western, there are 3 local First Nations communities: the Chippewas of the Thames First Nation, Oneida Nation of the Thames, and Munsee Delaware Nation. In the region of southwestern Ontario, there are 9 First Nations and a growing Indigenous urban population. Western recognizes the significant historical and contemporary contributions of local and regional First Nations and all of the Original peoples of Turtle Island (North America) to the development of Canada.”

FR1001B *Unlocking Paris*: Course Schedule (Winter 2026)
All readings are on BRIGHTSPACE under the 'Course Readings' tab

Week 1: Tuesday 6 January (2 hours)

What is a City?

Introductory lecture: What is a City?

YOUTUBE VIDEO: *Highlights of Paris: Eiffel and Monet to Crème Brûlée* (26 mins)

Week 1: Thursday 8 January (1 hour)

Walking in the City and Mapping Out Paris

READINGS:

Essay: Michel de Certeau, "Walking in the City" in *The Cultural Studies Reader* (1993) (3 pages)

Essay: Lauren Elkin, *Flâneuse: Women Walk the City in Paris, New York, Tokyo, Venice, and London* (2016) (21 pages)

Week 2: Tuesday 13 January (2 hours)

Historical Beginnings: From Medieval Times to the 17th Century

READINGS:

Essay: Joan DeJean, "The Bridge Where Paris Became Modern" from *How Paris Became Paris* (2014) (23 pages)

ART: Matthaus Merian *Pont Neuf* (1578); *Pont Neuf* (Map of Paris) (1615); Nicolas-Jean-Baptiste Raguenet, *Pont Neuf* (1763); Pierre-Auguste Renoir, *Pont Neuf* (1872)

Week 2: Thursday 15 January (1 hour)

Paris: City of Myths and the Eiffel Tower

READING:

Essay: Roland Barthes, "The Eiffel Tower and Other Mythologies" (1979) (15 pages)

Week 3: Tuesday 20 January (2 hours)

Paris and the Enlightenment I: Discovering the Other

Enlightenment Paris and Cultural Relativism

READINGS:

Novel extract: Montesquieu, *Persian Letters: Letters 28, 30, 36, 98* (1721) (7 pages)

Novel extract: Mme de Graffigny, *Lettres d'une Péruvienne: Letters XXVIII, XXXIII, XXXIV* (1747) (12 pages)

Week 3: Thursday 22 January (1 hour)

Paris and the Enlightenment II: Café and Salon Culture

READINGS:

Essay: Dena Goodman, "The Enlightenment Salonnrière," from *The Republic of Letters: A Cultural History of the French Enlightenment* (1994) (16 pages)

Week 4: Tuesday 27 January (2 hours)*Paris: City of Revolution (1789, 1830, 1848)***1789****READING:****Essay:** Douthwaite, Sol, Seth, "A Narrative Chronology of Events in Revolutionary France" (2019)**(4 pages)****ART:** *The Storming of the Bastille* (1789)Jacques-Louis David, *The Tennis Court Oath* (1789)**1830****YOUTUBE VIDEO:** *Les Misérables*, "Do You Hear the People Sing?", URL available on *Unlocking Paris* BRIGHTSPACE site**ART:** Eugène Delacroix, *Liberty Leading the People* (1830)**1848****Week 4: Thursday 29 January (1 hour)****IN-CLASS SHORT ASSIGNMENT (350 words) (15%)****Week 5: Tuesday 3 February (2 hours)***Haussmann, Catacombs, and the Rebuilding of Paris (1853-1870)***READINGS:****Essay:** Vanessa R. Schwartz, "Setting the Stage: The Boulevard, the Press and the Staging of Everyday Life," in *Spectacular Realities* (1998) **(13 pages)****Novel extract:** Emile Zola, *The Ladies' Paradise* (1883), chapter 4, pp. 86-104 **(18 pages)****YOUTUBE VIDEOS:**The Catacombs: URL available on *Unlocking Paris* BRIGHTSPACE site

The Man Who Rebuilt Paris (Haussmann in under 3 minutes)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q-_mVRG2IDI**Week 5: Thursday 5 February (1 hour)***Mourning the Old Paris: Baudelaire's "The Swan"***READING:****Poem:** Charles Baudelaire, "The Swan" (1856)**Week 6: Tuesday 10 February (2 hours)****MIDTERM TEST (1.5 hours) (20%)****Week 6: Thursday 12 February (1 hour)***Sex and the City***READING:****Novel extract:** Adolphe Belot, *Mademoiselle Giraud, My Wife* (1870) **(31 pages)****ART:**Édouard Manet, *Olympia* (1863), *Nana* (1877)Gustave Courbet, *Le sommeil* (1866)**Week 7: 16-20 February****READING WEEK: NO CLASSES**

Week 8: Tuesday 24 February (2 hours)*Painting Paris: The Impressionists (1860s-1890s)***ART:** Pierre-Auguste Renoir, *La Grenouillère* (1868), *The Theatre Box* (1874), *The Grands Boulevards* (1875), *Dance at the Moulin de la Galette* (1876), *Luncheon of the Boating Party* (1880-81)Claude Monet, *Impression, Sunrise* (1872), *La Grenouillère* (1869), *The Gare Saint-Lazare* (1877)Camille Pissaro, *Boulevard Montmartre in Spring* (1897), *Boulevard Montmartre at Night* (1898)Edouard Manet, *Music in the Tuileries* (1862), *A Bar at the Folies Bergères* (1882), *The Railway* (1873), *The Café Concert* (1878)Gustave Caillebotte, *Young Man At His Window* (1875), *Paris Street: Rainy Day* (1877)**Week 8: Thursday 26 February (1 hour)***Early Twentieth-Century Paris: La Belle époque (1880s-1914)***READING:****Novel extract:** Colette, *Claudine in Paris* (1901) (8 pages)**ART:** Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, *At the Moulin Rouge* (1892), *At the Moulin Rouge: Two Women Dancing* (1892), *The Medical Inspection (at the Rue des Moulins brothel)* (1894)**YOUTUBE VIDEO:** A Trip Through Paris, 1890s-1900 (Belle Époque)<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NjDclfAFRB4>**Week 9: Tuesday 3 March (2 hours)***Twentieth-Century Paris: Existentialism and the Interwar Period***READING:****Essay:** Sarah Bakewell, "Sir, What a Horror, Existentialism!" (34 pages)**Week 9: Thursday 5 March (1 hour)***Paris and Fashion***Guest speaker:** Dr. Kelly Olson, *Paris and Fashion***Week 10: Tuesday 10 March (2 hours)***Global Paris II: Black Americans in Paris***READINGS:****Novel extract:** James Baldwin, *Giovanni's Room* (32 pages)**Essay:** Gabrielle Belot, "James Baldwin in Paris" (2019), URL available on *Unlocking Paris***Week 10: Thursday 12 March (1 hour)***Paris and Song***Guest speaker:** Dr. Jacques Lamarche, *Paris and Song*

Week 11: Tuesday 17 March (2 hours)*Paris and Urban Terrorism: Charlie Hebdo, Bataclan***READINGS:***Essay:* Melanie Conroy, "Teaching Republican Culture Through Caricature: The Scandal of *Charlie Hebdo*" (2019) (10 pages)**RECOMMENDED READING:***Guardian* article: "Women are already excluded from French political life: that's the real issue in the school abayas row" (5 September 2023)**Week 11: Thursday 19 March (1 hour)***Reclaiming the Paris Banlieues: Hip-Hop and Rap***READINGS:***Essay:* Séverine Rebourcet, "*Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité, and Laïcité: Frenchness, Islam, and French Hip-Hop*" (2019) (16 pages)**YOUTUBE VIDEOS:**

PNL (Peace N'Lovés), 2 brothers Adema and N.O.S., "Au DD" (2019)

Médine, "Don't Laïk" (2015)

Diam's, "La Boulette" (2006)

Week 12: Tuesday 24 March (2 hours)**IN-CLASS LONG ASSIGNMENT (700 words) (25%)****Week 12: Thursday 26 March (1 hour)***Paris in the Millenium*

Paris in the Millenium

Week 13: Tuesday 31 March (2 hours)*Lupin Episode/Intro to Les Misérables*Paris and Its Detectives: *Lupin* (TV episode)Introduction to Ladj Ly, *Les Misérables***Week 13: Thursday 2 April (1 hour)****CLASS CANCELLED****Week 14: Tuesday 7 April (2 hours)****FILM:** *Les Misérables*, dir. Ladj Ly (2019)**Week 14: Thursday 9 April (1 hour)**

Discussion of film/Revision

TERM ENDS THURSDAY 9 APRIL 2026**Final Examination (2 hours) (30% of final grade)**