

Paris Internship Workforce Course

DESCRIPTION

The purpose of this course is to provide the framework necessary for students to accomplish a successful inter-cultural internship. This framework includes both theoretical and practical elements, with both types of elements focused on helping students achieve the inter-cultural outcomes of a direct experience of the French workplace. Such outcomes are certainly feasible but are by no means automatic.

The theoretical elements take essentially a sociological approach, and in particular the sociology of work. While providing necessary understanding of the current state of the French economy, the emphasis nonetheless is on presenting the makeup and the dynamics of the French workforce, important for understanding how to operate on the French workplace. Topics include the importance of public administration, male/female relations, unemployment, the separate category for management-level workers (*statut des cadres*), labor law and its social implications, and workplace behavior often identified with the French workplace (socialization, relation to time, productivity, hierarchy, etc.) This part of the course also takes a look at particular environments within the universe of work in France: the dynamics of a French company; education; arts and culture (including the strong role of the State, and the like).

The practical portions of the course draws on IFE's experience in accompanying US university students on their exploration of French society via the world of work. As in any inter-cultural setting, and especially given the pressures inherent to work environments, examining and decoding behavior and interpersonal communication are important for avoiding misunderstanding and opening the way to real understanding. A series of workshop sessions draws on students' actual experiences and perceptions for role playing, situational acting-out, small-group discussions and briefings/debriefings as a form of accompaniment of each student-intern throughout the internship period.

FACULTY

The Paris Internship Workforce Course is designed by Ugo Palheta holds a PhD in Sociology from the Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Paris (IEP-Paris or "Sciences-Po"). Ugo is a research scientist at the Observatory of Sociological Change (OSC), a joint research institute of Sciences-Po and the French National Research Organization or CNRS. He holds concurrently a post-doctoral fellowship at GRESCO, the sociology research institute of the University of Poitiers. In addition he has significant teaching experience at the university-level. Ugo is a specialist in the sociology of work and of professional education. In 2010 he received his doctorate from Sciences Po for a thesis on public policy and vocational training, awarded with highest honors. In 2011 he won the prestigious Louis Cros Prize, awarded by the Institute of France for the best academic publication in the area of education. Ugo has published a number of journal articles on the social implication and consequences of France's system of professional education, including the impact on career trajectories within social classes.

Guest speakers :

Clémence Imbert: Clemence Imbert is an art and design teacher and researcher at the University Paris 8. With a background in French Literature, she worked as a curatorial assistant at the Centre Pompidou (Paris) and at the Guggenheim Museum (New York). She is currently writing her Ph.D. dissertation on graphic design exhibitions in modern art museums.

Jan Plumet: Jan Plumet is a graduate from the Business School of Lille (North of France). Having worked for European companies such as the SNCF, Veolia Environnement (in Germany) and a bank in Paris, he came back to the SNCF as a team manager for the East High Speed Line towards Germany and Switzerland, a position he worked for 4 years long. He moved to Italy as international charter trains' manager from 2010 to 2014. He is now working as vice-director production for TGV Lyria (Switzerland).

COURSE OUTLINE

There are a total of 18 hours of classroom meetings, or 12 meetings of 1.5 hours each.

THURSDAY MAY 7 : 15h-16h30 - Session 1 – Inter-cultural Session One (Tim Carlson and Emily Freeman)

Theoretical presentation of inter-cultural issues, including enacting and practicing typical situations focusing on the main cultural differences between France and the United States.

THURSDAY MAY 14 : 15h-16h30 - Session 2 – Inter-cultural Session Two (Tim Carlson) *Jour férié (ascension)*

FRIDAY MAY 22 : 16h30-18h - Session 3 – Course: General Presentation (Jan Plumet)

An overview of French economic activity and the French workplace, including the French economy in the international context and a breakdown of the main sectors of the economy. Also, the principal socio-professional categories (CSP).

FRIDAY MAY 29 : 16h30-18h - Session 4 – The State and Culture in France (Clémence Imbert)

The important role of the State in France's artistic and cultural life: actors, policy, reality.

FRIDAY JUNE 05 : 14h45-16h15 – Session 5 - Inter-cultural Session Three – The Internship (Timothy Carlson)

Consultation and advice: What to do, what not to do.

FRIDAY JUNE 05 : 16h30-18h - Session 6 – The French State and its Impact on Work (Jan Plumet)

French labor law; history and current issues of the welfare state; public administration; stake-holding and claim-staking (trade unionism, collective bargaining, demonstrations, negotiations); quick overview of the key moments of French modern social history.

FRIDAY JUNE 12 : 16h00-18h - Session 7 – Women in the World of Work in France (Jan Plumet)

History, progress, parity, discrimination.

FRIDAY JUNE 19 : CANCELLED – Session 8 - Management Positions (*cadre*) in France, and the French company (Jan Plumet)

A socio-historical look at this characteristic French socio-professional category.
French business culture: SMEs, large corporations, public companies.

The content of this session will be discussed during the other longer sessions, before and/or after the 19th of June

FRIDAY JUNE 26 : 16h00-18h – Session 9 – Work and Immigration (Jan Plumet)

Stakes, issues, solutions.

Between Sessions 9 and 10 – On-Site Evaluation conducted by ACCENT Staff with student-intern and host organization mentor (Performance, points of improvement, lessons learned).

+ *debriefing "apéritif" during week July 6-10 (7 PM – day TBD)*

FRIDAY JULY 3rd : 16h00-18h – Session 10 – Education/Research (Jan Plumet)

The structure of the French Educational System from a socio-professional point of view, training and career paths, recruiting.

FRIDAY JULY 10 : 16h30-18h - Session 11 – Europe and the World (Jan Plumet)

The world of work in France in its European and international context, comparison with other educational/professional systems within Europe and beyond.

FRIDAY JULY 17 : 16h30-18h – Session 12 – Conclusions (Tim Carlson)

Debriefing, evaluation, collective self-evaluations.