

GRANDE PRAIRIE REGIONAL COLLEGE

ID1250 – Topics in Interdisciplinary Studies (3) Paris – Berlin: “A Tale of Two Cities”

Instructor:	Eva Abbas, Ph. D., M.A. Maîtrise TLE
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Office Hours:	TBA
Location:	GPRC
Date/Time:	TBA
Prerequisites:	None
Additional Costs:	TBA
Method of Delivery:	Lecture/guided reading/onsite observation and cultural immersion

Course Details

Course Description

This is a 4 week directed study course which consists of required readings, on-line discussions, assignments and travel. Part of the course will take place on site, one week in Paris and a second week in Berlin. The reading requirements and on-line discussions will prepare the students to maximize their educational travel experience and immersion into the culture of two major capitals on the European continent. This combination of:

- a. guided readings with assignments and
- b. direct observation and cultural immersion

will help students draw comparisons in history, art, architecture, music, etc. to better appreciate and understand Paris and Berlin. Participation in a variety of events (opera, concerts, ballet, art exhibits and expositions, excursions etc.) form an integral part of the course program.

Course Objective

The general aim of educational travel is to sensitize participants to aspects of cultural as well as linguistic differences and to create awareness of the impact of cultural and historical context on national representation and identity. The study of language and culture, especially through firsthand experience is a resource for intellectual discovery of the “other” in comparison to “self” and provides the means for better intercultural understanding; as such, this course represents a building block for a liberal education in the humanistic tradition.

More particularly, students will gain a better understanding of the history, the cultural characteristics and contributions of each of the cities and an appreciation of their respective

place in the past and today within the European context.

Teaching methods and assignments

This educational travel course will consist of directed reading, 2 weeks of daily guided tours of major cultural sites and cultural events, as well as written and oral assignments. The course is highly participatory as students have the opportunity to choose which aspect(s) to emphasize as they discover and compare the two cities. For this purpose, the main assignment will be a Journal or “field book” in which they integrate the components of the course through a series of writing assignments. This exercise is meant to generate and reflect learning and to clarify and articulate observations, thoughts, and insights; it also provides a forum for discussion with the other participants, including the instructor. Each participant will be asked to make 2 oral presentations on topics in culture, (art, history, music, language, literature...), one relating to Paris, the other to Berlin, and lead a conversation surrounding the theme of choice.

Tentative Schedule: TBA

Texts:

Suggested reading to prepare for Paris:

- Steele, St.Onge et St. Onge. *La Civilisation française en évolution II*.
- Robert Cole: A Traveler’s History of Paris, Interlink books, 1994
- Alistair Horne: Seven Ages of Paris; Knopf, 2003
- Selection of on-line materials

Suggested reading to prepare for Berlin:

- Anthony Read, David Fisher: Berlin Rising: Biography of a City; W.W. Norton & Company, 1994
- Giles MacDonogh: Berlin: A portrait of its History, Politics, Architecture and Society; St. Martin’s press, 1998
- Time Out: Berlin, Online: <http://www.timeout.com/travel/berlin>
- Selection of on-line materials

Evaluation:

- Active participation: 15%
- Journal / field book (to reflect readings and observations) 60%
- 2 oral presentations(one topic per city)
and leading discussion: 25%