

Millennials and Technology: How Keeping Up With the Kids Fosters Engaged Learning and Community Abroad

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SESSION OVERVIEW

What learning outcomes do students achieve by producing podcasts during short-term study abroad, in relation to course goals and their real-world peer audience?

- Podcasts have become standard pedagogical resources in higher education; however, many are faculty-produced or created to disseminate course content.
- In this session, we will outline how attendees can embrace technology to enhance students' experience abroad, with special focus on intercultural development, intentional experiential learning, and reflection.

History and Evolution of the Course

- 2011 - Born on the back patio of a bar
- 2012 - Proposed and accepted
- 2013 - Failed to make
- 2014 - An experiment that worked
- 2015-16 - Tweaking for improvement
- 2017 - When it all clicked
- 2018 - Onward!





**EAT, PRAY, LOVE:
SACRED SPACE AND THE PLACE OF RELIGION
IN 21ST CENTURY FRANCE**

Fall 2016 Wednesdays: Oct 5, Oct 12, Oct 19, Oct 26, Nov 2, Nov 9, Nov 16, Nov 30, Dec 7
3:35-5:15pm in Carlton 209

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W 1:30-3:00pm & by appointment

GBL 167 1 s.h. Required pre-departure course for GBL 267 Winter Term in France.

Course description: With time spent in Paris, in the vibrant medieval city of Montpellier, France, just ten minutes from the Mediterranean Sea, and in cities and towns nearby, this course will explore both historical and current notions of sacred space and perceptions of religious experience in French culture through the palate of gastronomy, art, architecture, and popular music. In so doing, students will examine France's paradoxical relationship to itself and study this country's shifts in national identity vis-a-vis organized religion due to decolonization and immigration during the last century. Course facilitation will include cultural studies texts, journal articles, French/Francophone literature in translation, video news reports and podcasts, films, documentaries, popular music, and on-site visits to places such as restaurants, cafés, cathedrals, abbeys, castles, the Papal palace in Avignon, mosques, a medieval synagogue and Jewish ghetto.



The Great Mosque of Paris

From the Holy Land to Hagia Sophia and Mt. Fuji to Mecca, why do we experience some places as more special than others?

- What makes a sacred space feel like hallowed ground?
- What precisely do we mean by *holy*?
- How do various subcultures express their understanding of self and world in the location and design of certain spaces that they consider sacred?

From Paris to Montpellier

Both Paris and Montpellier afford a rich variety of ancient and contemporary sites, Jewish, Christian, Buddhist, Muslim and prehistoric, where we can explore the meaning of the sacred as it is set forth in geographical and architectural forms. And yet, not every location we visit may strike you as religious in the traditional sense. Imagine, if you will, le Louvre as a temple of visual art, le *Stade de France* as the high church of soccer, the Cordon Bleu as the cathedral of haute cuisine.

Paris breathes intellectual air, ethnic and religious diversity, artistic appreciation, and culinary excellence at every corner: with its open-air markets, bistros, and *boulangeries*, its myriad of museums, historic landmarks and countless places of worship— all these spaces are deemed sacred by different people, and thus Paris embodies an ideal location to learn about cultural cohabitations in a multi-ethnic and multi-faith society.

The city of Montpellier is located in south central France 10 minutes from the Mediterranean. It was established around 985CE as a village of merchants importing spices from the Levant. With the imports came the medical uses of their products from the knowledge of Arabic medicine. By 1000CE, many Arab and Jewish trading partners were teaching merchants and students there. The school of medicine founded at this time is the oldest in Europe and still a prestigious medical school today. Montpellier is a vibrant, animated medieval city with a diverse population.

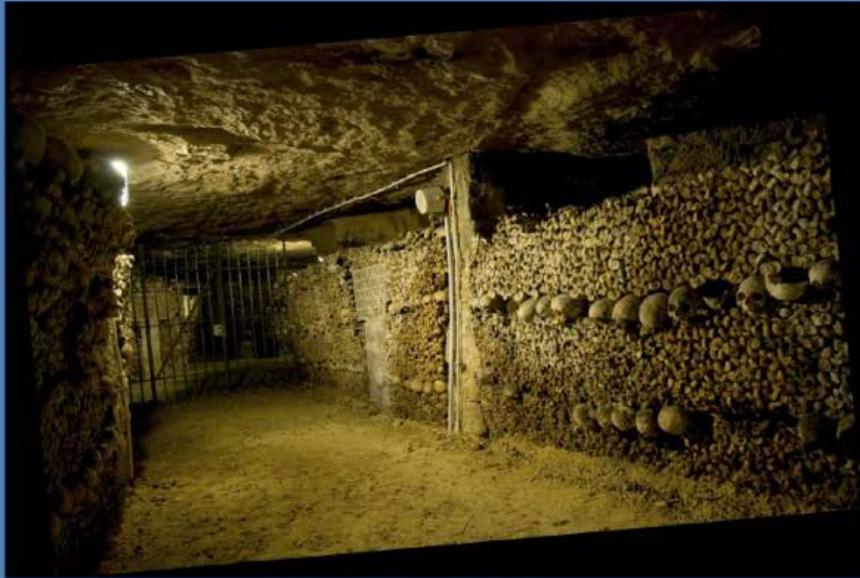


Why France?

In the US, France is beloved by many, despised by some, and all too often misunderstood. Yet France has long been a valuable partner of the US, politically and militarily, and its culture wields extensive influence over American arts, fashion, and food.

Students seeking to become global citizens stand to learn a great deal about their own cultural assumptions from first-hand experience of French politics, customs, and mores.

Moreover, exposure to the history and current state of relations among the many and varied religious communities in France will provide a rich source of information and possible options for how the United States might move forward into an increasingly multi-cultural future.



The Catacombs, Paris

In this course we will:

- Express ourselves in our own words on a variety of topics, some perhaps controversial or quite foreign to our own cultural conditioning;
- Explore French points of view on culture, space, place, privacy, and religion, and draw cultural comparisons;
- Establish links/make connections between the study of French culture and perspectives and other academic disciplines;
- Extend the study of French culture, French-American relations, and the concept of sacred space beyond the classroom and into larger communities.

Course expectations for students and professor:

The student will:

- come to class having checked the Moodle site for assignments and announcements.
- come to class having read and completed the assigned work.
- come to class prepared to engage in active class discussion and small group or pair activities, volunteering often.
- answer and ask questions frequently.
- demonstrate effort throughout the term.
- adhere to the Elon academic and social honor codes.

The professors will:

- be enthusiastic and rigorous about teaching and learning.
- provide opportunities for discussion, reading, and writing throughout the course.
- make every effort to answer student questions in a timely manner.
- be available to help students who are having difficulty.
- conduct the course with integrity and be exemplary ambassadors abroad.

Growth on Many Levels

Study abroad offers an amazing opportunity to grow in various ways. Please see below for examples of our high expectations for your experience this semester, which will ultimately inform and enhance your time in France. Consider adding your own goals below and explore this syllabus as well as the Winter Term itinerary to start planning how to achieve them!

Academic Course Goals

- To study, question and analyze: a) the nature of religion and its many cultural manifestations; b) the history and current status of religious culture in France; c) how perceptions of sacrality are embodied and expressed in art and architectural styles, and d) contemporary religious expressions and activities in non-traditional forms.
- To strengthen socio-linguistic awareness;
- To experience and develop writing, speaking, reading, critical thinking and reflection skills.

Global Engagement Goals

- Critically evaluate one's own culture and biases.
-Student Learning Outcome: The student will convey a complex understanding of national self-identity in comparison with French national identity.
-Assessment medium: Learning Journal with specific prompts.
- Understand the multiple dimensions of human experience within and across cultures and environments (also Core Curriculum goal #5).
-Student Learning Outcome: The student will convey an informed understanding of the increasing tensions of a staunchly secular society confronted by issues of religion rooted in its colonial past as embodied in a largely Muslim immigrant population primarily of Northern African descent.
-Assessment medium: Group presentation on particular sacred sites in the course itinerary while abroad.

Other global engagement goals for this course include a) analyzing the interconnectedness of global systems, and b) examining one's responsibilities as an active global citizen informed by multiple cultural perspectives.

Individual goals

- _____
- _____
- _____

GBL 267 Group Conversation Podcast Assignment

- While we are in France, you will have one major assignment.
- This assignment will be to record a group conversation about one of the sites that you all researched in groups this past fall.
- This time, however, you will discuss a different site than the one that you researched in the fall with different tribe members from those with whom you worked before.
- Review each PPT for the destination presentations from the fall (accessible on our GBL 167 fall course site and via google docs) in order to converse on the one you're assigned and to comment on/extend the conversation in writing on our Facebook page for all the other sites.

Podcast Assignment (continued)

- In terms of the recording, feel free to use whatever method you like.
- For the less technically inclined, you can simply use the voice memo function on your phone, which saves recordings as an MP3, and text it to LD and Sarah.
- But, have fun with this and be creative if you like as well.
- There are many apps out there that can help you create a podcast that has background music and/or sound effects, for example, like iMovie and Spreaker. We encourage you to have/record these conversations while out at cafés or in parks so that the spontaneity of the local ambiance is evident; however, this is not required, and you should always do a test recording from wherever you are to make sure that the background noise is not overbearing.

Podcast Assignment (continued)

- Furthermore, we recommend that more than one person record the conversation so that you have a back-up in place.
- And finally, we recommend that you start recording with 100% battery-levels and that you monitor the recording progress so that if someone's phone dies, you can notice this immediately and pick up the convo with another's device.
- In sum, be prepared. We are happy to discuss this assignment with you further over our first couple days in Montpellier.

Podcast Assignment (continued)

- Please read the rubric below thoroughly in order to understand what an excellent conversation would entail.
- Where the discussion goes is up to you; just be sure to talk to each other, and that you have a conversation, not just a string of individual comments.
- Your points should be well articulated and developed.
- We urge you to consider your perceptions and knowledge gained of each site during the pre-departure seminar and subsequently address how those perceptions have evolved now that you have experienced the destination in person physically.
- Reviewing course readings and learning journals will likely prove quite helpful as well.

Podcast Assignment (continued)

- We have also posted a document with a sacred space lexicon in our google docs folder.
- Reading this will also help provide relative terminology and aid in better articulating your points.
- Finally, we recommend that each group discuss/organize/debrief for 30-45 minutes before beginning recording in order to reach consensus on points you'd like to cover and create a loose outline.
- We stress "loose," because the conversation should be just that: a natural dialog that includes everyone's voice, a spontaneous discussion that does not come off as too scripted.
- Your recorded conversation should last 40-45 minutes, but do not sweat this detail. If it turns out to be 39 or 49, that is just fine.

GBL 267 Group conversation podcast assessment (/ 50)

Criteria	Excellent/Very good	Good	Fair/Needs improvement
<p>Substance (Introduction Organization, and Development of Ideas) 25 pts</p>	<p>Context provided: clear, logical organization of main points introduced; Demonstrated extensive preparation and reflection; Offered enriching perspectives and meaningful reactions; Referred to in-class discussion, previous course content, and/or outside research to enrich the discussion; Argument development was clearly part of a dialog, not just a bunch of points made in a vacuum; Final analysis of the topic as a whole showed reflection and enhanced cultural competence. (30-27 pts)</p>	<p>Context provided but more was needed; Organization of main points lacked some clarity or was less than logical; Preparation and reflection were evident; Offered engaging perspectives/reactions; Needed more references to in-class discussion, previous course content, and/or outside research to enrich the discussion; Elaborated sometimes when sharing ideas/ideas somewhat but not always fully developed. (26-24 pts)</p>	<p>Context was lacking; Preparation and/or reflection were weak or absent altogether; Ideas, reactions and/or questions were not fully developed or articulated; Little to no reference to in-class discussion, previous course content, and/or outside research to enrich the discussion; Unclear organization; May be missing crucial info. (23-0 pts)</p>

GBL 267 Group conversation podcast assessment (/ 50)

Criteria	Excellent/Very good	Good	Fair/Needs improvement
Initiative and Interaction 10 pts	Played a significant role in generating discussion throughout; Listened well (did not interrupt group mates) and if necessary, encouraged quieter peers to share their perspectives; Supported positions with authority and evidence; Contributed well to the whole. (10-9 pts)	Active participant in discussion/Effort was made to speak up; Supported his/her position but may not have used facts to back it up; May not have remained true to stated position; Made an effort to contribute and interact by offering ideas and reactions. (8.9-7 pts)	May not have taken as much initiative in the group discussion; May not have asked questions or been as reactive or interactive with others; Did not support his/her position with facts; Allowed others to take more of the burden of the discussion. (6.9-0 pts)
Articulation of Ideas, Examples, and Evidence 10 pts	Articulated points clearly; Cited well-chosen examples from course readings and materials as well as notes from tours to support ideas and enrich the conversation. (10-9 pts)	Expressed ideas clearly for the most part; Gave some concrete examples from course texts, group presentation from pre-departure seminar as well as on-site tour. (8.9-7 pts)	Ideas sometimes unclear; Points were hard to follow; ideas may not have been convincing due to poor expression; Few or poorly-chosen examples to enrich the discussion; May not have offered examples from course readings and group presentation to support ideas. (6.9-0 pts)

GBL 267 Group conversation podcast assessment (/ 50)

Criteria	Excellent/Very good	Good	Fair/Needs improvement
<p>Conclusions and Overall Outcome 5 pts</p>	<p>Conclusion was very clear; Provided concise summary of main points made; Arguments were very persuasive due to abundance of concrete examples; Conversation was authentic, well prepared but not overly scripted. (5-4.5 pts)</p>	<p>Conclusion was mostly clear although arguments may not have persuaded audience enough due to small gaps in research; Conversation felt mostly authentic; May have felt a bit scripted in places or contained a couple small gaps/hesitations, but this did not impede the flow. (4.4-3.5 pts)</p>	<p>Conclusion was poor, maybe lacking; No summary of main points was offered; Positions were unclear due to lack of concrete evidence and/or enough variety of examples; Conversation did not seem natural/may have come off as overly scripted/may have contained noticeable gaps in dialog/lulls in the conversation. (3.4-0 pts)</p>

SAMPLE SNIPPET... from Google Drive via our Facebook Page

The image shows a screenshot of a Facebook group interface. On the left is a sidebar for the group 'Sacred Space in France WT '17', which is a closed group. The sidebar includes navigation options like Discussion, Members, Events, Videos, and Photos, along with a search bar and a list of shortcuts for other groups. The main content area displays a post from Sarah Glasco, dated January 13, where she shared a link to a podcast titled 'Podcast #3: Papal Palace in Avignon'. The post text encourages members to listen and comment, and provides instructions on how to access the podcast via email or Google Docs. Below the text is a preview of the audio file 'Papal Palace.m4a' from 'DRIVE.GOOGLE.COM'. The post has received a 'Like' from LD Russell and is visible to everyone. Below the post, two comments are visible: one from Danny Thorrens dated January 26 at 11:13am, and another from Mike Hendry dated February 10 at 4:45pm. At the bottom of the post area is a text input field for writing a comment, accompanied by icons for emojis, photos, GIFs, and stickers.

Sacred Space in France WT '17
Closed Group

Discussion

Members

Events

Videos

Photos

Search this group

Shortcuts

- Women's, Gender, &... 9
- Jessie, Cassandra, Roc... 1
- All Things French ... 20+
- Sacred Space in Franc... 1
- Department of Worl... 8
- Elon Women's, Gender,...

Sarah Glasco shared a link. January 13

Podcast #3: Papal Palace in Avignon. Listen and comment, everyone. Let's extend the convo further together. Please access the podcast from your email or from google docs via the link here, listen and then anyone feel free to chime in and initiate. We look forward to hearing from you soon.

Papal Palace.m4a
DRIVE.GOOGLE.COM

Like Comment

LD Russell Seen by everyone

View 10 more comments

Danny Thorrens What was interesting for me was the expectation I had prior to. In class, as the papal palace was my presentation, I found myself defending the sacrality of a place that I had never been. However when I got there I discovered that the objections that a... See More
Like · Reply · January 26 at 11:13am

Mike Hendry I agree with many of you that it was hard to imagine the papal palace as a place that was once actually active. The enormity of the space no doubt made it difficult for me to put myself in the shoes of the Pope and others who worked and lived there. It... See More
Like · Reply · February 10 at 4:45pm

Write a comment..

RE-ENTRY SURVEY RESULTS

Q: Considering the academic goals of the course, what did you learn from the podcasting assignment? Please do the best you can to align your response to one or more specific academic goals.

- I was hoping to do more than just get a good grade. The nature of the assignment made me want to learn more about what we were doing.
- The podcasts allowed us to critically think and analyze what we experienced throughout the course. They also allowed us to discuss our experiences with our peers not only through the podcast but through our comments on them as well.

RE-ENTRY SURVEY RESULTS

Q: Considering the global engagement goals of the course, what did you learn from the podcasting assignment?

- Particularly with regard to the second global engagement goal, understanding the multiple perspectives of sacred space, the podcasting assignment helped greatly, as it allowed us to talk through our own perspectives and listen to others'. I know that everyone processed the various sacred spaces we visited very differently, and resonated with some more than others. The podcasts gave us the opportunity to bring our different perspectives to the table and talk them through, giving everyone a newfound appreciation for each sacred space in the process.
- Through the podcasts, we were able to critically look at how we interact with people from different cultures and realize the importance of understanding different worldviews.

RE-ENTRY SURVEY RESULTS

Q: Considering your responses in questions 1 & 2, how exactly did the collaborative podcasting experience and Facebook commenting facilitate your learning and achievement of the goals you identified above.

- There were times when I didn't fully know how to express my opinion or experience after visiting a certain cite. The comments from my classmates helped me to have a groundwork to build from so I could better express my views.
- The podcasting assignment was most helpful in achieving the learning goals by allowing us to hear the different perspectives that everyone had on the sacred spaces we visited, bringing their own life and religious experience into the conversation. I think that oftentimes in society, hatred and conflict arise from a misunderstanding of others' perspectives and backgrounds, and the podcasting assignment teaches us to listen to other people's points of view.

RE-ENTRY SURVEY RESULTS

Q: Considering your responses from questions 1, 2 & 3, please comment in as much detail as possible on why this learning has been important for you?

- I think that this type of learning experience is important for everyone, because it teaches understanding and tolerance for those who are different from us. Collaboration is also key to furthering one's own thoughts and understanding of key concepts. For example, during our podcasts, someone would say something, which would spark someone else's thoughts, and on and on until a great conversation was born.
- The learning of how to respect differences in opinions of sacrality helped me to further understand the importance to be open minded when communicating with others, not only about what we find sacred, but in other aspects of life as well.

RE-ENTRY SURVEY RESULTS

Q: How would you compare the learning experience of the collaborative nature of this podcasting assignment (conversing on site, recording together, and then reading, commenting and responding to yours and other podcasts) to keeping individual journals and/or short writing assignments abroad that only your professors would have seen to submit for a grade ?

- I preferred the podcasts because orally discussing ideas allowed me to consider different opinions I hadn't previously considered. Additionally, several of my group members brought up details from our excursions that I hadn't noticed at the time. All in all, the podcast sessions enriched my knowledge and overall experience while abroad.
- I would prefer the podcasting assignment to individual writing assignments because it's far more interesting and helpful to discuss ideas with others. Keeping a journal can be helpful in processing the experience, and can be something fun to look back on, but the podcasting assignment is ultimately more helpful for intellectual growth because it broadens your perspective and connects you to others. Also, I think that students can find keeping a journal for a grade a bit tedious, whereas a podcast can be a fun and enlightening experience.

RE-ENTRY SURVEY RESULTS

Q: This assignment considered and benefited from a "real-world" audience: you all listened and responded to each other. How did that experience affect your capacity to evaluate, analyze, and apply the academic course material while you were in France and since you have returned home?

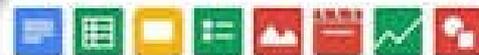
- I think that the fact that we were all participating in some capacity in each discussion helped us to continue the conversation outside of the podcasts. For example, when we were on an excursion we would be reminded of something said in a podcast, and would pick up the conversation then and there.
- This experience helped my to evaluate, analyze and apply the course material because I had others to compare my views with, furthering my ability to think critically about how the material in the pre-departure class applied to the places we visited in France.



facebook

Google Drive

Keep everything. Share anything.



A vibrant city skyline under a clear blue sky. In the foreground, a multi-arched bridge with a white railing spans across the frame. The background is filled with various skyscrapers, including a prominent blue glass tower with a curved top, a red and white brick building, and a purple-tinted tower. The text 'THANK YOU' is overlaid in large, white, sans-serif font in the upper right quadrant.

THANK
YOU