CONTEMPORARY FRANCE

Module Number: LF2050

Number of Aston Credits: 10

Name of Module Convenor: Professor John Gaffney

Other Staff Contributing to the Module: Benjamin Bâcle

Pre-Requisite(s) for the Module: Successfully complete Level One

Programme(s) for which module is offered: MLF, IBMLF, CHF

Language of Delivery: English (Lectures), French (Seminars)

Teaching Period when offered: Teaching Period One

Normal minimum and maximum intake sizes:

1. Module Learning Outcomes:

I. Knowledge and Understanding

Language-related skills

Develop a sound, concise academic writing style in French

Using debate and discussion informally to self-appraise and appraise as a group, with seminar leaders in French.

Develop the ability to express views on political topics and engage in debate in French b) Subject-related skills

Students will gain an appreciation of the broad and complex structure of contemporary French Politics. Students will learn the narrative political history of the French Fifth Republic, from the perspective of its organising framework, that of presidentialism. Students will gather a basic understanding of the key contents and problems of French politics, and will have an introduction to its comparative framework

- II. Cognitive and Analytical skills
- a) Language-related skills

Students will learn about leadership politics in the context of the French party system, and the wider political culture, and the main theoretical approaches to these. In the seminars, they will discuss these issues in French

Students will be able to understand key political concepts, and to use them in political debates, and through seminar work particularly will learn critically to analyse information in French.

b) Subject-related skills

Interpretation of graphic information, e.g. graphs, tables, political advertising, etc.

Understanding the complexity of French politics

See also bullet points under IIa)

III. Transferable skills

a) Language-related skills

Listening, note-taking, acquisition of new and complex information, in both English and French.

Exchanging information and ideas in French

b) Subject-related skills

Working in groups and presenting of individual or group work results

Developing basic literature research skills.

Using debate and discussion informally to self-appraise and appraise as a group, with seminar leaders.

Interpretation of graphic information, e.g. graphs, tables, etc.

Selection of appropriate reasearch sources from a range of)given) data.

Starting to develop a sound, concise academic writing style.

2. Module Content:

This course enables students to acquire familiarity with main areas and problems of French politics, and with key concepts used in the analysis of political institutions and political culture. This knowledge forms the conceptual, methodological and analytical basis for many of the politics-related issuers to be studied by French students throughout their programmes.

Syllabus

Wee k	Topic
1	Introduction to the course. Lecture no seminar
2	The Fourth Republic (1946-1958): Decline and Fall. Lecture and seminar
3	De Gaulle. Return of the hero. Lecture and seminar
4	The Fifth Republic. Presidentialism v. Republicanism.
	Lecture and seminar
5	The Gaullists with and without de Gaulle. Lecture and
	seminar
6	Reading week. No lecture, no seminar
7	Revolution '68. Lecture and seminar
8	The Giscardian years. 1974-1981. Lecture and seminar
9	The Left and the Republic. Lecture and seminar
10	France in the 2000s. Lecture and seminar
11	Submission of essay. Seminar, no lecture
12	In-Class Test

3. Method of Learning and Teaching:

Lectures: weeks 1-5, 7-10, Seminars: Weeks 2-5, 7-11.

Group Work / Discussions: weeks 2-5, 7-11

In-Class test: week 12

Students are expected to familiarise themselves quickly with the general literature, and then go on to more specialised reading in preparation for seminars, the essay and the In-Class Test. Week 6 is reserved for Guided Study and individual

Consultations (appointments on demand during normal session hours), and in week 11, the seminar will help prepare students for the class test and answer questions.

4. How are the total 100 Learning Hours per module achieved?

Contact and directed learning				
Lectures		10		
Group work and discussion		9		
Guided Study		2		
Examination		1		
Private study				
General Reading		28		
Preparing for discussions/essay		30		
Revision for examination		20		
	Total	100		

5. Method of Assessment:

One essay, in French (1, 000 words by Candidate name) handed in to the LSS office on the first day of week 11 (50%), one In-Class Test (in English or French by name[no extra marks will be given for candidates answering in French]), in week 12/13, which counts for 50% of the final mark for this module. The students will answer two out of eight unseen questions (short answers/notes are acceptable), in one hour.

6. Essential Reading:

R. Elgie, Political Institutions in Contemporary France, OUP, 2003

7. Indicative Bibliography:

- A.Cole, French Politics and Society (Prentice Hall. 1998)
- J. Charlot, La politique en France (Poche, 1994)
- O. Duhamel, Le pouvoir politique en France (Seuil, 1993)
- J. Gaffney, Presidentialism in France: the Elections of 1995 (Ashgate, 1997)
- J. Gaffney, The Presidential and Legislative Elections of 2002 (Ashgate, 2003).
- N. Hewlett, Modern French Politics (Polity, 1998)
- P. Morris, French Politics Today (MUP, 1995)
- H. Portelli, La Cinquieme republique (Poche, 1994)
- A. Stevens, The Government and Politics of France (Macmillan, 1998)