

FREN 2813 – Special Topics

Emily in Paris: A Critical Lens on The French and Francophone World

Fall 2026

Clough Learning Commons 131

Instructor: Dr. Brigitte Stepanov

Course Description

Topics of current interest in French. No prerequisites. Taught in English.

General Information

Why do we watch the Netflix show Emily in Paris, and what could we watch it *for* (especially if we have never, in fact, watched it...!) This course takes as its premise the idea that watching Emily in Paris, studying what it depicts and, especially, what it omits, can shed light on broad cultural, ethical, and even geopolitical questions about the French and Francophone world, while also allowing for intercultural comparisons between France and North America. Overall, the course looks to improve cultural awareness and contribute to students' education in the humanities.

Learning Objectives:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

1. Improve their communication with peers and the instructor, both orally and in writing, while also creating a shared community experience in class (by expressing ideas, asking and answering questions, and thinking critically).
2. Employ strategies to comprehend text and video.
3. Understand and communicate advanced ideas with respect to Francophone cultures, modes of life, and customs, as well as Franco-American intercultural experiences.
4. Develop intercultural awareness through the study of the similarities and differences among and the relationships between language and culture systems.
5. Prepare to apply knowing in other FREN courses and when interpreting the human experience both in and outside the classroom.

Evaluation Criteria

Participation & Attendance	30%
2 In-Class Leading Discussion Presentations	5% each = 10%
Midterm	20%
Critique	10%
Final Project	30%

Description of Graded Components

Participation (30%)

You are expected to attend class and participate, making meaningful contributions to the class.

2 In-Class Leading Discussion Presentations (5% each = 10%)

Students will independently lead two class discussions over the course of the semester and will prepare slides with images, quotes, discussion questions, and recommended secondary references for their discussion.

Midterm

In-class midterm that addresses material discussed in class. More information will be given as we get closer to the date of the midterm (with respect to the exact material to study and what to expect vis-à-vis the format).

Critique (10%)

Students will write up a “critique” of *Emily in Paris* (an element of the episode or a particular episode or a whole season) from the perspective of a French/Francophone critic as well as a (North) American one.

Final Project (30%)

Students will complete a project, based on a topic of their choice as it relates to the topics of the class. Clear guidelines and grading criteria will be given as we get closer to the date of the final project.

Grading Scale

Your final grade will be assigned as a letter grade according to the following scale:

A	90-100%
B	80-89%
C	70-79%
D	60-69%
F	0-59%

Course Materials

Required access to *Emily in Paris* on Netflix

All readings will be made available through Canvas

Course Calendar

Week 1: Introduction to visual analysis

Weeks 2-3: Language and Identity

Week 4-5: Paris and New York (and all the other cities that aren't those two): Concepts of “Center” and “Periphery”

Week 6: Intercultural Competencies

Week 7: Architecture and Fashion

Week 8: Romance and Friendship

Weeks 9-10: What is omitted?

Week 11: How to do “business” in France

Week 12: Environment and Sustainability

Week 13: Transportation

Week 14: Sound and Smells

Week 15: What is critique? Reflections on the series as a whole

Course Expectations & Guidelines

Academic Integrity

Georgia Tech aims to cultivate a community based on trust, academic integrity, and honor. Students are expected to act according to the highest ethical standards. For information on Georgia Tech's Academic Honor Code, please visit <http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/policies/honor-code/> or <http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/rules/18/>.

Any student suspected of cheating or plagiarizing on an assignment, project or exam will be reported to the Office of Student Integrity, who will investigate the incident and identify the appropriate penalty for violations.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

If you are a student with learning needs that require special accommodation, contact the Office of Disability Services at (404)894-2563 or <http://disabilityservices.gatech.edu/>, as soon as possible, to make an appointment to discuss your special needs and to obtain an accommodations letter. Please also e-mail me as soon as possible in order to set up a time to discuss your learning needs.

Attendance and/or Participation

Please remember that your attendance and timely participation is key to your success in this course, as well as that of your classmates.

Collaboration and Group Work

Language learning occurs in a community of people. This semester, you will participate in multiple small group activities both oral and written.

However, the following forms of assistance are not allowed for doing any of the work in this course: copying (from someone else's assignments or from another source [a reading in a textbook, the Internet, etc.]) without clear attribution of the source; having another student, a

tutor, or a friend suggest changes or correct the work you are to turn in; completing assignments in consultation with other students (“working together”) unless specified by your instructor; translating directly from another source; and especially **using electronic translation programs**. These restrictions apply to any work turned in for this course, even daily homework assignments. The issue of digital plagiarism has raised concerns about ethics, student writing experiences, and academic integrity. GT subscribes to a digital plagiarism detection program called Turnitin, which may be used to check assignments submitted in this course.

Extensions, Late Assignments, & Re-Scheduled/Missed Exams

No late assignments or extensions will be granted. Please plan accordingly. Contact your instructor in the case of extenuating circumstances.

Student-Faculty Expectations Agreement

At Georgia Tech we believe that it is important to strive for an atmosphere of mutual respect, acknowledgement, and responsibility between faculty members and the student body. See <http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/rules/22/> for an articulation of some basic expectation that you can have of me and that I have of you. In the end, simple respect for knowledge, hard work, and cordial interactions will help build the environment we seek. Therefore, I encourage you to remain committed to the ideals of Georgia Tech while in this class.

Campus Resources for Students

The Center for Academic Success (success.gatech.edu/) offers a variety of academic support services to help students succeed academically at Georgia Tech (e.g. tutoring, peer-led study groups, study skills, etc.).

The Office of Disability Services (disabilityservices.gatech.edu/) ensures that students with disabilities have equal access to all programs and activities offered at Georgia Tech. They provide documentation and officially sanctioned requests for accommodation for students, and serve as a resource for instructors as they build learning environments to meet the needs of all students.

OMED: Educational Services (omed.gatech.edu/) is the unit charged by Georgia Tech with the retention, development, and performance of the complete student learner who is traditionally underrepresented: African American, Hispanic, and Native American. OMED’s programming and academic support services are aimed at equipping all students with strategies to navigate the Georgia Tech environment.

Support for Students in Distress

Counseling Center counseling.gatech.edu/ 404-894-2575
Dean of Students (Student Life) studentlife.gatech.edu/ 404-385-8772
GT Police police.gatech.edu/ 404-894-2500
Stamps Health Services health.gatech.edu/ 404-894-1420