



ML 2500 – Introduction to Cross-Cultural Studies (3 credits)

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

Fall 2026 Syllabus

Tuesday, Thursday 3:30-4:45pm, Clough Learning Commons 131

Instructor Information

Instructor

Dr. Brigitte Stepanov

Email

bstepanov@gatech.edu

Office Hours & Location

Tuesday and Thursday, 5:00pm-6:30pm in Swann 206D
and by appointment on Zoom or
in person (please contact me in
advance and we will find a
convenient time!)

This is a Core IMPACTS course that is part of the Humanities area.

Core IMPACTS refers to the core curriculum, which provides students with essential knowledge in foundational academic areas. This course will help master course content, and support students' broad academic and career goals.

This course should direct students toward a broad Orienting Question:

- How do I interpret the human experience through creative, linguistic, and philosophical works?

Completion of this course should enable students to meet the following Learning Outcome:

- Students will effectively analyze and interpret the meaning, cultural significance, and ethical implications of literary/philosophical texts or of works in the visual/performing arts.

Course content, activities and exercises in this course should help students develop the following Career-Ready Competencies:

- Ethical Reasoning
- Information Literacy
- Intercultural Competence

Catalog Course Description

This course introduces students to literature and film from around the globe and teaches comparative literary and cultural studies analysis.

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 about French and Francophone histories, cultures, aesthetics, modes of life, and customs.
4. Develop intercultural awareness through the study of the similarities and differences among languages and cultural systems, including Franco-American cross-cultural experiences.
5. Prepare to apply knowledge in other FREN/HUM/IAC courses and when interpreting the human experience both in and outside the classroom.

Course Materials

Required access to *Emily in Paris* on Netflix.

All readings and additional viewing material will be made available through Canvas.

Recommended materials will also be uploaded to Canvas.

Evaluation Criteria

Assignment	Date	Weight (Percentage, points, etc.)
Attendance + participation (in-class discussion)	Every class	30%
Photography Project	Tuesday, October 13	10%

Assignment	Date	Weight (Percentage, points, etc.)
Midterm (in-class)	Tuesday, October 27	20%
Critique	Flexible due date (any day after Thursday, September 24, but before Sunday, December 6)	10%
Final Project	November 19&24, December 1&3 (proposed idea by November 5 th)	30%

Description of Graded Components

Attendance + participation (in-class discussion) (30%)

Active participation in class and engagement with the assigned materials are vital. Please come to class prepared by having read/watched/listened to the assigned readings/film/music. You are expected to participate in each class by making meaningful contributions, answering questions, and interacting with your peers. This course is grounded in dialogue, and I look forward to discussing these works with you!

Before class: Prepare the texts at home by reading them, using a dictionary and researching vocabulary/key terms, and completing the assignments as advised in the calendar. Access additional materials and resources on Canvas. Please bring any readings and notes to class.

During class: Class presence and participation points are given to encourage your active class participation and discussion. You will be rewarded with a perfect score as long as you come to class with a high level of preparedness and actively contribute to class discussions through thoughtful contributions. Participation includes thinking about what you have seen/read/listened to ahead of class and sharing these perspectives with the class; voicing opinions of, reactions to, and reflections on the assigned material; focusing on a particular passage or scene and explaining why it speaks to you or why you think it's important; engaging with the terminology of textual/visual analysis; volunteering to read passages out loud; speaking in French; responding to your classmates' comments in a respectful and empathetic manner; focusing on the discussion and not checking texts/social media, doing homework for other classes, speaking in English, etc.

You will be awarded two participation grades this semester (1 before the midterm and 1 toward the end of the semester).

Participation will be graded on the following scale:

High degree of preparedness and active participation = 10 points

Moderate degree of preparedness and participation = 9 points

In class and making an okay contribution = 7 points

In class, but silent or ill-prepared = 4 points

Unexcused absence = 0 points

These grades include mini presentations throughout the semester.

Attendance: You are required to attend class when it convenes, and I will be recording attendance in each class. An excused absence has to be documented by a letter from the Office of the Vice President for Student Life and Dean of Students. Absences and/or excessive tardiness will affect your participation grade – since it is worth a third of your final grade, please do attend class! If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to find out what happened in class that day and to catch up on the work that you missed. ***I record attendance in Canvas (using the “Attendance” feature) right after each class. Please let me know within 48 hours if you observe a discrepancy between what is indicated in Canvas and your actual attendance for that day. Unfortunately, I cannot retroactively change attendance at the end of the semester.

Photography Project (10%)

Visual repertoires abound in *Emily in Paris* (and in our quotidian lives more generally). This assignment is an opportunity to create, asking you to engage with the visual dimensions of everyday life in whatever way speaks loudest to you, focusing on the how, why, and what of visual representation.

You will be graded on how well you relate your project to the themes and topics of the course, the thoughtfulness of your images, and your captions. Additional details will be shared as we get closer to the due date.

If you cite external sources in your captions, please practice good citation literacy (MLA citation practices): when in doubt, cite! Find credible sources and acknowledge the work that has been done before you to dialogue with and build on it.

Midterm (20%)

In-class midterm with questions in various formats (multiple choice, short, and longer answer) that address material discussed in class and give you space to elaborate on your thoughts. 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 regarding the format).

Critique (10%)

Students will write up a “critique” of *Emily in Paris* (focusing on a specific episode).

The reflection should be approximately 800-1000 words and include:

- 2 references to discussions we’ve had in class
- References from at least 2 texts read in class
- A reference from at least 1 academic text that we did not read in class, but is related to our class’s themes

The assignment is an opportunity to hone your communication skills, synthesize the discussions had in class, and conduct research. This will help you prepare for your final project.

You will be graded on your content, writing, and adherence to the guidelines. Please practice good citation literacy (MLA citation practices): when in doubt, cite! Find credible sources and acknowledge the work that has been done before you to dialogue with and build on it.

The due date for this assignment is flexible – any time, via Canvas, after Thursday, September 24, but before Sunday, December 6 (this gives you time to settle into the course and flexibility to complete the assignment at a time that works best for you during your busy semester).

Final Project (30%)

Students will complete a research project on a topic of their choice related to the themes of the class. There will also be a creative component. Students will prepare a PPT presentation about their work. The presentation will be followed by a participative Q+A with the class. The dates for these presentations will be shared as we approach November.

***Please come speak to me in class or email me (bstepanov@gatech.edu) your proposed idea by November 5th to make sure that it aligns with the final project guidelines.

If you cite external sources, as always, please practice good citation literacy (MLA citation practices): when in doubt, cite! Find credible sources and acknowledge the work that has been done before you, so that you can dialogue with and build on it.

Clear guidelines and grading criteria will be provided as we get closer to the final project date.

Grading criteria will include the depth and quality of your research, how well you relate your project to the themes and topics of the course; the coherence of your explanations; the organization of your presentation; and the depth and coherence of your answers during the Q+A.

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%

For grades that are on the cusp, rounding up is at the discretion of the instructor.

Turning-in Assignments

Assignments are due by the start of class on the day they are due.

Late assignments will incur a 5% penalty per day late.

Not being prepared to present on the day of a presentation will incur a 10% penalty.

If you are struggling to complete work on time, please come see me. I am here to help and am happy to find a solution. If there are extenuating circumstances, we will figure something out!

***Guidelines for all written work that you hand in:

- Please submit a Word Doc
- Double-spaced
- Times New Roman, 12pt font
- Page numbers (anywhere on the page)
- “Normal margins”
- MLA citation practices for notes and bibliography (please find more info at https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_formatting_and_style_guide/mla_in_text_citations_the_basics.html and <https://style.mla.org/works-cited/citations-by-format/>)

***General guidelines for presentations:

- I encourage you to use audio/visual support (images, links, maps, video clips, songs, quotes) to engage your audience
- If you quote a text in your presentation, please cite it using MLA citation practices and, if possible, include the link where you found the information
- Please do not print your entire presentation and read it to the class; I encourage you to use brief notes/index cards

Course Website and Other Classroom Management Tools

We will be using Canvas as our course website. Please find readings and resources posted there, on the Home Page.

Course Expectations & Guidelines

General Course Policies

- Freedom of expression and guidelines for discussion: You are encouraged to share personal experiences and opinions while engaging in critical inquiry with respect to the topics covered in this class. Mutual respect is key to be able to engage in well-rounded and constructive discussion that is beneficial to us all.
- AI: Do not use Chat GPT, Google Translate, or cut + paste quotes without following proper citation guidelines. *Tools like ChatGPT/Claude and other AI-based assistance programs are powerful and valuable tools, but your ultimate submission must be your own. As with all other sources, do not copy and paste content you did not create directly.
- Recording class activities: Please do take notes in class; however, in order to preserve class integrity, student privacy, and a safe environment to express opinions, recording of our classes using digital, tape, or audio devices is not allowed. This policy can be waived for students with accommodations upon explicit recommendation from the Office of Disability Services.
- Materials posted on Canvas and shared in class are for the sole purpose of educating the students currently enrolled in the course.
- Please do not hesitate to speak with me; I will make sure any question, concern or suggestion gets the attention it deserves.

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 Participation

Please remember that your attendance and timely participation are key to your success in this course, as well as that of your classmates. (Please see above for attendance and participation requirements for this course.)

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. 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.

AI is everywhere, but please don't use it for this class. Doing the work, completing the readings, and contemplating the themes will be most valuable!

Rule of thumb: Submitting any work other than your own is a violation of the Academic Honor Code. **Do not plagiarize!**

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 expectations 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.

Student Use of Mobile Devices in the Classroom

Unless expressly needed for an activity, please do not use cellphones during class.

Modified Operations and Digital Learning Days

In the event of a weather-related event on campus or other emergency situation that requires modified operations, I will contact all students via email about canceling class or our plans for a digital learning day depending on the situation. When possible, we will pivot to an online format and I will send a Zoom link via email. If there are widespread internet outages, I will post information about the missed class to Canvas once we once have regained online access.

Campus Resources for Students (Academic Well-Being and Mental Health Support) *See Canvas for more resources

Please find campus resources, support systems, and study supports below:

Center for Academic Success: <http://success.gatech.edu>

Academic advisors for your major: <http://advising.gatech.edu/>

Academic coaching: <http://success.gatech.edu/coaching>

1-to-1 tutoring: <http://success.gatech.edu/1-1-tutoring>

Peer-Led Undergraduate Study, PLUS: <http://success.gatech.edu/tutoring/plus>

Residence Life's Learning Assistance Program: <https://housing.gatech.edu/learning-assistance-program>

OMED: Educational Services: <http://omed.gatech.edu/programs/academic-support>

The Office of the Dean of Students: <https://studentlife.gatech.edu>; 404-385-8772

Georgia Tech Police: police.gatech.edu; 404-894-2500

Food banks and food security resources, STAR: <https://studentlife.gatech.edu/content/star-services>

LGBTQIA Center: <https://lgbtqia.gatech.edu/>

Mental health resources, CARE: <https://care.gatech.edu/> and the Counseling Center: <https://counseling.gatech.edu/>; 404-894-2575

Office of the Vice President for Student Life and Dean of Students: <https://studentlife.gatech.edu/>

Resources for veterans, service members, and their families: <http://veterans.gatech.edu/>

Stamps Health Services: <https://health.gatech.edu/>; 404-894-1420

Student Center: <https://studentcenter.gatech.edu/>

The Communication Center: <https://commlab.gatech.edu/>

Tutoring and Academic Support: <https://tutoring.gatech.edu/> and <https://omed.gatech.edu/academic-support>

Women's Resource Center: <https://womenscenter.gatech.edu/>

Course Calendar

Week 1: Introduction to course and to *Emily in Paris*; Franco-American Relations and the Reception of *Emily in Paris* (An Overview)

Week 2: Intercultural Competencies (including in Business)

Weeks 2-3: What is Media? The History of Television (and Visual Analysis)

Weeks 3-4: Paris: Sights and Sounds

Week 5: A History of France

Week 6: The History of Photography: Technological Developments

Weeks 7-8: Fall Recess, Photography Project Presentations, Everyday life and the Quotidian Objects that define it

Week 9: La Mode/Fashion

Week 10: Midterm; The Culinary Arts

Week 11: Environment (Terra, Terroir, The Ecological Arts)

Week 12: Friendship and the Ethics of Care

Week 13: What is critique? Reflections on the series as a whole

Weeks 14-end: Thanksgiving; Final Projects and Group Q+As; Final Instructional Class Day/
Conclusion of course

Your constructive assessment of this course plays an indispensable role in shaping education at GT! Upon completing the course, please fill out the anonymous online course (CIOS) evaluation available at <http://gatech.smartevals.com>

Consider filling out a Thank-A-Teacher note at the end of the semester for the professors that you appreciate! Find more info here: <https://ctl.gatech.edu/content/thank-teacher>