



ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

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GENERAL STUDIES PROGRAM COURSE PROPOSAL COVER FORM

Courses submitted to the GSC between 2/1 and 4/30 if approved, will be effective the following Spring.

Courses submitted between 5/1 and 1/31 if approved, will be effective the following Fall.

(SUBMISSION VIA ADOBE.PDF FILES IS PREFERRED)

DATE 1/20/10

1. ACADEMIC UNIT: BARRETT
2. COURSE PROPOSED: HON 366 INTERNATIONAL FRANCE
3. CONTACT PERSON: Name: Kevin Dalton Phone: 5-8323
Mail Code: 1612 E-Mail: Dalton@asu.edu

4. ELIGIBILITY: New courses must be approved by the Tempe Campus Curriculum Subcommittee and must have a regular course number. For the rules governing approval of omnibus courses, contact the General Studies Program Office at 965-0739.

5. AREA(S) PROPOSED COURSE WILL SERVE. A single course may be proposed for more than one core or awareness area. A course may satisfy a core area requirement and more than one awareness area requirements concurrently, but may not satisfy requirements in two core areas simultaneously, even if approved for those areas. With departmental consent, an approved General Studies course may be counted toward both the General Studies requirement and the major program of study. (Please submit one designation per proposal)

Core Areas

Awareness Areas

- Literacy and Critical Inquiry-L
Mathematical Studies-MA
Humanities, Fine Arts and Design-HU
Social and Behavioral Sciences-SB
Natural Sciences-SQ SG

- Global Awareness-G
Historical Awareness-H
Cultural Diversity in the United States-C

6. DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED.
(1) Course Description
(2) Course Syllabus
(3) Criteria Checklist for the area
(4) Table of Contents from the textbook used, if available

7. In the space provided below (or on a separate sheet), please also provide a description of how the course meets the specific criteria in the area for which the course is being proposed.

CROSS-LISTED COURSES: [X] No [] Yes; Please identify courses:

Is this a multisection course?: [X] No [] Yes; Is it governed by a common syllabus?

David Pickus
Chair/Director (Print or Type)

Sam Miller
Chair/Director (Signature)

Date:

Arizona State University Criteria Checklist for

GLOBAL AWARENESS [G]

Rationale and Objectives

Human organizations and relationships have evolved from being family and village centered to modern global interdependence. The greatest challenge in the nuclear age is developing and maintaining a global perspective which fosters international cooperation. While the modern world is comprised of politically independent states, people must transcend nationalism and recognize the significant interdependence among peoples of the world. The exposure of students to different cultural systems provides the background of thought necessary to developing a global perspective.

Cultural learning is present in many disciplines. Exposure to perspectives on art, business, engineering, music, and the natural and social sciences that lead to an understanding of the contemporary world supports the view that intercultural interaction has become a daily necessity. The complexity of American society forces people to balance regional and national goals with global concerns. Many of the most serious problems are world issues and require solutions which exhibit mutuality and reciprocity. No longer are hunger, ecology, health care delivery, language planning, information exchanges, economic and social developments, law, technology transfer, philosophy, and the arts solely national concerns; they affect all the people of the world. Survival may be dependent on the ability to generate global solutions to some of the most pressing problems.

The word university, from universitas, implies that knowledge comes from many sources and is not restricted to local, regional, or national perspectives. The Global Awareness Area recognizes the need for an understanding of the values, elements, and social processes of cultures other than the culture of the United States. Learning which recognizes the nature of others cultures and the relationship of America's cultural system to generic human goals and welfare will help create the multicultural and global perspective necessary for effective interaction in the human community.

Courses which meet the requirement in global awareness are of one or more of the following types: (1) in-depth area studies which are concerned with an examination of culture-specific elements of a region of the world, country, or culture group, (2) the study of contemporary non-English language courses that have a significant cultural component, (3) comparative cultural studies with an emphasis on non-U.S. areas, and (4) in-depth studies of non-U.S. centered cultural interrelationships of global scope such as the global interdependence produced by problems of world ecology, multinational corporations, migration, and the threat of nuclear war.

Proposer: Please complete the following section and attach appropriate documentation.

ASU--[G] CRITERIA			
GLOBAL AWARENESS [G]			
YES	NO		Identify Documentation Submitted
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1. Studies must be composed of subject matter that addresses or leads to an understanding of the contemporary world outside the U.S.	Please see syllabus and activities
		2. Course must be one or more of following types (check all which may apply):	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	a. In-depth area studies which are concerned with an examination of culture-specific elements of a region, country or culture group. The area or culture studied must be non-U.S. and the study must contribute to an understanding of the contemporary world.	Please see syllabus and activities
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	b. Contemporary non-English language courses that have a significant cultural component.	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	c. Comparative cultural studies in which most, i.e., more than half, of the material is devoted to non-U.S. areas.	Please see syllabus and activities
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	d. In-depth studies of non-U.S. centered cultural interrelationships of global scope, such as the global interdependence produced by problems of world ecology, multinational corporations, migration, and the threat of nuclear war. Most, i.e., more than half, of the material must be devoted to non-U.S.	

Course Prefix	Number	Title	Designation
HON	366	International France: Culture and the Construction of International Identity	G

Explain in detail which student activities correspond to the specific designation criteria. Please use the following organizer to explain how the criteria are being met.

Criteria (from checksheet)	How course meets spirit (contextualize specific examples in next column)	Please provide detailed evidence of how course meets criteria (i.e., where in syllabus)
Outside of US		Taught in Paris
Culture-specific studies		Please see syllabus and activities

Syllabus Hon 394: International France

Where do national boundaries end? Where does French culture stop and "other" culture begin? Posing this question allows us to see France as an "inter-nation," as the convergence of many different influences that have all in some way become "French." Our familiarity with the English language makes it natural that we should explore ways in which American or British literature has entered into French culture and language.

After the Battle of Hastings, bilingual poets in Brittany began to write about the legendary King Arthur. These romances appear in French in the work of Marie de France and Chrétien de Troyes, and it is with medieval romances that we begin the course.

Meeting times:

Flexibility is important. GENERALLY, Susser and Dalton seminars will meet Monday (lundi) afternoons and Wednesday (mercredi) mornings each week we are in Paris. Tuesdays, Thursdays and Wednesday afternoons will be devoted to museums and cultural visits; on these days we require your attendance from after breakfast up to dinner, and on some occasions for night excursions.

Readings: All readings are due on the day assigned with the exception of Hemingway and Horne. You must finish these books by the day you arrive; expect a quiz which will count as 10% of your grade.

Grading: 20% of the grade is class participation, but remember that class is field trips as well. Paying careful attention to guides; using your written materials well; being well-prepared; and asking questions on field trips is important. The initial quiz counts for 10% of the grade. In-class quizzes count for 20%. The final project, which incorporates your written responses during the program, counts for 50%.

BOOKS (from Bookstore):

Marie de France, *Lays of Marie de France*

Shakespeare, *Henry V* (Penguin)

Hemingway, *A Moveable Feast*

Horne, *Seven Ages of Paris*

For Activities: Guiliano, French Women Don't Get Fat

Required for HON 194: Rick Steves' Paris 2009

IN PACKET (from Alternative Copy Shop)

Henry Adams, "The Virgin of Chartres"

Voltaire, *Candide*

Rilke, "Archaischer Torso"

Selections from David Harvey, *Paris, Capital of Modernity*

So memorize these words (by week 2 all days on syllabus will be in French):

lundi	Monday
mardi	Tuesday
mercredi	Wednesday
jeudi	Thursday
vendredi	Friday
samedi	Saturday
dimanche	Sunday

Schedule for HON 394: French Lit Cult

Prerequisites for this course:

- 17 mai Orientation 4 PM at the FIAP; Be prepared for a quiz on assigned pages of *Seven Ages of Paris* (see below) and *Moveable Feast*.
- 18-19 mai HON 194: Three Modules
- 20-25 mai Hastings to D-Day Discovery Trek. **Reading:** "The Virgin of Chartres" in packet.
- 25 mai lundi RETURN TO PARIS! Orientation for "International France"; Module 4, "the Enlightened Traveler."
- 18:30: Eiffel Tower Picnic and Lecture
- 26 mai mardi Classes 11:00-15:00
- READING:** Lays of Marie de France: "Lanval;" "Yonec"; "Laustic."
- ARRIVE 16:00 at Sainte Chapelle for visit.
- 27 mai mercredi MEET at Notre Dame 10 AM for "Historic Paris Walk" (**Bring Steves and Horne, focus pp 17-57**).
- Classes 13:00-17:15 **READING:** Henry V.
- Meet at 17:45** "The Dark and Backward Abyss of Time": Medieval Louvre
- 28 mai jeudi Marais Walk in Steves. This walk must include the Picasso Museum (9:30-5) and Carnavalet (10-6; avoid lunchtime [12-2]) (Be sure to **bring Steves and Horne, focus pp 57-74**).
- Receive Carte Orange Metro Pass.

Response: Consider the relationship between sexuality and authority in one of the Lais by Marie de France. 200 words.

Journal: Consider and compare the sites we visited on our two city walks. Is Notre Dame a sacred space or a tourist trap or both? How does it compare to Sainte Chapelle? How did you respond to the

extraordinary variety of public spaces and architecture you encountered – does this change your sense of what “history” or the “past” means to you? Choose at least three moments of these walks and characterize your responses to them.

Response and Journal due anytime before dimanche 20:00 If you travel on the weekend turn it in before you leave.

- lundi 1 juin 13:00 -17:15 PM Class: Discussion of journals/responses plus **Reading: Candide**
- mardi 2 juin 10:00 AM Musée de l'armée and Napoleon's Tomb in Les Invalides (Bring your favorite Rick Steves). Meet at Napoleon's Tomb entrance.
- mercredi 3 juin 10:45 Meet at pyramid for FULL DAY Tour of the Louvre. Each and every One must bring your happy Rick Steves! **No backpacks or large bags allowed in the museum (they will dispose of both you and the bag!)** The museum is open until 9 PM, so relax, take breaks, and wander in and out.
- jeudi 4 juin Versailles! Full day visit. We leave 9 AM from the Citadines. Bring Rick Steves!
Reading (due by departure for Versailles):
Horne, “Louis XIV” 105-158.

Response: Create your own satirical travel narrative, in the genre of Candide, describing your experience of the Louvre, and/or Les Invalides. Consider both aristocracy and military history. Do you agree, as the culture of aristocracy did so strongly, that war and martial force are a necessary and normal part of human life? Is it true that we can only attain our potential by facing death on a fairly regular basis? If not, then why do humans fight so much? And why do they treat those who fight as heroes and potential leaders – does experiencing violence teach us something about power and authority?

Journal: Consider a Museum. Define the idea of a “museum” in terms of purpose and structure. Choose a museum to compare to the Louvre and discuss spatial and structural elements (How ‘bout that pyramid?). What would a perfect museum designed by you look like? What would it contain? If I preserve an object or a stone in a museum am I taking it out the historical context that makes it meaningful?

What are the advantages and disadvantages of the museum *as a* context? Finally, how should we classify Versailles -- a museum with an historical context preserved – or is it a palace?

Response and Journal due Sun 8:00 PM

lundi 8 juin 13:00-17:15: Discussion of Journals and Responses. **Reading:** Harvey, Introduction, Chaps 4, 7 10, 12 in packet.

NOTE CRUISE Monday 8 June!

mardi 9 juin 11:00- Noon Montmartre Walk. Meet Metro Abbesses. **(Bring Steves).** **Reading:** Harvey, “The Building of the Basilica of Sacré-Coeur” in packet.

14:00-17:00 Musée AU CHOIX

mercredi 10 juin 8:30-12:30 Class **READING:** Hemingway

13:45 Meet at Musée d'Orsay grasping your RICK STEVES!

jeudi 11 juin 11:00-Noon: Meet at metro Cardinal Lemoine for Hemingway walking tour

Afternoon visit to Pere Lachaise Cemetery: Follow the RICK STEVES walk (It is great). **Reading:** Horne, 279-353

Response: We’ve considered the question “What is art?” Please define what is **not** art – what object, act, or idea doesn’t qualify and why? Then please turn to Hemingway, who lived in a culture and time period in which the concept of “art” was being redefined. Using specific and detailed examples from his book, please define Hemingway's ethic of work as art, and justify or criticize his description of his own professional ethic as an “artist.”

Journal: We did walks exploring a place (Montmartre) and a person’s life (Hemingway) as a context for place. How does your knowledge of Hemingway change your experience of the neighborhoods and cafes he lived in and wrote in? At Montmartre, were you in a different place than Paris? Consider the idea of “place.” Place is a feeling as much as a location. How has your response to Paris as a

place changed during this program? If you were designing a walking tour based on your experiences in Paris this summer, which places would we visit?

Response and Journal due Sun 8:00 PM

lundi 15 juin 13:00-17:15 Go over journals and responses

mardi 16 juin 9:00-12:00 Class

Reading: Horne, "De Gaulle" and "Death in Paris, Père Lachaise Cemetery" 353-422

1:15: Rodin Museum

mercredi 17 juin 10:00 Full Day visit to Pompidou Centre gripping your Rick Steves!

jeudi 18 juin Self Assessment Exercise

Final Dinner/Picnic

vendredi 19 juin Last Chance Day (what you kept meaning to do)

samedi 20 juin 10 AM DEPARTURE

France 2009: Journal

Written requirements for the six upper division credits.

Reading:

Everyone on the program must read Hemingway, *A Moveable Feast* by the time you arrive in Paris and be prepared for a quiz on the book then. You may respond to it anywhere in this journal but you must make it part of your response to Activity 5.

Responses:

All written responses, whether assigned by the individual professor in relation to our group activities in Normandy, the Loire valley and Paris or in conjunction with our consideration of the assigned texts, must be presented in your JOURNAL after our return to the States (due October 1, 2009). All written work we ask you to hand in while in France may be handwritten. But all written work that appears your journal should be revised and either typed or presented in a legible, though perhaps artistic, format.

Each activity has three phases:

1. Preliminary research and a two-page summary.
2. Evidence gathering; hypothesis testing (in which you collect all types of data including menus, maps, brochures, pamphlets, pictures, tattoos, ticket stubs, whatever.
3. Reflective conclusion, normally two pages.

For Phase 1 we expect you to use the required reading as well as your own research on the web, furtive scans of books in bookstores you're too cheap to buy, sketches, pictures you take or create in any medium, polls you design and administer (opinions of French people, institutions, D-Day, Catholicism). Keep in mind that just because we accept a diverse set of resources doesn't mean we're casual in our expectations. We expect excellence and a high degree of intellectual sophistication. We firmly believe opening up academic inquiry to creative and alternative forms of expression enhances our ability to think in a critical and productive manner.

Grading:

Journal Activities: 50% (30% written and analytical quality; 20% presentation)

Written Responses (see the syllabi): 30%

Class Participation: 20%

ACTIVITY 1: The Tapestry

Invasion and transformation. YOU are about to invade another country and culture with all your dashing and debonair Americaness. William (the Conqueror) had a similar idea about 1000 years ago. Those two dates: the Norman invasion of October 14, 1066 and the ASU invasion of May 18, 2009 define the parameters of our research for this summer. So, these Normands made a tapestry as a record of their exploits and we're going to go see it; it is housed in the town of Bayeux. The relevant question for Activity 1 in which we are asking you to link the Hastings Tapestry (named after the Battle of Hastings) to your own journal in the Summer of 2009 is: Why do people make records of their travels? Why not just travel?

Let's introduce a new term here: the "travelogue." Back in the day, there were only travelogues. Travelogues are a form of literature that describe a place or culture as "foreign" for a "home" audience who the writer assumes shares his/her perspective. There are even fake travelogues from the 18th century with titles like "Notes by a Chinaman" by British writers pretending to be foreign so they could make fun of Londoners. And then, after literally thousands of years of travelogues, something happened to this venerable genre. It probably started with the sons of British middle class families trying to get some snob culture by taking the "Grand Tour" to see Paris, Rome, Madrid, and Vienna after going to University. To help these middle-class sons do their Grand Tours a new genre of travel book sprang up -- the "Travel Guide." Instead of the travelogue, which didn't have a specific agenda but rather was the story of its author's travels, the Travel Guide was like going shopping. Travel guides tell you what "sights" you should "see" and even rate the "sights" in terms of how "important" it is to see them -- "Must-see," three stars, and etc. In the 18th century there were no cameras so everyone brought a sketchpad and the Travel Guide could tell you where to sit to get the best sketch. So we move from the travelogue as a record of experiences created by an individual traveler to the model of shopping in which particular sites are "worth" a particular rating and you consume them by "seeing" them or "doing" them.

For your personal European Invasion we're asking you to create a tapestry like the Normans did; the result will be your Journal. For your first activity we'd like you to write an introduction following the three phases of:

1. Research (normally two pages or more);
2. Evidence gathering and hypothesis testing;
3. Reflective conclusion (normally two pages or more).

So for example, first you need to do some research using whatever sources you feel comfortable with: travel literature; web resources; art history; etc. Then write down your plans in two or more pages for this journal and that is Phase 1 of Activity 1.

Guidlines for Phase 1 of Activity 1. To begin, you need to discover some details about the Hastings Tapestry housed at Bayeux (perhaps starting at <http://www.battle1066.com/>). What about that great project of documentation strikes you as relevant to the task of documentation you are going to undertake? Once you have done this, turn your attention to your own ambitions. Ask yourself why you would make a record of your travel -- what are your goals? What media do you plan to express yourself in? What do

you imagine from your perspective as a homeboy/girl from your 'hood in Mesa, AZ that Paris will smell like? Maybe you're not into smells; maybe you're interested in food, or a world where there is no drinking age, or just the experience of thinking about life in the very same room that Philippe Auguste had decorated before he left for his first crusade (about 1180). Or maybe you're into the cruising scene and consider yourself an artist of that sort of thing -- in French you're a "dragueur" or perhaps a "femme fatale." Or lets be honest your greatest fear is the nude beaches and those sneaky cellphone cameras. Whatever. Set it down in writing. This is **your** journal. Keep in mind that this journal isn't private. It is a document in which you express yourself as yourself, in which you perform your life and expectations at this particular point in being who you are. Be honest and take the job seriously and you'll have something that will make great reading 20 years from now.

Phase 2 of Activity 1 can't be done ahead. Contain yourself. Phase 2 for each activity has to be done on the spot. Every time we encounter a "sight," every time we encounter a travelogue (such as the Tapestry at Bayeux), everytime we see a portrait commemorating a person or an event, everytime we do a walking tour and see the "very cafe in which Hemingway became drunk (again) after writing another 20 pages of his Nobel-Prize winning story. . . .," everytime you manage to get that great picture at the nude beach on your cellphone camera, see if you can find or collect material to answer the question: Why do travelers write? What will you write? What will be in your tapestry?

To complete Phase 3 of Activity 1, you need to write a reflective conclusion setting forth what you have decided is the best response to the question of "Why do travelers write? What did you write? What have you tried to create?" Phases 1, 2, and 3 of Activity 1 will act as your presentation of the journal to come.

Activity 2: Questions of Travel.

Oscar Wilde famously noted that "There is no such thing as good or evil. There are people who are tedious and people who are charming." So let's adapt Wilde to say that there are no "bad" or "good" travel destinations; there are just travelers who are tedious and travelers who are charming. Some travelers find Paris life-transforming and extraordinary in every way while others need to tell you about the rude waiter, how dirty the bathroom was, and the long line to get into the Eiffel Tower.

In Phase 1 of this Activity please identify three types of traveler. Examples follow. Describe some characteristics of each type. You may identify some of these characteristic behaviors using examples in others (fun) or in yourself (interesting). For Phase 2 test the validity of your categories. For Phase 3 reflect on what worked and didn't in your pretrip analysis and include some notes on your own traveling practice.

Examples. In my strange little world I identify three levels of traveler. I call the first level the "Liberty Fries" traveler, the second the "This isn't what I expected" traveler, and the third level "Beginner Mind." (Please create your own levels or use mine with your own examples.)

The "Liberty Fries" traveler judges every experience or encounter as "like home" (good) or incomprehensible and somehow defective. In Paris, Liberty Fries demand the same services or foods they are used to at home and complain loudly when these aren't available. Liberty Fries feel that speaking English is "normal" and feel insulted or angry when "foreigners" (their word for French people even while traveling in France) refuse to speak normally; Liberty Fries will often mutter the common wisdom that "if English was good enough for Jesus it is good enough for the French."

The "this isn't what I expected" traveler uses that phrase a lot. Now if you think about it, a traveler who is visiting a destination for the first time clearly doesn't know what to expect. In fact, this is the whole point of traveling to somewhere you've never been -- to see something new and unexpected. But the unfortunate "This isn't what I expected" traveler, once abroad, starts to evaluate everything he/she does or sees by the standard of his/her expectations, which have now become a universal standard: The Louvre was "overcrowded" (measured by my expectations); the hotel was dirty (dirtier than I expected); the bus trip was too long (longer than I expected); the weather was too hot (hotter than I expected it to be), the Mont Saint Michel was small (er than I expected).

My third level of traveler practices the "beginner mind." This traveler knows that his/her personal experience of home will differ from experiences in other cultures: Red Bull may be served warmer in Spain, and you order beer with your McBrat burgers in the Frankfurt McDonalds. This traveler lives by the motto from Sun Tzu: "In combat, expect nothing and you will never be surprised." All experiences are potentially fascinating to the traveler with beginner mind; every situation may become the beginning of a new adventure. Had to sit in the toilet on the supercrowded overnight train from Rome because you gave up your seat to a single dad from Croatia with four kids? Well first you never have to wait in line for the poddy and second think of all those people you meet everytime you have to give up your "seat" and then early that morning the Croatian dad invites you to his village on this island which when arrive

you realize is the most beautiful place you've ever seen and you buy property off the coast for practically nothing which is now worth an enormous amount of money. Sound incredible? It happened to one of my best friends. Beginnings can and do happen to those with the right frame of mind, and there is no better training ground for developing beginner mind than travel.

So having said that, I've completed Part 1 of Activity 2. Now I need to do my research during my summer travels and test my hypotheses for Part 2. To complete Part 3 I need to reflect upon the value of my categories and think about my own traveling practice -- where do I fit in to these categories?

Activity 3: Getting down on Food.

We've asked you all to read French Women Don't Get Fat by Mireille Guiliano. A good practice after spending time with any book is to create a concise summary of what the author's thesis is: Why did Guiliano take the time to write those pages -- what is her argument? My summary of French Women is: the act of chewing and swallowing is one small part of the enjoyment of eating; those who use food only to satisfy hunger are missing a lot. Of course, that's the short version. But Mireille Guiliano's argument that if we understand eating as a sensuous experience involving the people you sit down with, the beauty of the setting, the shopping you do, the wine you select, the cooking skills or food awareness you've cultivated, the presentation you create or appreciate, and your consciousness of eating as one of life's great activities then you will stop focusing on calories and lose weight. It's an argument worth considering. In any case, French women don't seem to be fat.

To complete the three phases of Activity 3, begin by reading Guiliano's book. Then use Rick Steves or another guide book (Frommer's, Fodors, Rough Guide (available as ebook), and Lonely Planet all have sections on this but be sure to look at the Paris edition rather than the edition covering all of Europe or France) to educate yourself on markets, cheese shops, and food shopping in Paris. What interests you? Review (Guiliano) for tips on wine, bread and chocolate. Challenge yourself now: invite your family to dinner and choose one dish to make to get started. Try: the salad on p; the salmon; the flan; or the chops (easy to grill; much more sophisticated than steaks). Take pictures, write down your recipes, have everyone you invited to dinner sign a napkin -- start your journal tonight. If you have never cooked anything but Cheez Whiz before, then at least try the apples on 144-5 for a desert.

For Phase 2 of Activity 3, we'll be asking you to do a Market Visit (Guiliano) and a Dinner Preparation which you must document with pictures, sketches, receipts and notes (see Guiliano for seasonal recipes). Everyone must make their own yogurt and create a record of your success including an evaluation by our TA. Your Market Visit will be very easy -- we'll be living within 100 feet of one of the best markets in Paris. To complete the activity, we have three requirements: (1) you must shop for an item you buy regularly in America and note the differences in both shopping for and the quality of what you purchase; (2) you must shop for (or order in a restaurant if you're faint of heart) something you WOULD NEVER EAT EVER in America -- rabbits, raw beef, andouillettes (intestines), or raw horse are examples from previous years; and (3) you must unless it would require a hospital stay of more than 3 days eat some real French cheese, preferably as a fourth course (after starter, main, desert).

Phase 3 of Activity 3 is the reflective conclusion. How did it go? What did you learn? Is Mireille right -- is the answer to America's obesity problem to stop dieting and start eating four course meals? And let us know how that raw horse or the tiny, cute little bunny you cut up and stewed tasted.

Activity 4: The Sacred.

In devoting an Activity to the sacred we hope to give content to an idea that is often treated as either a purely personal experience, or a vague and universally applicable category. The problem with both ends of this spectrum is that the sacred becomes “anything I think it is” -- books about Doga (dog yoga) are a good example of where this leads -- or so “universal” that we can’t really discuss sacredness or think critically about it -- after all if it is universal what more is there to say? You can fight back against these two empty extremes by insisting on giving content to your conceptualization of the sacred. Fortunately, our visits this summer include four monuments that are arguably among the most significant structures in the Catholic tradition, each representing very specific and content-rich inscriptions of Catholic ideology: the Mont St Michel; Sainte Chapelle; Notre Dame; and Chartres Cathedral. Obviously terminology such as the High and Flamboyant Gothic is applicable here, but those terms are just ways of talking about certain visual aspects of monuments created in the period from Augustine to Aquinas during which the music, art, politics, and astounding architectural prowess exhibited by those working in service of the Catholic Church formed and transformed the relationship of humanity to built space in the Western world. It is your mission to enter into the dark and tormented world of the Gothic, to appreciate the Gothic conception of the human evil and the divine Gift of Pain, and to sympathize with the otherworldly conceptions of flesh, time and space invoked by their statuary, artwork, and stonemasonry.

To create Phase 1 of this activity, you need to define the sacred as it was celebrated in the architecture of our four monuments. Look the Mont St Michel, Sainte Chapelle, Notre Dame de Paris, and Chartres cathedral up on the web or in travel literature. To write Part 1 of this Activity you should record build dates, architectural styles, very significant historical events such as fires (at Chartres) and founding or inspirational figures (such as St Louis for the Sainte Chapelle). You don’t need to be an expert, but you should be able to define these monuments as sacred architecture in specific rather than general terms. If they are sacred -- what does this term mean? Use whatever resources you feel most comfortable with to do this, but avoid generalizing one-size-fits-all definitions you find in Webster’s dictionary or the like. You may find these questions useful in formulating your idea of the sacred: what space or place isn’t sacred?; are all sacred spaces big (as in vast halls and soaring spires?); do you have to know you’re in a sacred space?; can my marble be sacred even if you like to play with it? are all sacred spaces related to a religion?; are all sacred spaces related to an idea of the afterlife?

Phase 2 involves visiting each of the monuments, taking notes, collecting materials, and creating images. We will visit the Monument de la Deportation on the Isle de la Cité in Paris once we arrive for example; decide whether this unique and striking space is sacred by your definition.

In Phase 3 you will reconsider, refine, completely rewrite, or justify your understanding of the sacred. You’ll be evaluated on your ability to use specific and local features of each monument to define differences and to introduce complexity into your definition of the sacred as a fundamental dimension of human experience as it was expressed during the period of Catholic dominance in Europe.

Mini-activity for Activity 5:

1. In the space below, right now jot down 5 sacred spaces
2. In the space below, jot down 5 spaces that can never be sacred.

Sacred Spaces

Spaces that can never be sacred

Activity 5: The Plan for Paris.

This Activity is easy. Please read over Mireille's "plan for life" (Guiliano). We've noticed that the people on this program who enjoy themselves the most often have a list of "trip objectives." Of course, we'd recommend making each objective the beginning of an adventure rather than an item on a list you compulsively check off. For Phase 1, make your own list for an ideal summer in Paris: food, clothes, what you love and would love to do, and what you are planning to need and why. Your list can identify plans such as "Create a beautiful dinner in my apartment using two kinds of fish," or "Sit in a cafe for at least an hour each day doing nothing but enjoying the moment." You can also include attitudes towards food and life, like Mireille's "French women eat with all five senses, allowing less to seem like more," or behaviors you plan on adopting, "French women don't eat 'fat free,' 'sugar free,' or anything stripped of natural flavor. They go for the real thing"; "French women eat smaller portions of more things"; "French women honor mealtime rituals and never eat standing up or on the run." Can you make a ritual of a once-a-week dinner in your apartment or a lunch to which you invite friends? I make a list myself every summer and this year one example is: Whenever I am on a train, plane, café or any type of public space in which I have to sit next to strangers I am going to try to talk to the person next to me. Frankly I view this idea with dread, but a writer I really admire named Hunter Davies wrote a book about his year in the Lake District (in northern England) -- he just walked around and talked to everyone he met, and wrote everything down in his journal. I'm going to the Lakes myself after our program, so I plan to begin a journal about my summer in Paris and the Lakes. I also plan to adopt Mireille's suggestion to "Write down everything you eat this week" the first two weeks I am in Paris. Just to see -- I'm going to write down everything I eat and drink, even sips of water. Now merge this approach to detailed experiences of life and food with Hemingway's own commitment to know and to understand the simple and elegant beauty of writing or painting -- or creative responses to the world we encounter -- as the central activity of his life. How can this journal change a summer from a one-time experience to an experience that becomes part of your life and the way you see the world? Find ways to make your commitment to journaling, to remembering, self-transforming. Go ahead, make a Plan for Paris (Phase 1). Record your surprises while there -- perhaps brief notes, perhaps poetically, perhaps in drawing or photos (Phase 2). For Phase 3 revise your Plan for Paris. How much did you accomplish? What was worth it and what was not? What would your new experienced self do differently if you were going to do this summer over again?