Paris, France
Contemporary French Studies
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Welcome to Your Program

Academic Program

Host University Overview

Paris Center for Critical Studies

The Contemporary French Studies (CFS) program, created in 1999, is a two-track program which offers language instruction and content courses either in French or English. It is designed for intermediate students interested in deepening their understanding of modern French and Francophone cultures and societies. CFS courses, taught by Paris-based professors, offer a wide variety of themes, including contemporary history, literature, cinema, art history and architectural history, popular culture and immigrant cultures, sociology, education, religious studies, disability studies and intercultural communication. The program is designed for students with a strong interest in contemporary France and at least two semesters of prior French instruction at the college level or the equivalent at the secondary school level, as confirmed by placement test. The program is unique in that it brings together low intermediate and high intermediate students, providing a wide range of challenging courses in English or French depending on the students' level, numerous opportunities to connect with French society, high-quality French instruction for all and the option to audit classes at the French university for those with the appropriate level.

CIEE's Paris Study Center, known as the Paris Center for Critical Studies, is on Paris’ Right Bank. It is centrally located in the 2nd arrondissement, near the lively Grands Boulevards with their cinemas, theatres and cafés. The Center is a 30-minute metro ride from the Sorbonne, a 15 minute walk from the Louvre, and is right in the heart of the historic Sentier fabric district. The CIEE Paris Center has been hosting semester and yearlong programs for U.S. college students since 1973.

CFS classes, taught by CIEE-hired faculty, take place in the Center's classrooms (though some may involve projects, outings or field trips outside of the Center). The two exceptions are the Intercultural Communication class, which is taught in part at the University of Paris Diderot, and the Community Service Learning class which is taught both at the center and at the site of CFS volunteer work. The Intercultural Communication class is open to CIEE students and to French students from the University of Paris Diderot. All other CIEE Courses are open only to CIEE students, though they may involve discussions and intercultural debates with students from French institutions or “practicum” activities such as volunteering, teaching English in French schools, or auditing classes at the French university. CFS students share the Center with other CIEE students from the U.S. participating in the Critical and Francophone Studies Program, and with young people from the CIEE Paris gap-year program.

Academic Culture

Language classes in the CFS program are always small, with never more than 15 students. Teachers work intensively with each student and tailor the class to the level of the group. Attendance is taken and active class participation is expected.

Content classes may be as large as 25 students, or as small as 5 students. Teaching is seminar-style, even in large classes, however: each class involves discussion, and students are expected to be active and involved.
Most classes integrate at least one outing per semester. Outings are led by the professors and are integrated into the themes and goals of the class. Some classes, such as art history and architectural history, are based on frequent outings as an integral part of the class. Evaluation of student work is similar to that in an American university. Depending on the course theme, students will be evaluated through papers, and in-class and take-home exams. Many professors require oral presentations in class, a practice which is common in the French educational system.

CFS students who audit classes at the French university will find a different kind of academic culture. First, professors rarely hand out a detailed syllabus with weekly readings and assignments spelled out. Second, lecturing tends to be the norm, and students often do not have the opportunity to participate in class. A class format within the French university system typically consists of a lecture with students taking notes. Third, a final grade may be based on a single research paper or final exam, and there may not be a midterm exam. Many professors ask students to do oral presentations in class. In any case, to study at the French university you will need to develop independence and self-discipline and take charge of your learning process.

Center Facilities

The Center consists of four classrooms, several offices and a library area. All students have access to an extensive collection of videos and DVDs of French and international films as well as a lending library with approximately 800 volumes in French and in English.

There are three computers with Internet access, each with their own printer, for student use in the library. You can also access the Internet at the Center through WiFi, so we recommend that you take your laptop wireless card (or, for MAC, an Airport card), and a USB key.

Courses and Program Requirements

Academic Program

Prior to arrival, CFS students will complete a placement test. Based on this test, groups will be formed for the one-week Intensive Language Program (ILP) which starts the CFS program. At the end of the ILP, each student has an individual meeting with his or her language professor to set goals for language learning and establish language placement for the semester: Intermediate I, Intermediate II, or Intermediate III.

After the ILP, students begin their regular semester program. Depending on their language placement, all students will take one Grammar class (at level Intermediate I, II or III) and one Conversation class (at level Intermediate I, II or III). Besides these two obligatory classes, students have three elective content courses to choose. Their options will depend on their track.

The program is divided into two tracks: the Language in Context track or “Springboard” track, and the Language and Culture or “Threshold” track.

Students in the Language in Context or “Springboard” track will take French Grammar, French Conversation, and three additional elective CIEE content courses taught in English. With special permission, students with the appropriate level may take one CIEE content course in French.

Students in the Language and Culture or “Threshold” track will take French Grammar, French Conversation, and three additional elective CIEE content courses in French; with special permission and a valid academic reason, a “Threshold” level student may also take a content course in English. If they have the requisite level, they may also audit a class at the French University.

Credit and contact hours are the same for all courses. Total recommended credit for the semester is 15 semester units or 22.5 quarter units.

All CFS students are required to participate in conversation exchange.

In the “Springboard” or Language in Context track, classes are designed to bring you into contact with French students for intercultural dialog or exchange. In the “Threshold” track, “Practicum” classes allow
you to participate in French society through teaching classes in French schools, volunteering, or auditing classes at the French university.

**Daily Schedule**

CFS students take five classes during their semester at the Center: At least two of the five classes must be in French. French language classes meet twice a week for a total of three hours. All other classes will meet once or twice a week, for a total of three hours per week. Center classes are held between the hours of 9:30 am and 6:30 pm and take place Monday -- Friday.

**Course Registration and Academic Advising**

Prior to coming on the program, students will receive a preliminary course choice form. It is up to the student to go over their course choice with their academic advisor and to return it to CIEE. Based on this course form and on the student’s language placement test, each student will be placed into one of the two tracks. The Language in Context or “Springboard” track is designed for those with 2 semesters of French or the equivalent who wish to take content classes in English, and the Language and Culture or “Threshold” track is designed for those with 3 or more semesters of French or the equivalent who wish to take their content classes in French.

During the first weeks of the program, the program Director meets with each student to discuss the student’s academic goals, linguistic level, and course choices for the term. At the end of the first two weeks of content classes, the student completes and signs a final course registration form that will be forwarded to CIEE's Registrar in the CIEE home office.

**Continuing study**

Students who decide to continue their studies in Paris for a second semester, or decide to do a summer or semester program at one of the other CIEE Study Centers should remember these deadlines: April 1 for most summer and fall programs; November 1 for most spring programs. You must complete an enrollment extension form, which can be obtained from the Resident Director, if you plan to continue your studies at a CIEE Study Center.

**Class Locations**

All CIEE courses are held at the Paris Center for Critical Studies, with the exception of the Community Service Learning class which is held in part at the Center, and partly at the volunteering site, the Club Barbes, one-half hour away from the Center by metro, and the Intercultural Communication class, which is held in part at the Center, and partly at the University of Paris Diderot. Students auditing classes at the French university will go to one of our partner institutions, the University of Paris – La Sorbonne Nouvelle, or the University of Paris Diderot. Both campuses are about one half-hour away from the Center by metro.

**Libraries in Paris**

CFS students may get a library card at the Bibliothèque National de France. This prestigious national library is a 30-minute Metro ride from the center. In addition, Paris offers a wealth of libraries, including many specialized ones. A list will be distributed during orientation. Students are encouraged to get a card and use the local public library or bibliothèque municipale in the arrondissement in which they live.

**CIEE Academic Field Trips**

Extracurricular activities and occasional group excursions are organized throughout the semester. In previous semesters the Resident Staff have organized visits to the cinema, theatre and museums, and outings to discover little-known neighborhoods in Paris and political sites such as the Assemblé Générale.
Day trips have been organized to sites like Reims, Lille, and Vaux le Vicomte. Weekend excursions have been organized to sites like Normandy, the Loire valley region, Bordeaux and Strasbourg.

Office and Onsite Staff

Study Center Office Location

CIEE Office Address

CPEC: Centre Parisien d’Etudes Critiques  
37 bis, rue du Sentier  
75002 Paris  
M° Bonne Nouvelle  
Tel. 33-1-40-75-00-19  
Fax: 33-1-53-76-04-00

Your Program Mailing Address

(Your Name)  
CPEC: Centre Parisien d’Etudes Critiques  
37 bis, rue du Sentier  
75002 Paris  
France

Site Staff Team

Hannah Taieb

Dr. Hannah Taieb has a Ph.D. in anthropology from New York University; her thesis, concerning women and identity, was based on fieldwork in a rural center in Morocco. After working with a research team in Lyon in 1992, Hannah settled permanently in France in 1992, where she was the co-editor of a multilingual, multidisciplinary review, Mediterraneans. She taught intercultural and interpersonal communication at the American University of Paris for several years, and has been working at the CIEE Study Center since 2001. She runs yearly faculty seminars on diversity in France, touching on themes like cultural approaches to disability, anti-Semitism and Islamophobia and religion in prison. She teaches intercultural communication, cultural approaches to disability and international service learning at the CIEE center.

Lucie Laureillard

Student Well-Being and Housing Coordinator

Lucie Laureillard, Student Well-Being and Housing Coordinator for the CIEE Paris center, has a Master’s in French Language Teaching and is a doctoral candidate in linguistics at the Université de Paris VIII, working on theater and language learning. She is a professor of French in the CFS program, and is the Director of the Paris Gap Year Abroad program.

Jean-Philippe Primout

Center Coordinator

Jean-Philippe Primout, Center Coordinator, has an M.A. in Foreign Language Instruction and a second Master’s in European Studies. Jean-Philippe is a professor of French in the CFS program and teaches the Seminar on Living and Learning. He is responsible for excursions and overall coordination of the center. He is also Director of CIEE Paris’ Summer Language and Culture program.
Arrival and Departure

Discount Airfare and Booking

Included in your program materials will be an iNext insurance card/student ID that allows airfare discounts through Student Universe (www.studentuniverse.com)

Benefits include:

- $15.00 discount on flights costing $100.01 to $249.9
- $25.00 discount on flights costing $250.00 or more
- Simply type "iNext" into the Promo Code text box when you finalize your reservation
- Your iNext card is valid for 365 days; the discount code is applicable for up to two separate purchases
- Most tickets allow changes to the ticket for as little as $50

You may book tickets directly through the airlines, many of which offer discounted prices on their websites. Iberia, Air Europa, British Airways, Continental and Delta are some of the airlines that fly to Spain. Also, the following websites may be useful when searching for airlines and fares to Seville: http://www.expedia.com/; http://www.travelocity.com/; http://www.flycheap.com/; http://www.orbitz.com/.

STA Travel (http://www.statravel.com/) and Student Universe (http://www.studentuniverse.com/) also offer great options for students.

CIEE strongly recommends that all students travel with a round trip ticket. In the past, some students travelling to Europe have been denied boarding by their airline when they attempted to travel with a one-way ticket. For students who are unsure of their plans at the end of the program or will be taking regular university courses, we recommend researching fares with low change fees so that tickets may be changed later.

Dates

CIEE staff members will be at Charles de Gaulle airport from 10 am to noon on the designated date of arrival. A meeting point will be determined and announced in the final details email that goes out about one month prior to the program start date. Taxis will be set up to allow you to proceed to your homestay host on that day. Your host will be expecting you. Should you arrive earlier or later than the designated arrival date or after the pick-up time, you will receive instructions allowing you to proceed directly to your homestay host on the designated date of arrival, as indicated in the Program Dates, Details and Updates. A taxi from Charles de Gaulle airport will cost roughly $80 USD (€50 EUR) to the center of Paris.

Fees

The cost of transportation to and from the program is not included in the CIEE program fee. You will need to provide CIEE with your travel itinerary as soon as you purchase your ticket. Please submit this information using the Flight Arrival Information online survey, available on your online CIEE account.

Delayed Arrival

If you are delayed en route to the orientation site, you must leave a message with the CIEE home office at 1-800-407-8839 and Resident staff as soon as you realize that you will be late.

In the event of a forced or unforeseen early departure from the program, any alternate arrangement to complete course work must be approved in writing by a representative of your institution and the CIEE Chief Academic Office.
Important Note: If you are delayed en route to the orientation site, you must leave a message with the CIEE home office at 1-800-40-STUDY as soon as you realize you will be late. CIEE does not permit students to arrive after the program start date for any circumstance with the only exception being unforeseen flight delays.

Orientation

Online Pre-Departure Orientation

Before leaving home you will be participating in a CIEE Online Pre-Departure Orientation. During the online orientation, you will:

- Meet with other students online
- Get information about your program and site from your Resident Director
- Receive important alumni tips and concerns
- Get time to ask any questions you may have before leaving home.

The orientation will allow you to connect, reflect and learn about what others in your group would like to accomplish.

The CIEE goal for the pre-departure orientation is simple: to help students understand more about the program and site, as well as their goals for the program, so that they arrive informed and return home having made significant progress toward their goals.

On-site Orientation

Your stay in Paris begins with a mandatory Orientation program. During this time, you will attend information sessions at the Center and participate in a variety of group activities throughout the city.

Orientation is designed to help you adjust to daily life in Paris, to become familiar with the Center, and to get to know staff and other students.

If you are delayed en-route to the program, call the Resident Director in Paris as soon as you realize that you will be late.

You will receive more specific information about the orientation schedule in your final details email, including directions for independent travelers.

Housing and Meals

On arrival, participants in the CFS program will go to their homestays, where their hosts will be waiting for them. Later on the same day, we will meet as a group and have a welcome dinner with students, staff, and homestay hosts. All CFS students are housed with French hosts.

CIEE staff will help facilitate the move-in process, and will continue to be attentive to all questions that may arise during the entire housing process. Housing placements are determined on the basis of the online questionnaires filled out by students before arrival. Please fill out these questionnaires with as much detail as possible as they are key to the process of matching students with French hosts.

Many of the French hosts we work with have housed CIEE students for years. As the program has grown, we have added new hosts as well. The CIEE Housing Coordinator visits each home and meets with each host to be sure that the housing meets CIEE standards.
An important part of the experience of living with a French host is the contact you will have with them on a daily basis through sharing everyday concerns. Your host will provide two meals a week plus breakfast for the duration of your stay.

All other meals are the responsibility of the student.

Those students wishing additional meals may arrange directly with their host at a rate of 10€/meal.

**Homestay**

People in Paris who open their homes to students include couples, single parents, and, more rarely young professionals and families with adult children. You can expect a fully furnished room with a bed, closet space, desk or table, chair, lamp and linens. We recommend that you bring at least one big bath towel, however, for travel. You’ll also have access to the kitchen to prepare meals. There may not be a washing machine in the apartment; you should be prepared to go to a laundromat to wash your clothes. Home appliances are considerably more expensive in France than in the U.S., so there may not be a microwave, dishwasher, clothes dryer, etc. CIEE pays your rent directly to the host every month for the entire semester whether or not you are in Paris every week or weekend. During vacation periods, you may want to travel outside of Paris, but you will not be reimbursed for any portion of the rent for time spent away from home.

**Guests**

According to CIEE policy, you may not have overnight guests in your housing. We recommend instead that you ask your host about hotels in the neighborhood.

Similarly, ask when you move in about inviting friends over: how many, how late they can stay, etc. Again, remember that friends (especially girlfriends and boyfriends) cannot spend the night in your room. Also, a constant stream of friends may be viewed as annoying and may cause tension. Keep in mind that French students generally socialize with friends outside the home and in public places, such as cafés or parks in nice weather. Invitations to someone's home tend to be limited to close friends and arranged in advance in France where the difference between public and private space is greater than in the U.S. For this reason, always check with your host before inviting a friend over for dinner or to watch TV and don't assume you can have parties if your host is out for the evening or gone for the weekend.

**Tips for Getting Along With Your Host**

As a short-term resident in Paris, you are not a tenant or roommate but more of a "privileged guest" in someone's home. In other words, it’s up to you to be respectful and considerate of their lifestyle and to try to adapt. The following strategies and advice will help you with the process:

- Phone ahead or leave a note if you are going out and will be coming home late at night. It may make them uncomfortable to have you coming and going at unpredictable hours even if you have your own key and try to be quiet. Be considerate and communicate with the person or people you live with.

- Respect your host's or roommate's belongings and keep shared living space tidy and free of clutter. Ask for permission (and instructions) when it comes to using a stereo, VCR / DVD, or other appliances.

- Don't go into the rooms of other members of the household unless invited or told to do so. If you're not sure, ask.

- Ask where you should put your towels, toiletries, appliances, etc. in the bathroom and don't leave your things lying around. Your host may not think to clarify such details on arrival, but they can become an issue later, so don't be afraid to ask. It'll be a sign of thoughtfulness and respect.
• If you smoke, ask where it's permissible.
• It's a good idea to put money, travelers' checks, passport, or very personal items in a safe, locked place (e.g. suitcase). Your host cannot be held responsible for theft and neither can CIEE. Lending money to or borrowing from your host is inappropriate; we strongly advise against it.

Moving in with a French person will involve adjustments that may seem difficult at first, especially if you're accustomed to living an independent lifestyle. The first few weeks will also be very tiring, physically and mentally, but don't get discouraged or lose sight of the goals that motivated your choice. If something isn't clear or if you don't understand an explanation, don't be afraid to say so and ask for clarification. The key is to communicate. There are bound to be misunderstandings due to linguistic or cultural factors but try to handle these in a mature, good-humored way and, above all, don't take things personally. If your attempts to communicate or negotiate don't succeed, talk to the on-site staff and seek their advice or assistance.

Problems with Housing

Under exceptional circumstances, when a serious problem occurs, housing changes can be made. The advisability of these changes, however, will be determined by the resident staff.

During orientation, the staff will talk about some of the little problems or misunderstandings that might arise and suggest ways of broaching topics you may find difficult or delicate. Sometimes the best tactic is simply to ask a question about a cultural difference you've noticed and show interest or curiosity in the "French way" of doing or reacting to something. This will signal your awareness of an issue and your effort to adapt or understand.

Tip: Problems and preferences. Take your time filling out the on-line housing questionnaire. The more details the better. You may not get EXACTLY what you prefer, but CIEE staff will do their best! On the other hand, once you're placed, CIEE staff won't move you just to suit your preferences. You'll be moved only if there's a real problem.
Before you leave

Essential Documents

When preparing to travel and live abroad, it is essential that you obtain all the proper documents prior to your departure. CIEE cannot accept responsibility, financial or otherwise, for a student who travels without proper documentation.

Passport

If you already have a passport, be sure that it is valid for the required period. You must have a passport valid for your entire stay overseas (as well as at least 3 months after your time abroad) and a student visa to participate in the program. If you do not have a passport, apply for one immediately as the process can take several months. We strongly recommend that you pay for expedited processing, which takes several weeks. If you are not a U.S. citizen go to the consulate website for detailed entry and visa information:

http://www.ambafrance-us.org/

U.S. citizens applying for their first passports must apply in person at a passport agency or at one of the several thousand federal or state courts or U.S. post offices authorized to accept passport applications.

Applicants should research the requirements through the US Department of State website at http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html.

Generally, the only times you need to show your passport or legal identification while in France is when cashing traveler's checks, registering at hotels, or picking up a registered letter or package at the post office. Many students choose to leave their passports in their file at the Center for safekeeping and carry a photocopy (which should be officially certified at the town hall nearest your residence), but remember that the office is closed evenings and weekends.

Visa

A visa is an endorsement or stamp placed in your passport by a foreign government allowing you to enter and stay in that country for a specified period of time. All participants in the program need a French student visa. We urge you to begin the visa process as soon as possible as it takes several months. The CIEE fee does not cover the cost of the visa. More information can be found on your MY CIEE online checklist.

Failure to obtain your visa in a timely fashion may prevent your participation in the program.

Your visa status may require that you obtain a visitor's permit (carte de séjour) once you are here. This administrative procedure is obligatory for anyone residing in France for more than three months. The CIEE center staff will help you with this procedure which involves a medical examination and which costs approximately fifty-five euros. Students should budget for this expense which is not covered by CIEE.

Documents for non-U.S. Citizens

If you are not a U.S. citizen, check with your country's consulate for regulations regarding your stay in France and reentry into the United States. Visa procedures may vary so check with the French consulate
nearest your city of residence immediately for specific visa procedures. Failure to do so may result in your being refused entry into the country or not even being allowed to board the plane at the point of departure. Also, you should call the nearest district office of the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) for information on the documents necessary for you to leave and re-enter the U.S.

Before leaving the U.S., non-U.S. citizens must also obtain a Certificate of Compliance (often referred to as a Tax Clearance or a Sailing Permit) from the local Internal Revenue Service (IRS) office. This will certify that you do not owe taxes to the U.S. government. Contact your local IRS office for information on documents required to procure this permit.

Before departure from the United States, non-U.S. citizens must also obtain a Certificate of Compliance—often referred to as a Tax Clearance or a Sailing Permit—from the local IRS (Internal Revenue Service) office. This will certify that you do not owe taxes to the U.S. government. Contact your local IRS office for information on documents required to procure this permit.

**Permanent Residents**

Permanent residents need to apply for a Re-entry Permit that serves as a passport while overseas. Being out of the United States for more than one year may jeopardize your permanent resident status. Check with the nearest INS office for information regarding documentation and procedures for return to the U.S.

**Stateless Persons**

If you do not have a country of citizenship, contact the nearest INS office and the appropriate consulate or embassy to determine the procedures you must follow to obtain the proper travel documents and visas. In addition, be sure to check with the consulate of any country where you may be spending a night or more in transit to the country of your study program. Failure to do this may result in refusal of permission to enter that country or even to board the aircraft at the point of departure.

**Additional Items**

**iNext Travel Insurance Card**

CIEE provides you with supplementary iNext travel insurance while you are abroad. You will need to have your iNext card with you to access the policies' provisions. For more information, please refer to the Insurance, Health and Medical section below.

**Lost Passport Kit**

Preparing a lost passport kit can help you speed up the process in re-obtaining your passport if it is lost or stolen while you are abroad.

A passport kit should include:

1. Two passport photos
2. Official copy of his or her birth certificate
3. Photocopy of passport’s photo, signature, and visa pages

**Spare Passport Photos**

You may need to bring up to 2-4 additional passport sized photos for both school ID and city registration purposes.
Insurance, Health and Medical

iNext Travel Insurance

The iNext Accident and Sickness Insurance policy

- Helps you cover cost of accidents and/or routine sickness while abroad
- Offers Emergency Evacuation and Emergency Medical Transportation coverage
- 24-hour Travel and Medical Assistance Service
- Offers you travel document replacement and limited travel delay and lost/stolen baggage coverage.
- Coverage begins two weeks before the program start date and continues for 365 days.
- This Health Insurance is an additional or secondary policy only, and does not cover liability.
- It also does not include routine physical, dental examinations, or preventive medicine.

You can find a complete description of the Accident and Sickness Insurance policy on the enrollment website. It is important that you read the policy carefully and note exactly what coverage it provides and excludes. Doctors, hospitals, and clinics will require you to pay bills at the time of treatment. You must then submit receipts to the insurance company for reimbursement. With this in mind, be sure to budget at least $400 to pay for medical expenses and unexpected illnesses up front.

Personal Insurance

If you are covered by a personal or parental insurance plan, CIEE recommends that you continue this coverage while abroad. Prior to departure, you should contact your current insurance carrier concerning coverage for accidents, illnesses, and liability cases that occur outside the United States. Check your policy’s limitations before making any assumptions about coverage. Most U.S. based insurance companies will not cover property lost or stolen overseas.

Immunizations

No vaccinations are required to enter France unless you are a citizen of, or arriving from, one of a number of developing countries or sites of disease outbreak. If you plan to travel to other countries where immunizations are required, you must present a record of vaccinations. The most widely recognized document for this purpose is the yellow World Health Organization booklet, International Certificates of Vaccination, which is available from most doctors and health centers. In Paris, vaccinations and a WHO certificate can be obtained at the Institut Pasteur.

Medical Supplies

If you take prescription drugs, take a sufficient supply with you for your time abroad. (Be sure to pack any prescription medication in your carry-on bag in the original packaging along with a copy of the prescription and a note from your doctor.) Students who wear glasses or contact lenses should be sure to take an extra pair as well as a copy of their prescription. If you use oral contraceptives, take an adequate supply with you. If you use antihistamines or anti-allergy products like api pen, don’t forget to bring these as well.

Note: Prescription medication cannot be mailed overseas nor stored in your checked luggage.

Be prepared for the common cold and for minor stomach or intestinal disorders often caused by changes in diet and your daily routine, the damp winter weather, or fatigue during the first weeks. It might be wise to take along small amounts of medications in case these problems arise; your doctor may suggest some.
For most minor ailments, such as colds, coughs or diarrhea, there are many medications available in local pharmacies. When in France, you can go to any pharmacy, describe your symptoms, and the pharmacists (all of whom have rigorous medical training) will recommend an effective non-prescription remedy.

**Medical Facilities**

Medical facilities in Paris are excellent in general. In an emergency, we recommend you contact a staff member or ask a French person (e.g., host, roommate, a friend) to advise you on the nearest clinic or hospital to go to; in a serious emergency, make sure you have somebody to accompany you, and always contact CIEE staff.

A list of English-speaking doctors (general practitioners and specialists) will be distributed at Orientation. Be sure to bring information regarding your primary health insurance policy. Also consult the information on your MY CIEE online checklist regarding your travel insurance policy.

**Additional Precautions**

Inform the resident staff of any existing health problems, including mental health problems, learning disabilities, sleep disorders, eating disorders, or any potential problems that might arise during your stay. This includes allergies to any medications, foods, insect bites, and so on. CIEE staff will use this information to ensure that appropriate accommodations are made. Please inform the resident staff if you become ill during the program.

**AIDS**

The HIV virus is present in Europe. It is important to take the necessary safety precautions. Condoms (les préservatifs) are readily available in France. Should you need an injection while in France, make sure the needle comes sealed in a special package and is torn open in front of you. This is standard procedure in France. Paris has AIDS centers providing counselling and free testing for HIV and STDs.

**Smoking**

Smoking is now banned in most public places in France. However, smoking remains much more common in France (and in Europe in general) than in the U.S. Therefore, if you are allergic to or easily bothered by smoke, be aware that it will be more difficult to avoid in France than it is in the United States.

**CDC Recommendations**

If you plan to travel after the program to other countries, you may want to consult the CDC information specific to these countries. The CDC website is [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov).

**Personal Finance**

Your CIEE Program fees include:

- Pre-departure information and services
- Optional on-site airport meet and greet
- Orientation
- On-site support
• Tuition
• Cultural activities and require local excursions and field trips
• iNext health insurance
• The cost of housing, some meals

Budgeting

You will need money for meals, books and course materials, entertainment, toiletries and cosmetics, gifts, school supplies, a cell phone, independent travel and travel within Paris. Since you will be commuting daily to the CIEE Study Center, be sure to budget for local travel costs. And, as described above, be sure to budget for the obligatory medical exam necessary for your carte de séjour.

Monthly expenses vary greatly depending on luck, living conditions, and frugality. For more information, consult the CIEE Europe catalog or website for a list of estimated expenses. Student expenses vary widely depending on independent travel.

Besides inflation and currency exchange, another variable that will affect your spending abroad is your individual lifestyle. When estimating a budget, it may be helpful to consider how much you normally spend in a semester and inflate it a bit. The cost of living for a student in Paris is generally higher than that of a student in the U.S., and the added cost of independent travel along with the impulse to splurge makes careful budgeting imperative. Former students have saved considerably by limiting vacation travel to the area around Paris. We suggest you take extra money, if possible, for unforeseeable expenses.

Food

Consider shopping in open markets and cooking with others to save money. Cafes are tempting but expensive. RUs, restaurants, universitaires, or student restaurants, offer decent, moderately priced meals.

Financial Arrangements and Banking

Money

The national currency is the Euro, broken down into 100 centimes.

Several options for handling money while in France are described below. Whatever you decide, the best advice is to come with at least two ways to obtain money, so that in the event that one method fails or is inconvenient, a back-up option is available.

Our recommended approach is to plan to use your ATM card as your primary source of money. It is good to bring some cash or travelers checks as back up.

Cash

Exchange rates fluctuate. You may want to change a large amount of cash at the beginning of the year in order to budget and ensure a fixed dollar amount for the semester or year. Or you may take a risk and wait to see if the rate improves. In either case, you’ll need to have a certain amount of money available at the beginning of the term. If you bring cash, please note that some French banks are reluctant to accept the new $100 bills, so you should bring smaller bills. We don’t recommend that participants travel with a large amount of cash.
Bank and Credit Cards

The best way to get money in France is to use a credit card or ATM banking card with a PIN number. From the moment you arrive at the airport you should be able to get cash from ATM machines. Cash advances cost less from ATMs than those made at banks or exchange offices. Pay off cash advances taken against credit cards quickly though, as the service charge and interest rates are high.

Most past participants have had no trouble accessing checking accounts at their home bank using an ATM card. Double check with your bank before you leave to make sure you have the type of account that will allow you to do this and to find out what the fees will be. Past participants have noted that it's best to withdraw as rarely as possible and budget the money withdrawn in order to keep service charges down. Remember that it may not be possible to get balance information when using foreign ATM's so it is important to track your finances carefully if you choose this option to handle your money. Before your leave the US, do not forget to call your bank and credit cards to make them aware of your international travel plans.

As you'll see in the next section on banking, you may also be able to use a French ATM card if you open an account in a local bank. However, we recommend this only for students coming for the entire year. Note that credit and debit cards are less commonly used for purchases than in the US. You should plan on using cash for most everyday expenses.

Traveler’s Check

Traveler's checks are safe and convenient, and for many years were the best way for travelers to handle their money. However, now that ATMs are widely available, we no longer recommend them particularly, since they involve fees and since not all banks will change them. If you do choose to use them, remember that you will need your passport as identification. Check around for the lowest service charge. Some banks charge a fairly significant commission, while others charge very little.

Personal Checks

American Personal Checks will not be accepted in Europe.

French Bank Account

If you are coming to Paris for the entire year, you may want to open a bank account. If you are coming for the semester, we do not recommend it as most French banks will not open short term accounts.

It's best to open an account with cash or traveler's checks; bank drafts and international money orders require 10-60 days to process and carry very high service charges. Subsequent deposits or transfers can be made in a number of ways.

If you open a French bank account, you will receive a cash withdrawal card that can be used at any of the thousands of ATM machines in Paris and around France.

Packing

Try to organize and pack a day or two prior to departure to make sure if you'll be able to carry your bags (you must be able to do this). Also, by packing early you'll have time to rest before the long trip.

Limits vary. Read the weight limitation and baggage allowance information provided by your international airline carrier. Generally flights overseas permit two pieces of checked baggage and one carry-on piece. Each checked bag must weigh less than 50 pounds. Total dimensions (length + width + height) of the first piece must be less than 62 inches, and the second piece less than 52 inches. Total dimensions of the carry-on must not exceed 45 inches and must be able to fit below the seat in front of you or in the
overhead compartment. If your baggage exceeds any of these standards you may be charged for excess baggage. Check with your airline regarding any items that are oversized.

To avoid paying duty on items coming into France from the United States, declare all baggage, whether with you or unaccompanied, with a low declared value marked "Used Personal Belongings." Generally, laptops, cameras, personal CD players, radios, and other similar items can be carried in duty free.

**Clothing**

Since you are limited in the amount of baggage you can take, choose each item carefully. Take clothes that will suit many types of occasions and avoid duplications. You won't need much variety: European students do not vary their dress much from day to day. In general, the colors are conservative, and there is no need for a large wardrobe. Also, note that space for storing your clothing will be limited.

France is cold and damp in the winter and hot in the summer. Parisian weather can change quickly, so bring a raincoat and umbrella. Plan a layered, versatile wardrobe so you can add and subtract items as the weather changes. Since much of your time during the semester is spent out of doors walking long distances, choose durable, comfortable, and practical clothing that travels well.

U.S. students have often said they have taken too much clothing. Don't forget that nothing ruins traveling abroad more than having too much luggage, especially when you have to carry it yourself. You can save packing space by coordinating your clothing so that shirts and sweaters can be worn with different skirts and pants. Bring comfortable walking shoes. Peg the weight of your clothing to the season you go; take wools and heavy cottons for winter and lightweight clothing for the summer.

**Electronics**

Electrical current in France, as in nearly all of Europe, is 220 volts, 50 cycle AC. Electric converters and adaptors must be used to connect North American equipment. Travel supply shops and some hardware stores in the U.S. carry them. Although converters and adapters are available in France, it will be easier and less expensive to buy them before you go. If you are buying any new electrical items to bring with you, try to get dual-voltage models so you won't need a converter at all; though you will still need the adapter plug. The French plug is a standard European plug with two round prongs.

Note that most laptops have a built in voltage converter (check with your manufacturer if you're unsure), but will still require a plug adapter.

**Laptop**

A laptop is not required, but if you do have one, you will find it very handy to have with you.

As mentioned above, if you plan to take a laptop, be sure you have the appropriate electrical adapter. Additionally, we recommend that any students taking a laptop consider installing security/theft recovery software. One example of this software is Computrace LoJack for laptops, made by Absolute software.

**Prescriptions**

If you need to obtain medication while overseas, you will have to see a French doctor. CIEE staff can help you find a doctor if need be. If you are already taking medication, you should bring enough to last throughout the program if possible. If necessary, you may be able to bring your US prescription to a French doctor, and ask for a French prescription for the same or similar medication. Do not have medication mailed to you.

**Additional Items**

**Jewelry**
Do not take expensive or elaborate jewelry with you to France. Not only is there a very good possibility of loss or theft, fine jewelry is rarely appropriate.

**Toiletries**

For both men and women, common toiletries are readily available in Paris, but they can be very expensive. Bring your own supply if you are particular about a brand or are on a tight budget.

**Linens**

Sheets and blankets are provided in your semester housing. We recommend you pack a large bath towel for independent travel.

**Contact Lenses**

If you wear contacts, you should know that contact lens solution is available but slightly more expensive than in the States.

**Mementos from home**

Bring things from home that you can share with your French friends. This includes pictures of yourself and your family in the U.S., recipes you like to cook, typical items from your community, college, or region of the U.S., and items related to talents you might have and wish to share.

**Gifts**

It is nice to bring gifts for new friends and your host. Choose various small generic gifts such as picture books of the United States, and other memorabilia from your university and hometown. Since you will not know your housing situation until your arrival, it is best to choose generic gifts.
While Away

Living in France

Sometimes living in a university environment abroad makes it easy to forget you're not in your home country. Remember, you are in another country with its own laws and customs, and they are different from the ones you're used to. Be aware of this and conduct yourself accordingly. Also, be sure to attend classes regularly and participate in program activities. Like it or not, you will be viewed as a representative of U.S. culture and people will often draw conclusions and generalize about Americans based on your behavior.

The orientation described in earlier will cover practical aspects of living in France and Paris, cultural differences, stereotypes of Americans, differences in educational philosophy and practices, and personal safety. Some past participants have remarked that ideas about gender and male-female relations are quite different and that women are subject to more attention (especially in public spaces) in France and in other parts of Europe than in the U.S. These and other cultural differences will be discussed during orientation.

Cultural Adaptation

Although cultural adaptation is highly individual, research indicates that most people go through similar stages in adapting to a new environment. Any travel you've done abroad, and perhaps even within your own country, have exposed you to culture shock. But if you've never had to overcome culture shock, you might want to read about it before you depart. You'll find books relating to cultural adaptation and culture shock on the recommended reading list at the back of this handbook.

During your on-site orientation, the resident staff will discuss culture shock and suggest strategies for adapting to your new surroundings. Near the end of the program, they will also provide information on reverse culture shock and suggest ways of coping with returning home.

Meeting the French

Just as it is impossible to define an average American, it is impossible to describe a typical French person. You will meet many types of people in France who have different opinions, attitudes, and habits. The more you interact with Parisians and Europeans, the better chance you'll have of forming relationships and understanding the culture. During these interactions, try to remain objective and not take things personally if the talk turns to the U.S. and Americans. Be prepared to discuss your views freely and openly, to listen with an open mind, and to find out where people's perceptions and images come from. The French generally love a good debate!

You may arrive in France with preconceived notions of the French and may encounter people with stereotyped images of Americans. If you are confronted with what you feel is a false stereotype about the U.S., be frank yet tactful in your response. Avoid refuting arguments by criticizing France or making equally sweeping generalizations about the French. This type of response will only create bad feelings whereas a positive, thoughtful response may help dispel myths about the United States.

Meeting Other Students

A great way to meet French people is through conversation exchange. Center staff will introduce you to a French person whom you will meet for conversations in both French and English. Social events at the center bring together center students with the French conversation partners. If you take the Intercultural Communications class, you'll have French students in your class with you.
Outside of the center, the best way to meet people is through activities that you enjoy. If you like sports, sign up for a local club. If you like yoga or dance, take a class. If you sing, you can join a choir. If you like hiking or biking or mountain climbing, there are clubs for these as well. Some students join political discussion groups; others go to religious services. The main thing is to engage in activities outside the Center. You can set up a real life for yourself here in Paris – not just through the CIEE Center, but in the city itself, full of your own activities and favorite places.

You can mingle with French students at one of the many student cafeterias or restaurants universitaires (resto U) scattered around Paris; this is also a good way to live on a student budget! Don't expect to find the campus life or social atmosphere to which you are accustomed in the U.S., however. Student cafeterias are not located in the same place as classroom buildings, and French students don't usually hang out there for long periods and often prefer to eat quickly and go to a nearby café to talk, read or spend time in between classes.

Do not hesitate to ask a CIEE staff member for help in finding an activity you can enjoy outside the Center.

Safety Precautions

The health and safety of program participants abroad is understandably an important issue for all concerned. CIEE was a founding member of the Inter-Organization Task Force on Safety and Responsibility in Study Abroad.

CIEE’s approach to safety is fourfold. First, we conduct a careful safety evaluation of every program we run. Next we provide comprehensive and realistic information to prospective applicants so that they may make informed decisions as to participation. Then, when the students arrive on site, we conduct a thorough orientation that includes tips on reducing risk and handling difficult situations should they arise. Finally, program staff continuously monitors local conditions in order to provide guidance to participants throughout their stay.

Experience has shown that the single most important factor in assuring a safe study abroad experience is the sensible and cautious behavior of the participants themselves. When traveling abroad, you should exercise additional caution until you become familiar with your new surroundings. Always remain alert to what is going on around you, especially in crowded tourist areas and on public transportation.

Paris is a large city and many of the same problems evident in other large cities also exist here, so you should take the same precautions as you would in any major U.S. city. Purse snatching, pick pocketing, and other forms of theft occur, very often in areas frequented by tourists, such as the Eiffel Tower and Sacré Coeur. Violent crime occurs less frequently, but certain metro stations or areas should be avoided late at night. These will be discussed during orientation. Remain alert in crowded tourist areas and on public transportation where pickpockets operate.

Paris streets bustle with people moving quickly. Whether underground in the subway, or in post offices or train stations, people are often thrown together in tight and sometimes narrow spaces. Because Paris can be crowded, you may come into physical contact with others that necessitates extra awareness of your belongings.

Follow these general rules:

- Tourists are common targets for pickpockets. Always be aware of your backpacks and camera especially on crowded transportation. Don't carry large amounts of cash or your passport with you. Never leave belongings in a parked car.
- Keep a suitcase that can be locked and leave your money, passport, camera, and other valuables secured in it when staying in a hotel or in the hotel safe.
- When you carry your passport, wear it around your neck in a thin pouch inside your shirt. If you must carry it in a bag, use one that can be slung diagonally across your chest and that has a sturdy strap that cannot be easily ripped.
• Never carry valuables in the pockets of your pants.
• At night, don’t take shortcuts or walk down deserted streets. If the metro is no longer running, take a cab home.
• Do not accept rides with anybody you do not know.
• As noted earlier, keep a photocopy of your passport in a separate place. This will speed up the process of replacing your documents should they be lost or stolen.
• Be especially cautious in areas frequented by tourists, such as airports, train stations, and museums.
• Be aware of the heating situation provided by your host institution and host residence. For locations where carbon monoxide producing appliances may be present – i.e., any appliance that burns fuel such as gas, oil, kerosene, wood, or charcoal – detailed information on the possible dangers associated with such appliances, along with safe operating instructions, will be provided in the on-site program orientation. For further information, please visit the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) website at www.epa.gov. You may wish to take a small battery-operated carbon monoxide detector to have in your housing.

Special Notes

For Women

Paris is a big city, and as in all big cities, women should be careful and attentive. Some past female program participants have reported that they got a lot of unwanted attention on the streets, including men staring at them or making comments, or persistently trying to strike up a conversation. This is partly due to cultural differences – up to a certain point, such behavior is considered to be harmless flirtation from a French point of view, whereas in the US it might be considered as harassment. Also, in the US the cultural norm for women is to maintain an open, smiling expression and a direct gaze; in France, this can be misperceived as an invitation. We advise women to observe French women’s facial expressions, body language and behavior in public spaces. All students, male and female, should use common sense and not take unnecessary risks, especially at night or on your own.

For Minorities

Students who are members of ethnic minorities, students with disabilities, LGBTQ students, or overweight students may face particular difficulties in the study abroad setting. France is increasingly multi-ethnic and heterogeneous, but this doesn’t mean that ethnic stereotypes, racism or other kinds of prejudice don’t come into play. The resident staff is sensitive to these issues and will provide as much information and support as possible.

For general information and tips on diversity and study abroad, check out http://www.diversityabroad.com/.

Transportation

Daily Commute

Students will typically use the metro and/or bus system to commute to class every day. A typical commute time is 25-45 minutes. When students arrive for orientation, they will be given a packet of 10 metro tickets to use until they purchase their own metro passes, along with detailed instructions for the purchase and use of metro passes. Current rates for metro passes are 20.40 € for a weekly pass or 67.10 € for a monthly pass. CIEE staff recommends the purchase of monthly passes because it is more cost effective. Academic year students may also consider purchasing a full year pass (323.30€).
Independent Travel

You are expected to remain in Paris when classes are in session. You will undoubtedly want to explore other regions in France and neighboring countries during university breaks. Before leaving the U.S., gather as much information as possible about places you may want to visit. If you don't want to have to carry some of the guidebooks in English previously recommended, you can purchase them at one of the English language bookstores in Paris. The Center library also has a small collection of guidebooks in English.

Trains

Certainly one of the easiest ways to get around Europe is by train. Regular youth passes and student fares are readily available in France. You might want to look into a Eurail pass for train travel. Eurail passes cannot be purchased in Europe although other youth passes and fares are available in France. Note that unless you plan to do a good deal of travelling by train, a Eurail pass may not be cost effective.

Hostels

Many hostels are not considered official and therefore do not require Hostelling International Membership Cards. Many are listed in travel books and offer comfortable and clean accommodations. For more information on Hostelling International, see www.hiusa.org

Communications and Mail

Telephones and Cellular Phones

Since phone costs are considerably higher in France than in the U.S., encourage friends and family to call you. Skype is also a popular choice among students as it can be the most cost effective.

Cell Phones

Cell phones are a must to insure good contact among CIEE students and staff. After your arrival, CIEE staff will suggest stores to purchase a French cell phone. The initial cost of buying the phone itself is from 40 to 50 Euros. There is normally no cost for receiving calls on your cell phone. Charges are only incurred for outgoing calls and messages.

Once you have a cell phone, you can recharge it with minutes (similar to a pay-as-you-go phone in the US) at any Tabac around Paris.

Most U.S. cell phones will not work in Europe. The reason for this is that European cellular network works on the GSM system. If you bring a cell phone with you from the United States, it must be either a triband phone or a GSM phone. Otherwise, it will not work in Paris. Keep in mind that, even with a U.S. cell phone, you'll most likely need to obtain a new chip and a local phone number for your phone. Without buying a new chip, you may end up paying excessive international roaming charges. Be sure to inform yourself prior to departure to find out whether your phone will work in France and, if so, what the costs will be.

Time Zone Note: Remind your callers that all of France lies in the Central European time zone that is 6 hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time. When it's 6 p.m. in New York, it's midnight in Paris.

Internet Access

Computer Labs and E-mail
There are three computers for student use in the Center, and they are equipped with Internet access. You may also access the Internet at the Center through wifi, so we recommend that you take your wifi-equipped laptop. Wifi is available in some public spaces, notably train stations and McDonald’s. However, you’ll find that the in general the French are less “wired” than Americans.

**Program Mailing Address**

Mail service in France is similar to that in the United States. First class letters between the two countries usually arrive within a week, but surface mail (for packages) may take as long as 2 months.

If someone wishes to send you a package, have them send it parcel post with a full description of the contents written on the outside of the package along with the words "Unsolicited Gifts – No Commercial Value" Don’t mail a computer, as it will cost you a lot in fees.

It is unwise to have electronic equipment sent to you as this leads to high customs fees and the equipment may be vulnerable to theft.

**Your mailing address will be as follows:**

(Your Name)
CPEC: Centre Parisien d’Etudes Critiques
37 bis, rue du Sentier
75002 Paris
France
Additional Resources
Information you should know

Policies and Procedures

CIEE Program Policies

The link below provides additional details and information regarding CIEE program policies, academic policies, program fees and payment policies.

To view CIEE’s Policies and Procedures please follow: http://ciee.org/study-abroad/terms-conditions/

Suggested Reading

We urge you to read several of these publications to expand your knowledge of France and ease your adjustment to French culture. Many of these books can be purchased at your local bookstore or may be available for reference at your campus study abroad office or local library.

Books on France

Books to check out before you come

- Platt, Polly. French or Foe? Getting the Most out of Visiting, Living and Working in France. 1998 (2nd ed.)
Books on Cultural Adaptation

Adaptation to a new culture can be difficult. The following list of books deal specifically with issues of culture shock and the challenges associated with living overseas. Many of these books may be available for reference at your campus study abroad office or local library.

- Citron, James. Short-Term Study Abroad: Integration, Third Culture Formation and Reentry, NAFSA: Association for International Educators, 1996.

Additional Info

Websites

www.ciee.org
CIEE’s web site. If you haven't already, take a look and find out about other CIEE activities around the world.

www.parisdigest.com
A comprehensive overview of Paris and its attractions.

Guide to the Paris Metro, RER, and bus system. The home page of this site, www.paris.org, also offers a lot of useful information.

www.paris-anglo.com
A very thorough online directory of contacts, a humorous look at what it's like to live in France, a section on studying in France, and a current listing of what's happening in Paris.

www.paris-tourism.com
An online travel guide to the City of Lights

http://www.paris.fr/
The website of the city of Paris

www.diversityabroad.com
A general approach to questions and issues concerning diversity of all kinds – age, physical difference, sexual orientation, race, class etc. -- and student travel.
**Suggested Packing Checklist**

Naturally you'll want to pack what best reflects your own life style and taste, but CIEE recommends the following:

**Important Documents**
- Printed copy of CIEE “Final Details” email
- Airline ticket (including return ticket)
- Credit and or debit card w/PIN number
- French student visa (in your passport)
- Copies of documents you used to get your visa
- Birth certificate (and certified English translation if born abroad)
- Home Advisor’s (both study abroad and academic) address, fax, E-mail
- Passport/Photof copy of passport (keep separate from passport) and extra photographs
- Traveler’s checks (optional) and list of traveler’s check numbers (keep separate)

**Clothing**
- Bras
- Pajamas
- Pants (men: one should be dressy)
- Robe
- Shirts
- Shoes (including a dress pair)
- Shower sandals
- Skirts or dresses (one should be dressy for the theater, opera, etc.) and pantyhose/slip if necessary
- Sneakers
- Socks
- Sportcoat/blazer and tie
- Sweaters/sweatshirts
- Swim suit
- Underwear
- Walking boots, sturdy, water resistant
- Winter coat/gloves/hat/scarf

**General**
- Adapter and Converter for electrical appliances
- Address book/e-mail addresses
- Backpack/Overnight bag for travelling
- Batteries
- Battery operated CO detector
- Camera, memory cards and extra camera battery
- Contact lens solution
- Contraceptives
- Feminine hygiene Supplies
- French grammar book
- Gifts/Photos from home
- Glasses or contact lenses, extra pair, prescription
- Guidebook
- Hair dryer (dual voltage)
- Journal
- Laptop (optional) with electrical adapter and security/theft recovery software
- Medication you are taking and a copy of the prescriptions
- Medicine kit: aspirin/antacid/cold medicine/anti-diarrhea medicine, Band-aids
- Money belt or pouch
- Pictures of your home, family, university and region
- Pocket French-English dictionary
- Reading material: books, magazines
- Sewing kit
- Sunglasses, good pair
- Toiletries/personal items
- Travel alarm clock
- Umbrella (it rains frequently)
- Washcloth, towel, and beach towel