

## Student Comments on the Erasmus Academy French Course, Summer 2015

*Each day's lesson built on the previous one. Although the progression from day to day was often large, it was structured in such a way that it was manageable to acquire the new material. Class sessions cover a lot of material, but the fact that the class meets only twice a week means that there's usually enough time to review before the next class day, and also look ahead at the following day's material in order to pick it up more easily during class. This is a useful class. I am glad that I took it, and I would recommend it to others who were interested.*

*Students should be asked to read in advance the chapters that will be covered in class. I would appreciate having a course schedule that indicates what chapters will be gone through on which day. Time constraints might prevent this, but it could be helpful to have in-class reading comprehension exercises, in which students were asked to read an extended section of text and then answer questions about the information conveyed in order to test their comprehension. If class time does not permit for this, then it could be assigned for homework.*

*Fabien is patient with the students who are really challenged by the material while still being willing to push those in the class who are excelling. He was willing to make time to work with us outside of class, and usually answered emails within a few hours. I appreciate that he encouraged us to learn to say the words and sentences correctly. I was worried that I would finish this course without the ability to pronounce French properly, and I am glad that did not turn out to be the case.*

*The instruction would be more effective if more of the practice exercises in class were not identical to the ones in the book. This is important.*

*Fabien always seemed like he genuinely enjoyed teaching us. This may sound like a low bar to clear, but I've had plenty of teachers who seem to find being in the classroom tedious and unpleasant, so it really stands out when someone is enthusiastic. Even when there were technology issues or everyone was struggling to pick up a particular concept, Fabien kept a positive demeanor. He effectively balanced constructive criticism with encouragement and praise.*

*The course website was a phenomenal resource. I liked having all the class materials available for download in one location. The supplementary resources like the preposition guide and the cheat-sheet of linking words and phrases were very useful. I appreciated having the discussion board assignments, because they created interaction among the students. I think it could have been good to have more of them.*

*The fact that there was a small number of students enrolled helped make it easy for the instructor to regularly engage us with practice exercises. I think that was crucial for my acquisition of the material. This class was different from in-person classes that I've taken in that there were few quizzes and no tests. It could be good to have more assessment activities, provided that they be structured in such a way as to reinforce reading comprehension.*

Alec A.

July 6, 2015

*The course is, indeed, intensive. I am amazed at the language capacity I have gained within 8 weeks of study. Fabien is a committed instructor, and facilitates a class experience that moves quickly and comprehensively. I appreciate that, while the emphasis of the course necessarily remains on reading and translation, beginning our class sessions with small conversations helps make the language feel more accessible, and the learning more applicable (beyond language proficiency exams.) Fabien has gone above and beyond the minimum requirements by compiling a quite helpful website, with additional resources, and by making himself available for additional tutorials, etc.*

*I find it inherently challenging to learn in an online course, and miss the personal relationships afforded by embodied interaction. Yet, I recognize that this format enables access and participation that would not be possible offline. I think a formal syllabus, with more specific and detailed requirements and rubrics for grading, would help me feel more confident about knowing, and therefore meeting, all the requirements.*

*Fabien is committed, a skilled educator, encouraging, and obviously loves both language, and teaching. I appreciate his ability to navigate the technological aspects of the course, and his willingness to make himself available through additional tutorials, email, etc.*

*The expectations of the instructor and of the course haven't always been clear. I believe this is, primarily, because of a helpful commitment to flexibility. But I haven't had a solid sense of how I was being assessed/evaluated.*

*Fabien has good rapport with us students, and does an excellent job of meeting us where we are. Some of the students in the course have extensive language experience, and some of us started with zero experience with French and very limited language learning. I have been grateful for and impressed by Fabien's ability to continue to challenge the more skilled students while encouraging and continuing to teach those of us who are struggling.*

*The book, French for Reading, is quite dry, but a good, comprehensive resource. Fabien generously contributed significant resources beyond that book, making available powerpoint slides, various websites, additional printable resources, and reading practices.*

Anna B.

July 9, 2015

*The instructor is extremely well versed, and is understanding and caring. He creates a very comfortable atmosphere with the students even without a classroom, and makes every student feel like they are improving and learning during class. Class was open and questions were encouraged, which is difficult to do without a classroom. However, more time should be allowed to explain difficult aspects of the language.*

*I found the PowerPoint and website extremely helpful. All of the things that were created on the suite were more helpful to me than the book. The Instructor should make more of us practice speaking and maybe writing out sentences to send in for homework. The GoogleDocs assignments were great, but it may have been more productive to have us receive the answers right away so we can correct them and do them again.*

Julie M.

July 8, 2015

*This course provided a very comprehensive introduction to French, in terms of grammar, vocabulary, and writing styles and topics. I appreciated the inclusion of informal conversations to balance the more formal passages we read in our book.*

*I would have liked to have been sent a syllabus for the course. We were shown what I think was the syllabus on the first day, which included how the grades would be broken down, but it didn't seem to apply to more than the first half of the course. M. Riviere did tell us clearly what was due for each upcoming week. I guess having a syllabus would have helped me gauge my progress more easily and know well ahead of time what to expect.*

*M. Riviere was always very attentive to our progress in class, and worked hard to provide us with helpful practice exercises and outside resources on the website.*

*For an online class (my first), I think it was more interactive and personal than I thought it would be. M. Riviere was good at directing the class while allowing the students opportunities to discuss their opinions.*

*I found the French for Reading book most helpful. It was our primary material, and so I referred to it again and again, and I'm sure I will later as I continue to study French.*

Hannah D.

July 7, 2015

*Fabien is extremely passionate, gentle, patient, accessible and tech-savvy. I greatly appreciated his commitment to the class. He is also very positive, has great energy and an admirable sense of humor. Teaching language is clearly one of his gifts! I felt privileged to learn under his instruction.*

*The book and supplemental material – including Fabien's custom website and use of flashcards (I wish he would have used the flash card feature more) - were helpful for me.*

*The conversations were less helpful. But I appreciated the exposure for my own personal benefit. I would definitely recommend keeping conversation included in the curriculum.*

Nikia R.

July 8, 2015

