

## Paris Program Testimonials from Alumni

### **Summers 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018**

(The program did not run in 2019)

- Our place of living in Paris, the Foyer, was a great one in a wonderful location. I loved that other students from all over the world stayed there as well.
- All excursions were very enlightening and enjoyable. We were always given the opportunity to explore an area or museum on our own at the end of each one.
- The entire experience was fantastic. I loved how I was able to go out on my own into Paris and soak in the culture. The atmosphere of the program was perfect.
- My most positive experience was getting an essay back that I wrote for the literature class (FR446) with an “A++” and comments from the professor stating that it was exactly what he asked for if not more. I really loved the class which helped me to give my best work for the essay.
- The most positive experience of the program was an outing to a ballet performance at the Paris Garnier Opéra.
- The program really took us everywhere around the city, and I felt like I really got to know Paris well.
- The program was planned amazingly by Mme Szeps. It couldn't have been any better. Her expert knowledge of Paris made it the best experience of my life.
- All courses were very helpful and enlightening. Contemporary Civilization (FR308) was definitely the most beneficial in relation to understanding the location.
- I loved the literature class (FR446). It was an amazing experience reading literature in French and then writing analysis papers in French. I also really loved that we were able to see performances of two of the plays we studied.
- The history course (FR307) was really good. It was nice to be able to see what we were learning about.
- All courses were helpful. The professors were tough, but that kept the program very professional. It is good that they kept us so busy, because we learned a lot more that way!
- It was very obvious how very hard Professor Szeps-Fralin worked to make the program as worthwhile and as great as possible. We most certainly got our money's worth. A day never went by without having something to do. We never had time to be bored and all the outings really helped with immersing oneself in the culture. Her schedule was very organized and very well-thought-out. It really made the trip enjoyable as well as intellectually stimulating.
- Courses were very fast-paced and intense, but the work was well balanced with outings and class.
- French History with Francis Mathieu (Southwestern University) was particularly wonderful. However, the two other courses offered by JMU teachers (the Fralin family) were amazing as well.
- Learning the history of France (FR307) helped me understand the current culture. Professor Mathieu was fantastic.

- I found FR308 the most beneficial because it gave me a general overview of the French culture that I can use in the future when I interact with French people.
- The Contemporary Civilization course, FR308, was the most beneficial to me because I felt a lot of things taught in that class were helpful as one gets to know the city.
- I felt all the classes were important to my adaptation to the French culture.
- I found the French history (FR307) to be the most beneficial as it helped me have a greater appreciation for the subjects of the other two classes: modern French civilization (FR308) and French literature (FR446) and FR448.
- The inclusion of interactive learning through tours and through sightseeing really enhanced the courses we studied. When one is able to go and visit Notre-Dame while reading *Notre-Dame de Paris* by Victor Hugo in class, it really brings the course to life.
- Each instructor was extremely enthusiastic and very helpful. They all understood our schedules and based homework and tests accordingly.
- It is hard to say what I like best during the program because I found the entire trip to be an amazing positive experience. I loved that we were able to go to Mt. Saint-Michel, Dinan and Strasbourg. Professor Szeps budgeted the trip very well in order to give us these experiences and they were all amazing.
- Our day trip to Mont-Saint-Michel was my most positive experience.
- Going to see a ballet at the Opera Garnier was my most positive experience. I've dreamt about going there since I was ten and read *The Phantom of the Opera* for the first time and seeing a ballet on top of just learning about the Opera and experiencing it through a tour was simply sublime.
- This program was a fabulous experience! It was one of the best experiences in my life. I felt as if I was a different person entirely coming back into the USA. Thank you to Professor Szeps a thousand times for such a wonderful experience!
- A fantastically well-designed and run-program! Brilliant experience in Paris and wonderful professors and organization.
- The program was well organized and well balanced between free time and classes. They were randomly added events during the trip, but they enhanced the experience.
- The program had a set schedule and we had at least one outing a day, if not more.
- One of the best experiences I have had thus far at James Madison! The professors were great. Madame Szeps created a program that challenged students to engage with an unfamiliar culture, and I feel all the better for it.
- Best program ever. The classes were taught well and helped me to ease into the culture.
- I found Contemporary French Civilization (FR308) to be very helpful and relevant because it helped me to better understand Parisian culture. It was a most beneficial and practical course.
- I found FR308, which was taught by Mr. Nicolas Fralin, the most beneficial course because its focus was contemporary French civilization. Thus, we put into action the information learned in Mr. Fralin's class each day. I thoroughly enjoyed learning about modern France, its politics and geography.

- Everything that we learned about during each course was reinforced by visiting sites around Paris whether it was historical sites for French history, the Senate for French contemporary civilization or going to see plays performed live that we had just read as well as studied.
- All instructors were great and effective teachers. They were all passionate about connecting with the students, getting to know them and making the material more interesting and enjoyable.
- The program's professors were exceptional. This was the greatest educational experience of my life because of their wisdom and efforts to engage with students. I feel that Madame Szeps, Monsieur A. G. Fralin and Monsieur Nicolas Fralin went out their way to get to know students on a personal level, which was an absolute bonus.
- The Navigo pass was wonderful to have, and we all got to know our way around Paris very well because of it.
- I loved the Foyer, our place of residence and classroom. Long live the Foyer!
- The Paris program is truly a beautiful experience! My professors were the most positive experience of the program. Their approachable natures put me at ease.
- I highly recommend the program. Professor Szeps is a terrific professor who is demanding, but cares for her students.
- The Paris program was perfect, a life-changing, wonderful and an absolutely beautiful experience. If you are a French major or minor, this trip is one of the best experiences. It changed my life and my future endeavors. I am infinitely grateful to Madame Szeps and the other professors for their tireless work to create a program of this caliber.
- The timing of most of the excursions coincided with the class material. We literally went all over Paris and even visited other places in France. The outings corresponded to what we were learning in classes and helped us better understand Paris and French culture.
- The orientation meetings Madame Szeps organized on campus were very useful. She was very precise and concise, and told us exactly what we needed to expect. We were also given useful information.
- I now feel much more connected to the world.
- Each instructor was extremely passionate and truly wanted each of us to learn and benefit from our courses.
- It was my first time in Paris, and it was all magical. It was an amazing experience socially and academically. It was something I will look back on for the rest of my life. I learned so much in just six weeks.
- I learned a lot and saw things I would not have seen if I did not go on this program.
- I feel like I matured intellectually. It was an amazing experience.