

French House provides totally immersive experience

TCU is bringing a French experience to campus through a program called "French House". The French House is a lively group of twelve students living in Tom Brown-Pete Wright apartments hoping to become fluent in French with the help of a live-in, native French speaking tutor and through cultural immersion.

Students participating in the French House are typically French majors and minors. They ideally speak only French while at their apartments. Ibtissam Saad is a native of France and serves as the French House coordinator and live-in tutor. Saad says speaking French at home helps because students may not have French courses each semester. This type of immersion really helps students perfect the language.

"Working one-on-one helps with in the moment corrections," said sophomore Abby Jennings. This is Jennings' first year with the French House although she's studied French since she was a child. As a freshman, Jennings attended all of the French House events and fell in love with the experience. "It's fun because in class, [French] is a chore, but at home it's fun. Plus, it helped with more opportunities to speak in French." Hannah Richstein, senior French major, is also a French House resident. Richstein has studied French since she was in 8th grade and said, "The French House gives me more confidence in the language now." She also really enjoys the cultural discovery this program offers.



In addition to speaking primarily French, French House students play games like Scrabble in French several times a week. They also watch movies in French and prepare cultural meals together. Krystin Pickering, senior French minor who started studying French in high school, said that the conversation hours they have are her absolute favorite. She "feels immersed in French" and enjoys practicing outside of the classroom.

The group also participates and hosts cross-cultural activities. The most recent cultural event took place October 2017. The Cultural Festival was a collaboration between other student groups to celebrate African, French, Italian, Chinese, and other cultures through song, poetry, dance, and more. The French House sang "Les beaux yeux de la Mama" by Kendji Girac and "Qui saura?" by Mike Brent. They also read two poems: "La lune et le cypress" by Sylvia Plath and "Invictus" by William Ernest Henley.

The French House students plan to visit Canada over spring break and attend the Festival International de Louisiane in Lafayette, Louisiana in April 2018. They also plan to visit France to really discover the French culture and language.

All students are welcome to attend all French House activities and events. Students interested in living in the French House must be a French major/minor or enrolled in French coursework, make a serious commitment to speaking primarily French in their apartment, and participate in French House activities. Native French speakers may also live in the French House. For more information about living in the French House for the 2018-2019 academic year, please contact Ibtissam Saad at I.SAAD@tcu.edu.