

Welcome aboard! This will be both a challenging and enriching year for all of us in ECO1.

In English, you are expected to work on the language (through written expression and translation) and on civilization through press articles and other media. Translation is from French into English. Have a look at the type of exam you will have to cope with (see below for the example of the *sujet de concours blanc*). You can then gauge the difference there is between what you did at the lycée and the type of work expected from you in CPGE.

The basis of translation is an article in French from a thematic dossier based on articles from the press as well as visual documents. You are expected to answer specific comprehension questions using a synthetic method and an essay method. In order to familiarize yourself with the expectations and the expected format of the exam, I suggest you consult the website for the BCE. Look up ELVI *rapport de jury* and *bonne copie*. You will sense the importance of being abreast of current events as well as having a solid knowledge of cultural aspects of the Anglosphere.

Therefore, you need to keep informed by watching documentaries but mostly reading the press – you need to start right now:

The Economist is a little difficult but you can find some interesting short articles in it as well as more in-depth ones.

The New York Times, *The Times*, *The Guardian*, *The Guardian Weekly* and *Vocable* are excellent reading material. You can find some online editions but I advise you to buy one once in a while to be able to keep the articles easily. You will find *The Economist* at the library as we get it every week.

ONLINE PRESS:

<http://www.economist.com>
<http://www.bbc.co.uk>
<http://www.guardian.co.uk>
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk>
<http://www.nytimes.com>
<http://www.abcnews.com>
<http://www.cnn.com>
<http://www.voa.com>
<https://theconversation.com/uk>
<https://www.motherjones.com>

The above sites have articles but also podcasts you can (and should) listen to.

Practice your oral comprehension as it is more difficult to do so in class.

- Download on your smartphone **Wordreference** (free application) as well as **Pronunciation Dictionary**
- On your laptop, add the following resources to your favorites:

American press:

- The New York Times → www.nytimes.com
- National Review → www.nationalreview.com

Radio stations:

- NPR (US) → www.npr.org
- BBC Radio 4 (GB) → www.bbc.co.uk/radio4

British press:

- The Guardian → www.theguardian.com
- The Telegraph → www.telegraph.co.uk

News channels:

- CNN (USA) → www.cnn.com
- BBC News (UK) → www.bbc.com/news
- SkyNews (UK) → <http://news.sky.com>
- CNN 10 → <http://edition.cnn.com/cnn10>

BBC News, CNN, The Guardian and SkyNews are free if you have television via box or satellite. SkyNews is available live for free 24/7 on Internet and on YouTube.

- **Dictionaries** available in the school library:

Bilingual:

Le Robert et Collins Senior

All English:

The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, Oxford University Press

The Advanced learner's English Dictionary, Collins Cobuild

The Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary, Cambridge University Press

Add the following **free dictionaries** to your favorites:

French↔English:

Wordreference → www.wordreference.com

Pronunciation dictionary:

Howjsay → <http://howjsay.com>

English-English dictionaries:

Merriam-Webster (US) → <https://www.merriam-webster.com>

Cambridge (GB) → <http://dictionary.cambridge.org>

French dictionary:

Larousse → www.larousse.fr/dictionnaires/francais

For September you must ABSOLUTELY have bought three books:

1. ***An Apple a Day***, Editions Ellipses, collection Optimum, by Jean Max Thomson
2. ***Fiches de civilisation américaine et britannique***, Ellipses collection Optimum, by Fabien Fichaux
3. ***Say it With Style, ou comment réussir l'essai et l'entretien en anglais***, by Judith Andreyev, éditions Bréal

Homework:

1. As the title suggests, you need to work on ***An Apple a Day*** every week to revise vocabulary and learn some as well.
2. In the ***Fiches de civilisation*** you need to have read at least chapters 1-5 as well as chapters 42-45. But you can read more, obviously. You can also consult ***A Cultural Guide***, (Françoise Grellet, éd. Nathan) for its shorter synthetic information sheets on controversial topics. To go further you can also consult in ***The English Textbook*** which is a comprehensive guide for the exams, offering several ELVI subjects and corrections. Both are available at the school library.
3. Try to work on the Concours blanc and see how much you can do.
It will show you why you also need to have good French grammar and spelling as in “version” you need to write in perfect French (**bled**, **Bescherelle**, ***La grammaire d'aujourd'hui*** d'Arrivé et al., use every book you need but work on it).

In case you have the feeling that your level in English is not good enough, you could buy secondhand and use:

- ***Maîtriser la grammaire anglaise***, Editions Hatier, by Michèle Malavieille and Wilfried Rotgé. It is well done and easy to use and has exercises.
- ***L'anglais de A à Z***, by Michael Swan, éditions Hatier.
- ***Grammaire pratique de l'anglais***, by S. Berland-Délépine, éditions Ophrys.

SCHOOL SUPPLIES to have for September

- 1/ You need a folder with transparent plastic sleeves
- 2/ At any rate, you are expected to have a small notepad, a convenient one, neither too big, nor with any alphabetical order, and it must be convenient and solid to write in it your vocabulary and specific expressions. It is essential. You will keep it for the years to come.
- 3/ You need a big copybook (“A4” type) so as to have everything you might otherwise lose.
- 4/ And you definitely need highlighters.
- 5/ Medium-sized cards are a good idea to revise as well –not mandatory to have them.

TRAINING : CONCOURS BLANC ECO1 2024

EPREUVE ELVI – 4 HEURES

1. Compréhension : résumé analytique comparatif des documents 1 et 2. (30 points)

According to the views expressed in documents 1 and 2, what threatens academic life in American universities? *Answer the question in your own words in 350 mots (+ / – 10%)*

2. Expression personnelle : essai argumenté (50 points)

To what extent does the free speech crisis society is going through threaten democracy?
Answer in your own words in 500 words (+ / – 10%) referring to all the documents in the dossier and using at least two other examples from the English-speaking world to argue your case.

3. Thème : traduction du français en anglais (20 points)

Traduire la partie en gras dans le document 5.

Mr. Shields is a professor of government at Claremont McKenna College and a founding member of the Academic Freedom Alliance, a group founded last year to protect the academic freedom of professors.

I'm a Conservative Professor Who Opposed Safe Spaces. I Was Wrong.

Like other conservative professors who are advocates of free speech on campus, I once opposed efforts to create a classroom climate in which students are protected from speech they find emotionally upsetting, ranging from "microaggressions" to political perspectives that diverge from current liberal orthodoxy. Efforts to create these "safe spaces" seemed, to me, to infantilize students by insulating them from speech they found the least bit upsetting. After all, an unquestioned objective of a liberal education, I supposed, was to make students uncomfortable. Now I think that while we certainly shouldn't be preoccupied with policing microaggressions or silencing contrarian viewpoints, we need to take the comfort of students far more seriously.

Teaching courses on controversial topics — including cancel culture, gender, and race — has taught me that in order to get students to engage in open inquiry, we must attend to their feelings of insecurity. The debate we should be having is not one that pits free expression against safe spaces. The real question is how to design safe spaces that aid the goals of liberal education.

There is now little doubt that students frequently bite their tongues because they feel unsafe. A 2021 survey of more than 37,000 college students — by far the largest on free expression to date — found that more than 80 percent of students censor their own viewpoints at least some of the time, while roughly one in five students regularly does so. Only 40 percent of students say that they are comfortable openly disagreeing with their professors.

While robust defenses of free expression and debate, like the "Chicago Principles" — a widely adopted statement developed at the University of Chicago in 2014 — are important, they do little to soften the climate of fear that has gripped our campuses. This is because such statements of abstract principle — like the liberal tradition from which they spring — neglect the concrete social norms necessary to facilitate and regulate the collective search for truth in college classrooms.

All of us who teach controversial subjects are struggling to identify and cultivate these norms, especially as our students have become more anxious in the age of cancel culture. For example, when I first taught a course on policing in the wake of George Floyd's murder, some of my students lobbied for a version of the "Vegas rule"¹ since they worried about their comments spilling out into social media land.

I have little doubt that our "Vegas rule" allowed them to express perspectives that ranged from support for abolishing the police to center-right endorsements of the status quo. As soon as I announced it, in fact, one student let out an audible sigh of relief. But I have to confess that in asking students to maintain our classroom as a place of private deliberation I am asking them to keep quiet — and all in the name of open and free expression. (...)

No students have yet protested my class expectations — and I'm frankly not sure what I would do if they did. But however my mix of class norms and guidelines evolves, they'll grow up from experience, not simply downward from the abstract principles of academic freedom found in statements like Chicago's.

¹ = what happens in Vegas stays in Vegas. If you are having a private conversation that is not to be repeated you say "Vegas Rule".

Regrettably, too many on the right who advocate free speech have embraced a normless public square, one that celebrates transgression as an antidote to cancel culture. Of course, Donald Trump is the most prominent offender, as usual. From the beginning of his presidency, Mr. Trump mocked the expectation that his speech should be “presidential.” But other conservative apostles of free speech have reveled in transgression as well. (...)

For all their errors, excesses and harms, advocates of “safetyism” on the left rightly reject this culture of transgression because they understand that normlessness can’t be a foundation for any community, even a free one. (...)

That community will require safe spaces in our college classrooms. So, let’s stop opposing safety and freedom. Instead, let’s elaborate and defend our own version of safe spaces. Truly free and open inquiry in our classrooms depends on it.

Document 2

Opinion | Guest Essay

The New York Times (abridged) | Nov. 18, 2021

By Michael S. Roth. Mr. Roth is the president of Wesleyan University².

Anxiety About Wokeness Is Intellectual Weakness

Accusations of political intolerance and indoctrination on campuses and in the public discourse have been with us for decades. Woke young people have aroused the choreographed indignation of leaders as different as Presidents Donald Trump and Barack Obama. Every president since George H.W. Bush has earned points by attacking political correctness.

Like all stereotypes, the image of the woke college student suppressing the speech and thought of others is wildly misleading. My 40 years in higher education have shown me that no student wishes to fit such a stereotype, and the reality is that few actually do.

Sure, there are cases of students and professors who are enraged by the expression of ideas they find objectionable. And they don’t just criticize the ideas; they sometimes go after the platforms that publish them. At Wesleyan a few years ago, for example, the editors of the student newspaper were harshly denounced for publishing an op-ed critical of some Black Lives Matter protesters. Students threw newspapers in the trash, and because of the intensity of the reaction, editors became fearful.

Some believed that these students protesting the op-ed had gone too far, that they were more worried about giving a platform to unpopular opinions than they were about the free exchange of ideas. That may have been true. But these worries led, as they often do, to serious reflection and lively debates on campus, and eventually to the hard work of thinking through what editorial autonomy should mean for student journalists.

In the end, the protesters recognized the importance of having a newspaper free to publish unpopular opinions and had succeeded in drawing attention to the barriers that kept some students from seeing the newspaper as a vehicle for their views. But these sorts of healthy debates can be hard to come by; political polarization has made them even more difficult.

Concerns about the intolerant left have been around for a very long time. At Wesleyan, where I’ve been president for almost 15 years, political correctness was already being satirized in the 1990s. It’s true that conversations about bias, sexual assault, climate change or the winner-take-all economy are complex and tend to elicit strong emotions. But the fear of bruised feelings or the threat of offense is no reason to cut off a genuine discussion, or to censure faculty or students for engaging freely in these

² a private liberal arts university in Middletown, Connecticut

conversations. I have argued for some time that colleges must be much more intentional about creating intellectual diversity.

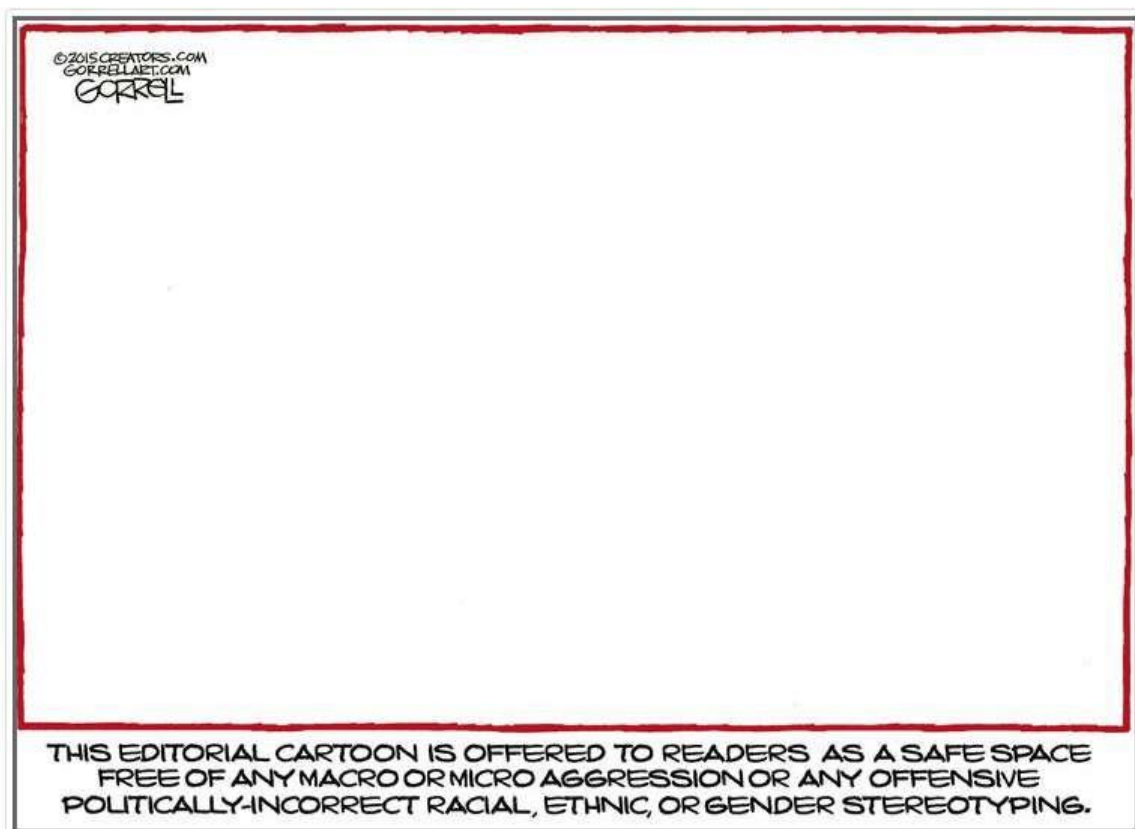
Some students don't shy away from disagreement or argument. I have met conservative students who love standing up to their progressive classmates. As a government major told me recently with a grin, "I have fun debating with my classmates, and my professor finds me *fascinating*."

But some don't want to be outliers — as has always been the case. There are students and faculty who complain that they don't want to express centrist or right-wing views because they fear being criticized or stigmatized. They may not see themselves as hypersensitive, but they do crave some protection from students and colleagues whom they perceive as demanding leftist ideological conformity.

Those who complain of such conformity should recognize that their fear isn't the fault of anyone's wokeness or hostility toward free expression. It is a sign that they need more courage — for it requires courage for students, or anyone, to stay engaged with difference. Whatever your political position, embracing intellectual diversity means being brave enough to consider ideas and practices that might challenge your own beliefs or cause you to change your views, or even your life. (...)

In the current climate of political pessimism and manufactured outrage, we can work with students to reject the tired tropes of the past and embrace what many in the older generations have forgotten: how to engage with and, yes, debate people who have a variety of points of view and who imagine the future with a mix of hopes sometimes very different from their own.

Document 3



Cartoon by Bob Gorrell

Tuesday, November 10, 2015

Document 4



Document 5

Aux États-Unis, la riposte face à la censure de livres s'organise

Maus, *L'Œil le plus bleu*, *La Servante écarlate*, *Ne tirez pas sur l'oiseau moqueur*... La liste des chefs-d'œuvre de la littérature contemporaine qui ont été interdits ces derniers mois dans certaines écoles et bibliothèques américaines sous la pression de lobbies conservateurs ne cesse de s'allonger. L'Association des bibliothèques américaines révèle ainsi avoir répertorié trois cent trente cas d'interdiction à l'automne dernier. Raison de plus... pour les rendre facilement accessibles. C'est, en tout cas, ce qui a convaincu la plateforme d'e-books Scribd de mettre à disposition pendant trente jours gratuitement tous les ouvrages bannis récemment à travers les États-Unis. « *Notre objectif est de nous assurer que chacun a la liberté de lire des livres, y compris ceux qui sont interdits* », peut-on lire sur la plateforme de celle que l'on surnomme le « Netflix du livre ».

Cette décision s'inscrit dans le cadre de nombreuses initiatives, individuelles et nationales, visant à contrer la fronde conservatrice contre les livres qu'ils considèrent comme dérangeants, menée depuis le départ de Donald Trump par des élus et des parents parfois très organisés et bien financés. Scribd est en effet loin d'être la seule à être entrée en résistance. Des organisations littéraires importantes, comme The Authors Guild et PEN America, ont elles aussi riposté par des opérations de mobilisation des auteurs et du grand public. En Pennsylvanie, un lycéen a lancé un « club de lecture de livres interdits ».

Et à Saint-Louis (Missouri), une mère a noué un partenariat avec une librairie locale pour faire parvenir gratuitement à qui le veut ces ouvrages controversés. Dans le même temps, les ventes de *Maus*, le roman graphique d'Art Spiegelman sur l'Holocauste, banni en janvier du programme de quatrième dans un comté du Tennessee pour cause de nudité et d'insultes, ont bondi de 753 % depuis le début du mois aux États-Unis.

« *C'est ridicule de vouloir retirer des livres des établissements scolaires* », s'exclame Alex Heymann, une lycéenne militante antiraciste au Texas, où quelque 850 livres sont dans le collimateur des législateurs républicains.

« *L'homosexualité, le racisme... Ces sujets sont partout dans notre quotidien. On a accès à Internet sur nos téléphones ! Il est impossible de les passer sous silence.* »

Now, enjoy your summer, READ as much as you can, and come refreshed a CPGE year is exacting. Be ready to learn a lot, and to work hard.

See you in September,

L. STEWART