
ICES – INSTITUT CATHOLIQUE D'ETUDES SUPÉRIEURES

Updated: August 16, 2018

OVERVIEW

PROGRAM SNAPSHOT

The Catholic Institute of Higher Education is located in La Roche-sur-Yon, Vendée, France. Programs offered in French in nine areas of study. English classes in Political Science, History, British Civilization, American Government, International Relations, Comparative Law and Anglophone Literature. All international students are offered free French language tutoring and weekend excursions.

LOCATION

The City of La Roche sur Yon is located close to the Atlantic coast, in a region called “[la Vendée](#)”. The city of La Roche-sur-Yon was created by Napoleon after the French Revolution and is rich with history. It is a small city of 50,000 people which makes it easy to navigate and easy to get around. La Roche sur Yon is 3 h from Paris, 3 h from Bordeaux, 1h from Nantes, and 30 minutes from the ocean.

PROGRAM TYPE

Semester or year Exchange program.

CHANCE OF PLACEMENT

Chances of placement are excellent.

PROGRAM DATES

Academic Year: early September to early June; SM1: September to early January; SM2 mid-January to early June.

ACADEMICS

FAST FACTS

La Roche sur Yon, Vendée, France (pop. 50,000)

Student Enrollment: about 1,150

Language of instruction: French; a selected number of classes are taught in English

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PROGRAMS

ICES offers nine areas of studies, at Bachelor and/or Master level: Biology (BA), Law (BA & MA), History (BA & MA), Languages (BA), Literature (BA), Mathematics (BA), Physics (BA), Political Sciences (BA & MA), International Relations (MA), Catholic Studies (MA), Church-State Relations (MA).

ACADEMIC NOTES

Benedictine College students are required to meet the Registrar before going abroad to make sure the courses they intend to take abroad are transferable to Benedictine.

At the beginning of the semester at ICES students will meet with the Heads of Departments to discuss the classes they have chosen, the level they have previously acquired in the discipline, and their language skills.

Students can choose from a number of classes in English and in French, and of course study French language. International students participate in French workshops that will either introduce, or strengthen, their French language. Students can decide how much French language classes they want, either a couple introductory hours for their general knowledge, or intensive Grammar and writing classes.

Students generally enroll in 30 ECTS per semester (five to six courses), and spend 20 hours a week in class. Semesters are 18 weeks in length.

Exam sessions: from end of December to beginning of January, and from mid-May to beginning of June.

Holidays breaks: Christmas break in December, Winter break in February, Spring break in April/May.

TRANSCRIPT DETAILS

Transcripts are generally released in March for Semester 1 and in August for Semester 2 and Full Year. Transcripts are sent to Benedictine College.

CREDITS AND GRADES

The academic credits system in Europe is different from the US, and is based on ECTS credits. Credit conversion is usually determined based on the number of contact hours as specified in the course syllabus. The unofficial credit conversion rule of thumb from ECTS to US credit hours is as follows: ECTS = 1/2 US (example: 4 ECTS = 2 US credits).

Grades in France are expressed on a 20-point scale. This is how approximately French grades compare to US grades:

14 – 20=A

12 – 13=B+ /A-

10 – 11=B-/B

8 – 9=C-/C/C+

7 - 7.9=D-/D/D+

Below 7=F

LANGUAGE NOTES

Language Notes: ICES requires proof of DELF B1 level of French. If DELF test is not available in the student's country of residence students have to present a French instructor's letter of recommendation that states the level of their studies in French as well as their ability to take courses taught in French.

Pre-Session: A 1-week pre-session, intensive French language course is offered in August before the fall semester and in January before the spring semester.

During the whole semester, classes of "French as a second language" are offered to incoming students.

CLASSES OFFERED IN ENGLISH

Classes offered in English on a regular basis are listed [here](#).

SPECIAL APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Students must have a minimum 2.5 G.P.A. to apply.

HINTS FOR RESEARCHING COURSES

[Here](#) is the link to the list of classes available to international students.

To have a complete view of the academic offer, click on the [Licenses and Masters](#) link, then click on a specific *License* on your left and you will get a description of the major. By clicking on the *Les formations* tab you will get to the list of courses offered.

CAMPUS LIFE

ICES is not a residential college, students are responsible for their own housing and meals.

HOUSING AND MEALS

[Housing options](#) available to international students include a student residence located at 10 minute walk from the university (about 300 Euros monthly rent, including utilities), a room in a private apartment (280 to 350 Euros monthly rent, not including utilities. Rooms can be single or double accommodation).

In la Roche sur Yon students can have lunch at Escale Rivoli Restaurant that is located only 5 minutes walk from ICES. Rivoli 2014 costs : 5,25 euros for 1 meal, 42 euros for 10 meals. Express menu: 3,20 euros for 1 meal (starter and dessert). Students may also decide to bring their own lunch bag at ICES cafeteria that is equipped with microwave and coffee/snack vending machines.

PERSONAL EXPENSES

In addition to lodging and meals students have to budget for books and for their own expenses (traveling during weekends and breaks, social life, etc.),

ORIENTATION

An orientation week for international students is organized a few days before the beginning of each semester.

ARRIVAL DETAILS

See the Arrival section in the [International Student Guide](#).

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

All along the semester, the Board of Students (BDE) organizes events, including the «ICES show», ICES annual celebration, Gala reception at the end of the academic year, skiing week excursion. Students can also participate in visits, tours, activities and excursions organized for free for the international students on weekends.

MINISTRY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

ICES is Catholic institution in line with the Apostolic Constitution *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*. The school chaplaincy offers daily liturgy at the *Chapelle de la Misericorde* in front of ICES' main entrance and organizes numerous activities. The *Foyer Saint Thérèse* offers a housing option for students who want to grow in their faith while studying at ICES.

See [here](#) for more information (in French).

APPLICATION PROCESS AND COSTS

APPLICATION PROCESS

1. Students must turn in a Study Abroad application to Benedictine College. Forms are available [here](#).
2. After the Study Abroad office confirms the student that his or her application has been accepted, the student must complete the ICES application form and send it to ICES with all the required documents within the following deadlines:
 - no later than June 30th for the 1st semester or academic year
 - until November 30th for the second semester
3. Once students have been accepted at ICES, they receive an official Letter of acceptance. With this they can apply for a student visa to France (see below.)

STUDENT VISA

Exchange students must obtain a student visa prior to departing for France and French overseas departments. As soon as students are accepted, they should start the process for obtaining their visa. The local French Consulate is the official source of all visa information. Students will have to submit a Campus France application (see [here](#)), then submit a student visa application to the French consulate that has jurisdiction on their home state. Once in France, students will have to register with the French Office of Immigration and Integration (OFII) within a few days after their arrival in France (for more details see paragraph Visa, Immigration Regulation [here](#)).

HEALTH INSURANCE

Students will have to get Travel Medical Insurance through Benedictine (\$90). This coverage is essential in case students need to be repatriated for health reasons. In addition to that, once in France they will have to purchase coverage from the French Social Security (211 Euros in 2013). This is compulsory for all those who stay in France longer than 3 months.

COSTS

Students pay tuition at Benedictine College and can apply their financial aid. In addition to the tuition cost, Benedictine College will charge \$750 study abroad fee, and \$90 Travel Medical Insurance.

Students are responsible for lodging and meals in France (see Lodging and meals section above).

Students will also have to pay for their plane ticket, as well as books, visa application fees, French social security, and personal expenses.