

Centenary freshmen headed to Paris in fall 2014

First-year students arriving in fall 2014 will begin their college experience in a way no other class before them has – with immersive study in Paris, France. Centenary has joined a very small number of colleges and universities across the nation that offers a shared international study experience to first-year students.

"In my experience, Centenary must be the first in the nation to do this," said William Arceneaux H'12, President of the Council for the Development of French in Louisiana (CODOFIL) and the only person in American higher education to have led both public and private national university associations. "This unprecedented decision to send the entire freshman class to Paris will place the college in the international spotlight and result in bringing much-needed attention to Louisiana and its efforts to promote its French language heritage. This initiative can only be described in one way: formidable."

Centenary in Paris is part of a new immersive segment which has been added to the fall semester. New students' first course, which begins August 4, and ends August 22, on campus, will include a 10-day trip to Paris. The trip will be led by Centenary faculty and staff, and each course will be taught by a Centenary faculty member. The intensive learning experience will support first-year students in creating strong bonds with classmates and the College.

"*Centenary in Paris* is a meaningful way to introduce our incoming students to Centenary and



Centenary students in Paris for May Module 2013.

its rich history in Louisiana," said French professor Dana Kress, Chair of the Foreign Language Department and honorary consul of France for North Louisiana. "Both Centenary and Louisiana have deep cultural, educational, and governmental roots in France. Travel itself is such an education. As Mark Twain tells us, 'Travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry, and narrow-mindedness.'"

The initiative has already garnered the support of both the French and American governments following an exploratory trip to Paris by Dean of Students Mark Miller and Dr. Dana Kress.

The American Embassy in Paris will host Centenary students for discussions on French and American relations for the inaugural Centenary in Paris session. The French government has also offered their support, and the Consulate General of France in New Orleans has been instrumental in offering recommendations and connections so that students have a purposeful and meaningful cultural experience.

"Centenary College of Louisiana is about to launch what is a first in the history of study abroad for American universities: taking its entire freshman class to Paris," said Jean-Claude Brunet, Consul General of France in New Orleans. "The French Consulate in New Orleans supports this initiative and will facilitate the welcoming

of these young students in France. I want to congratulate President Rowe and the faculty of Centenary College for such a meaningful decision. We understand and appreciate that Centenary is investing in the cultural and linguistic diversity that is native to Louisiana in order to broaden the connection of its students with the global world. France is proud and happy to be part of this academic project."

While in Paris, Miller and Kress secured housing in Paris for students arriving in August. Bypassing the more traditional American experience, Centenary in Paris students will stay at an international education and exchange facility rather than a hotel.

"We wanted to be sure in choosing accommodations that our students were engaging with other cultures on every level possible. The residence we chose for our incoming freshmen is the FIAP – Jean Monnet, a center specializing in hosting international youth," said Kress.

Each student will participate in one of ten classes that will cover a variety of academic areas. Students can expect a lively spread of experiential learning activities and field studies throughout the duration of their courses including excursions to museums, historical sites, theaters, film locations, and restaurants.

