GETTING STARTED WITH THE FRENCH 311 NING MINI

A ning is a social networking web, similar to Facebook but with a focus on a specific topic of interest. Each member of a ning has a personal space with status updates and a comment wall. Members can also create blogs and start discussions that are shared with other members. On some nings, members can also share photos and videos and create events on a common calendar. Nings can be public or private. **Even though the French 311 Ning is a public ning, only the home page is visible to outsiders and members must be approved by the Ning administrator, i.e., Professor Scinicariello.**

The French 311 Ning is a Ning Mini. Its functions are limited to the creation of blogs and discussions, the embedding of videos from other sites, and the use of photos. French 311 students will practice writing in French by maintaining a blog on contemporary French and Francophone culture and by responding to discussion questions. Tabs on the Ning's navigation bar lead out to other course resources, like *Le Français au Travail* pages in Netvibes and web pages with course information and activities. In general, the French 311 Ning will be used as a substitute for Blackboard.

Note: Ning supports languages other than English, so you may type in French, inserting accents as you normally do in your operating system.

Signing Up and Signing In

To join the ning, go to its home/main page, i.e., *http:// http://la-france-et-la-francophonie.ning.com/*, and click on the **Inscription** button.   You'll be asked to supply an e-mail address and create a password. You'll also be asked your age (although you needn't display it) and some questions about yourself in order to join. These questions form the basis of your profile, but you can edit the answers later. You membership will have to be approved by Professor Scinicariello before you can log in.

Once you are a member of the ning, you can sign in at any time by clicking the **Ouvrir une Session** button. **Note: Once you join one ning, you can use the same identity to join others.**

Your Profile

Once you have signed in, you will see your name (here it's 'SharonGS), a **Se déconnecter** link, and other useful links in the upper-right corner. **Boîte de réception** is where you will find messages others have sent you. From this **Boîte**, you can also compose messages to send to others.

Click **Paramètres** to change your profile, upload a (new) picture, etc. There is also a **Confidentialité** function, if you want to restrict content more than the ning's default settings. (Please don't do this!) You can also use **Courriel** to receive notifications when content is added to the ning. If there is not much activity on the ning or you won't log in often, you might want to be notified when anyone adds content. Just remember which e-mail address you used to join, since that's where the notifications will be sent!
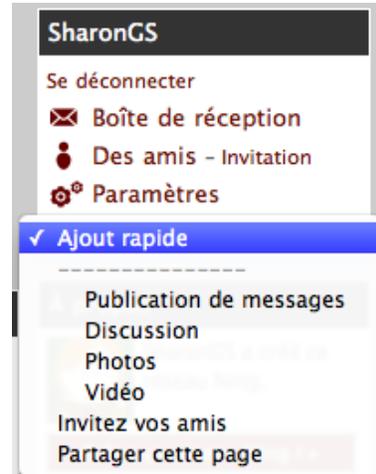
Navigating the Ning

The easiest way to navigate the ning is to use the tabs under the title. **Note: Some of the tabs have important sub-menus.**

To see content contributed by others that is not featured on the main page, click on the member's picture.

Your Page

When you click the **Ma Page** tab, you arrive at a page where you can organize all the content you contribute. The content navigation is on the left. There is a box where you can add an RSS feed that interests you. In the text box (**Zone de texte**), you can embed widgets, videos, etc.
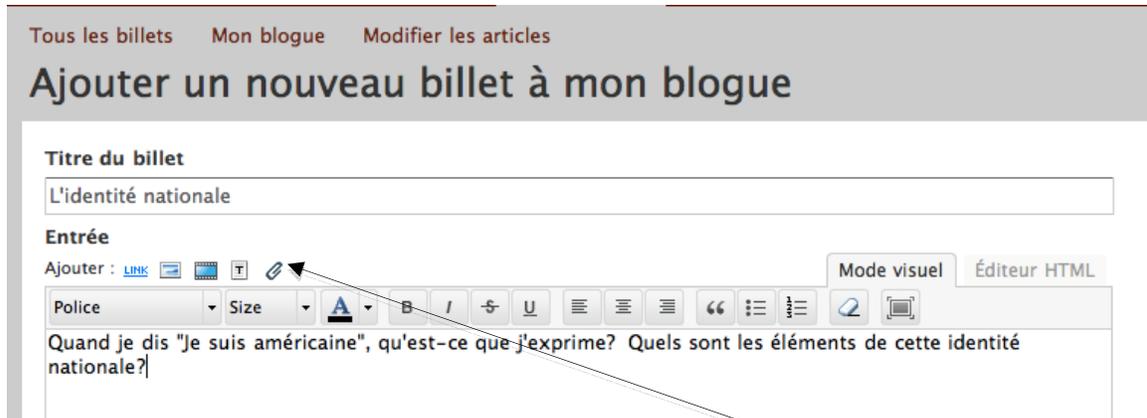
Creating Blog Posts

To create a blog post, go to **Collaboration** > **Blogues** or **Ma Page** > **Billets de blogue** > **Ajouter**. You can also click on **Ajouter un Message** under **Billets de blogue** on the **Page principale**.
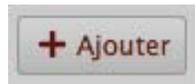
This opens the window in which you will type your text.

When you have finished typing your entry—and you can add links and images or attach files, too—scroll down to choose your posting options. You do not need to create '*balises*' (*balises* = tags) for your entry. **So that others can read and reply to your posts, you need to choose 'Tout public'.** ('Tout public' means only the participants in this ning.)

You can save your post as a draft (*Enregistrer comme brouillon*) (useful if you need to log off and plan to finish later), preview your post (*Prévisualiser*), or publish your post (*Publier le billet*).

All blog posts in a Ning Mini must be moderated, so you will not see your post immediately. Mme Scinicariello will moderate posts at least once each day.

Replying to Blog Posts

In French 311 you will be reading and replying to blog posts of others. To reply to a post, click on the title of the post to open the text editor. Click **Ajouter Commentaire** when you have finished. To find all the blog posts, go to **Collaboration** > **Blogues** > **Tous les billets**.

Starting or Contributing to a Discussion

The **Discussions** link or tab (**Collaboration** > **Forum**) opens a new threaded discussion. To contribute to an existing discussion, click on the discussion's title on the **Forum** or **Discussions** page.

Posting Files on the Ning

Sometimes you may want to add files (PDFs, Word documents, PowerPoint slides, etc.) to your posts of personal pages.
Files can be uploaded wherever you see the little paperclip icon.

Files can be attached to blog posts and discussions. You can also upload a file to the text box and/or the comment wall on your personal page. In the text box (*Zone de texte*), click the 'Modifier' button; click "Commenter mon profil' on the comment wall. Click the paperclip to upload a file, which will appear as a link.

Adding Photos and Videos

Use the **Photos** links and tabs (**Médias** > **Photos**) to upload images from your computer. Use the **Vidéos** (**Médias** > **Vidéos**) to embed video from YouTube and other popular video sites using the 'embed' codes provided by the sites. You can also upload images and embed videos in the **Zone de texte** on **Ma Page**.

What's happening in the ning?

As mentioned in the **Your Profile** section, you can use **Paramètres >
Courriel** to choose to receive e-mail whenever certain things happen in the ning.

You can also subscribe to the ning's RSS feed and follow what's happening
through a 'live bookmark' in your browser or through an RSS reader. Nings
generate three RSS feeds: one shows '*Activité récente*'; another, new posts to the
Forum; a third, new blog posts. You can subscribe to any or all to keep track of
what's happening in the ning.

Belonging to Multiple Nings

Once you start joining nings that interest you, it's easy to forget their names and
URLs. If you joined using one ningID, you can log into http://www.ning.com,
click on **Networks** for a list of the nings to which you belong.