

Guide to the M.A. and Ph.D. Programs in French



WISCONSIN
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

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Welcome to the Department of French and Italian! This Guide to the M.A. and Ph.D. Programs in French has been put together to help answer many of the questions you will have as you begin your career as a graduate student at UW-Madison. There may be times when the Graduate Studies Committee will grant a student an exception to these guidelines when a good reason is presented in the form of a written request to the Director of Graduate Studies. Generally, questions that are not addressed in this booklet should be directed first to the Graduate Coordinator, Shawn Ramer, in 608 Van Hise. In some cases, Shawn may then refer you to your advisor or to the Director of the Graduate Studies Committee.

Faculty of the Department of French and Italian strive to ensure good communication with graduate students. Faculty encourage students to reach out to them at any time.

ADVISING

Upon entering the department, students are each assigned a faculty advisor with whom they will work (in most cases) until they have completed all the requirements for the M.A. Students who wish to change advisors should speak to the Director of Graduate Studies for French. Within two months of completing the requirements for the M.A., students are requested to choose the Chair of their Prelims Committee, who may be but need not be the same as the originally assigned advisor; students' evolving research interests, among other factors, may warrant a change. The Chair of their Prelims Committee assists students with the process of preparing for the preliminary examination. Until the students complete the last preliminary examinations, they should work with their originally assigned advisor in regards to all matters other than the content and scope of the prelims (for instance: choice of classes, etc.). Upon completion of the preliminary exams, the chair of the student's dissertation proposal committee, to be set up by the student in consultation with faculty, usually becomes the advisor, but a change of director is also possible at that time.

Students consult their advisor at least three times a year: once in September to become acquainted and address any issues related to the start of the academic year; a second time later in the fall, before course registration for the spring, in order to discuss course selection; and a third time in the spring, before course selection for the fall. Students are encouraged to contact their advisor concerning any academic problems or issues that may arise, and to engage with their advisor on an ongoing basis about their own short- and long-term concerns, plans, and interests. Advisors will mentor their advisees as well as attending to administrative functions like course selection and requirements. Advisors will actively participate in the end-of-the-year assessment of all graduate students. Additional information and clarification about requirements can be obtained from the Director of Graduate Studies for French or the Graduate Coordinator.

GRADUATE LEARNING GOALS FOR FRENCH M.A. AND PH.D. DEGREES (RESEARCH-BASED DEGREES)¹

Master's Level. Students obtaining a master's degree in French and Francophone literature and culture are expected to have achieved the following learning goals by the end of their degree work:

- Show broad knowledge of French and Francophone literature and culture
- Master a broad range of texts fundamental to French and Francophone studies
- Demonstrate critical understanding of the major works in literature, culture, and intellectual history that have been written in French from the Middle Ages up to the present
- Show the ability to analyze literary texts of various genres, and to formulate well-informed, interpretive arguments about them

¹ The doctoral level learning goals are inclusive of the master's level learning goals

- Identify, select, and retrieve primary and secondary sources pertaining to questions in French and Francophone literature and culture
- Analyze and interpret the theories, research methods, and approaches to inquiry in this discipline
- Demonstrate adequate proficiency in French to lead a well-informed discussion of literature and culture
- Communicate clearly and appropriately in both written and spoken French
- For those who teach (most M.A. students), demonstrate skills as teachers of the French language and French/Francophone culture at the college level and document their development as teachers by means of a teaching portfolio. The skills they develop include:
 - the ability to create level- and course-appropriate instructional objectives, activities, and assessments for teaching language, literature, and culture
 - the ability to use instructional technologies appropriately to enhance the teaching of language, literature, and culture
 - the capacity to incorporate insights from second language acquisition theory and current best practices in foreign language teaching into instruction

Doctoral Level. Students obtaining a doctoral degree in French and Francophone literature and culture are expected to have achieved the following learning goals by the end of their degree work:

- Demonstrate thorough knowledge and critical understanding of one or two areas of French and Francophone literature, and of the historical and social contexts that have influenced the works examined in their dissertation
- Show the ability to synthesize and define a field of inquiry in a persuasive, coherent, and original way
- Make effective use of research sources, tools, and strategies in the field of French and Francophone literature
- Demonstrate, in the writing of their Ph.D. dissertation, an originality of thinking and insight that reaches beyond the current boundaries of knowledge within the field of study
- Articulate awareness of various questions, problems, and limitations implied by their framing of their topic
- Contribute substantially to their area of specialization, and be able to engage in a dialogue with other experts in that area
- Communicate and defend complex ideas in a clear and understandable manner, in both French and English
- Be capable of applying their investigative skills to a variety of fields within French-speaking literature and cultures
- Show reading knowledge of a second foreign language pertinent to their research specialty (and, for specialists of Medieval and 16th-century French literature, a third foreign language)
- Be prepared to be effective teachers of French/ Francophone literature, culture, and language at the college and university levels and document their further teaching development through the final element of their teaching portfolio, a collaboration with a faculty member teaching an undergraduate course.

THE M.A. IN FRENCH

CRITERIA FOR SATISFACTORY PROGRESS

- 1) **GPA:** The Graduate School requires a minimum of a 3.0 grade point average.
- 2) **Course Load:** Minimum of 9 credits taken each semester, generally consisting of 3 courses, seminars, proseminars, or research labs, not necessarily in the Department of French and Italian.
- 3) **Auditing:** Students are allowed to audit a 4th course as long as they officially register as auditors, do all the reading, and participate in class discussions. During the course of their graduate studies, students will be allowed to count a total of 3 audited courses or seminars toward the distribution requirements. No more than one audit is allowed in each of our three defined areas.

- **Area 1** - Middle Ages & 16th - 17th centuries
- **Area 2** - 18th - 19th centuries
- **Area 3** - 20th - 21st centuries & Francophone and Global French Studies

Circumstances under which students may take 1 of their 3 (as opposed to 4) courses as an audit:

- Teaching 2 sections as a TA
 - Preparing for the M.A. exam in the semester immediately preceding this exam.
- 4) **Completion of annual portfolio and self-evaluation:** Starting in a student's second year of courses (third semester), the student will begin keeping a portfolio of work accomplished academically (actual contents will be explained in the research laboratory described below). Towards the end of each academic year the student will write a one-page self-evaluation that explains the portfolio accomplishments for the given year and sets goals for the year to come. The portfolio and self-evaluation will be evaluated by the student's advisor, who will provide the student with a written evaluation of progress. For students who are TAs, they begin a separate teaching portfolio in their first semester of study and maintain it as long as they have a TAship. See below under [TEACHING](#) for M.A. Students.
 - 5) **Timely completion of M.A. requirements:** The M.A. exam is usually taken by the end of the 4th semester of study, although earlier is possible. All requirements including the M.A. exam should be satisfied before the beginning of the 5th semester of graduate studies. Academic probation will be considered if all requirements including the M.A. exam are not completed by the beginning of the 6th semester.

M.A. REQUIREMENTS

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

- 1) **Oral Proficiency in French:** Non-native speakers of French will be placed on probation during their first semester in the program. Oral proficiency in French is assessed through a collaborative process that includes class participation, oral presentations, meetings with advisors, teaching observations, and other relevant interactions throughout the semester. Additionally, faculty teaching first-semester courses will evaluate students' proficiency in class. If concerns arise based on these assessments, the Graduate Studies Committee will review the findings and make appropriate recommendations. First-year students who do not meet the minimum oral proficiency requirements may be required to take up to 6 credits of advanced French language or phonetics courses (e.g., French 311, French 313). All decisions are made on a case-by-case basis by the Graduate Studies Committee.
- 2) **Close Reading Review for First-Year Graduate Students:** This evaluation is a diagnostic tool designed to gauge the proficiency of incoming first-year graduate students in close literary analysis—a core skill for advanced study in literature. By identifying individual strengths and areas for improvement early in the program, the department can provide timely and targeted support to ensure that all students develop the analytical and writing skills essential for success in coursework and research.

Review of Literary Analysis Skills

All first-year graduate students (MA and PhD) will complete a close reading exercise during the third week of their first semester. This activity will be administered by a rotating committee of faculty members.

Within the first two weeks of classes, each student will submit a list of three works from the MA reading list with which they are already familiar. Based on this list, the evaluation committee will select short passages from two of the chosen works. These passages will be provided to the student in hard copy at the start of the scheduled session.

At the beginning of the session, the student will choose one of the two passages for analysis. They will then have 45 minutes to:

- Read and annotate the passage, and
- Write, by hand, a two- to three-paragraph analytical commentary (in French) that interprets the passage's central themes and examines how its language, structure, and stylistic choices contribute to its meaning.

The evaluation will take place in a classroom or testing office. Students may use a French-language dictionary but may not consult any notes, books, electronic devices, or other reference materials.

Faculty evaluators will review each commentary according to the following scale:

- **Meets expectations**
- **Does not meet expectations**

If a student's performance raises concerns, the Graduate Studies Committee will review the evaluation and recommend next steps. Depending on the committee's recommendation, students may be asked to:

- Complete up to three (3) credits of coursework in literary analysis (e.g., French 271, 321, 322, or equivalent), or
- Work individually with a faculty member to strengthen analytical skills during their first academic year.

All decisions regarding additional coursework or remedial support will be made on a case-by-case basis by the Graduate Studies Committee.

- 3) **Seminar Distribution Requirement:** For the M.A., students must take at least one seminar in the department in each of the three defined areas:

- **Area 1** - Middle Ages & 16th - 17th centuries
- **Area 2** - 18th - 19th centuries
- **Area 3** - 20th - 21st centuries & Francophone and Global French Studies.

Note: seminars spanning more than one of these areas may be counted for only one of the areas they cover.

- 4) **Research Paper Requirement:** For MA and PhD students, the following guidelines apply regarding research paper submissions:

- Rather than submitting multiple major papers during a semester when they are taking two or more seminars in our program, students may submit one substantial final research paper (12–15 pages, followed by a bibliography).
- Students can elect instead to write a paper for each seminar when they are taking multiple seminars in our program.
- By the end of the degree program, each student must complete at least one research paper in each of the three designated chronological or thematic areas:
 - Area 1: Middle Ages and 16th–17th Centuries
 - Area 2: 18th–19th Centuries
 - Area 3: 20th–21st Centuries, Francophone, and Global French Studies

Research papers that span more than one area may be counted toward only one of these areas. Students may fulfill this requirement in any graduate-level course that focuses on one or two of the defined areas. Students who receive an MA degree from our program will not have to repeat this requirement for the PhD.

Each graduate seminar or course should offer students the option to complete either:

- a. One substantial final research paper, or
- b. Alternative, less extensive assignments.

Instructors will provide clear and detailed guidance outlining expectations for both the research paper and alternative assignments, ensuring equity, clarity, and consistency across courses.

Each student's chosen option must be communicated to the Graduate Coordinator, as well as to other faculty teaching graduate seminars that semester, to ensure proper coordination and to prevent overlap.

The decision to write a final research paper in a given course must be approved in writing by the instructor no later than the fourth week of the semester.

This policy will be piloted in Spring 2026 and reviewed for effectiveness based on student feedback and assessment outcomes.

Final assignments in pedagogy coursework (i.e., French 820 and French 821) and methodology and theory coursework (i.e., French 569 and French 750) are exempt from this policy, as they fall outside the designated research areas.

- 5) **Proseminars:** Students must complete the following proseminars:
 - **French 569:** French 569, a 3-credit introduction to theory and critical reading practices, must be taken in the first semester it is offered.
 - **French 820:** Students who teach in the Department must take French 820 either before beginning to teach or concurrently with their first semester of teaching (see [TEACHING](#) for M.A. Students). Students are required to take French 820 concurrently with their first semester of teaching if possible.
- 6) **French 750 Research Laboratory:** French 750, a 3-credit introduction to graduate studies and academic careers focusing on professional development, must be taken in the first semester it is offered.
- 7) **Exchange Program Course Work:** Please note that courses taken while graduate students are participating in one of our exchange programs abroad do not usually count toward the completion of departmental degree requirements, although exceptions may be considered if students can provide adequate documentation of their written work, and if the Graduate Studies Committee finds the work completed abroad to be comparable to a graduate course or seminar offered in our Department.
- 8) **Minimum Credits:** The Graduate School requires at least 30 credits (300 level or above) for a master's degree.
- 9) **Comprehensive Exams**
Students will have the **choice** between a written and oral examination, **or** an M.A. thesis and an oral defense.

M.A. EXAMINATION

Option 1: M.A. Examination:

Written Examination:

- **Purpose, Timing, Content, Sign-up Period:** The M.A. exam is usually taken by the end of the fourth semester of study, although taking it earlier is possible. It should be taken before the fifth semester of study. Academic probation will be considered if all requirements including the M.A. Exam are not completed by the beginning of the sixth semester. Given twice a year, it tests students' mastery of a broad range of texts fundamental to French and Francophone studies, along with their ability to analyze texts, answer questions, and present arguments. The reading list is posted on the program website : https://frit.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/1050/2022/08/French-MA-Reading-List-June-2014_revised-October-2021-FINAL.pdf. To take the exam, students sign up with the Graduate Coordinator by April 30th for the August exam; for the January exam they must sign up with the Graduate Coordinator by the November break.
- **Format:** The written part of the M.A. exam lasts a total of 7 hours. In Part I (4 hours), students are given a choice of three questions within each of the three defined areas (Middle Ages - 16th - 17th; 18th - 19th; 20th - 21st - Francophone and Global French Studies). They must answer one question in each area. Students turn in their answers and take a one-hour break. In Part II (2 hours), students must choose one of three broad essay topics. Part I must be answered in French. Part II may be answered in English or in French.
- **Use of Materials, Academic Misconduct:** Students are not allowed any notes, documents, electronic files, or books (with the exception of a dictionary). M.A. exams can be handwritten, but if students prefer to use a computer, they should be aware that they are not allowed to consult any

files or websites. As with all other methods of evaluating students' performance in the program, such as course assignments, the Department conforms to university regulations governing academic misconduct. Students should refer to the following university website to familiarize themselves with the definition of and the serious consequences of academic misconduct: <https://conduct.students.wisc.edu/academic-integrity/>.

- Withdrawals and Completion: Once the MA written exam has been scheduled, students may withdraw until one week before the scheduled exam without penalty. Beyond that time, students who decide not to take the exam receive a “technical failure” and forfeit one of their two opportunities to take the MA exam. In the case of failure, students are allowed one chance to retake their MA exam at the next exam session.

Oral Examination:

A student who fails the written part of the M.A. exam will not take the oral part. The oral usually takes place within a week after the written examination and is conducted entirely in French. It lasts about one hour. Forty-eight hours before the oral, the candidate will be told which three books from the M.A. list will be used for selections and for the oral exam. Three hours before the oral, the candidate will be given three short extracts from the M.A. Reading List, and they will inform the Graduate Coordinator which extract they will analyze. The candidate will prepare an analysis of this extract in a room reserved for this purpose. There they will not have access to a computer and access to any other electronic devices is not allowed. They will annotate the text or write notes by hand that may be brought to the exam, and may use a dictionary in the preparation of these notes. During the exam the candidate will give an analysis in French of the extract chosen, lasting approximately twenty minutes. Students should not read a text word for word. This will be followed by 10-15 minutes of discussion of the student's analysis of the chosen extract, and then by a period of questions (lasting approximately 25 minutes). Some of these questions may pertain to the candidate's written exam, but others may involve other texts on the M.A. reading list, from other areas. For the August session, the exam schedule will be specified on the official department Orientation Schedule as a way to avoid scheduling conflicts.

- **Weak Passes, Failures:** If a student fails the written part of the exam, s/he will not take the oral part. S/he will be able to retake the entire exam at the next exam session. A student who fails the oral part of the exam may be allowed to retake the oral exam one time, at the next exam session, if s/he wishes to be reconsidered for admission into the Ph.D. program. In order to postpone the retake until a later session, the student must make a written request to the Graduate Studies Committee and have it approved.

Option 2: M.A. thesis and thesis defense

A Master's thesis in French (40-60 pages, including notes and bibliography):

A master's thesis is a piece of original scholarship written under the direction of a thesis advisor. Students who are interested in writing a master's thesis should begin thinking about possible topics early in their academic program. They should contact their prospective thesis advisor by the end of their first year so that they can work on their reading and thesis plan during their third semester and write/finalize their thesis during their fourth/last semester. A Master's Thesis project may be submitted for final approval only during fall and spring semesters—not in the summer.

Students should submit a prospectus five months before the anticipated defense. The prospectus should establish the main lines of argument and organization for the thesis, and it should spell out the methodology. It should also include a timetable and a working bibliography of major and secondary sources. The prospectus needs to be approved by the thesis advisor.

Once the prospectus is approved, students will choose a second and a third reader from the Department in consultation with their thesis advisor. The final thesis should be sent to the thesis advisor and the two readers at least three weeks before the scheduled defense.

Thesis defense

Students selecting the M.A. thesis option will take a 60-minute oral exam that will consist of a 15-minute presentation of their findings, followed by a question and answer period. The questions raised by the members of the thesis committee will focus on the thesis but may also address broader points such as the conceptual framework, methodology, theoretical approach, and socio-historical context that contribute to the definition and elaboration of the thesis topic.

At the conclusion of the defense, the thesis may be approved in its current form or approved contingent on further revisions. If extensive revisions are required, the student will need to resubmit the thesis for final approval, and the M.A. thesis committee may request that the student do an additional thesis defense. If after revisions and a second defense the work is deemed insufficient for entry into the Ph.D. program, the student will be awarded a terminal M.A.

TEACHING for M.A. Students

- 1) Teaching is not required for the M.A., but students who receive TAs must complete 3 credits of teaching methodology, French 820, College Teaching of French. TAs may take French 820 prior to teaching in the Department or concurrently with their first semester of teaching.
- 2) To be exempted from French 820, a TA must have had at least one of the following preparations:
 - A 3-credit methods course that covers the essential content of French 820, plus at least 2 semesters of college-level teaching experience in the United States.
 - At least 3 years of full-time teaching experience at the high-school level, plus courses in pedagogy subject to be validated by the Graduate Studies Committee.
 - Experience teaching abroad that meets one of the above criteria, plus familiarity with American students, institutions, and practices of foreign language teaching, as determined by the Graduate Studies Committee.

If these preparations are met, then in order to determine if the requirement can be waived, TAs with prior experience may ask the instructor of French 820 (who will forward the request to the Director of Graduate Studies) to complete the summative assessment (written exam), which is typically completed at the end of the 820 course. Incoming TAs have to demonstrate that they have knowledge of the definitions and application of both literacy-based and communicative language teaching and genre-based writing instruction.

- 3) M.A. students who are not TAs in the Department are encouraged to take French 820 and 821, but they may request that that requirement be waived if they have no intention of teaching.
- 4) A teaching portfolio will be first set up in French 820. Its purpose is to document French graduate students' growth as instructors of language, literature, and culture as they move through each stage of the program. Materials gathered from French 820 may include statements about students' teaching philosophy, other self-reflective materials, and may also draw upon other pertinent work from French 820. During the remaining semesters of the MA and post-MA for as long as students continue to teach as TAs, one short reflective statement per semester (during those terms during which the graduate student is teaching will be added to the portfolio; these reflections should describe teaching accomplishments and goals for the next semester related to teaching. Throughout the period of TAs, the teaching portfolio may be supplemented with other pertinent materials: for example, documentation of participation in other professional development experiences pertinent to teaching, whether acquired within the Department or through other forms of training or experience (e.g., LSS workshop series, oral proficiency training, external certifications, etc.); and other teaching materials such as a sample lesson or module for use in an advanced undergraduate language, literature, or culture course. After the MA is completed, students must collaborate with a faculty member teaching an undergraduate course and document that collaboration in the teaching portfolio. (For details, see [TEACHING](#) for Ph.D. Students.)

NEW-ENTRY STUDENTS HOLDING AN M.A. IN FRENCH

Students holding an M.A. in French from another institution must complete all the requirements indicated above with the following modifications:

- **Course Equivalencies:** Students may petition Graduate Studies to receive equivalencies for a maximum of three graduate courses they took while completing their M.A. degrees elsewhere. Proper documentation—syllabi, transcripts, and written work—is necessary, and equivalencies are granted only if the committee believes the work completed to be comparable to graduate courses or seminars offered in the Department.
- **Qualifying Examination:** Instead of the M.A. examination, students are required to take a qualifying examination identical to the oral part of the M.A. examination (p. 6). The qualifying exam will be held at the start of the second semester and administered by the Qualifying exam committee. Candidates who fail will be asked to take the regular M.A. exam that is administered by the Department at the next exam session or during their fourth semester of study.

Please Note: It is particularly important that the new-entry Ph.D. students with an M.A. in a field other than French consult their advisor at the beginning of their first semester to discuss supplementing their courses with extra work in certain areas.

THE Ph.D. IN FRENCH

CRITERIA FOR SATISFACTORY PROGRESS

- 1) **Prerequisite:** Completion of the M.A. in French.
- 2) **GPA:** The Graduate School requires a minimum of a 3.0 grade point average.
- 3) **Course Load:** Minimum each semester of 9 credits (3 courses or seminars) until dissertator status is reached. Minimum of 9 credits taken each semester, generally consisting of 3 courses including seminars, proseminars, and research labs, not necessarily in the Department of French and Italian until dissertator status is reached.
- 4) **Auditing:** Students are allowed to audit a 4th course as long as they officially register as auditors, do all the reading, and participate in class discussions. During the course of their graduate studies, students will be allowed to count a total of 3 audited courses or seminars toward the distribution requirements. No more than one audit is allowed in each of our three defined areas.
 - **Area 1** - Middle Ages & 16th - 17th centuries
 - **Area 2** - 18th - 19th centuries
 - **Area 3** - 20th - 21st centuries & Francophone and Global French Studies**Circumstances under which students may take 1 of their 3 (as opposed to 4) courses as an audit:**
 - Teaching 2 sections as a TA
 - Preparing for the preliminary examinations in the semester immediately preceding or including an exam.
- 5) **Completion of academic and teaching portfolios.** For the academic folio, the same rules for the portfolio described above apply (see item #4 in [CRITERIA FOR SATISFACTORY PROGRESS](#) in THE M.A. IN FRENCH.) New-Entry Students holding an M.A. in French should start their academic portfolio in the second semester in the Program. For the teaching portfolio, see [TEACHING](#) for Ph.D. Students.
- 6) **Timely completion of Ph.D. requirements:**
 - **Preliminary Examinations:** The Field Exam is to be taken preferably two semesters, and definitely no later than five semesters, after completion of the M.A. Academic probation, which may have implications for students' teaching assistantships as long as it is in force, will be considered if the Field Exam is not taken by the beginning of the sixth semester, after completion of the M.A. The Dissertation Proposal oral exam is to be taken within nine months of the successful completion of the Field Exam. If it is not taken within one year of passing the Field Exam, academic probation may be considered.
 - **Foreign Language Requirement:** Candidates must complete their foreign language reading requirement before being granted dissertator status.
 - **Ph.D. Minor:** Candidates must complete the Ph.D. minor requirement before being granted dissertator status.
 - **Dissertation Defense or Final Oral Examination:** Graduate School policies require Ph.D. candidates to defend their dissertation "five years from the date of passing their preliminary examinations" ([Graduate School Academic Policies and Procedures](#)).

Ph.D. REQUIREMENTS

- 1) **Course Requirements** (to be completed prior to the Dissertation Thesis proposal):
 - **Seminar Distribution Requirement:** Students must complete at least nine seminars (excluding proseminars and research labs) in the department, including at least two seminars in each of the three defined areas:
 - **Area 1** - Middle Ages & 16th - 17th centuries
 - **Area 2** - 18th - 19th centuries
 - **Area 3** - 20th - 21st centuries & Francophone and Global French Studies.Seminars taken during the course of the M.A. count towards these totals. Note: seminars whose topics span more than one of these areas may only be counted for one of the areas they cover.
 - **French 750 Research Laboratory:** Students entering at the Ph.D. level must enroll in the Research Laboratory (3 credits) in their first fall semester, or, if not offered that semester, as soon as it is offered

again.

- **Medieval Specialists:** Students intending to write a dissertation on the medieval period must take additional courses in philology and paleography, as indicated by their advisor.

2) **Research Paper Requirement:** For MA and PhD students, the following guidelines apply regarding research paper submissions:

- Rather than submitting multiple major papers during a semester when they are taking two or more seminars in our program, students may submit one substantial final research paper (12–15 pages, followed by a bibliography).
- Students can elect instead to write a paper for each seminar when they are taking multiple seminars in our program.
- By the end of the degree program, each student must complete at least one research paper in each of the three designated chronological or thematic areas:
 - Area 1: Middle Ages and 16th–17th Centuries
 - Area 2: 18th–19th Centuries
 - Area 3: 20th–21st Centuries, Francophone, and Global French Studies

Research papers that span more than one area may be counted toward only one of these areas. Students may fulfill this requirement in any graduate-level course that focuses on one or two of the defined areas. Students who receive an MA degree from our program will not have to repeat this requirement for the PhD.

Each graduate seminar or course should offer students the option to complete either:

- a. One substantial final research paper, or
- b. Alternative, less extensive assignments.

Instructors will provide clear and detailed guidance outlining expectations for both the research paper and alternative assignments, ensuring equity, clarity, and consistency across courses.

Each student's chosen option must be communicated to the Graduate Coordinator, as well as to other faculty teaching graduate seminars that semester, to ensure proper coordination and to prevent overlap. The decision to write a final research paper in a given course must be approved in writing by the instructor no later than the fourth week of the semester.

This policy will be piloted in Spring 2026 and reviewed for effectiveness based on student feedback and assessment outcomes.

Final assignments in pedagogy coursework (i.e., French 820 and French 821) and methodology and theory coursework (i.e., French 569 and French 750) are exempt from this policy, as they fall outside the designated research areas.

3) **Foreign-language reading requirement**

17th- through 21st-Centuries and Francophone and Global French Studies: Students must demonstrate reading proficiency in a language other than French or English. The language will be selected in consultation with the graduate advisor and a faculty member in the intended area of specialization. It is advisable that the foreign language reading requirement be completed before the preliminary examinations unless advisor approval has been given. In all cases, the foreign language reading requirement must be completed before dissertator status can be granted.

- **Acceptable UW-Madison Courses:**
 - A three-credit 300-level course or above conducted completely in the target language. Students must receive at least a B.
 - For students seeking to achieve reading competency in Arabic: a third-semester level course, 300-level or above, conducted completely in that language. Students must receive at least a B.
 - Reading Knowledge Courses:
 - “A” in Italian 301
 - “A” in German 391*
 - “A” in Latin 391*

- *If a student takes German 391 or Latin 391 and does not receive an A, then they must take German 392 or Latin 392 and receive at least a B.
- **Courses Taken Elsewhere:** Upon submission of proper documentation for a 300-level course or above taken elsewhere, the foreign-language reading requirement may be satisfied upon approval by the Graduate Studies Committee.
- **Other Ways of Fulfilling the Requirement:**
 - Students can fulfill the requirement by passing outreach exams in Spanish or German with a score of “advanced.”
 - For less commonly taught languages, students can take an individual examination administered by a faculty member, with the approval of the Graduate Studies Committee. In these cases, the examining professor should be asked to fill out a Language Reading Competence Evaluation form, available from the Graduate Coordinator in 608 Van Hise.

Medieval and 16th-Century Specialists:

Students writing a dissertation on the medieval period or the sixteenth century must demonstrate reading proficiency in two languages other than English and French, reaching maximum proficiency in one language and minimum proficiency in the other. The languages for medieval specialists are Latin and German; for 16th-Century specialists they are Italian and Latin, with Italian usually being taken for maximum proficiency. It is advisable that the maximum-proficiency language requirement be completed before the preliminary examinations unless advisor approval has been given. In all cases, the foreign language reading requirement must be completed before dissertator status can be granted.

- **Acceptable UW-Madison Courses:**
 - Maximum Proficiency:
 - A three-credit 300-level course or above conducted completely in the target language. Students must receive at least a B.
 - Reading Knowledge Courses:
 - “AB” in Italian 301
 - “B” in German 392
 - “B” in a Latin course deemed appropriate by advisor
 - Minimum Proficiency:
 - A three-credit 300-level course or above conducted completely in the target language. Students must receive at least a B.
 - Reading Knowledge Courses:
 - “B” in Italian 301
 - “B” in German 391
 - “B” in a Latin course deemed appropriate by advisor
- As with the other areas of specialization, credit toward these requirements may be granted through outreach exams (in German, for example), individual exams for less-commonly- taught languages, or, with the approval of the Graduate Studies Committee, for courses taken elsewhere, upon submission of proper documentation.

Ph.D. MINOR

The Graduate School has stated that “breadth is a required component of doctoral training at UW–Madison. Given there are multiple paths to breadth, the Graduate School leaves the choice of whether students achieve breadth through a doctoral minor, Graduate/Professional certificate, or other means up to the student's doctoral major program.” In the French Ph.D. program, this required component of graduate training is fulfilled by the completion of a Ph.D. minor or a Graduate/Professional certificate in a program outside the student’s field of specialization. The minor or certificate must be completed before dissertator status is granted. The three options available are:

- **Option A (External Doctoral Minor):** This type of minor requires a minimum of 9 credits in a doctoral minor program (single disciplinary or multi-disciplinary) outside of the student's

doctoral major program. Fulfillment of this option requires the approval of the doctoral minor program. Students must follow the guidelines of the program in which they are taking the minor.

- **Option B (Distributed Doctoral Minor):** In this option, students require a minimum of 9 credits in one or more programs forming a coherent topic, and can include coursework in the student's doctoral major program. Fulfillment of this option requires the approval of the student's doctoral major program. Students obtain the approval of the Graduate Studies Committee to complete an Option B minor by writing and sending to the Director of Graduate Studies a description of the courses they wish to include in their minor, a rationale that groups them under a common theme, and reasons why the proposed minor is different from their field of specialization.
- **Option C (Graduate/Professional Certificate):** This option requires successful completion of a graduate/professional certificate in a program outside of the student's doctoral major program.

More information and the full policy can be found at <https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1200>.

To meet the breadth requirement and satisfy the doctoral minor or graduate/professional certificate students must:

- Earn a cumulative GPA of 3.00 across all doctoral minor or graduate/professional certificate courses.
- Enroll in graded (non-audit/pass/fail) courses numbered 300 or above.
- Limit enrollment to 3 credits of independent study (e.g., 699, 799, 899, 999).
- Omit research and thesis courses (e.g., 790, 890, 990) as these do not satisfy doctoral minor or graduate/professional certificate requirements..
- Limit credits earned more than five years prior to admission to the doctoral program to 5 credits.
- Omit credits earned 10 or more years ago as these do not satisfy doctoral minor or graduate/professional certificate requirements.

Credits earned towards the doctoral minor or graduate/professional certificate may count towards the minimum graduate residence requirement, minimum graduate degree requirement, and the minimum graduate coursework (50%) requirement.

A student cannot earn a doctoral minor and a graduate/professional certificate of the same name.

TEACHING for Ph.D. Students:

1) Students pursuing a Ph.D. in French and Francophone studies who receive support in the form of a TAsip must complete a total of 4 credits of teaching methodology, including French 820, Teaching College French (3 credits), and French 821, Issues in Methods of Teaching French and Italian (1 credit; French 821 may be taken any time before dissertator status is granted). TAs may take French 820 prior to teaching in the Department or concurrently with their first semester of teaching.

2) See the information in item 2 in [TEACHING](#) for M.A. Students above regarding what is required to be exempted from French 820.

3) Ph.D. Students who are not TAs in the Department are encouraged to take French 820 and 821, but they may request that that requirement be waived if they have no intention of teaching.

4) At some point after the MA is completed, students will be required to collaborate once with a faculty member of their choice with regard to a non-TA taught undergraduate course the faculty member is teaching that semester. The collaboration may be carried out as part of the work of French 821 with the agreement of the instructor of 821, or it may be undertaken with the student's dissertation advisor or any other faculty member.

For this collaboration, students will:

- Attend two classes, once to observe and once to participate by giving a presentation or leading a class discussion for at least 15 minutes. Other means of participation may be deemed suitable.
- Meet twice with faculty, once before and once after the required two class visits.
- Develop a basic description and syllabus of an undergraduate course the student would be interested in teaching.

This collaboration will be recorded in the teaching portfolio in two ways.

- Students will provide the syllabus they have developed and a statement of self-assessment explaining what they have learned from the collaboration and how their course syllabus intersects with their research interests; they may also address practical concerns such as accessibility of material, target audience, and enrollment potential.
- Faculty collaborators will fill out a form indicating the dates of the two class visits, the dates of the two meetings between student and faculty, and approval of the course syllabus and other written materials provided by the student, as well as their feedback on their collaboration with the student.

PRELIMINARY EXAMINATIONS

For formal admission to candidacy for the Ph.D. in French, a student must pass two preliminary examinations: a “Field Exam” and a “Dissertation Proposal Oral Examination.”

FIELD EXAM:

- **Purpose of the Field Exam:** The goals of the Field Exam are twofold: 1) to guide students toward a deeper knowledge and understanding of a minimum of one area (two maximum; if two, the two areas must be clearly connected to the rationale of the chosen topic of research) of French and Francophone studies than is afforded by the M.A. exam; and 2) to enable them to define and narrow their interests in preparation for the greater specialization required for the dissertation. Thus the exam tests not only first-hand acquaintance with selected texts and the ability to analyze and interpret them in depth, but also the ability to synthesize and define a field of inquiry in a persuasive, coherent, and original way.
- **Timing, Sign-Up Period:** Students normally complete all requirements for the M.A. by the end of the second year of study. Within four months of their receiving the M.A., they identify at least one area of specialization. The committee should have three members. One member of the committee should be a specialist in the chosen or main area; choose an exam committee chair, preferably a specialist in the chosen area; and in consultation with him or her ask one or two other members of the graduate faculty to be members of their Field Exam committee. The exam itself is taken at the beginning or in the middle of the fourth year of study and definitely no later than during the fifth semester of study. The precise exam date is to be arranged with the Field Exam committee, in consultation with the graduate coordinator. In advance of the exam itself, students submit a [Field Exam document](#) to the members of the exam committee as well as to the Director of graduate studies and the graduate coordinator. It is up to the exam committee chair, in consultation with the student and the other committee member(s), to decide on the exact deadline for the submission of the Field Exam document, but that date should not be later than one month before the exam itself. Students who plan to take a field exam prelim in late August or early-to-mid September must submit a final, polished field exam document (reading list, rubrics & research questions) to their committee no later than the last day of exams of the previous semester.
- **Incoming Students Holding an M.A.:** Students who hold an M.A. in French from another university and who pass the qualifying exam are encouraged to schedule their Field Exam to be taken as soon as they have satisfied all the requirements for the UW-Madison French M.A. program, including all course requirements. In other words, in some cases they might actually be forming a committee and

drawing up their Field Exam document while still completing their distribution requirement or other proseminar requirements (French 569 and French 820, for example) necessary for the Field Exam.

- **Field Exam Document:** The Field Exam document consists of 1) an individualized reading list; 2) rubrics of research interest, the number to be determined in consultation with the exam committee; and 3) research questions: one per rubric.
- **Reading List:** The reading list is to be drawn up conjointly by student and committee. It can be partly based off the [PhD General Reading List](#) created by the faculty, which is a list that builds upon the [MA reading list](#) and is available on the [department website](#). Each student's reading list should reflect their interests but also fill gaps in their knowledge of the areas. If the student works in two areas, they both must be well represented, either equally or with a larger number of works in the major area, if one has been designated. Pertinent critical/theoretical works should also be included in the list. Students are also free to add a small number of works pertinent to their interests from other areas.
 - **Rubrics of Research Interest:** Students identify rubrics of research interest with as much specificity as possible. These rubrics can be quite general (medieval *fabliaux*; lyric poetry of the 16th and 19th centuries; *écriture féminine* in the 17th and 20th centuries) or relatively focused (Proust and Sévigné; Rousseau's autobiographical texts; conceptions of homeland in francophone texts; poetry and the plastic arts in the 19th and 20th centuries). Students are encouraged to group at least some of the works on their reading list under these headings.
 - **Research Questions:** In consultation with their exam committee, students submit broad research questions that help to define and synthesize the field of their research interests and that will be used in some form by the exam committee in formulating the exam questions. One question should be submitted pertaining to each rubric of the list.
- **Content and Format of the Exam:** The exam is a forty-eight-hour open-book take-home exam. You will receive three sets of two questions. Each of the sets will be based around a common theme suggested by the rubrics of your reading list. For each set, you will choose one of the two questions to answer—therefore answering three questions total. The questions will generally ask you to demonstrate knowledge of and synthesize the different literary and philosophical/theoretical works of your list. All the questions should be given in French, and at least one of the three responses should be written in French; the other two may be in French or English. No formal bibliography or footnote apparatus is expected on the exam, although sources must be acknowledged and may be concisely cited and documented (author, title, page number). Students are expected to provide original responses to the questions drawing from their own ideas. It is forbidden to plagiarize others or one's own past work (self-plagiarism). There are no specific length requirements, but students typically write between 5 and 8 double-spaced pages per essay; it is not unusual for the length of essays to vary somewhat. The questions are sent to students by email; they may arrange to receive the questions at any time that is acceptable to the committee and should be sure to inform the graduate coordinator of this choice at the time the exam is scheduled. Students email their responses both to their exam committee chair and to the graduate coordinator by forty-eight hours after receiving the questions.
- **Withdrawals and Completion:** Once the Field Exam has been scheduled, students may withdraw until one week before the scheduled exam without penalty. Beyond that time, students who decide not to take the exam receive a "technical failure" and forfeit one of their two opportunities to take the Field Exam. In the case of failure, students are allowed one chance to retake their Field Exam. The time framework of the retake is to be determined by the exam committee.
- **Incompletes:** Students who have one or more incompletes at the time of signing up for the Field Exam and/or receive any during that semester must complete their course(s) before taking the exam. If they are unable to remove all incompletes, they must withdraw from the exam prior to one week before the scheduled examination to avoid a technical failure.
- The recycling of previously written assignments and the use of AI tools are strictly forbidden. The use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools and applications (including, but not limited to, ChatGPT, DALL-E, and others) for the field exam does not support the learning objectives of this exam and is prohibited. Using them in any way for this exam is a violation of the field exam's expectations and will be addressed through UW–Madison's academic misconduct policy, specifically UWS 14.03(1)b (b) Uses unauthorized materials or fabricated data in any academic exercise.

THE DISSERTATION PROPOSAL ORAL EXAMINATION:

- **Purpose, Language of the Exam:** The goal of the exam is to evaluate students' ability to articulate the constituent elements of their dissertation topic coherently and convincingly; to test their awareness of various questions, problems, and limitations implied by their framing of their topic; and to assess their skill in defending original ideas in a well-informed and effective way. The exam may be in French or English, depending on the student's preference, but it is recommended that at least one question be asked and answered in French. Finally, the proposal should emphasize what the student brings to their chosen field that is new and exciting. Having already dealt with plenty of secondary/critical literature, the student should be able to identify what "gaps" there are in the respective field(s) and what their contribution might be.
- **Timing, Format, Sign-Up Period:** After passing their Field Exam, by the end of the fourth year of study and definitely no later than during the fifth semester of study students choose a thesis advisor and form their dissertation committee; draft their dissertation proposal; and draw up a working bibliography. Students normally take the dissertation oral exam only after completing all other requirements, including the Ph.D. minor and language requirements. The exam might well be taken during Welcome Week of the semester that starts the fifth year of study, but a time during the course of that semester would also be possible; students are reminded that dissertator status is not granted until the beginning of the semester following the one in which all requirements have been fulfilled. As with the Field Exam, it is up to the advisor, in consultation with the student and the other two committee members, to decide on the exact deadline for the submission of the dissertation proposal and bibliography, but that date should not be later than one month before the exam itself. Students should be aware that especially for August welcome week exams, these documents can reasonably be required to be finalized by the last day of instruction of the Spring semester if the committee so chooses. The precise scheduling of the oral exam is arranged by the student and committee in consultation with the graduate coordinator. Exams should not be given during university breaks. In cases of faculty leaves or other reasonable contingencies one member of the committee may be substituted for by another member of the graduate faculty for the purposes of the exam.
- **Dissertation Proposal Committee:** The Dissertation Proposal committee may be but need not be the same as the Field Exam committee.
- **Dissertation Proposal:** Dissertation proposals average 15-20 double-spaced pages in length, including bibliography. For sample proposals students are encouraged to consult those on file with the graduate coordinator.
- **Oral Examination:** On the basis of the dissertation proposal and bibliography, an oral exam of approximately one hour in length is administered by the three members of the committee.
- **Retaking of Dissertation Proposal Oral Examination:** In case of failure, students may retake the Dissertation Proposal Exam once. The time of the retake is determined in consultation with the committee.

THE PH.D. DISSERTATION

- **Dissertator Status:** Once students have taken and passed the Field Exam and the Dissertation Proposal Exam, and met all of the other requirements for the Ph.D., including the minor requirement, foreign language reading requirement, and course requirements, their signed Preliminary Exam Warrant will be sent to the Graduate School for review, and they will be granted dissertator status after approval. If they have not completed all of these requirements at the time they take and pass the Dissertation Proposal Exam, they will not be eligible for dissertator status until the beginning of the semester following completion of all requirements. More information on becoming a dissertator can be found on the Graduate School website: <https://grad.wisc.edu/academic-policies/>
- **Dissertation Committee:** The Dissertation Committee has five members, including a dissertation advisor, and at least two additional members from the French PhD Program at UW-Madison. For

further information regarding the Dissertation Committee see Graduate School guidelines at: <https://grad.wisc.edu/documents/committees/>. The Dissertation Committee is often based on the Field Exam and Dissertation Proposal Committee. The committee members read and comment upon the dissertation as it is being written, and they must approve it before a dissertation defense can be scheduled.

- **Dissertator Course Registration:** Once achieving dissertator status, all dissertators must enroll in exactly 3 credits of graduate level credits every semester; during most semesters, this will be French 990 (Individual Research), but all dissertators must register for French 901 (Materials and Methods of Research) for three credits instead of French 990 at least once, and may do so more than once. French 901 will be organized in a way to facilitate writing of the dissertation and will not have an independent thematic content of its own. The precise modalities of French 901 will be decided by the instructor, but the seminar will start out with students' sharing of and commenting on previously completed work on the dissertation. In the second half of the semester, students will present one new chapter written in the course of the semester, also to be commented on by all of the members of the seminar. The seminar members will offer critiques and suggestions to each other, and the seminar leader will introduce research techniques tailored to the participants' dissertation projects. In preparing guidance for the individual dissertator, the seminar leader will be in close touch with the dissertation advisor. Students off-campus may register and participate via real-time video conferencing. The seminar will be graded on an A-F grade basis only.
- **Length, Language of Dissertation:** Our French program expects the minimum length of the dissertation to be approximately 200 pages, not including bibliography and annexes. Dissertations may be written in English or French.
- **Dissertation Defense, Sign-Up Period:** Once the Dissertation Committee has approved the final draft of the dissertation, a Dissertation Defense is scheduled in consultation with the Graduate Coordinator, in order to meet Graduate School deadlines for the submission of the Final Degree Warrant. Please note that rough drafts of the dissertation will not be accepted for the dissertation defense. Students must inform the Graduate Coordinator that they will be defending their dissertation **at least three weeks in advance of the scheduled defense**, so that a warrant can be requested from the Graduate School in a timely manner.
- **Dissertation Defense Committee:** The defense is administered by the Dissertation Committee. The "non-reading" members do read parts of the dissertation or the whole dissertation. Students will contact them to know whether they wish to receive the entire dissertation. Candidates should give all readers **at least four weeks to read the final copy of the dissertation**, and also within the same time frame are asked to supply non-readers with a synopsis of the dissertation, to which they are free to add whatever representative materials they deem appropriate. Please note that the French PhD program's requirement is higher than that set by the Graduate School (i.e. four committee members). More information about dissertation defense committees can be found in the [Graduate School policy](#).
- **Dissertation Defense Content:** In the oral examination, students will first present an overview of how they came to their dissertation topic, how it evolved during the research and writing process, what challenges the topic posed and how those challenges were met, and how the dissertation fits into their broader interests. This 15-20 minute presentation should not summarize the dissertation but rather contextualize it in terms of dissertators' past and future careers. They will then be questioned by the committee about topics relating to the dissertation, including its conceptualization, contextualization, and content. Arguments that readers believe need clarification or substantiation may be brought up, and committee members may ask dissertators to reflect on issues related to their thesis and its broader implications. In the event of unsatisfactory answers or weaknesses identified in the thesis, the committee may request that revisions be made to the dissertation before it can be deposited at the Graduate School. The duration of the dissertation defense is approximately two hours.
- **Depositing Dissertation, Time Limit:** An appointment must be made at the Graduate School for depositing the dissertation. For more information, see the Guide to Preparing Your Doctoral Dissertation online at: <https://grad.wisc.edu/current-students/doctoral-guide/>. The Graduate School sets a limit for the completion (final deposit) of the dissertation of five years after completion of the

last preliminary exam, although they may grant an extension upon the request of the dissertation advisor.

- Doctoral degree recipients must acknowledge in the dissertation contributions received from other individuals, including co-authors of published work that appears in the document, such as in designing the research, executing the research, analyzing the data, interpreting the data/research, or writing, proofing, or copyediting the manuscript.
- The **co-advisor/co-chair role** is formalized by including the following statement in advisor policy: The co-advisor/co-chair will be designated on dissertation documentation.

FRENCH PROGRAM GRIEVANCES

If a student feels unfairly treated or aggrieved by faculty, staff, or another student, they should consider the following steps:

1. Students' concerns about unfair treatment are best handled directly with the person responsible for the objectionable action.
2. If the student is uncomfortable making direct contact with the individual(s) involved, he/she should contact the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) for French and/or the Department Chair.
3. If the student wishes to file an official complaint, s/he should consult with and send the following information to the Graduate Coordinator:
 - A detailed written statement on the events that resulted in the grievance and any efforts to resolve the matter prior to official complaint;
 - Copies of any relevant communications regarding the events that resulted in the grievance.

Upon receipt of all of the above materials:

- The Graduate Coordinator will forward the formal grievance to the DGS (if the complaint is about the DGS, the documents will be forwarded to the Chair).
- The student will be notified in writing, within 5 business days after the materials arrive in the Graduate Coordinator office, acknowledging receipt of the formal complaint and giving the student a time line for the review to be completed.
- If necessary, the DGS (or Chair) will request additional materials relevant to the issues raised in the student's grievance.
- The DGS (or Chair) will request and conduct formal interviews with the people named in the written statement.
- If necessary, the DGS (or Chair) will arrange a meeting with the student, his/her advisor and/or the Department Chair.
- If the student wishes, s/he may present his/her case at a meeting of the FIC.
- The DGS (or Chair) will inform the student in writing of the decision within 45 business days of the submission of the grievance by the student.

If a student believes that his/her grievance was not appropriately handled or resolved at the program/department the student may file an appeal with the Graduate School. Follow this link: <https://grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy/> The appeal must be filed within 30 days from the moment the student receives the decision of the department.

MAKING THE TRANSITION FROM UNDERGRADUATE TO GRADUATE SCHOOL

As you begin a course of study leading to an M.A. and perhaps a Ph.D., you will probably be struck by the differences between an undergraduate and graduate environment. The Department of French and Italian's graduate program is a kind of apprenticeship period for a career in teaching, research, and publication. It is our hope that by the end of the first semester you will feel at ease in your classes, both those you take and those you teach.

Since graduate study means specializing within one department, you will probably find that the intellectual experience, compared with that of your undergraduate years, has increased in intensity and, inevitably, in competitiveness. You may also have difficulties balancing your studying with your teaching and personal concerns. This is all part of the normal transition to graduate school.

While each student will eventually develop his or her own *modus vivendi*, the following suggestions may ease the transition into graduate school and teaching:

- Keep up with the reading and contribute regularly to class discussions. Discussions both in and outside of class are an integral part of the learning experience.
- Do not expect to teach a “perfect” class every time you enter the classroom. Although group meetings and the required course in teaching methodology will help you improve your technique, do not feel discouraged if have some off days, or have problems balancing your teaching with the other demands of the program.
- Talk with professors, with experienced TAs, and with advanced graduate students. They will have suggestions, opinions, and information that will help you navigate all aspects of the program.
- The Graduate Association of French and Italian Students (GAFIS) and the T.A.A. (the Teaching Assistants' Association) exist as forums for your concerns.
- Your advisor will help you decide on appropriate course work and seminars. Your advisor and the Graduate Coordinator, as well as the Director of Graduate Studies, are prepared to help you with questions that you may have.
- Course Chairs and Supervisors for French:
 - 101, 102, 105, 201, 203 & 204 -- Heather Willis Allen

ABOUT THE T.A. WORKLOAD

Appointment levels for various types of courses are determined by the University and by the College of Letters & Science. Each appointment level (based on a percentage of FTE) translates into a specific number of hours per semester. Each TA receives a workload statement that breaks down the total number of hours to be worked in a semester by task (classroom teaching, lesson planning, grading, test preparation, etc.). These workload statements are prepared and reviewed regularly by the course chairs and approved by the College. It is understood by the course chairs that there will be some individual variation within a course on how some hours are spent (some people spend more time on lesson planning and less on grading or vice versa); however, it is the assumption of the course chair's committee that no TA should spend more time on required teaching duties than accounted for in the workload statement.

If a TA feels that they have a workload problem, that TA should contact their supervisor (course chair) at the earliest possible moment. When notified of a problem, the course chair will meet with the TA with the expectation of finding mutually agreeable ways for the TA to work the number of hours for which they are paid. If the course supervisor is unable to relieve the workload problem, the TA should contact first the chair of the course chairs committee and, if there is still no resolution, the chair of the department. If a course chair receives several workload complaints during the same semester, they will re-examine the course's workload statement and suggest possible adjustments to the course chairs' committee.

Please refer to the Graduate Assistantship Policies and Procedures (GAPP) for more information about TA workloads and graduate assistantships.

DEPARTMENT LECTURER HIRING POLICY

The Department of French and Italian occasionally hires dissertators for lectureships when there is a need. It is the policy of the Department to limit the hiring of short-term lecturers to a maximum period of three years. Employment as a lecturer in either semester of an academic year counts as one of these three years.

-Graduate Studies Committee, 03/14/2007

GENERAL NOTES AND ADVICE ABOUT THE M.A. EXAM

The overall goal of the MA exam is to gauge the progress made by students in attaining the learning goals specified on Page 3 of this document.

The faculty teaching at the 600-level will do their best to include texts from the reading lists in their syllabi; however, this is not a requirement. Class work and class readings will partially help the students prepare for the exam. It is possible that a text from the Reading List that was never studied in the classroom features on the exam. In such cases, it is expected that students respond based on their own reading of the text, and using the skills they garnered over the span of the MA program. As a general rule, if there is confusion, the students should reach out to the faculty, to the DGS, or to the Chair of the MA exam committee with any questions they may have.

1) Preparing for the Written Exam

- Select courses to fill gaps in your background.
- Students may request MA-formatted assessment in 600-level classes.
- Take notes on all the readings you do for the exam.
- Formulate a coherent and feasible reading program.
- Form study groups with fellow students to discuss works from the list.
- Students are encouraged to contact faculty to schedule meetings (individually or in groups) to discuss the MA exam preparation.
- Contact the MA exam committee ahead of time for discussion of learning objectives, expectations, and advice about preparation. Contact the graduate coordinator for further information.
- Do not limit your reading to the texts on the list; also consult critical studies of literary movements, genres and cultural background. Feel free to ask faculty for suggestions.
- Consult past exam questions to familiarize yourself with the format, and use them as practice. Past exam questions can be obtained from the Graduate Coordinator.

2) Answering Written Exam Questions

- Draft a quick outline before you write, and, time permitting, reread and polish what you have written.
- Answer the specific questions asked analytically. Avoid simply giving a plot summary, but be sure to show good familiarity with the works.
- Support your arguments with specific examples from the texts.

3) Preparing for the Oral Exam

- Consult with the chair of the M.A. Exam Committee if you have questions about expectations for the presentation of your *explication de texte*.
- Prepare good notes that will allow you to speak extemporaneously. Practice your *explication* at least once *out loud*, and be sure to time yourself.

4) Faculty encourage you to ask for feedback on the written part of the MA exam following the completion of the entire exam.

INDEPENDENT STUDIES (FRENCH 799)

Doing an Independent Study is neither required nor expected of PhD students. Faculty members receive no compensation for teaching Independent Studies, and, when they accept to do so, teach them above and beyond their normal teaching load. For these reasons, Independent Studies should be requested only in rare cases where a student truly needs one-on-one interaction with the professor. (E.G. in order to successfully prepare for their PhD preliminary exams, or participating in Curricular Practical Training (CPT).)

It is the student's responsibility to request an independent study with a particular faculty member or members. Students should choose the subject or materials they wish to study before approaching a professor with their request.

If a professor consents to do an independent study, the student and faculty member agree on the work to be performed during the independent study. It is the student's responsibility to initially prepare a written study plan that should include: learning objectives, books to be read, student work required, calendar, the time and place for regular meetings, the number of credits to be earned, and any other issues related to the learning experience. The format of an Independent Study may vary depending on its nature and goal, and it should only be conducted during the Fall or Spring semesters (with the possible exception of CPT/OPT).

The total recommended maximum of French independent studies for doctoral students is 3 credits but may, under specific conditions, go up to 6 credits.

CONSEILS UTILES POUR LA PRÉPARATION DE VOTRE EXAMEN PRÉLIMINAIRE

Veillez noter que votre objectif initial doit aller au-delà de la simple réussite de l'examen. En effet, la période de préparation en vue de l'examen doit être une opportunité pour vous d'accomplir bien plus. Vos priorités devraient être de :

- Vous immerger profondément dans le corpus que vous avez choisi pour votre liste de lecture. Cela signifie explorer en profondeur les textes, comprendre les nuances et les idées sous-jacentes, et développer une véritable expertise dans ce domaine.
- Effectuer un tri judicieux au sein de ce corpus. Identifiez les auteurs particuliers, les ouvrages primaires et les sources secondaires qui se révèlent les plus pertinents pour votre futur projet de thèse. Cette sélection rigoureuse vous aidera à construire des bases solides pour votre recherche future.
- Cultiver une réflexion critique et développer un ensemble de questions de recherche originales concernant les principaux auteurs, œuvres et sources secondaires. Cette démarche vous permettra de contribuer de manière significative au domaine de recherche et d'affiner votre compréhension du sujet.

En fin de compte, l'examen ne devrait pas être uniquement perçu comme un obstacle à franchir, mais plutôt comme une étape cruciale pour renforcer vos compétences de recherche, votre expertise, et votre vision pour votre projet de thèse à venir.

Conseils généraux pour la préparation de l'examen :

- Les questions que l'on vous posera seront façonnées afin de vous permettre de développer les questions de recherche que vous avez présentées dans votre document "liste de lecture & rubriques". Un conseil général est de vous entraîner pour l'examen en mettant quelques-unes de vos questions à l'épreuve des textes ciblés dans vos rubriques. Pour chaque question, choisissez un corpus restreint de textes (2 ou 3), et trouvez dans ces textes-là des exemples concrets qui vous permettent de répondre à la question de manière originale. Faites un travail à la fois analytique (pour chaque texte traité) et interprétatif (créez un dialogue entre les textes, ou bien entre les périodes)".
- Au moment de prendre l'examen lui-même, soyez attentifs aux questions et essayez d'y répondre de manière méthodique et argumentée en annonçant dans votre introduction ce que vous allez analyser et comment vous allez procéder. Vos analyses précises de textes peuvent s'articuler à une réflexion plus générale liée aux problématiques qui vous intéressent. Selon la question, vous privilégiez peut-être l'une ou l'autre approche (analyse précise vs réflexion théorique), mais n'hésitez pas à mobiliser les deux si vous le pouvez.
- Si la question fait écho à des sujets que vous avez déjà travaillés, il est important de ne pas simplement recycler d'anciens travaux ou d'anciennes réflexions. L'objectif est de répondre à la question posée avec un regard neuf. Vous pouvez vous appuyer sur ce que vous avez lu et étudié précédemment, mais il faut que votre réponse montre que vous avez fait, pendant l'examen, un travail de réflexion et de rédaction sur la base de la question posée.

Quelques petits conseils utiles 'par étapes' :

- Lisez attentivement la question de l'examen. Assurez-vous de bien comprendre ce qui est demandé, les aspects clés à aborder et les mots clés.
- Avant de commencer à écrire, prenez quelques minutes pour élaborer un plan. Identifiez les points clés que vous souhaitez aborder dans votre réponse.
- Organisez votre réponse de manière logique, en suivant une structure cohérente.
- Commencez par une introduction claire et concise. Présentez brièvement le sujet, exposez votre approche et annoncez les principaux points que vous allez traiter.
- Chaque paragraphe doit traiter un seul point ou aspect spécifique de la question. Assurez-vous que chaque paragraphe commence par une phrase de transition claire qui lie le point précédent au suivant.

- Rédigez de manière claire et concise. Évitez les redondances et les phrases longues et compliquées. Utilisez un langage académique approprié.
- Utilisez des exemples concrets des œuvres tirées de votre corpus pour étayer vos arguments. Citez des extraits pertinents et analysez-les en profondeur.
- Identifiez les sources secondaires qui soutiennent ou contredisent vos arguments. Analysez ces sources et expliquez comment elles renforcent votre argumentation.
- Montrez votre compréhension en abordant des aspects complexes des œuvres tirées de votre corpus et en les reliant à vos sources secondaires.
- Assurez-vous que votre réponse est cohérente et claire. Utilisez une structure logique avec des transitions fluides entre les paragraphes.
- Cherchez à apporter une contribution originale à la recherche sur le sujet. Identifiez des angles d'approche inédits ou des interprétations novatrices.
- Assurez-vous que votre réponse est bien structurée et que vous avez couvert tous les points essentiels.
- Si le temps est limité, assurez-vous de vous consacrer en priorité aux points les plus importants.
- Gérez votre temps de manière efficace pour que vous ayez le temps de répondre à toutes les questions de l'examen. Ne passez pas trop de temps sur une seule question de l'examen.
- Relisez attentivement votre réponse pour corriger les erreurs grammaticales et les fautes de syntaxe et de style.

FACULTY AND ACADEMIC STAFF AND THEIR AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION

Joshua Armstrong	20th- and 21st-century French literature, theory, and culture; urban studies and cartographic theory; geocriticism and ecocriticism.
Ritt Deitz	Professional Communication; French for Professional Purposes; Contemporary Quebec novel and film.
Nevine El Nossery	Francophone Studies (North Africa and France); Postcolonial studies; women's writing; intersection of art and politics; popular culture, and Middle-Eastern literature and culture.
Jan Miernowski	French Literature and Culture; Renaissance Studies; Literary Responses to Early Modern Philosophy, Theology and Political Rhetoric; Early Modern Humanism, 20 th -century Anti-humanism, and 21 st -century Posthumanism; 20 th – and 21 st -century Literature and Philosophy; Digital Humanities and e-Learning.
Anne Theobald	Pedagogy (French language, literature, and culture) and second language acquisition, phonetics, 17th-century French literature; French House Director.
Florence Vatan	19th-century French fiction and poetry; literature and science (psychology, medicine, biology); literature and philosophy; 20th-century Austrian literature; European intellectual and cultural history; intellectual and cultural transfers.
Anne Vila	Eighteenth-century French literature and culture; intellectual history; history of the body and mind/body relations, 18th century to the present.
Heather Willis Allen	Second language acquisition, multiliteracies pedagogy and assessment in L2 instruction, L2 writing instruction, L2 teacher cognition.

Overview of Exams in French M.A./Ph.D. Program in the Department of French and Italian

Exam	Format	When taken	Register before	Withdraw by	See Page
M.A. Exam	Based on M.A. reading list. Written: 7 hours. In Part I (4 hours), students answer one question in each of the three defined areas. 1-hour break. In Part II (2 hours), students choose one of three broad essay topics. Part I must be answered in French. Part II may be answered in English or in French. Oral: 1 hour. Analysis in French of a selected library extract, followed by questions.	Written offered in January, and August, taken by end of fourth or beginning of fifth semester of study; oral scheduled within 10 days of written exam.	See Graduate Coordinator for sign-up deadlines.	One week prior to scheduled exam, or technical failure.	Go to
M.A. Thesis	Written Thesis: 40-60 pages, including notes and bibliography. A master's thesis is a piece of original scholarship written under the direction of a thesis advisor. Thesis Defense: 60-minute oral exam. Presentation of findings, followed by a question and answer period.	Taken by end of fourth or beginning of fifth semester of study. A Master's Thesis project may be submitted for final approval only during fall and spring semesters - not in the summer.	Students should submit a prospectus five months before the anticipated defense. The final thesis should be sent to the thesis advisor and the two readers at least three weeks before the scheduled defense.		Go to
Qualifying Exam: Only for students entering the program with an M.A.	Oral, 45 minutes: <i>Explication de texte</i> and questions.	Second semester of program.	Mid-October	n/a	Go to
Preliminary Exam #1 of 2: Field Exam	One or two areas. Based on personalized reading list and Field Exam document. 48-hour open book take-home exam. Three essays, at least one must be answered in French. The other two may be answered in English or in French.	During fourth year of study if student enters program without an M.A., or by the fifth semester of study if student enters program with an M.A.	The precise exam date is to be arranged with the Field Exam committee, in consultation with the Graduate Coordinator.	One week prior to scheduled exam or a technical failure.	Go to
Preliminary Exam # 2 of 2: Dissertation Proposal Oral Exam	Oral, one hour: given on the basis of the dissertation proposal (approx. 10 pages) and bibliography.	After passing the Field Exam and by the end of the fourth year of study if student enters program without an M.A., or by the end of the fifth semester of study if the student enters program with an M.A.	Time is scheduled in consultation with the Dissertation Proposal Committee. Notify Graduate Coordinator at least 4 weeks before the exam. Not given during university breaks.	One week prior to scheduled exam or technical failure.	Go to
Dissertation Defense	Oral presentation followed by questions. Defense usually last 1-3 hours.	Maximum 5 years after completion of last prelim.	Defense scheduled at least 3 weeks before defense. See Graduate School deadlines for deposit dates.	n/a	Go to

M.A. Worksheet

Must have minimum of one (1) **seminar** in each of the three (3) areas/columns

Minimum of one (1) **research paper** in each of the three (3) areas/columns

Minimum of three (3) **total seminars** (9 credits)

Semester	AREA 1 Middle Ages & 16 th - 17 th centuries	AREA 2 18 th - 19 th centuries	AREA 3 20 th - 21 st centuries & Francophone and Global French Studies

French Language Proficiency

Required French Language Course(s), if necessary	Credits	Grade

Must complete all of the following

Course Requirements (9 credits)	Semester
French 569	
French 750	
French 820	

Total of 30 credits required by Graduate School for the M.A. degree.

Total of 18 credits of required coursework in the French graduate program.

Ph.D. Worksheet

Must have minimum of two (2) **seminars** in each of the three (3) areas/ columns

Minimum of one (1) **research paper** in each of the three (3) areas/columns

Minimum of nine (9) **total seminars** (27 credits)

Semester	AREA 1 Middle Ages & 16 th - 17 th centuries	AREA 2 18 th - 19 th centuries	AREA 3 20 th - 21 st centuries & Francophone and Global French Studies

Must complete all of the following

Language Requirement (3 credits, exam, transfer)	Level of Proficiency	Credits

Course Requirements (15 credits)	Semester
French 569	
French 750	
French 820	
French 821	
French 901 (as a dissertator)*	

Minor Courses (minimum 9 credits)	Credits

Total of 51 credits required by Graduate School for the Ph.D.

Total of 48 credits of required coursework in the French graduate program prior to dissertator status.

*Additional 3 credits of required coursework after dissertator status, for 51 credits total.