French

The major and minor in French are administered by the Department of French: Professors Gadjigo, Gelfand (on leave Spring 2016), LeGous (on leave Fall 2015), Rivers (chair), Vaget; Senior Lecturer Holden-Avard; Language Instructors Bloom (on leave Fall 2015) and Shread; Visiting Instructor Alquier.

Overview

The French curriculum is intended to develop skills in the language and provide a broad and varied acquaintance with French and Francophone cultures and literatures. Taking as its premise that language gives access to new and different cultures, the program makes available to students the textual, oral, and visual products of the French-speaking world. It also offers familiarity with the interdisciplinary exchanges—art, literature, history, politics, music, philosophy—that inform French studies today.

The department offers courses in language, culture, and literature at all levels. All courses are conducted in French with the exception of the department’s first-year seminars and the Romance Language and Literatures Seminar (321). The Romance Language seminar is taught in English but all reading and writing are done in French.

In language courses students work with native French and Francophone assistants in small supplementary conversation groups. Many culture and literature courses are either speaking-intensive or writing-intensive, and in some, writing mentors are provided. Students are encouraged to attend weekly language tables held in a private dining room of one of the dorms and have access to weekly drop-in tutoring sessions in addition to one-on-one tutoring for more in-depth remediation. Technological resources—Web-based and computer-assisted applications, videoconferencing, iMovie, and various multimedia tools—are used in courses at all levels to foster individual learning and to promote communication with the international community. A comprehensive library of DVDs and classic French texts is maintained in the department office.

Graduates of Mount Holyoke who have majored in French have used the analytical skills and means of expression acquired during their studies to pursue a wide range of career options: education, government service, law, international banking, publishing, and marketing, among others. Each spring, the department sponsors a Major Tea and Career Panel inviting to campus three or four alumnae with diverse occupations to speak about the benefits and opportunities that their French major has brought to their careers.

Study Abroad

Mount Holyoke College has its own study abroad program in Montpellier, France, and is also affiliated with the Sweet Briar College Junior Year in France Program. A student spending her junior year in France or a Francophone country with a program approved by the department will normally meet some of the requirements of her major through study abroad. The programs are open to both majors and nonmajors.

Students must have successfully completed at least one 4-credit course each semester they are enrolled at Mount Holyoke prior to departure for study abroad (excluding independent study). They also should have completed at least one course in culture and literature at the 200 level (215, 219, 225, or 230).

By taking appropriate courses, French majors who spend their junior year in France or a Francophone country with a program approved by the department may bring back three courses at the 300 level to count toward the major, as well as the four required credits of advanced language study. Additional courses in French taken abroad will normally receive credit at the 300 level but will not count toward the minimum requirement for the major.

French minors spending their junior year in France or a Francophone country with a program approved by the department may bring back two courses at the 300 level. French minors spending a semester abroad may bring back one course at the 300 level.

Please consult the French department and the McCulloch Center for Global Initiatives for details about these and other programs. Eligible students who are selected to participate in the Montpellier program may use their Mount Holyoke financial aid to do so. Mount Holyoke financial aid for Sweet Briar, as well as for other approved study abroad programs, is awarded on a competitive basis. Scholarships, specifically for study in France or Italy, are available to qualified undergraduates from the Mary Vance Young Scholarship Fund. Information about financing study abroad may be obtained from the McCulloch Center for Global Initiatives. See www.mtholyoke.edu/go/global.

Honors Work

The French department is pleased to support senior independent study projects during the fall semester undertaken by students with a proven track record of exceptionally high performance in course work in French. However, continuation of these projects toward completion of a thesis to be considered for possible honors is not guaranteed and is contingent upon approval of the department.

Contact Info

Stacey Pare, senior administrative assistant
Christopher Rivers, chair
Department Website: http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/french/

Requirements for the Major

Credits

- A minimum of 32 credits

Courses

- Two 4-credit intermediate courses in culture and literature (215, 219, 225, or 230) (8 credits)
- Two 4-credit electives in culture and literature at the 200 or 300 level. One of these electives may be a course in another department taught in English provided it focuses substantially on French or Francophone material and is pre-approved by the chair of the French department. (8 credits)
- Two 4-credit courses in culture and literature at the 300 level. It is recommended that at least one of these courses include a significant pre-1800 component. (8 credits)
- One advanced-level seminar (370) (4 credits)
- Four credits of advanced language study in phonetics as well as in grammar, composition, or stylistics, subject to approval by the French department (either two courses, one in phonetics and one in grammar/composition/stylistics, of at least two credits each, or one course, incorporating both phonetic and grammar components, of at least four credits). Typically, majors spending a year or semester in France or another Francophone country will fulfill this requirement through appropriate course work abroad. Majors who do not study abroad may fulfill the requirement in advanced language study by doing appropriate course work within the Five College Consortium or independent study arranged through the Mount Holyoke Department of French. (4 credits)
- Note that independent study (295 and 395) will not be counted among the required courses listed above.
• Students should also consider complementing the French major with courses in other disciplines dealing with France, Francophone countries, or Western Europe, such as international relations, art history, English, European studies, geography, history, language, music, philosophy, politics, or religion.

Designing the Major
A student may design her French major around a particular topic, century, theme, or area such as French or Francophone studies; gender/women’s studies; medieval studies; eighteenth-, nineteenth-, and twentieth-century studies; theatre studies; film studies; classicism; symbolism; travel literature, etc. She should work closely with a faculty advisor to select appropriate courses in other departments, which may include independent study that would complement her course work in French. Whenever graduate study in French is contemplated, the major should include courses covering several centuries of French culture and literature.

The major program should provide continuity in the study of French. To this end, at least one 4-credit course taught in French must be elected each semester of the junior and senior years.

Requirements for the Minor

Credits
• A minimum of 16 credits

Courses
• Two intermediate courses in culture and literature (215, 219, 225, 230) (8 credits)
• Two advanced courses in culture and literature (300 level) (8 credits)

Other
• Two intermediate courses in culture and literature (215, 219, 225, 230) (8 credits)
• Independent study (295 or 395) does not count toward the minor

Teacher Licensure
Students interested in pursuing licensure in the field of French can combine their course work in French with a minor in education. In some instances, course work in the major coincides with course work required for licensure; in other cases, it does not. For specific course requirements for licensure within the major of French, please consult your advisor or the chair of the French department. For information about teacher licensure consult Sarah Frenette, Teacher Licensure Coordinator in the Psychology and Education Department.

Licensure also requires a formal application as well as passing scores on the Massachusetts Test of Educator Licensure (MTEL) in both the literacy component and the subject matter component. Copies of the test objectives for the MTEL are available in the French department and in the Department of Psychology and Education. Licensure application information and materials are available in the Department of Psychology and Education.

Course Advice

Course Selection/Foreign Language Requirement
Students who have never studied French should enroll in French 101–102, a two-semester course for beginners. Those who have previously studied French at Mount Holyoke and who wish to continue must have the prerequisites stipulated for specific courses.

All students must take a placement test online. The test is available at https://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/french/placement_exam. If you enroll in French 101 as a first-year student, and are interested in studying in a French-speaking country during your third year, you will need to accelerate your French language studies. Your advisor will assist you in working out a plan of study, which may include altering your course sequence, for example going directly to French 201 after French 101 if you have made sufficient strides in acquiring elementary French or French 203 instead of French 201 after completing French 102. See Acceleration information here: https://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/french/study_abroad.

Advanced Courses
The department’s 300-level courses represent a variety of approaches to advanced work in French studies and thus reflect the diversity within the field of French today. Specific offerings under the general rubrics change from year to year. Prerequisites for all 300-level courses (except 370) are two of the following: 215, 219, 225, or 230. Students who do not have the stipulated prerequisites must consult the department chair and the course instructor.

Course Offerings

FREN-101 Elementary French
Fall and Spring
An introduction to understanding, speaking, reading, and writing French. The videotape-based method 'French in Action' provides a lively story line and cultural context for the acquisition of basic grammatical structures with a conversational focus. The course includes frequent composition writing. French 101/102 is recommended for students with no previous training in French or a maximum of one year of French at the high school level.
Applies to requirement(s): Humanities; Language
A. Alquier, C. Bloom, N. Holden-Avard
Advisory: No previous study of French or a placement score of 0 - 100
Notes: Students who take French 101 in the spring and who wish to continue in French should plan on taking French 199 the following fall. (Students who have done strong work in French 101 in the spring may, with the approval of their instructor, take French 201 instead the following fall.)
Credits: 4

FREN-102 Elementary French
Spring
Continuation of French 101, an introduction to understanding, speaking, reading, and writing French. The videotape-based method 'French in Action' provides a lively story line and cultural context for the acquisition of basic grammatical structures with a conversational focus.
Applies to requirement(s): Humanities; Language
N. Holden-Avard
Prereq: French 101.
Credits: 4
FREN-199 Advanced Elementary French
Fall
A course in language and culture for elementary-level students with some previous study of French. The videotape-based method French in Action provides a lively story line and cultural context for a thorough review of grammar, and the development of listening and speaking skills. The course concentrates on vocabulary building, writing, and developing ease and competence in spoken French.
Applies to requirement(s): Humanities; Language
C. Shread
Advisory: placement score of 100-200
Credits: 4

FREN-201 Intermediate French
Fall and Spring
A comprehensive grammar review aimed at developing language skills in context and providing a foundation for continued study of writing, speaking, reading, and listening in French. Using French in Action and various methods and multimedia tools, all sections will concentrate on: study of grammatical structures as means of communication; frequent compositions to develop effective writing strategies; reading short literary and non-literary texts; and, guided oral expression through structured discussions and exercises.
Applies to requirement(s): Humanities; Language
A. Alquier, C. Bloom, C. Shread
Prereq: French 102 or 199.
Advisory: French 102 or 199, placement score of 200 - 350, or department placement
Credits: 4

FREN-203 Advanced Intermediate French
Fall and Spring
This course will improve students’ writing and speaking skills in French and develop their ability to read and analyze texts. Course materials include authors and films representing cultures of the French-speaking world. Written and oral expression are strengthened through weekly essays, class discussion, and comprehensive grammar review.
Applies to requirement(s): Humanities; Language
C. Rivers, C. Shread
Prereq: French 201.
Advisory: French 201, placement score of 350 - 450, or department placement
Credits: 4

FREN-215 Intermediate Level Courses in Culture and Literature: Introduction to the Literature and Culture of France and the French-Speaking World
Fall and Spring
This course introduces students to literature and culture from a variety of perspectives. It will increase confidence and skill in writing and speaking; integrate historical, political, and social contexts into the study of literary texts from France and the French-speaking world; and bring understanding of the special relevance of earlier periods to contemporary French and Francophone cultural and aesthetic issues. Students explore diversified works - literature, historical documents, film, art, and music - and do formal oral and written presentations.
Applies to requirement(s): Humanities; Language
Other Attribute(s): Writing-Intensive
E. Gelfand, C. LeGouis
Prereq: French 203 or placement score of 450 or higher.
Credits: 4

FREN-219 Intermediate Level Courses in Culture and Literature: Introduction to the French-Speaking World
Fall and Spring
This course introduces the literatures of French-speaking countries outside Europe. Readings include tales, novels, plays, and poetry from Africa, the Caribbean, Canada, and other areas. Discussions and short papers examine the texts as literary works as well as keys to the understanding of varied cultures. Students will be asked to do formal oral and written presentations.
Applies to requirement(s): Humanities; Language
S. Gadjo
Prereq: French 203 or placement score of 450 or higher.
Credits: 4

FREN-225 Intermediate Level Courses in Culture and Literature: Introduction to Contemporary Culture and Media of France and the French-Speaking World
Spring
This course will introduce students to contemporary popular culture in France and the French-speaking world, largely through the study of recent (post-1990) best-selling novels, popular music, and feature films. Students will be asked to give formal oral presentations based on up-to-date materials gathered from the Internet and/or French television and to participate actively in class discussion.
Applies to requirement(s): Humanities; Language
Other Attribute(s): Speaking-Intensive
C. Rivers
Prereq: French 203 or placement score of 450 or higher.
Credits: 4

FREN-230 Intermediate Level Courses in Culture and Literature: Introduction to the Civilization of France
Fall
Images et Patrimoine: In this multimedia course students learn to decode images and study the social and historical context of French art and architecture: Medieval tapestries, Romanesque and Gothic cathedrals, Renaissance castles, Classic and Rococo art, and nineteenth century schools of painting. Students give in-class presentations and write essays about notable French landmarks. The purpose of such inquiry is to revisit the past and see how it has affected contemporary French society. All course material is online.
Applies to requirement(s): Humanities; Language
Other Attribute(s): Speaking-Intensive
N. Vaget
Prereq: French 203 or a placement score of 450 or higher.
Advisory: French 203, or placement score of 450+, or department placement
Credits: 4

FREN-295 Independent Study
Fall and Spring
The department
Instructor permission required.
Credits: 1-4
Course can be repeated for credit.

Advanced Courses
FREN-311 Period Courses
The usual periodization of French literature and culture is by century. Some period courses focus on the characteristics of specific centuries. Others focus on artistic or intellectual movements: gothic, Renaissance, romantic. All period courses, whatever their conceptual framework, integrate texts and historical contexts.
FREN-311HD Period Courses: 'From Hope to Despair: Life & Letters in Interwar France'
Fall
Study of French society, politics, literature, film, and visual arts between the two world wars as markers of France's complex relationship to the modern world: How did the optimism of les années folles evolve into the repression of the Vichy era? What was the role of the writer and artist in France's changing political and social climate? How did gender, race, ethnic, and class differences mark the period? What issues still resonate today? Authors may include: Cocteau, Breton, Colette, Weil, Beauvoir, Sartre, Césaire, Brasillach, Némirovsky, de Gaulle; plus films: Un chien andalou, L'Atalante, Regain, Princesse Tam Tam, La règle du jeu.
Applies to requirement(s): Humanities; Language
E. Gelfand
Prereq: Two of the following courses: French 215, French 219, French 225, French 230.
Credits: 4

FREN-311LM Period Courses: 'Les Misérables'
Spring
Hugo's epic masterpiece, written in exile, has everything: ceaseless adventures, crimes and punishments, love, hate, obsession, heroes, villains, the battle of Waterloo, and civil war. The sympathetic everyman, Jean Valjean, condemned to hard labor for stealing bread and relentlessly pursued by the pitiless policeman Javert, encounters unforgettable characters. We will examine how Hugo situates Valjean's escapes within a framework of social injustice and good triumphing over evil, balancing his political and romantic ideas. Reading, discussion, film screenings.
Applies to requirement(s): Humanities; Language
C. LeGouis
Prereq: Two of the following courses: French 215, French 219, French 225, French 230.
Credits: 4

FREN-321 Genre Courses
This interdisciplinary seminar will focus on a comparative study of Romance languages or literatures. Topics will vary from semester to semester. Seminar discussions will be conducted in English, but students wishing to obtain language credit are expected to read works in at least one original language. Papers will be written in either English or the Romance language of the student's choice.

FREN-321MT Genre Courses: 'The Mind of the Traveler: Journeys, Expeditions, Tours'
Spring
Travel literature has always been a precious source for the study of culture, politics, arts and, last but not least, people. From Tacitus to Marco Polo, from Stendhal to Camilo Jose Cela, we will read and discuss authors who traveled for political, personal, and recreational reasons. We will also pay special attention to tales of emigration and immigration in the third millennium.
Crosslisted as: Spanish 360MT, Italian 361MT, Romance Language & Literature 375MT
Applies to requirement(s): Humanities; Language
O. Frau
Prereq: two of the following courses: French 215, 219, 225, or 230.
Advisory: for language majors; two courses in culture and literature at the 200-level
Notes: Note: Students wishing to obtain 300-level credit in French, Italian, or Spanish must read texts and write papers in the Romance language for which they wish to receive credit.
Credits: 4

FREN-331 Courses on Social and Political Issues and Critical Approaches
These courses examine a definable phenomenon--an idea, a movement, an event, a mentality, a cultural structure or system, an historical problem, a critical mode--relevant to the civilization of France or of French-speaking countries. Readings from a variety of disciplines shed light on the particular aspect of thought or culture being studied.

FREN-331SE Courses on Social and Political Issues and Critical Approaches: 'Writing and Politics: Literature as Social Engagement'
Not Scheduled for This Year
Study of French and Francophone writers, filmmakers, and artists, in their specific contexts, whose works engage with important political and social issues of their time and place. Preliminary readings theorize how texts can communicate, explicitly or implicitly, an ideological stance. We will then consider imaginative works, from the Middle Ages to the present, whose thematic, narrative, cinematic, stylistic, or linguistic techniques connect with movements for social or cultural change.
Applies to requirement(s): Humanities; Language
E. Gelfand
Prereq: 12 credits including two courses at the advanced level, or permission of department chair and course instructor.
Credits: 4

FREN-341 Courses in Francophone Studies
These courses study nonmetropolitan French-speaking cultures and literary works written in French outside Europe. Areas of focus are one or more of the following regions: Africa, the Caribbean, or Canada.

Spring
Born in 1923 in Senegal, the writer/filmmaker Ousmane Sembène is one of the rare witnesses of the three key periods of contemporary African history: the colonial period; the period of struggle for political and economic independence; and the period of effort to eliminate neocolonialism through the rehabilitation of African cultures. This course is entirely devoted to the works of Ousmane Sembène and will explore the key moments of his life, his activism in European leftist organizations, his discovery of writing, and most of all the dominant features of his film work.
Applies to requirement(s): Humanities
S. Gadjigo
Prereq: Two of the following courses: French 215, 219, 225, or 230.
Credits: 4

FREN-351 Courses on Women and Gender
These courses explore cultural, literary, and social issues relating to women and gender identities in France and French-speaking countries. Topics may include women's writing, writing about women and men, the status of women, feminist criticism, and

FREN-351VR Courses on Women and Gender: 'Viragos, Virgins, and Visionaries'
Fall
In this course, we will study the three most celebrated French female saints: Jeanne d'Arc, Thérèse de Lisieux and Bernadette de Lourdes. Their stories are similar: ordinary young women to whom extraordinary things happened, who became symbols of France and inspired a rich verbal and visual iconography. Yet they are profoundly different: Joan was a warrior, Thérèse a memoirist, Bernadette a visionary. We will study the facts of their lives, in their own words and those of others, but also the many fictions, semi-fictions, myths and legends based on those lives. We will analyze a number of films and visual images as well
as literary and non-literary texts in our attempt to understand these cases of
specifically female, specifically French sainthood.

Crosslisted as: Gender Studies 333VR
Applies to requirement(s): Humanities; Language
C. Rivers
Credits: 4

FREN-361 Courses in Advanced Language Study
These courses investigate the French language, past or present, and refine
students' linguistics skills by focusing on nuances of written and spoken
expression. Areas of study may include stylistics, translation, phonology,
morphology, syntax, rhetoric, and dramatic art.

FREN-370 Advanced Level Seminar
The seminar is intended to challenge students at the highest level. A regular
rotation of topics ensures a variety of perspectives across genre and period,
enshrining linguistic, literary, theoretical, and cultural issues of French and
Francophone studies. Development of critical skills is stressed through classroom
discussion and critique of writing projects, drawing on individual student
interests and experiences as they relate to the topic of the course.

FREN-370BA Advanced Level Seminar: 'Banned Books'
Spring
This seminar will address questions of literary censorship in France in the 18th,
19th, and 20th centuries. We will read literary texts banned at various moments
in history, situate the moments of both their publication and censoring in a
historical and literary historical context, and attempt to answer the following
fundamental questions: who bans what, when and why? We will examine the
explicitly political, religious, and/or sexual thematic content of the texts. We will
try to establish distinctions between more textual taboos and those which would
appear to be universal. We will view banned films as well.

Applies to requirement(s): Humanities; Language
C. Rivers
Prereq: 12 credits including two courses at the advanced level, or permission of
department chair and instructor.
Credits: 4

FREN-370PL Advanced Level Seminar: 'Icons of Power, Lust, and Ambition
in Pre-Revolutionary France'
Fall
An examination of powerful female archetypes of 15th, 16th, 17th and 18th
centuries. Ambitious, influential women whose legends shaped the traditional
cultural mindset of France's Ancien Regime and beyond. Using texts and visual
elements (paintings, drawings, contemporary films), we will study how these
iconic figures define the image of women in their times and in ours. Warriors,
heretics, martyrs, schemers, nymphomaniacs, intellectuals, scientists. Do they
constitute a stereotype of the quintessential French woman?

Applies to requirement(s): Humanities; Language
N. Vaget
Prereq: 12 credits including two courses at the advanced level, or permission of
department chair and instructor.
Credits: 4

FREN-395 Independent Study
Fall and Spring
The department
Instructor permission required.
Credits: 1-8
Course can be repeated for credit.