

PHD PROGRAM IN MODERN FRENCH STUDIES (FRMS)

Graduate Student Handbook, 2020-21



**SCHOOL OF
LANGUAGES
LITERATURES
& CULTURES**

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Ph.D. Program Description

The Ph.D. in Modern French Studies covers the Early Modern Period to the present. Ph.D. students are required to take for credit a minimum of eight courses beyond the M.A. at the 600-level or above. All students take three core courses to receive the same fundamental analytical training; then, in consultation with their advisors, they work out an individually-tailored program of study consisting of five courses that best match their interests. (French 898, doctoral exam preparation, may count as one of these five courses.) Some students may be advised to take one or more additional courses to be better prepared for their comprehensive examinations and dissertation topic.

Course Requirements

Core Courses

All students must take one course in each of the three following core categories:

1. History of Ideas (e.g., courses on feminism, intellectualism, reflections on literature, Francophone thinkers)
2. Issues in Literature (e.g., courses focusing on the concept of tragedy, utopia, autobiography, women's identity, the art of persuasion, the evolution of a specific genre)
3. History of the French Language

Courses Taken Outside the Department

Students may include two courses out of the five that make up their individual program with affiliate faculty outside the department. Other units with faculty expertise in relevant areas include: Art History, Comparative Literature, English, German, Linguistics, Sociology, and Spanish.

D.C. Consortium

In accordance with Graduate School policy, students may be granted permission to take courses at local universities belonging to the [D.C. Consortium of Universities of the Washington Metropolitan Area](#). The request must be approved by the student's advisor and the Director of Graduate Studies.

Credit vs. audit

Courses taken on an "audit" basis may not be counted towards the course requirements.

Foreign Language Proficiency Requirement

All Ph.D. students are required to demonstrate a sound reading knowledge of one other foreign language in addition to French. Students should choose a language that provides an appropriate background for the projected dissertation. The fulfillment of this requirement is one of the prerequisites for advancement to candidacy. To fulfill the foreign language proficiency requirement, students select one of the two options below, with the approval of their Committee of Advisors.

Option A

One semester of a college language course at the 300-level, or its equivalent, with a grade of B or higher, taken within 3 years of entrance into the Ph.D. Program or any time thereafter.

Option B

A Foreign Language Translation Examination which consists of a translation from the foreign language into English or French. The passage normally relates to literary, cultural or historical criticism, and is 800-1000 words in length. The use of one dictionary is permitted. The maximum length of time allowed is two hours. A grade of "Pass" or "Fail" is assigned, with the understanding that the minimum level for passing is the letter grade "B." The Foreign Language Examination must be taken before advancement to candidacy. It may be repeated once.

Alternative to Language Proficiency Requirement

In exceptional circumstances, a student having an advanced degree or diploma in a subsidiary area such as Music, Economics, Political Science, etc., and who plans to make substantial use of this body of knowledge in the dissertation, may be permitted, with the approval of the Graduate Programs Committee, to substitute that degree or diploma for the foreign language proficiency requirement.

Qualifying Examinations for Advancement to Candidacy

In order to be advanced to candidacy, Ph.D. students are required to pass two Qualifying Examinations consisting of (a) one two- part Comprehensive Examination and (b) one Prospectus Defense.

Qualifying Examination Part One

The first Qualifying Examination is a two-part comprehensive exam, first written, then oral, taken over two consecutive days. This exam should be taken by the end of the student's third semester in the PhD program.

Written Exam

For the written part, students will receive two questions, based on the PhD reading list. Students have four hours to write their response to one of these questions, without notes, in an examination room with a computer typically provided by the Department. If students choose to write their response in English, the oral portion of the exam will be conducted in French, or vice versa.

Oral Exam

The written response and the reading list provide the starting point for the oral portion of the exam. The duration of the oral examination is approximately one hour. The goal of this exam is to ensure that students have a sufficiently broad knowledge of French literature as well as of a range of theoretical approaches (beyond what they acquired at the MA stage). To obtain a list of the readings for the first Ph.D. examination, contact the Director of Graduate Studies.

Qualifying Examination Part Two: Dissertation Prospectus

The second Qualifying Examination is the defense of a written dissertation prospectus, in which students demonstrate sufficient knowledge of the relevant scholarship and outlines their contribution to the field. The prospectus should be a formal proposal in some detail (approximately 5,000 words), laying out the proposed area and subject of the intended research, a statement of what has and has not been done in this field, a description of the methodology to be pursued, plus an appended annotated bibliography. The committee will then meet with the student in order to offer guidance and feedback. When the prospectus receives the committee's final approval, copies will be distributed to all members of the graduate faculty for their information.

Qualifying Examination Committee

Three members of the French Department faculty will comprise the Qualifying Examination Committee for both parts of the exam. An additional, fourth member from outside the Department is possible for the prospectus defense if warranted by the topic. It is expected that the exam committees will remain constant for the two exams (with the exception of the optional additional outside member for the prospectus exam).

Ph.D. Dissertation

Dissertation Committee

After advancement to candidacy, students are expected to constitute their dissertation committee in consultation with a faculty advisor and with the Direction

of Graduate Studies (DGS) and to register the choice of committee members in writing with the DGS. At the beginning of the semester in which the dissertation will be defended, the dissertation director will ask the Dean of the Graduate School to approve the Examining Committee. At least one member of this five-person committee (normally the Dean's Representative) will be external to the School of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures, and one may be drawn from another university.

Satisfactory Progress

One year date-to-date after their prospectus defense, and every six months thereafter until the submission of the final version of their dissertation, doctoral students are required to submit the most recent version of their dissertation draft as an email attachment to the three Departmental members of their Dissertation Committee. As a rule, students will receive written feedback on these drafts within four to six weeks.

Ph.D. dissertations must receive the preliminary approval of the three departmental members of the Dissertation Committee before being submitted to other readers. All readers must be given at least two weeks in which to read the dissertation.

Oral Defense

Once a Ph.D. dissertation has received preliminary approval by the departmental faculty on the committee, a date will be set for the oral defense. It can be expected to last about two hours.

Students Receiving Financial Support

Years of financial support

For students working towards the Ph.D., the total number of years, including the M.A. years, during which financial support (i.e., graduate assistantship, fellowship, or part-time instructorship) will normally be granted, will not exceed six years (or four years for students entering the program with an M.A. from another institution). One of these years may be spent as a *lecteur* or *lectrice d'anglais* at the Université de Nice. On the recommendation of the student's advisor with the concurrence of the department head and TA Coordinator, and contingent upon available resources, an additional period of TAship may be granted to students who have been advanced to candidacy for the Ph.D.

Course Registration

All Ph.D. students receiving financial aid should register, no later than the end of the Drop-Add period each semester, for the full number of credits for which they have received tuition remission (i.e., five (5) credits for half-time GTAs, ten (10) credits for full-time GTAs, twelve (12) credits for Fellows). These credits may be taken as coursework or as research hours (e.g., 898, 899). Fellowship students are expected to carry 12 credits per semester unless the fellowship specifically stipulates otherwise.

GTA Orientation and Teaching Practicum

In addition, all new (first-semester) Graduate Teaching Assistants must enroll in a 1-credit teaching practicum in their initial semester (e.g., FREN709 or SLLC601). All Graduate Teaching Assistants, new and returning) are required to attend the bi-annual pre-semester Orientations and Professional Development Workshops organized by the School of Languages, Literatures and Cultures, typically one week to ten days prior to the beginning of the Fall semester and three to five days prior to the beginning of the Spring semester.

Graduate Teaching Assistants are expected to know and abide by the duties and responsibilities of GTAs detailed in the Official GTA Offer Letter, forwarded to the student at the time the offer of an assistantship is made. Additional expectations will be made clear during the TA Orientation and in expectation setting meetings held during the academic year with the TA Coordinator. Failure to meet these expectations in a satisfactory manner may result in the Graduate Teaching Assistantship not being renewed.

Other Requirements

GPA Requirements

The Graduate School requires that graduate students maintain a B average for all graduate courses taken in their program. A student whose average falls below 3.0 upon completion of nine credit hours is automatically placed on academic probation for the following full semester. If the average remains below 3.0 for three consecutive semesters of enrollment, the Graduate School requires that the student withdraw from the University.

English Proficiency Requirement

Non-native speakers of English must submit TOEFL exam results to the Graduate School with their application. Based on these results, students may be advised to take a written expression course from the Maryland English Institute or a basic

writing course given by the English Department. This course will not count towards the degree.

Full-time and Part-time Status: Credits and Units

Program requirements are measured in “credits,” and thirty (30) credits are required for the M.A. degree. However, the University of Maryland uses a different scale to verify students’ full-time status. Students who hold fellowships should pay close attention to this requirement (as well as foreign students who do not receive financial aid). Note that all course levels (e.g., 400, 600, 700, 800) do not carry the same number of “units.” Consult the [Graduate Catalog](#) for details.

Application for Diploma and Important Dates

Application for the diploma must be made by the [due dates stipulated by the Graduate School](#).

Faculty

Graduate Faculty

Mercedes Baillargeon (Ph.D., University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill) Associate Professor: 20th & 21st century French literature; women’s writing; autofiction; critical theory; gender & queer studies; cultural studies; Québec cinema

Maria Beliaeva Solomon (Ph.D., New York University) Assistant Professor: 19th-century French literature, media and mass culture; digital humanities; medical humanities; gender studies

Sarah Benharrech (Ph.D., Princeton University) Associate Professor: Enlightenment studies; 18th-Century fiction and drama; ecocriticism; women in science; plant studies.

Hervé-thomas Campagne (Ph.D., Rutgers University) Professor: Renaissance and 17th Century Literature and Culture, France-United States relations.

Lauretta Clough (Ph.D., University of Maryland) Associate Director SLLC: Translation Theory and Practice

Caroline Eades (Doctorat, Paris Sorbonne Nouvelle) Associate Professor: Film, Contemporary Culture

Giuseppe Falvo (Ph.D., Johns Hopkins University) Associate Professor of Italian: Renaissance, Cinema

Andrea Frisch (Ph.D., Berkeley) Professor: Renaissance and 17th Century Literature and Culture

Valerie Orlando (Ph.D., Brown University) Professor: Francophone Literatures of Africa and the Caribbean, African Cinema, 20th-21st Century French Literature

Mary Ellen (Mel) Scullen (Ph.D., Indiana University) Associate Professor: French Linguistics, Linguistic Theory, Second Language Acquisition and Language Pedagogy

Professors Emeriti (Research Directors)

Joseph Brami (Ph.D., New York University) Professor: Poetry, Fiction, Autobiography, History of Ideas

Carol Mossman (Ph.D. Rice University) Professor: 19th Century literature, Women's Studies.

Charles C. Russell (Ph.D., Harvard University) Professor of Italian: Dante, Opera Libretto

Pierre Verdaguer (Ph.D., University of Virginia) Professor: 20th Century Fiction, French Cultural Studies, History of Ideas

Affiliate Faculty

Marilyn Matar (Ph.D., University of Maryland, College Park), Program Director, Language House, SLLC: Francophone literature, media, and culture of the Mashrek; theatre; literary theory; postcolonialism

Charles Butterworth (Ph.D., University of Chicago; Doctorat, Université de Nancy), Professor Emeritus, Department of Government & Politics: Political Philosophy, Law and Society

Isabelle Gournay (Ph.D., Yale University) Associate Professor Emerita, School of Architecture, Cross-currents between Western Europe and North America, Modern and Contemporary Architecture

Martin Heisler (Ph.D., University of California-Los Angeles) Professor Emeritus, Department of Government & Politics Comparative Politics, International Relations, Political Sociology

Christine Jones (Ph.D., Princeton University) Assistant Director for Academic Affairs, University Honors, Honors College; early-modern French fairy tales, trades, decorative arts

Piotr H. Kosicki (Ph.D., Princeton University) Associate Professor, Department of History; modern French intellectual and cultural history, political and religious thought in Europe

François Loup (Conservatoire de Musique, Fribourg) Associate Professor Emeritus, School of Music

Donald Sutherland (Ph.D., University of London) Professor Emeritus, Department of History ; The French Revolution and Counterrevolution