

French Literature and Culture for Honors Students

School of International Letters and Cultures

Faculty of French and Italian

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List of courses available as honors enrichment contracts:

- all upper level 300 and 400 (some 400 are combined with 500, depending on the semester they are offered)
 - FRE 321 – French Cultural Masterpieces I
 - FRE 322 - French Cultural Masterpieces II
 - FRE 451 – Modern French Narrative
 - FRE 452 – Modern French Poetry
 - FRE 494 – among topics offered in recent years are: French Civilization; Paris and Florence in the Middle Ages; Gay Tradition in French; Baroque Theater: Text and Productions; African Literature and Cinema; Exploring the East in Medieval French Literature; Introduction to Textual Analysis, etc.
- some 200-level courses like:
 - FRE 201 – Intermediate French I
 - FRE 202 – Intermediate French II
 - FRE 205 – Readings in French Literature

What are the advantages gained in career and the graduate/professional school opportunities?

This depends on the topic and the student, but the French program has seen students complete theses on education topics and then apply their findings in subsequent jobs particularly in the field of education. In the field of Francophone studies, a thesis can set a student on a particular research path to be pursued in graduate school, or prepare the student for work in related fields such as government, international business, translation, tourism, diplomacy, etc.

How the honors experience in French will benefit honors students' education and future goals?

The thesis is important to allow students to investigate a problem or question in depth, and to allow students to experience extended research and writing. The thesis process will promote:

- the acquisition of information and knowledge beyond what is usually offered in the course of a semester in a class;
- independence, responsibility and planning since students have deadlines to meet, library content to explore, the Internet to search, mostly on their own even though they receive guidance;
- the acquisition of new vocabulary connected to the field;
- the development of what critical discourse means and entails in their writing;
- the interaction on an intellectual level with one or several faculty members and other professionals by arguing one's vision, asking the right questions, summarizing a discussion, etc.
- public speaking such as a presentation in class in front of an audience with no previous knowledge of the subject;
- effective communication skills and an analytical mind in the treatment of material accumulated during the research process and clarity in the presentation of the results

What constitutes a thesis/creative project in French?

The student's project depends on the level of competence of the student.

- at the 300 level students are encouraged to write an additional essay on a subject of their choice that is not necessarily covered in class. Students have to complete some moderate research prior to writing the paper in the target language [French]. A bibliography of at least 5 titles (combination of books and/or articles) is encouraged. Sometimes the student will also present the project or part of the project to the class at the end of the semester.
- at the 400 level the length of the essay and research should be more substantial and the bibliography should contain at least 10 titles (combination of books and/or articles). The faculty member continues to act as a mentor, but students should demonstrate a sense of initiative and independence in the research process, and should be able to complete research on their own in consultation with the faculty member when needed.

What preparation is necessary for working on a thesis/creative project in French?

In general a good command of the spoken and written French language is essential. Students must be able to complete research on their own, to prepare a bibliography and be capable of reading critically in order to use scholarly books and articles in their own written argument. For oral presentations, a good command of spoken French and technology (such as PowerPoint, for instance) is essential. Students should also be prepared to anticipate questions and comments on their work, and be able to respond to them.

How should students approach the thesis, where to get ideas, how to talk with the professor?

Students can get ideas from a class, a personal reading, a particular interest, as a result of a conversation with friends or of a trip, etc. They should already have a clear idea of their project when they approach a faculty member. This requires that they complete a minimum of research on the subject prior to approaching a faculty member, so that they have a clear sense of what the topic entails and how it's been generally treated by scholars. Then students should contact a faculty member early enough (at least one year prior to the date of completion of the project) in order to ensure that they will both have enough time for the project to come to completion (some faculty members are sometimes on research leaves or sabbaticals).

Which members of the French faculty are interested in working with honors students on the thesis/creative project?

In principle all members of the French faculty are interested in and used to working with honors students as long as the project lies within the field of their competency and interest. As an example, here are some of the areas of specialization of the current French faculty:

Mariana Bahtchevanova – MarianaB@asu.edu

Syntax and morphology; applied linguistics; pedagogical studies

Frédéric Canovas – fcanovas@asu.edu

Modern French literature; classical theater; surrealism; gay studies; literature and the other arts

Markus Cruse – Markus.Cruse@asu.edu

Medieval literature and culture; medieval theater; Haitian literature

Isaac Joslin – ijoslin@asu.edu

Colonial and post-colonial French-speaking African literature, cinema and cultures

Enrico Minardi – Enrico.Minardi@asu.edu

Modern poetry; French popular culture

Helene Ossipov – athxo@asu.edu

Linguistics; Computer-assisted language learning; North American French