

**PHD PROGRAM IN MODERN
FRENCH STUDIES (FRMS)**
Graduate Student Handbook

School of Languages, Literatures & Cultures
University of Maryland

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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 faculty outside the department.

D.C. Consortium

In accordance with Graduate School policy, students may be granted permission to take courses at local universities belonging to the [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.

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 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).

Qualifying Examination Part One

The first Qualifying Examination is a two-part comprehensive exam, first written, then oral, taken over two consecutive days, based primarily on the student's personal PhD reading list. 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 appropriate to the area in which they intend to write their dissertation.

This exam should be taken by the end of the student's fourth semester in the PhD program.

Personal PhD Reading List

The personal PhD reading list will be comprised of 1) all works read in PhD coursework and 2) an additional set of works determined by the student in consultation with their primary advisor, according to the area of research in which they plan to write the dissertation. This second list should contain between 40-50 works (including both primary and secondary/theoretical texts), and should be established by the end of the third semester in the program.

Written Exam

Students will receive two questions, based on their personal 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.

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.

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 outline their anticipated 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.***

Ph.D. Dissertation

Dissertation Committee

After passing the qualifying exams and submitting the [form for advancement to candidacy](#), students are expected to constitute their dissertation committee in consultation with a faculty advisor and with the Director 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, students must file a [form with 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.

Oral Defense

All readers must be given at least two weeks in which to read the dissertation before the defense date.

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. Semester deadlines for PhD defenses are set the [Graduate School](#).

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

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.

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

Cécile Accilien (Ph.D., Tulane), Professor: Afro-Caribbean Studies; Film Studies; Cultural Studies; Haitian Studies

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

Caroline Eades (Doctorat, Paris Sorbonne Nouvelle), 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; travel literature; Wars of Religion

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

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: Director, SLLC; French Linguistics, Linguistic Theory, Second Language Acquisition and Language Pedagogy

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

Professors Emeriti

Joseph Bami (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