FRENCH

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http://french.yale.edu
M.A., M.Phil., Ph.D.

Chair
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Affiliated Faculty Dudley Andrew (Film & Media Studies), Carol Armstrong (History of Art), John Merriman (History)

FIELDS OF STUDY
Fields include French literature, criticism, theory, and culture from the early Middle Ages to the present, and the French-language literatures of Africa, the Caribbean, and the Maghreb.

SPECIAL ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS
A thorough command of French is expected, as well as a good preparation in all fields of French literature. Applicants should submit a twenty-page writing sample in French. This can consist of one twenty-page paper or several shorter papers that total twenty pages.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PH.D. DEGREE
(1) Candidates must demonstrate proficiency in two languages (in addition to English and French). Proficiency is defined as the successful completion of one year of study at the college level or reading proficiency at the graduate level. Students must fulfill one language requirement no later than the beginning of their third term of study. The second language requirement must be satisfied before the prospectus can be approved. (2) During the first two years of study, students normally take sixteen term courses. These must include Old French (FREN 610) and at least two graduate-level term courses outside the department. They may include one term of an approved language course taken as a means of fulfilling one of the language requirements, and as many as four graduate-level term courses outside the department. At the end of the first year of study, a grade of Honors must be obtained in at least two graduate term courses taught by core faculty within the French department. By the end of the second year, a grade of Honors must be obtained in at least four graduate term courses taught by core faculty within the French department. The total required number of Honors in French department courses taught by core faculty is thus four. (3) A qualifying oral examination takes place during the sixth term. The examination is designed to demonstrate students’ mastery of the French language, their knowledge and command of selected topics in literature, and their capacity to present and discuss texts and issues. (4) After having successfully passed the qualifying oral examination, students are required to submit a dissertation prospectus for approval, normally no later than the end of the term following the oral examination.

In order to be admitted to candidacy for the Ph.D., students must complete all predissertation requirements, including the prospectus. Students must be admitted to candidacy by the end of the seventh term.

Teaching is considered an integral part of the preparation for the Ph.D. degree, and all students are required to teach for at least one year. Opportunities to teach undergraduate courses normally become available to candidates in their third year, after consideration of the needs of the department and of the students’ capacity both to teach and to fulfill their final requirements. Prior to teaching, students take a language-teaching methodology course.

COMBINED PH.D. PROGRAM
The French department also offers three combined Ph.D.s: one in French and African American Studies (in conjunction with the Department of African American Studies), one in French and Renaissance Studies (in conjunction with the Renaissance Studies Program), and one in French and Film and Media Studies (in conjunction with the Film and Media Studies Program). Students in all of these combined degree programs are subject to all the requirements for a Ph.D. in French, with exceptions noted below. In addition, they must fulfill certain requirements particular to the combined program.

The combined Ph.D. in French and African American Studies is most appropriate for students who intend to concentrate in and write a dissertation on the literature of the francophone Caribbean. Students take sixteen term courses, including Theorizing Racial Formations (AFAM 505), which is a required course for all first-year graduate students in the combined program, and three other graduate-level African American Studies courses: (1) a history course, (2) a social science course, and (3) a course in African American
literature or culture. Ten of the remaining twelve courses are devoted to the full spectrum of periods and fields in French and francophone literature and culture; the two remaining courses can be in any field. Students in the combined degree program should fulfill the French department’s language requirements by gaining proficiency in either a Creole language of the Caribbean or Spanish, as well as by demonstrating competence in a second foreign language that is directly relevant to the study of the Caribbean. The students’ oral examinations normally include two topics of African American content. The dissertation prospectus must be approved by the director of graduate studies both in the French department and in African American Studies, and final approval of the dissertation must come from both departments. For further details see African American Studies.

Students in the combined Ph.D. program in French and Renaissance Studies will take nine courses in French and seven in Renaissance Studies. Students must learn Latin and Italian. The oral examination will consist of seven topics: four in French and three in Renaissance Studies. Both the dissertation prospectus and the final dissertation must be approved by the French department and the program in Renaissance Studies. For further details see Renaissance Studies.

For students in the combined Ph.D. program in French and Film and Media Studies, the oral examination will normally include one topic on film theory and one on French film. Both the dissertation prospectus and the final dissertation must be approved by the French department and the program in Film and Media Studies. In addition, Film and Media Studies requires a dissertation defense. For further details see Film and Media Studies.

MASTER’S DEGREES

M.Phil. See Degree Requirements under Policies and Regulations.

M.A. (en route to the Ph.D.) Students enrolled in the Ph.D. program may petition for the M.A. degree after a minimum of one year of study in residence, upon completion of one of the language requirements and eight courses, of which at least six are in French. Two grades of Honors in French graduate courses are required.

Program materials are available on the department’s website at http://french.yale.edu/academics/graduate-program.

COURSES

FREN 6244 / AFAM 6244, Slavery and Its Aftermath in French and Francophone Literature Christopher Miller
The practices, effects, and culture of both slavery and emancipation in the French empire and the postcolonial francophone world, as seen through literary writings. Readings on New France, the Code Noir, the Encyclopédie, the Haitian Revolution. Literary authors include Olympe de Gouges, Claire de Duras, Victor Séjour, Alfred Mercier, Aimé and Suzanne Césaire, Edouard Glissant, Maryse Condé, Ousmane Sembène, Gisèle Pineau.

FREN 700a, Readings in European Cultural History Carolyn Dean
This course covers readings in European cultural history from 1789 to the present, with a focus on Western Europe.

FREN 812b, The Old French Fable and Fabliaux R. Howard Bloch
A study of Marie de France’s 103 animal tales and some of the anonymous “Ysopets” as well as of the 170 comic verse tales whose veins of satire, parody, comedy of language, situation, character, and farce are at the root of the European comic tradition. We read the fables and the fabliaux against the background of twelfth- and thirteenth-century social, religious, and literary culture. Fables to be read in the bilingual (Old French and English) edition of Harriet Speigel and fabliaux in the recently published bilingual edition, with translations by Ned Dubin. Conducted in English.

FREN 829a, François Rabelais et Marguerite de Navarre Edwin Duval
An in-depth study of two authors who defined the early Renaissance in France. Closely allied in many respects but diametrically opposed in others, Rabelais and Marguerite de Navarre are equally representative of a complex, turbulent age. Readings include Rabelais’s four “Books of Pantagruel” and the most important works of Marguerite’s abundant and varied oeuvre: songs, farces, first-person allegorical narratives, and the so-called Heptameron. Conducted in French.

FREN 861b, Margins of the Enlightenment Pierre Saint-Amand
This course proposes a critical examination of the French Enlightenment, with a focus on issues of progress, universalism, and race. We confront these notions with approaches that have emerged in the postcolonial field of studies as well as gender studies. Authors from the clandestine and underground philosophical milieu are also studied. We are assisted by contemporary historians and critics of the Enlightenment, principally Foucault, Hunt, and Darnton. Readings are in Mme de Graffigny, Mme de Duras, Boyer d’Argens, Mairobert, Diderot, and Rousseau. Conducted in French.

FREN 868b, Guerres de papier [Printing Wars] Staff
Seventeenth-century France brought about a new relationship to writing, information, and media that transformed the style and the purpose of literature. In this course we explore various kinds of disputes in which writing and printing played a part. We examine literary quarrels and the way they created success and stars; delve into questions about propaganda, early modern fake news, and innovative strategies the government developed to control public opinion; and explore competition between the printed book and digital humanities, thinking about the way digital humanities have changed the way literature is studied and approached. Students create their own digital edition as an initiation to digital humanities. To become more familiar with book history, we also visit the Beinecke Library and try the Sterling Library’s printing press. Main authors are Boileau, Boursault, Corneille, Donneau de Visé, Guéret, La Bruyère, Molière, Racine, Scudéry, Ségrais, Sévigné.
FREN 885b, Modern French Poetry in the Maghreb  Thomas Connolly
A survey of twentieth- and twenty-first-century poetry written in French by authors from North Africa, including works by Amrouche, Sénac, Khâir-Eddine, Laâbi, Nissaboury, Djaout, Jabès, Farès, Ben Jelloun, Meddeb, Acherchour, Negrouche, Dib, and Bekri. Readings in French, discussion in English. Prerequisite: reading knowledge of French.

FREN 898a / CPLT 898a, Fin-de-siècle France  Maurice Samuels
The course examines major French literary and artistic movements of the last decades of the nineteenth century (Naturalism, Decadence, Symbolism) in their cultural context. Weekly reading assignments pair literary texts with contemporary theoretical/medical/political discourse on such topics as disease, crime, sex, poverty, colonialism, nationalism, and technology. Literary authors include Barbey, Mallarmé, Maupassant, Rachilde, Villiers, and Zola. Theorists include Bergson, Freud, Krafft-Ebing, Le Bon, Nordau, Renan, and Simmel. Some attention also paid to the visual arts. Prerequisite: reading knowledge of French.

FREN 900b / HIST 667b / WGSS 667b, History of Sexuality in Modern Europe  Carolyn Dean
An introduction to the various lines of inquiry informing the history of sexuality. The course asks how historians and others constitute sexuality as an object of inquiry and addresses different arguments about the evolution of sexuality in Europe, including the relationship between sexuality and the state and sexuality and gender.

FREN 918a, May 68: Building a Corpus  Alice Kaplan and Morgane Cadieu
Now that fifty years have passed, how can we assemble a corpus to represent May 68? Would it include posters and flyers, novels and narratives, films and documentaries, theoretical interventions and political discourses? What mark did May 68 make on works of art and literature, and what is the best way to access the uprisings: through a document written at the time, a retrospective narrative, a film shot before 1968? Is there such a thing as an aesthetics of May 68? Topics include education; feminism and sexuality; family and heritage; social class; imperialism and decolonization; consumerism; factories; political organizations. Works by Akerman, Barthes, Certeau, Debord, Deleuze, Delph, Ernaux, Foucault, Godard, Goupil, Houellebecq, L. Kaplan, Linhart, Marker, Perea, Rancière, Rochefort, Rolin, Ross, Wittig.

FREN 949b, Novel, Film, and History in French Africa  Christopher Miller
African history as represented in historiography, novels, and films. Limited to French and Francophone Africa. Themes include empire and epic; orality and literacy; the slave trade; contact, conquest, and resistance; the Congo Free State; the role of colonial intermediaries; the two world wars; decolonization and neocolonialism; and the 1994 genocide in Rwanda.

FREN 969a / AFST 969a / CPLT 985a, Islands, Oceans, Deserts  Jill Jarvis
This seminar brings together literary and theoretical works that chart planetary relations and connections beyond the paradigm of francophone. Comparative focus on the poetics and politics of spaces shaped by intersecting routes of colonization and forced migrations: islands (Sri Lanka, Mauritius, Martinique), oceans (Indian, Mediterranean, Atlantic), and deserts (Sahara, Sonoran). Prerequisite: reading knowledge of French; knowledge of Arabic and Spanish invited. Conducted in English.