FRENCH

Humanities Quadrangle, 3rd floor, 203.432.4900
http://french.yale.edu
M.A., M.Phil., Ph.D.

Chair
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Directors of Graduate Studies
Pierre Saint-Amand
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Professors R. Howard Bloch, Dominique Brancher (Visiting), Ardis Butterfield (English), Carolyn Dean (History), Marie-Hélène Girard (Visiting), Alice Kaplan, Pierre Saint-Amand, Maurice Samuels

Associate Professors Morgane Cadieu, Thomas Connolly

Assistant Professors Jill Jarvis, Christophe Schuwey

Affiliated faculty 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 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. (Core faculty are faculty appointed in French, as opposed to affiliated faculty.) (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. PROGRAMS**

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 Early Modern Studies (in conjunction with the Early Modern 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.

**French and African American Studies**

This program 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 AFAM 505, Theorizing Racial Formations, 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 (DGS) 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.

**French and Early Modern Studies**

The Department of French offers, in conjunction with the Early Modern Studies Program, a combined Ph.D. in French and Early Modern Studies. For further details see Early Modern Studies.
French and Film and Media 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 561a / AFAM 561a / AMST 612a / ENGL 761a, Caribbean Literary and Cultural Studies  Marlene Daut

This course examines eighteenth- and nineteenth-century writing (in translation, where applicable) by writers from the Anglophone, Francophone, and Hispanophone islands that make up the Caribbean. Haitian independence in 1804 ushered in a vibrant and diverse print culture that included poetry, plays, newspapers, and historical writing. From the pages of La Gazette Royale d’Hayti (1811–1820), to the poems of Jean-Baptiste Romane (1807–1858), to the historical writings of Louis-Félix Boisrond-Tonnerre (1776–1806), to the operas of Juste Chanlatte (1766–1828), there arose a distinct nineteenth-century literary culture in Haiti. Beginning with national literary developments in Haiti, this course expands to consider writing from Barbados, Cuba, Trinidad, Jamaica, Antigua, and Bermuda. These writings, both fictional and non-fictional, help us to think about whether and/or how a coherent early Caribbean literary tradition developed across geographical, linguistic, national, and imperial lines.

FREN 668a / ENGL 979a / HSAR 668a, Ekphrasis and Art Criticism  Carol Armstrong

Ekphrasis in its ancient Greek sense refers to the vivid description of an object, animal, person, place, scene, or event undertaken as an exercise in oral rhetoric. In that original context, the practice of ekphrasis was meant to “paint” a picture in the mind of the listener, and thus pointed to both the imagistic capacities of verbal language, and the integral link between the image and the imagination. In the twentieth century, ekphrasis acquired a narrower meaning: poetry addressed to or modeled on works of visual art. While informed by both of those understandings, this seminar considers ekphrasis both more broadly, in terms of genre, and more narrowly, in relation to a partial history of art criticism as a modern form of writing in the anglophone and European worlds, with a focus on the eighteenth through the twentieth century. It treats the different writerly modes now understood to be embraced by the term ekphrasis: not only poetry, but also the prose poem and the novel, as well as the Salon
and art review. It also touches on such issues as the Renaissance inversion of the phrase *ut pictura poesis*; the competition between the arts of word and image; the presence or absence of illustrations; the modern relations between genres and mediums and the question of mediation; and the address of the different arts to the subjectivity of the reader/spectator. In addition to weekly presentations, a short preliminary paper, and a final research paper, students organize and contribute to a workshop on ekphrasis based on their own ekphrastic exercises, undertaken in the Yale Art Gallery. (Some class time is devoted to those exercises.) This seminar is the second of two (the first is HSAR 667); our hope is that students from both seminars will collaborate on this final event.

**FREN 690b, Contemporary French Literature in the Making**  Morgane Cadieu

A survey of landmark contemporary novels coupled with a workshop. We read, debate, and rank the finalists of the Goncourt Choix US, a literary prize organized by the Cultural Services of the French Embassy. At the end of the term, one or two students are elected by their peers to travel to the Albertine Bookstore in New York, deliberate with fellow graduate students from other institutions, and elect their own recipient. In combination with this shortlist, we also read canonical twenty-first-century novels and narratives, discuss literary movements, genres, and trends, and explore the contemporary literary life in France (media, prizes, publishing houses, literary quarrels, digitalization). Students thus have the opportunity to practice and compare different types of literary criticism—academic and journalistic—so as to acquire the tools to examine contemporary literature in the making.

**FREN 815b, Medieval Lyric**  Ardis Butterfield

This course considers the mobile and shifting nature of medieval lyric from several perspectives: as poetry, as music, as poetry and music together (where appropriate), and as a material, visual, and aural construct produced on the page and in performance. Our weekly seminars explore a wide range of lyrics from the twelfth to the fifteenth century from the troubadours in France to lyrics in England. Authors include Arnaut Daniel, Jean Renart, Adam de la Halle, and Machaut; we also read the *Roman de Fauvel* and many anonymous and understudied but inventive English songs and short poems. Translations are provided if necessary. Musical training not required. Reading knowledge of French preferred but not required.

**FREN 868b, Printing Wars**  Christophe Schuwey

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, Segrais, Sévigné.
FREN 875a / CPLT 904a / FILM 617a / GMAN 617a / SPAN 901a, Psychoanalysis: Key Conceptual Differences between Freud and Lacan  Moira Fradinger

Working with primary sources mainly from the Freudian and Lacanian corpuses, this seminar is an introduction to key concepts of continental psychoanalytic theory. Students gain proficiency in what has been called “the language of psychoanalysis,” as well as tools for their critical practice in humanities disciplines such as literary criticism, political theory, film studies, gender studies, theory of ideology, sociology, etc. Concepts studied include the unconscious, identification, the drive, repetition, the imaginary, the symbolic, the real, and jouissance. A central goal of the seminar is to disambiguate Freud’s corpus from Lacan’s return to it. We pay special attention to Freud’s “three” (the ego, superego, and id) in comparison to Lacan’s “three” (the imaginary, the symbolic, and the real). Depending on the interests of the group, a special unit can be added (choosing from topics such as sexuality, perversion, fetishism, psychosis, anti-psychiatry, etc.). Commentators and critics of Freud and Lacan are also consulted (Michel Arrivé, Guy Le Gaufey, Jean Laplanche, André Green, Markos Zafiropoulos, and others). Taught in English. Materials can be provided to cover the linguistic range of the group.

FREN 885a / AFST 885a / CPLT 735a, Modern French Poetry in the Maghreb  Thomas Connolly

A survey of nineteenth-, twentieth-, and twenty-first-century poetry written in French by authors from North Africa, including works by Si Mohand, Amrouche, Kateb, Khaïr-Eddine, Séïc, Laâbi, Khatibi, Farès, Djajout, Dib, Ben Jelloun, Meddeb, Labbize, and Acherchour. Includes close readings set in literary, artistic, linguistic, aesthetic, historical, political, religious, and philosophical contexts. This iteration of the course coincides with the publication of a new double issue of Yale French Studies entitled “North African Poetry in French” (2020). Includes invited specialists. Readings in French, discussion in English. Prerequisite: reading knowledge of French.

FREN 900a / HIST 667a / WGSS 667a, History of Gender and 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 930a / CPLT 734a, Fiction and the Archives  Alice Kaplan

What can be learned about 20th-century French literature from literary archives? This course investigates fiction by Proust, Céline, Guilloux, Sartre, Sarrout, Wittig, studying finished books in the light of manuscripts, letters, and historical sources. An exploration in particular of the idea of the "genesis" of a literary work. A number of classes will take place in the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Conducted in English.

FREN 967b, Aesthetic cartographies of the Sahara  Jill Jarvis

This literature seminar counters an enduring colonial divide between North and Subsaharan Africa by taking the African Sahara itself to be a vibrant center of aesthetic and intellectual creation. Drawing key insights from spatial theory, critical cartography, forensic architecture, and material ecocriticism, we investigate the ways that contemporary writers, filmmakers, and artists from across the region are qualitatively transforming the reductive ways in which our planet’s largest desert has
long been represented. Taking off from a premise that maps are political fictions that reflect and facilitate the kind of power that renders such things as nuclear bombs, toxic uranium mines, and secret detention camps in the Sahara at once justifiable and forgettable, we consider what else might become possible if aesthetic works are taken seriously as counter-cartographies that stake epistemic and ethical claims to supposedly "desert" land.