

French

Department of Romance Languages and Literatures

French
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Overview

The French language is spoken by millions of people living in France, Belgium, Switzerland, Canada, the Caribbean, North and Central Africa, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia. It is a major international language of the arts, commerce, and science, a status that reflects the leading role that French culture and technology have played and continue to play. In the United States, more students study French than any other foreign language except Spanish.

The centuries-old relationship of the English-speaking and French-speaking cultures has resulted in a common heritage. Not only is there a substantial overlap in vocabulary - some 40 percent of English words are of French origin - there is also a common culture, going from the Arthurian legends through postcolonial self-examination, and students find many familiar landmarks in the study of French culture.

The French program trains students in the spoken and written language, and deepens their knowledge of and interest in the literature and culture of France and other French-speaking countries. Majors in French are encouraged to study abroad for a summer, a semester, or a full year. SUNY programs in French cities are open to UB students. For a major or minor, a minimum of four courses at the 300/400 level must be taken in residence at the Buffalo campus.

Students wishing to satisfy the requirements for teacher certification should plan their programs with particular care in order to accommodate the required semester of the professional sequence during their senior year. For certification requirements, students should contact the Teacher Education Institute, Graduate School of Education, 367 Baldy Hall.

About our Degrees

Acceptance Criteria

Minimum GPA of 2.0 overall.

Minimum GPA of 2.5 in preparatory coursework in French ([FR 101-FR 102](#) sequence or [FR 104](#); [FR 151-FR 152](#) or equivalent preparation; [FR 211-FR 212](#)).

About our Courses

The typical class size for:

Freshman/introductory courses is: 24

Sophomore/intermediate courses is: 20

Upper level/advanced courses is: 15

In the Department of Romance Languages and Literatures, what do teaching assistants (TAs) do?

TAs generally teach introductory-level courses.

For course descriptions, please see [Courses](#).

About our Faculty

Classes in the French program are small in size, and are taught by faculty with recognized commitment to teaching.

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One faculty member has received the Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching, and one has received a Lilly Fellowship.

Acceptance Information

In order to be accepted for the French major, a minimum GPA of 2.0 overall, and a minimum GPA of 2.5 in prerequisite courses or their equivalents ([FR 101-FR 102](#) sequence or [FR 104](#); [FR 151-FR 152](#), and [FR 211-FR 212](#)) are ordinarily required. Early admission is available for qualified and motivated students; inquiries should be addressed to the director of undergraduate studies.

In order to be accepted for the French minor, a minimum GPA of 2.0 overall, and a minimum GPA of 2.5 in prerequisite courses or their equivalents ([FR 101-FR 102](#) sequence or [FR 104](#); [FR 151-FR 152](#), and [FR 211-FR 212](#)) are ordinarily required.

Academic Requirements

Graduation requirements for the French major include completion of two 200-level courses (6 credit hours) with a minimum GPA of 2.5, and ten 300/400-level courses (30 credit hours) with a minimum GPA of 2.0. Among these ten courses, the following three are required: [FR 301](#), [FR 302](#), and [FR 343](#).

Graduation requirements for the double major are the same as those for the major.

Some students are interested in two fields of study, but prefer a program that does not require them to complete all requirements for both fields. These students may be interested in the joint major. Graduation requirements for the joint major include completion of two 200-level courses (6 credit hours) with a minimum GPA of 2.5, and seven 300/400-level courses (21 credit hours) with a minimum GPA of 2.0. Among these seven courses, the following three are required: [FR 301](#), [FR 302](#), and [FR 343](#). In addition, the student must complete the joint major requirements for another department.

Requirements for completion of the French minor include completion of two 200-level courses (6 credit hours) with a minimum GPA of 2.5, and four 300/400-level courses with a minimum GPA of 2.0. Among these four courses, the following three are required: [FR 301](#), [FR 302](#), and [FR 343](#).

Extracurricular Activities

There are many opportunities to participate in out-of-class enrichment activities through the RLL department, including conversation groups and lectures. A film series - "Fresh Films from France" - is offered each year. The Melodia Jones Chair in French often supports cultural activities such as films, theatre excursions, lectures and conferences. Information on the French Club (SA) is available at 910 Clemens Hall (645-2191).

See the [UB Student Association](#).

Practical Experience and Special Academic Opportunities

Undergraduate Research and Practical Experience

Study Abroad

Students are encouraged to study in French-speaking countries. Study abroad programs sponsored by other SUNY campuses are open to UB French students. See [Study Abroad Programs](#).

Honors, Awards, and Scholarships

The Linda Rock Scholarship and the Maria Becker Scholarship are awarded to students majoring in French who intend to participate in a study abroad program. The awards are granted on the basis of an academic evaluation, although financial need is taken into consideration.

Departmental Honors are awarded to graduating students based on GPA.

Career Information and Further Study

Students who choose French as their academic home at UB find a number of career opportunities open to them. Among graduates in the past

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decade, a small number have gone on to do graduate work in French, several have gone on to law school, and others have found positions with the U.S. State Department, as well as in secondary education. Whatever career appeals to graduating students, fluency in French will assuredly be an advantage.

Some careers our graduates have pursued include:

- Anthropological linguist
- Customs inspector
- Diplomat
- Educator
- Foreign service officer
- Foreign student advisor
- Immigration inspector
- Import/export agent
- International relations specialist
- Journalist
- Lawyer
- Public relations specialist
- Teacher
- Translator
- Tutor

Degree Options

The major program leads to a BA in French. For students who have another major field, both joint majors and double majors with French are possible; these programs also lead to the BA degree. There is also a French minor program.

Degrees Offered

Undergraduate: BA, Minor

Graduate: MA, PhD

Links to Further Information About this Program

- [Undergraduate Catalog](#)
- [Undergraduate Admissions](#)
- [Graduate Admissions](#)
- [Department of Romance Languages and Literatures](#)
- [College of Arts and Sciences](#)

French - B.A.

Acceptance Criteria

Minimum GPA of 2.0 overall.

Minimum GPA of 2.5 in prerequisite coursework in French.

Prerequisite Courses

[FR 101](#) Elementary French 1st Semester - [FR 102](#) Elementary French 2nd Semester, or [FR 104](#) Transitional Elementary French, or equivalent preparation

[FR 151](#) Intermediate French 1st Semester - [FR 152](#) Intermediate French 2nd Semester, or equivalent preparation

[FR 211](#) Studies in French Language and Culture I*

[FR 212](#) Studies in French Language and Culture II*

Required Courses

[FR 301](#) Survey of French Literature I

[FR 302](#) Survey of French Literature II

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FR 343 Advanced Grammar and Composition
Seven additional 300/400-level electives

Summary

Total required credit hours for the major...36

See **Baccalaureate Degree Requirements** for general education and remaining university requirements.

Recommended Sequence of Program Requirements

FIRST YEAR

Fall Elementary or intermediate French or **FR 211***

Spring Elementary or intermediate French or **FR 212***

SECOND YEAR

Fall **FR 211** or **FR 301***

Spring **FR 212** or **FR 302***

THIRD YEAR

Fall **FR 301**, two 300/400-level electives

Spring **FR 302**, **FR 343**, one 300/400-level elective

FOURTH YEAR

Fall Two 300/400-level electives

Spring Two 300/400-level electives

**Placement is based on a student's prior training, and may be determined by a placement test and an advisement session in the department. For further information, please contact Professor Jeannette Ludwig at (716) 645-0877, or jmludwig@buffalo.edu.*

Note: Different scheduling arrangements can be made for those students wishing to study abroad.

French - Minor

Acceptance Criteria

Minimum GPA of 2.0 overall.

Minimum GPA of 2.5 in prerequisite coursework in French.

Prerequisite Courses

FR 101 Elementary French 1st Semester - **FR 102** Elementary French 2nd Semester, or **FR 104** Transitional Elementary French, or equivalent preparation

FR 151 Intermediate French 1st Semester - **FR 152** Intermediate French 2nd Semester, or equivalent preparation

FR 211 Studies in French Language and Culture I*

FR 212 Studies in French Language and Culture II*

Required Courses

FR 301 Survey of French Literature I

FR 302 Survey of French Literature II

FR 343 Advanced Grammar and Composition

One additional 300/400-level elective

Summary

Total required credit hours for the minor...18

**Placement is based on a student's prior training, and may be determined by a placement test and an advisement session in the department. For further information, please contact Professor Jeannette Ludwig at (716) 645-0877, or jmludwig@buffalo.edu.*

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FR 101: Elementary French 1st Semester

Credits: 5
Semester(s): Fall, Summer
Type: LEC

Language as heard and spoken; development of listening, speaking, reading, and writing; five class hours weekly plus regular drill with language recordings.

FR 102: Elementary French 2nd Semester

Credits: 5
Semester(s): Spring, Summer
Pre-requisites: [FR 101](#)
Type: LEC

Language as heard and spoken; development of listening, speaking, reading, and writing; five class hours weekly plus regular drill with language recordings.

FR 104: Transitional Elementary French

Credits: 5
Semester(s): Fall, Spring, Summer
Type: LEC

Students who have completed [FR 101](#) and/or [FR 102](#) should not register for [FR 104](#) as no credit will be given for duplicate courses.

One-semester review course designed for students who have taken the Regents exams, but who are not yet able to go into the second year of language study. Involves development of all four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and, to some extent, writing), emphasizing the grammatical structures and vocabulary fundamental to simple, everyday conversation.

FR 151: Intermediate French 1st Semester

Credits: 3
Semester(s): Fall, Summer
Type: LEC

Continuing study of the language, includes a brief review of basic elements and the introduction and practice of more precise linguistic features. Students further their listening and speaking skills through in-class activities, as well as independent work with sound files. Also develops students' reading and writing skills through the use of literary and cultural texts.

FR 152: Intermediate French 2nd Semester

Credits: 3
Semester(s): Spring, Summer
Pre-requisites: [FR 151](#)
Type: LEC

Continuing study of the language, including briefly reviewing basic elements and the introduction and practice of more precise linguistic features. Students further their listening and speaking skills through in-class activities, as well as independent work with sound files. Also develops students' reading and writing skills through the use of literary and cultural texts.

FR 211: Studies in French Language and Culture I

Credits: 3
Semester(s): Fall
Type: LEC

Perfecting writing skills in preparation for advanced courses or study abroad: selections from prose, poetry, drama, or writings on contemporary issues and problems.

FR 212: Studies in French Language and Culture II

Credits: 3
Semester(s): Spring
Type: LEC

Perfecting writing skills in preparation for advanced courses or study abroad: selections from prose, poetry, drama, or writings on contemporary issues and problems.

FR 270: Intermediate Conversation

Credits: 3
Type: LEC

For majors and nonmajors who wish to enhance their spoken French by intensive listening and speaking activities. No credit toward French major. Develops understanding and speaking ability, and knowledge of contemporary France.

FR 271: Business French

Credits: 3
Type: LEC

Builds on the language proficiency acquired in 100-level French courses by introducing students to the vocabulary, idiom, and social conventions they must master to function in a business setting in the French-speaking world. Expects students to demonstrate proficiency both in the language skills taught in the course and in knowledge of the European and non-European business context. Among the anticipated assignments are oral comprehension exercises based on French news broadcasts, drafting of several business letters in French, and short business-related papers. No credit toward French major.

FR 301: Survey of French Literature I

Credits: 3
Semester(s): Fall
Type: LEC

Introduces students to major currents of French literature and thought in selected readings from the Middle Ages, Renaissance, Classical period, and Enlightenment. The study of epic (*La Chanson de Roland*), romance (*Yvain ou le chevalier au lion*), autobiographical writing (Montaigne's *Essais*), classical tragedy and comedy (Racine and Molière), the novel (*La Princesse de Clèves* and *Candide*), philosophical writing (selections from Descartes, Pascal, and Rousseau), and poetry (selections from Charles d'Orléans, Villon, Du Bellay, and Ronsard) emphasizes both literary and philosophical traditions, as well as textual interpretation.

FR 302: Survey of French Literature II

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Credits: 3
Semester(s): Spring
Type: LEC

Acquaints students with the major literary movements from the French revolution through contemporary times. Examines a selection of works - including Romantic poetry of Hugo, Lamartine, and Vigny; theatre; Flaubert's *Madame Bovary*; and contemporary and avant-garde works - particularly emphasizing the relationship between text and context.

FR 305: Readings from French Historians

Credits: 3
Pre-requisites: [FR 211](#) and [FR 212](#)
Type: LEC

Writings of selected French historians (e.g., Michelet, Thierry, Voltaire) or memorialists (e.g. Saint-Simon) in order to highlight rhetorical strategies to explore the linguistic context of historical writing. Taught in French.

FR 331: Pre-Romanticism and Romanticism

Credits: 3
Type: LEC

Begins with the study of Madame de Stael's *De l'Allemagne* and Châteaubriand's *René* and *Atala* for a sense of the origins of French Romanticism. The study of texts by Stendhal, Balzac, and Hugo focuses on the Romantic search for inspiration in the subject's emotional life, in exotic settings, and in the wealth of national legend.

FR 334: Poetry from Baudelaire to Surrealism

Credits: 3
Type: LEC

Surveys French poetry from 1857 - date of the publication of *Les Fleurs du mal* - to the years immediately following World War II when surrealism is on the decline. A series of schools, movements, and tendencies that constitute the historical frame of reference for the course characterizes the period, in which the works of poets who dominated the period are particularly emphasized.

FR 338: Women Writers of Francophone Africa

Credits: 3
Type: LEC

Explores feminine writing - *écriture féminine* - as it has developed starting in the late 1970s in Francophone Africa. Focuses upon the differences between the concerns and themes voiced by African women writers and those raised by their male counterparts. Issues include religion, marriage, polygamy, education, the workplace, urban and rural life, love, and family life.

FR 341: Topics in French Film

Credits: 3
Type: LEC

Examines the works of some of the major movie directors of France

since WWII. First Carné, Ophuls, Cocteau, then the directors of the "Nouvelle Vague": Truffaut, Resnais, Duras, Goddard. The last part of the course is devoted to a selection of more recent works, such as *Au Revoir les Enfants*, *Ridicule*, and *Tous les Matins du Monde*.

FR 343: Advanced Grammar and Composition

Credits: 3
Type: LEC

Provides a more sophisticated understanding of French syntax and improves skill in fluent, written self-expression. Brief weekly compositions serve as a basis for the discussion of points of syntax and style. Students also become familiar with reference works, which will be of continuing use.

FR 349: Stylistics and Translation

Credits: 3
Type: LEC

Introduces the objectives, techniques, and difficulties of translation to and from French. At the theoretical level, and through a number of explications de texte, students reflect on such issues as the distinction between an author and a narrator, the 'voice' in a text, textual 'intentions' vs. reader response. In practical terms, weekly translations of selected short texts should foster the development of respect for the linguistic, stylistic, and occasional cultural differences between English and French.

FR 350: Modern French Short Story

Credits: 3
Semester(s): Spring
Type: LEC

Surveys a selection of modern French short stories sampling from French as well as Francophone writers and explores the means by which short stories achieve their effects within the restricted economy of the genre. Considers the stories both as narrative constructs and as reflections of the historical and cultural contexts in which they were written.

FR 351: French Literature in English Translation

Credits: 3
Type: LEC

Upper-level literature course offered to non-majors who have an interest in literature but little or no training in the language. Organized by topic, the course sometimes focuses on an author (e.g. Montaigne, Flaubert) and sometimes on critical perspectives (e.g. French feminism).

FR 383: Problems of the French Novel

Credits: 3
Type: LEC

Examines the evolution of the narrative genre (centered on the novel with reference to a few short stories) from *La Princesse de Clèves* to the 'New Novel.' Offers a close reading of some of the major works of Mme de Lafayette, Prévost, Balzac, Stendhal, Auroville, Camus, and Claude Simon.

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FR 393: Study in Absentia

Credits: 1-16
Type: TUT

The content of this course is variable and therefore it is repeatable for credit. The [University Grade Repeat Policy](#) does not apply.

For students enrolled in the Study Abroad Program sponsored by the University at Buffalo (see Study Abroad section in this catalog).

FR 404: Introduction to the Structure of Modern French

Credits: 3
Type: LEC

Describes present-day French from a modern linguistic standpoint. Successively covers phonology, morphology, and syntax and lexical change to give the student a better understanding of the structure of French and a broader comprehension of the function of language in general. Weekly travaux pratiques enable students to apply the analytical theory to real language problems.

FR 420: History of the French Language

Credits: 3
Type: LEC

Acquaints students with the internal and technical linguistic changes that characterize the emergence of French from Latin, as well as the external and historic events that influence this development. Discusses the nature of language change, the development of dialects, and the emergence of national standards. Consists of two lectures and one discussion period per week involving linguistic problem sets and brief translations of early French texts.

FR 429: Advanced Business French

Credits: 3
Type: SEM

Seeks to familiarize students with the cultural and professional aspects of doing business in France. Topics include tariffs and quotas, the role of the EU and the euro, genetically modified foods, the environment, and globalization. Also covers French domestic issues, including the 35-hour work week, the strained retirement system, domestic political wrangling, the French press, and activist trade unions. This course also stresses practical skills such as business correspondence, how to read reports and other documents, how to follow the news (both written and televised) with full knowledge of its bias (national and political), and how to interview or give a business presentation.

FR 480: Seminar for Majors

Credits: 3
Type: SEM

The content of this course is variable and therefore it is repeatable for credit. The [University Grade Repeat Policy](#) does not apply.

Variable content.

FR 486: Islam in France

Credits: 3
Type: LEC

Survey of basic Muslim beliefs and practices, as well as its history with special emphasis on former French colonies in North and sub-Saharan Africa. Examines French colonialism, outlining its motivations, history and outcomes. Considers two key notions: first, French attitudes toward its immigrant populations as expressed through housing policies, educational attainment, citizenship laws, and other questions of how individuals and groups occupy public space; second, contrasts between the French approaches to immigration and those other European nations as well as the U.S. Some time will be devoted to the issue of hijab or veil since it functions as the presenting social issue that related religious expression on the one hand, with French public opinion on the other.

FR 496: Internship/Practicum

Credits: 1-6
Type: TUT

The content of this course is variable and therefore it is repeatable for credit. The [University Grade Repeat Policy](#) does not apply.

Hands-on experience in language and cultural studies at institutions and community organizations in the Western New York area.

FR 498: Undergraduate Research and Creative Activity

Credits: 1-6
Type: TUT

The content of this course is variable and therefore it is repeatable for credit. The [University Grade Repeat Policy](#) does not apply.

Students collaborate with faculty research mentors on an ongoing faculty research project or conduct independent research under the guidance of a faculty member.

FR 499: Independent Study

Credits: 1-6
Type: TUT

The content of this course is variable and therefore it is repeatable for credit. The [University Grade Repeat Policy](#) does not apply.

Students who have demonstrated the ability to perform upper-level coursework may, on occasion, wish to research a topic not available through regular course offerings. Such students may, with permission of a supervising faculty member and the director of undergraduate studies, enroll in [FR 499](#).