

FRENCH STUDIES MAJOR

MAJOR DESCRIPTION

The French Studies Major is designed for students interested in developing a command of the French language sufficient to live and work in a French-speaking environment. Students in the program develop a deep knowledge of French-language literature that informs a larger understanding of Francophone modes of thought, expression, cultures, history, and society. This flexible, interdisciplinary program gives students the opportunity to pursue coursework in several fields, including other Romance cultures, politics, art, literature, and history, all of which may serve as the basis for further academic studies or careers. Study abroad and language immersion in a French-speaking country are encouraged.

Students interested in this major are encouraged to bring an open-minded, interdisciplinary mindset and a global perspective to their study that will allow them to learn more about the diverse cultures of French-speaking societies. Adaptability, patience, and dedication are key traits to apply to studying languages and complex cultural nuances.

French majors gain skills that present various career opportunities in fields such as international relations, business, academia, translation, or cultural exchange.

ADMISSION TO THE MAJOR

Students must have completed FREN215 or a higher-level course with a grade of at least a B to be admitted to the major.

MAJOR REQUIREMENTS

FREN215 or the equivalent is the prerequisite for all FREN courses numbered 220 or higher.

The major consists of a minimum of eight courses beyond FREN215:

- **Four FREN courses numbered 220-399.**
 - These courses must be taken on campus in French.
 - Courses numbered **220-299** are introductory courses intended for students who have completed FREN215, who have taken an equivalent course elsewhere, or who have placed out of FREN215 through the placement test. In general, these courses are designed for students who have not yet studied abroad in a French-speaking country.
 - **300-level** courses are upper-level courses intended for students who have already completed two courses in French beyond FREN215 or who have studied abroad in a French-speaking country for at least a semester.
- **Four other courses** whose content is devoted substantially to the study of French or Francophone literature, history, culture, or society. These courses may be taken on campus or abroad, may be in French or English, and may be chosen from among the following courses:
 - Courses from the French section's normal offering of FREN courses numbered 220-399.
 - Courses listed Romance Lang & Lit In Eng (RL&L).
 - Courses taken through approved study abroad programs.

- Courses offered by other departments and programs on campus that include a study of French or Francophone culture, politics, or history. These courses must be approved by the student's major advisor.

A minimum grade of B is required for courses taken on campus to count toward the FRST major or the Romance studies (RMST) major where the student is combining French with another Romance culture.

Students majoring in FRST who receive two grades of B- or lower in FREN courses will be dropped from the major.

STUDENT LEARNING GOALS

The French studies major provides students with a command of the French language sufficient to live and work successfully in a French-speaking environment.

LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT

There is no language requirement for the French Studies Major.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Students who receive a C- or lower in FREN course may repeat the course once.

Students who receive less than a B in FREN102, FREN112, or FREN215 will not normally be permitted to enroll in another FREN course or, in the case of students who receive less than a B in FREN215, to study abroad on the Vassar-Wesleyan Program in Paris.

Students who receive a B-, C+, or C in FREN102, FREN112, or FREN215 may petition the head of the French Section to be permitted to take the following course in the French sequence or study abroad on the Vassar-Wesleyan Program in Paris. In their petition, they must explain in detail what supplemental work they will undertake in order to prepare themselves for the following course in the sequence or for study abroad on the Paris program (for example: they will take a summer course). If their petition is approved, they must complete the proposed supplemental work, take the placement exam at the Fries Center for Global Studies, and place into the course they wish to take (or place above FREN215 if they wish to study abroad on the Paris program) before they will be admitted to it.

Students interested in enrolling in French, Italian, or Spanish at the elementary or intermediate levels are urged to do so during their first-year and sophomore years. Department policy gives priority to first-year and sophomore students in our language classes (numbered 101–112) to allow students to study abroad and to meet the requirements of those programs requiring language study. Juniors and seniors who wish to take elementary and intermediate language courses should submit an online enrollment request and attend the first class. They may be accepted during the drop/add period if seats become available. Should a junior or senior enroll in the first course of an ampersand sequence (such as 101–102), he or she will have priority for the second course, just like first-year and sophomore students.

HONORS

See departmental honors program.

CAPSTONE EXPERIENCE

See departmental description of capstone experiences.