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Our Department's headquarters, the beautiful Rochambeau House, which we share with Hispanic Studies, has an efficient computer network, elegant gardens, and generous space for seminars, lectures, movie screenings, or friendly intellectual exchanges and conversation. The ten graduate students currently in our program form a supportive and cohesive group. A graduate student representative, elected by all the graduate students, functions as liaison among the different generations of graduate students in the department, between the graduate students and the faculty, as well as between students in French and those in other departments at Brown. Since 1993, the graduate students in the French department have organized a national colloquium called "Equinoxes", which takes place every spring. This colloquium has regularly attracted participants from the United States, Canada and France. Our Department's former Ph.D.s are often invited as keynote speakers.

Every year, a number of graduate students are involved in exchange programs with the Universities of Bourgogne and Lyon. These programs, which involve teaching English to French students, are an important part of the cross-cultural and professional training of our students. Graduate students may also spend a year or a semester at another Ivy League university (through the inter-Ivy exchange), attend courses at Harvard during the semester, or participate in a Mellon Study Group through a grant from the Graduate School. During the summer, students may take part in the Dartmouth Institute of French Cultural Studies or the Cornell School of Criticism through a fellowship from the Cogut Humanities Center.

**OUTLINE OF THE PROGRAM**

**REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PH.D.**

1. The Department of French Studies requires sixteen courses for the Ph.D. These may include tutorials, independent study projects, and courses in other departments. Individual course schedules and study programs will be worked out with the Director of Graduate Studies. All graduate students must complete the Graduate School requirement of 24 tuition units. (For further information, see "Tuition Credit vs. Academic Credit" on the Graduate School website.)

2. The following courses are standard requirements: FREN 2900: Teaching Methods; and the Departmental seminars and study courses at the 2000-level. Depending on students' previous preparation, these requirements may be waived with the approval of the Graduate Committee.

3. During the third year of study (second year for those who arrive with the M.A.), students will complete their course work and take a two part preliminary examination, individually planned around topics selected from their studies.

4. During the remainder of their time in the program, students research and write the dissertation. Depending on whether or not they enter the program with the M.A., students generally complete the program in four to six years.

5. The foreign language requirement may be satisfied by coursework or passing an examination in one foreign language other than French. In many cases, students will need to acquire mastery of a foreign language beyond this minimum requirement for research or teaching purposes.

6. Financial aid is available in a variety of forms: fellowships for students in their first year, teaching assistantships beginning in the second year, and dissertation fellowships during the final year. All financial awards are accompanied by a full tuition waiver and medical insurance. Summer support is available for three years, to be used when students prefer.
7. One year of teaching as a Teaching Assistant at Brown is required of all Ph.D. candidates as part of their professional training. Most students serve as Teaching Assistants for at least three years.

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE M.A.

1. Courses will be chosen in consultation with the Director of Graduate Studies.

2. One year of course work (eight 1000- and 2000-level courses) with a thesis (an essay of 50-60 pages) will satisfy the degree requirements for the terminal M.A. Alternatively, students may satisfy the M.A. requirement without writing a thesis by completing two years of course work (sixteen courses at the 1000- and 2000-level). (See VI. 1 below)

3. Candidates for the M.A. will be expected to demonstrate a reading knowledge of a foreign language other than French by passing a test, taking an appropriate course, or demonstrating that they have done university-level work in that language.

4. Students who have completed graduate-level work in French Studies at another institution should petition for Transfer Credits during the second semester of their first year at Brown.

Course Work

1. The Graduate Program in French Studies offers training in a wide spectrum of genres, periods, and critical approaches, including cultural studies, literary and philosophical history, gender studies, narrative theory, postcolonial studies. Other course offerings include such fields as sexuality studies, social history, theater and film studies. In addition to the required graduate seminars offered by the Department, students may take courses in other relevant departments at Brown (Africana Studies, Comparative Literature, History, Modern Culture and Media, etc.) as well as French Studies courses at the 1000-level. Students take four courses per semester during their first year and three per semester thereafter until the prelims have been successfully completed (during the second or third year in the program). In addition to graduate seminars, one course is required: FREN 2900 (offered second semester every year) which must be taken before teaching (see below paragraph IV.A).

2. At the end of each semester, students receive a Course Performance Report (CPR) for each seminar or course they have taken. Those students who fall behind schedule or whose academic performance is deemed unsatisfactory will receive written notification of steps needed for improvement. Every January, the Graduate Committee meets to make recommendations to the Graduate School concerning student funding (teaching assistantships and dissertation fellowships). In order to qualify for funding during the next year, students must complete all course work each semester, take their exams on schedule, and thereafter make regular progress on their dissertations.

3. Incompletes

In exceptional circumstances, a student may request to receive an "INC" as a grade for a course, denoting an incomplete. Incompletes can only be taken with the prior consent of the faculty member teaching the course. We advise you to avoid accumulating incompletes: they can greatly impede your progress through the program and can have a significant impact on your annual evaluation. The deadlines for making up incompletes are as follows: for courses taken in Semester I, by mid semester of Semester II; for Semester II, by the first day of the following semester. These can be extended only at the request of the instructor. However, any incomplete that remains one calendar year after the end of the semester in which the course was taken turns into an "NC," or "no credit," and you will have to make up that credit by taking another course.
4. Kinds of Courses

A. Until students have completed the first part of their preliminary exams, they are required to take all of the graduate seminars offered by the Department. Class sessions are devoted to brief lectures by the professor and to the exchange, discussion and critique of ideas. In addition to participation in class, the students give oral presentations and write term papers in consultation with the instructor.

B. Graduate students may also take undergraduate 1000-level courses for graduate credit. In these instances, they will usually do supplementary research, reading, and writing suited to their preparation and to the nature of the course. In consultation with the instructor, they may also assist in the classroom by giving presentations and conducting discussions.

C. FREN 2910 or 2920 (Tutorials or Independent Study courses) - Students may supplement course offerings through tutorials on topics suggested by members of the staff. Those topics may reflect current research developments or the research interests of individual professors. Students, in turn, may propose Independent Study topics to the Department faculty. Such FREN 2910/2920 independent study courses enable students to examine closely particular literary, textual or linguistic problems or techniques and to investigate subjects not covered in regular course offerings. Students normally take no more than two FREN 2910/2920 courses (or independent study courses in other departments) per semester, and staff members usually teach no more than two per semester. Student and professor usually meet at least once every two weeks.

5. Required Courses

FREN 2900: Teaching Methods. All doctoral candidates take this course for graduate credit in preparation for their teaching (see I, 7). Candidates for a terminal M.A. may also enroll in this course. It includes training in such areas as the psychology of foreign language learning, techniques of instruction, planning and structuring a course, textbook criticism, production of materials, and use of technology. Class observations and in-class practice teaching are an integral part of the course.

Any request to waive or modify these requirements must be addressed in writing to the Graduate Committee of the Department of French Studies. Such requests will be considered with respect to FREN 2900 only when the student presents evidence of both training for teaching and extensive teaching experience upon beginning graduate study at Brown.

6. Description of Courses

The program in French Studies offers courses organized in a variety of ways and chosen from the following categories. For recent and current course offerings, please refer to the Current Courses section of our website.

The Preliminary Examination

The purpose of the Preliminary Examination is to assess students’ knowledge of their chosen field of specialization, to evaluate their command of theoretical methods employed in the field, and to ensure that they possess the critical skills needed for scholarly research.

Students take the prelim during the third year of graduate study (those arriving with an M.A. follow all procedures in their second year). This examination tests students’ general preparation in French Studies as well as their ability to conduct independent research. The Department’s Graduate Committee reviews students’ examination fields before approving them. It oversees the administration and evaluation of prelims, establishes procedures and schedules, and reports on students’ prelims to the entire Department.
**Procedures:**

The exam consists of two parts.

1. The first part, "General Literary Exam", is intended to demonstrate the student's knowledge of the corpus of French and Francophone literature. It is a coverage exam meant to complement work pursued in previous study and to ensure that the student has studied works and authors of each area. The written exam will take place the week before Labor Day during the third year of study (or second year of study for students with an M.A). Preparation will begin the previous semester in accordance with the following chronology:

   A. In February of spring semester of the second year (first year for students with an M.A.), the student meets with the Graduate Advisor to identify the THREE periods to be covered, drawn from the following list:
      
      The Middle Ages  
      The Renaissance  
      The 17th century  
      The 18th century  
      The 19th century  
      The 20th century  
      Francophone Literature  

   B. Over the course of spring semester, the student meets with specialists in each of the chosen areas to establish the reading list of 10 works per area and to discuss the texts, contexts, and possible approaches. Out of this discussion, the specialist will come up with a set of 2 questions.

   C. By May 1, the student will give the Graduate Advisor his/her reading list consisting of 30 works (10 works per area) and then the prelim committee will send the questions to the Graduate Advisor. Summer funding is intended to help the student devote this summer to reading.

   D. The take-home written exam. The week before Labor Day (end of August), the student will have 4 days to write 3 essays of 6-8 pages each (roughly 1500-2000 words per essay). Students will be given a choice between 2 questions for each of the three essays.

   E. Oral Exam. 10-15 days after the written exam, the student will meet with the exam committee consisting of the professors representing the three areas. During this discussion, the student may be asked to develop parts of the written exam or to explore other works on the reading list. The exam is evaluated on a pass/fail basis.

2. The second part of the examination, "Research," will be taken during the second semester, no later than the second week of May. In comparison to the Coverage exam, the Research exam entails a more elaborated cultural, critical, and theoretical approach. It draws on TWO areas.

   A. The student prepares a 10-15-page proposal that must be approved by his/her prelim committee. It must include information about the two areas of study, the critical approach, a bibliography, and the names of the members of the prelim committee. Sample topics could include the study and application of critical methods to a selected group of texts, the relationship between literature and other art forms in a given period, or the intensive study of an important aspect of one genre. The student gives a copy of the proposal to the Director of Graduate Studies, who then forwards it to the Graduate Committee. The committee requires a minimum of ten days for consideration of the proposal. The student is to meet with the committee at least twice during the preparation of the exam. While preparing for this prelim, the student may take a tutorial on the examination topic.
B. At least a week before each part of the written exam, the prelim committee meets to prepare questions that are based on the student's chosen areas and topic. The student has seven days to complete the research exam (30 pages). A one-hour oral exam takes place one week after completion of the essays. At the discretion of the chair of the preliminary exam committee, the student may begin the oral exam with a brief presentation. The following assessments are possible: pass with distinction, pass, conditional pass, and fail. Students who fail either part of the examination have the right to take it a second time.

C. The prelim committee, on which sit professors representing the major areas included in the examination, prepares and evaluates both parts of the exam. It is the responsibility of the chair of the prelim committee to notify the Director of Graduate Studies and the Department Manager of the time and place of the oral part of both exams. A copy of the Research exam should be available in the department office one week in advance so that any faculty member planning to attend the exam may read it.

Teacher Training Program

Teacher training is an essential component of the Graduate Program in French. Students receive training both before they begin teaching and while they are Teaching Assistants. They normally teach only one course each semester in order to ensure timely completion of their graduate work.

A. Students take for credit the Teaching Methods course FREN 2900 before they begin teaching. The content of this course includes items such as the following: the psychology of the learning process in foreign language teaching; methods and techniques; planning and structuring a single class, the week's work, a semester's work; textbook criticism; production of materials; use of teaching aids, such as audio-visual and computer based materials.

B. All students must complete at least one year of teaching in the Department, and most teach at least three years. The Language Committee assigns Teaching Assistants a section of FREN 0100, 0200, 0300, 0400, 0500, 0520, 0600, or 0750 in keeping with their teaching performance and the needs of the Department. The Language Committee seeks to give students experience at as many different levels as possible. Teaching Assistants work under the supervision of a faculty course coordinator who meets regularly with all TAs, visits their sections at least once per semester, and writes a Teaching Performance Report (TPR) at the end of the semester. Two copies of each TPR are forwarded to the Director of Graduate Studies, and one copy is given directly to the student.

Professional Training

1. The Department will offer three workshops on professionalization each year: one on preparing abstracts and papers for conferences; one on preparing article manuscripts for publication; and one on preparing for the job market.

2. At least once a year, the Department will organize a workshop during which a student (or students) will circulate among other students and at least one professor a seminar paper to be revised for publication. The purpose of the workshop will be to provide the student/s with constructive feedback for revisions.

3. The Department will work actively with all students as they prepare to go on the job market. Dissertations advisors review their advisees' dossiers (cover letter, research statement, teaching portfolio, etc.). And the DGS will organize mock interviews for all students before the MLA.
Language Requirements

1. For the M.A. Candidates will be expected to demonstrate a reading knowledge of a foreign language other than French or English either by passing a test or taking an appropriate course, or by demonstrating to the Department's Graduate Committee that they have done previous work in that language at an acceptable level (equivalent to FREN 0500, a fifth semester language course at Brown).

2. For the Ph.D.: In order to be granted admission to candidacy for the Ph.D, students should have a minimum competence in one other language (besides French and English) which may be demonstrated:

A. by the satisfactory completion (with a B or better) at Brown of language courses at levels comparable to FREN 0500 or above. Students should keep in mind that only language courses on the 1000-level will be accepted for graduate credit.

B. by taking the reading courses especially designed for graduate students by different departments at Brown (e.g. GRMN 0220, etc.);

C. in special circumstances, the Department's Graduate Committee may waive the requirement on the basis of the student's previous record of work in that language at the college or university level.

D. Beyond this minimal requirement, the Department strongly encourages students to achieve a superior command of at least one other language in addition to French for the Ph.D. This language should be chosen for research or teaching purposes. (For instance, Latin for a student working in Medieval Literature or Arabic for a student of North African Literature.) In such cases, the Department is willing to allow students to do some advanced course work (above 1000) in that language in place of normal graduate course work or after they have taken the prelim examination.

Master's and Doctor's Theses

1. THE M.A. THESIS

The M.A. thesis is optional. Students may earn the M.A. degree either by completing one year of full-time study (eight courses) and writing a thesis (an essay of 50-60 pages) or by completing two years of full-time study (sixteen courses) without a thesis. The majority of students opt not to write an M.A. thesis.

2. THE DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

The Ph.D. dissertation (or thesis) is primarily a demonstration of the students' powers to treat profoundly a problem of some complexity, to communicate the results of their thoughts and findings and to show the implications of the latter for the chosen field. In this respect, it offers ample scope for original research and creative thinking. At the same time it is a training exercise that enables students to perfect techniques of critical and scholarly analysis. It is important to maintain a sensible balance between these functions. The goal is to achieve a meaningful contribution to our understanding of literature, culture, or language.

Students consult with appropriate faculty members concerning the feasibility of their proposed thesis topic and the selection of a thesis director. Both the Director and Second Reader will normally come from the Department. The Third Reader will normally be from outside the Department of French Studies, either from another department at Brown or (where appropriate) from another University. In close consultation with the dissertation committee, students draft their dissertation proposal as soon as possible after completion of the preliminary exam. In the proposal, they give a succinct statement of their aims, define the methods of inquiry and approach, demonstrate knowledge of what has and has not been done on their topic, tentatively outline the sections and chapters of the dissertation, and include a pertinent bibliography. The proposal should also include the names of the
dissertation director, the second reader, and (if possible) third reader. The usual length of a proposal is 15-20 pages (including bibliography).

After the student's dissertation committee has accepted the proposal, the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) receives a copy of the proposal and forwards it to the Graduate Committee. The DGS informs students when their proposal has been accepted.

Students become candidates for the Ph.D. only when the Graduate Committee has accepted their dissertation proposal. Students should enter candidacy no later than the beginning of the second semester after completing their preliminary exam. Candidacy is also contingent upon fulfillment of the language requirement.

Once the dissertation has been completed and accepted by the dissertation committee, an oral examination takes place. This examination, called the Dissertation Defense, consists of a public presentation and discussion of the thesis. (Approximately one week prior to the defense, the candidate leaves one complete copy of the dissertation in the Department Manager’s office for the faculty to read.)

The purpose of the defense is to assess the rigor and value of the findings set forth by the dissertation. During the first fifteen minutes of the defense the candidate offers a brief oral overview of the thesis, its contribution to literary studies, and possible plans for future expansion (all in about fifteen minutes). The major portion of the exam (somewhere between 60 and 90 minutes) consists of a dialogue in which the candidate responds to questions of the committee and other faculty. The author of the dissertation is expected to voice cogent, well-informed answers and to demonstrate professional expertise in the domain to which the thesis makes its contribution.

The Graduate School requires that all three readers accept the thesis. At the end of the defense, readers and other professors present consult in private and vote on whether to pass the dissertation.

For more information on the requirements and structure of the graduate program, and the application process, please contact our Director of Graduate Studies, David Wills, (401) 863-2741, Room 230, Rochambeau House.