

*University of Pittsburgh*

**Department of French and Italian  
Languages and Literatures**

*Graduate Policy  
(Graduate Handbook for  
students who matriculated  
before Fall 2020 (PDF))*

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(C.H. / L.I.)

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## I. DEGREES OFFERED BY THE DEPARTMENT

- A. Master of Arts
- B. Doctor of Philosophy

## II. FIELDS OF STUDY FOR THE MA AND PHD DEGREES

### *Masters Degree:*

French Language and Literature  
Italian Language and Literature

### *PhD Degree:*

French Language and Literature  
Film Studies with a Concentration in French (degree granted by  
Film Studies with French as Associated Program)

*Concentration is offered in*  
Romance Languages and Literatures

*Tracks are offered in*  
Literature and Politics

## III. THE MAJOR ADVISER

The director of graduate studies functions as the adviser for all MA and for the new doctoral candidates. After the initial registration, doctoral students may be advised by any departmental faculty member who will agree to the responsibility. Students must acquaint themselves with the requirements set forth in the current Graduate Bulletin of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, as well as with this statement. It is the students' responsibility to see that their folders are kept up to date and to initiate all necessary steps leading toward their graduate degrees.

## IV. PROGRAMS OF STUDY

### A. MA IN FRENCH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

A minimum of eight one-term courses in French literature and culture is required, of which at least six must be 2000-level courses. French 2710 (Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory) is required for all students. French 2970 (Teaching of French) is required for students holding a Teaching Assistantship or a Teaching Fellowship, but does not count among the eight courses. To ensure the acquisition of a broad knowledge of French and Francophone literature and culture, students must take at least one course in each of the seven fields (Middle Ages, Renaissance, 17th, 18th, 19th, and 20<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> centuries, and Francophone literatures).

Candidates for this degree must also pass comprehensive examinations and fulfill the following additional requirements:

1. **Seminar Paper.** This research paper (5,000-8,000 words) is written in French, usually in a course specifically designated as a seminar, but, in agreement with the professor, it can also be written in a survey course. It must receive a grade of B or better. (See VIII.C below)
2. **Second Language. See VII below.**

**B. MA IN ITALIAN LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE**

A minimum of eight one-term courses in Italian literature and culture is required, of which at least seven must be 2000-level courses. Occasionally, a student's particular circumstances, as well as the nature and content of an Italian-taught upper level undergraduate course make it suitable to be taken for credit, but only one such course may count towards the degree. Italian 2710 (Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory) is required of all students. Italian 2970 (Teaching of Italian) is required for students holding a Teaching Assistantship, but does not count among the eight courses. Directed and Independent Studies in Italian are offered upon request, whenever faculty members are available and willing to teach and/or supervise one or more students in a particular area of interest; such courses may be taken in addition to, but not in substitution of, regularly scheduled graduate courses, and only one may count towards the degree. Candidates must also pass comprehensive examinations and fulfill the following requirements:

1. **Research Paper** Each MA candidate is required to write a long final paper in Italian (30-40 pages). Students are strongly advised to select one paper from among their completed or ongoing seminar work. The first reader (typically the instructor for whom the work was originally done) will determine its suitability as an example of research methodology and scholarly writing, and will decide whether—with revision and expansion—it can be presented to a second reader, and then to the Department in lieu of a thesis. Students must submit the completed thesis, to the second reader at least 10 days before the deadline for certification of graduation. Such deadline typically falls in mid-December for Fall graduation and in the last week of April or first week of May for Spring graduation.
2. **Second Language** Candidates must demonstrate a reading knowledge of Latin or German or a Romance language other than Italian (other languages will be considered upon petition). This requirement is waived for those students who come to the program with two terms of undergraduate Latin, or four terms of German or a Romance language at Pitt or the equivalent. See also section VII.

**C. PHD IN FRENCH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE WITH MA EN ROUTE**

This degree is intended for students who wish to pursue the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree in French Language and Literature but who do not already hold an MA in this field or in a closely related discipline. Students must first successfully complete the requirements for the MA in French Language and Literature, normally within their first two years of full-time enrollment. Students doing the PhD with the MA *en route* will be awarded an MA degree at the completion of these requirements.

To ensure the acquisition of a broad knowledge of French literature and culture, candidates must have had taken at least one course or one exam in each field (Middle Ages, Renaissance, 17th, 18th, 19th, and 20<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> centuries and African and Caribbean literatures) before they reach candidacy.

Before students may be considered for admission to candidacy for the PhD, they must successfully complete a minimum of five 2000-level courses (15 credits) beyond the MA

The five courses must include:

1. FR 2710 (if not taken at the MA level) and an additional course in literary or cultural theory.
2. With the adviser's consent, students are free to take some of the additional required courses in other departments. Students in French are encouraged to pursue certification in one of the various programs offered by the University (EUCE, Cultural Studies, Film Studies, Global Studies, Medieval and Renaissance Studies, Women's Studies). However, only three exterior courses may count towards the degree in French.

In addition, the candidate must present an oral *explication de texte* before a faculty committee (completed as part of the MA comprehensive exams), fulfill the MA seminar paper requirement (completed at the MA level; see section IV.A.1), and pass written and oral PhD comprehensive examinations. The PhD language requirement will normally be satisfied at the MA level (see section VII below). The *explication de texte* requirement is normally completed as part of the MA comprehensive exams.

Upon admission to candidacy, the candidate will write and defend a doctoral dissertation.

#### **D. PHD IN FRENCH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE**

This degree is intended for students who already hold an MA in French Language and Literature or in a closely related discipline. To ensure the acquisition of a broad knowledge of French literature and culture, candidates must have had taken at least one course or one exam in each field (Middle Ages, Renaissance, 17th, 18th, 19th, and 20<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> centuries and African and Caribbean literatures) before they reach candidacy. Before students may be considered for admission to candidacy for the PhD, they must complete successfully a minimum of eight 2000-level courses (24 credits) beyond the MA

The eight courses must include:

1. FR 2710 (if not taken at the MA level) and an additional course in literary or cultural theory.
2. With the adviser's consent, students are free to take some of the additional required courses in other departments. Students in French are encouraged to pursue certification in one of the various programs offered by the University (EUCE, Cultural Studies, Film Studies, Global Studies, Medieval and Renaissance Studies, Women's Studies). However, only three exterior courses may count towards the degree in French.

In addition, the candidate must present an oral *explication de texte* before a faculty committee, satisfy PhD language requirements (see section VII below), and pass written and oral PhD comprehensive examinations.

Upon admission to candidacy, the candidate will write and defend a doctoral dissertation.

#### **E. PHD IN FRENCH: CONCENTRATION IN ROMANCE LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES**

Candidates for this concentration will typically already hold an MA in one of the Romance languages and literatures, or the equivalent and will, upon entering the program, choose two major linguistic areas, and one minor linguistic area from among the four language areas (French, Italian, Portuguese, and Spanish). Portuguese may not be used as one of the major areas, and one of the major areas must be French.

Candidates for this concentration are expected to have a strong preparation in French upon entering the program. The student will also choose a major and a minor period from among the following four periods: 1) Middle Ages, 2) Renaissance and Baroque, 3) Enlightenment, Romanticism and Realism (18th and 19th centuries to 1848), 4) Modern/Post Modern. If Spanish is one of the major linguistic areas, the student will also choose, as appropriate, between the peninsular and Latin American areas.

The candidate will then take at least three 2000-level courses in each of the two major linguistic areas, and at least two 1000-level courses in the third area. At least one of these courses will be a 2000-level course in linguistics in one of the major fields (a course in the History of the Language or in Comparative Romance Linguistics is recommended). At least three of these courses should involve the writing of a long (or seminar-type) paper of 20-30 pages, and one of these papers must be written in English.

Initially, the candidate will be advised by the Director of Graduate Studies in French. After a preliminary examination, taken sometime in the first year, the student will choose an advisor working in the major period in one of the two major areas. That adviser will guide the candidate in choosing courses and elaborating reading lists for the comprehensive examinations, and will oversee the preparation and grading of those examinations. This advisor is likely to be the intended dissertation director, but that is not necessary.

The dissertation committee should include one faculty member with expertise in each of the three major period/areas. In all cases, the choice of linguistic areas and periods will be limited by the availability of faculty and course offerings in the various departments.

It is expected that every candidate will teach at least one language course in each of his or her major linguistic areas before completing the degree.

#### **F. PHD IN FRENCH: TRACK IN LITERATURE AND POLITICS**

This concentration is dedicated to studying literary representations in their political context. The set of courses offered in this area all analyze the complex interaction between literary works and social reality. These courses, examine how literature reflects a certain image of the social order, while, at the same time it influences the image a society has of itself. This track allows students to develop their own conceptualization of the interconnection between literature and politics by studying, for

example, figures ranging from the medieval cleric, the Renaissance humanist and the Enlightenment philosophe to the Romantic poet, the intellectual and the postmodern theorist.

Our courses combine two approaches to the question of the relations between literature and politics. Some focus on the way literary works (often implicitly) represent the socio-political order through the way they depict the place of the individual in society. Whether they tend to strengthen and support this order, or on the contrary tend to question and disrupt it, most poems, plays, novels and films carry with them an implicit assessment of the way individuals are made to fit within the structures and hierarchies prevalent at each period. Other courses focus on the way writers have explicitly addressed political issues: while poets, playwrights, novelists and filmmakers often directly comment upon socio-political issues, political theorists also have recourse to rhetorical tools directly drawn from literary devices. Starting from close textual analysis, our courses both situate literature in a political perspective and look at political discourse from a literary and rhetorical point of view.

Although our students are invited (and required) to take courses in Political Science, History, Philosophy, or Film Studies to complement their knowledge and diversify their approaches, our core courses offer them a perspective which is specific to a literary program. As literary scholars, we are in a unique position to study the multifarious manifestations of the social imagination.

In addition to what are usually considered literary texts (poetry, theater, novels), our approach also includes other types of discourses and narratives (political treatises, pamphlets, newspaper articles, films) where this representation of the political order takes place. While our courses tend to focus on material produced in the French-speaking world, some issues can only be understood when situated within a wider European context, which is why some of the courses that satisfy the concentration reach across national and linguistic borders.

Among the topics discussed in this track, one can list such themes as: the place of the individual in medieval society; the image of the ruler in medieval writings (as manifested in the "mirrors of princes", letters to Kings and in the literature of the Hundred Years War); the images of the body politic in medieval and early modern France; the evolution of the relationship between the citizen and the State; the political imagination of the Enlightenment; the role of the Intellectuals in modern French society; issues of style and responsibility in post-war France; the politics of difference and identity in contemporary French fiction. (Some of these topics constitute the central object of a course, while others are presented as sub-themes within a broader survey.)

By studying the representations of political issues, approached in the primary texts within their historical context, this track produces degrees which combine a solid and wide knowledge of European political history with an original reflection on the place of literature in contemporary societies.



### **G. STRUCTURE OF TRACK**

Students concentrating in this area must fulfill the following requirements:

1. Out of eight courses that have to be taken with a letter grade, and four that can be audited, at least six have to come from the list of courses qualifying for this concentration. Consult with the director of graduate studies on which courses count toward the concentration.
2. Between two to four courses have to be taken in a department other than French and Italian (in the departments of Political Science, History, Philosophy, German, Spanish, Slavic, English as well as in the Global Studies, Medieval and Renaissance Studies, Women's Studies, West European Studies and Cultural Studies programs).
3. The comprehensive examinations are designed on the same format as those of a regular PhD in French languages and literatures. However, the topics of research have to fit the perspective developed in the area of concentration.
4. Dissertations can either focus on one specific point of interaction between literature and politics studied through different periods, or focus on a particular question linking politics and literature within one single period (or one single author).

### **H. PHD IN FILM STUDIES WITH A CONCENTRATION IN FRENCH**

The PhD in Film Studies at the University of Pittsburgh is an interdisciplinary and interdepartmental degree that stresses the history, theory, and aesthetics of international cinema, video, television, and new media. While the student will earn a PhD in Film Studies (granted by the Film Studies Program), he or she will also be a full member of French, fulfilling all requirements for the PhD in French. French will appear as an Area of Concentration on the student's transcript. Thus, the student graduating with a PhD in Film Studies will be doubly qualified: in film studies as well as in French Studies.

Students must fulfill all of the requirements for the PhD in French or PhD with MA *en route* (see sections IV.C and IV.D) and the following additional requirements:

1. Core Courses in Film Studies (7 credits):

- a two-course (6 credit) sequence taken in any order:

Film History/Theory I ENGFLM 2451

Film History/Theory II ENGFLM 2452

Students must complete both core courses by the end of their second year.

- 1 credit Film Studies Proseminar ENGFLM 2905

*Note: This will not count toward seminar credit within the French program and will be given on a Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory basis.*

2. Electives in Film Studies (12 credits)

- Four elective Film Studies courses (in any department).

*Of the total six required seminars, the student must take at least two courses taught by a member of the Film Studies faculty outside of French. These courses can include the two required core courses as well as any of the four electives.*

Students pursuing a PhD with MA *en route* may substitute a course in film or film theory (other than Film History/Theory I or II) for a course in one of the seven fields required for the MA (Middle Ages, Renaissance, 17th, 18th, 19th, and 20<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> centuries, and Francophone literatures). A course in this field must be taken as part of the PhD coursework. Students must receive permission from the DGS for this coverage substitution.

***Preliminary examination/evaluation:*** The two required core courses in Film Studies (Film History/Theory I and II) will serve as the preliminary exam in Film Studies. Successful completion of these two classes with a grade of B or better will constitute passing the preliminary examination. To maintain funding, students must also pass the required preliminary evaluation conducted by the French faculty at the end of the first year of enrollment.

***PhD comprehensive examinations:*** The PhD comprehensive exams must contain at least one component focusing on Film Studies and at least one component on French Studies (including its relation to cinema). Exams must demonstrate mastery of film studies as a discipline, the history of French and Francophone cinema, and the relationships between French and Francophone Studies and Film Studies as determined in consultation with the advisor. At least one member of the exam committee will be a member of the graduate faculty in Film Studies.

***Dissertation committee:*** The dissertation will be completed in the Department of French and Italian and must involve film and/or media studies as subject matter incorporated with French Studies (as determined by the dissertation director). The Chair of the dissertation committee will be a graduate faculty member in the Department of French and Italian who is also a member of the interdisciplinary Film Studies graduate faculty. The external member of the committee will be a member of the Film Studies graduate faculty from outside the Department of French and Italian.

***Teaching:*** All film PhD students will be required to serve as TA/TF for at least one film class. If the Department of French and Italian does not offer a film course or has no TA/TF positions for a film course, students will be required to teach one term of the undergraduate course Introduction to Film (or another such introductory course developed in the future) as part of his/her overall experience as a TA/TF.

## **V. EXCHANGES, RESIDENCE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADE OPTIONS**

### **A. EXCHANGE POSITIONS**

Students interested in going on exchange positions established with foreign universities should discuss this issue with the director of graduate studies, and submit an application by October of the preceding academic year. The application should take the form of a letter explaining what the student hopes to gain from spending a year abroad, and what specific goals will be reached by the end of the exchange year. The director of graduate studies will lead an ad hoc committee in charge of reviewing the applications, and of selecting the students whose case appears the strongest.

MA students selected for an exchange with a foreign university will thereby earn a third year of financial support since the faculty believes that any student at this level can profit simply from the experience of living and working in France.

At the PhD level, the application letter should take the form of a detailed research proposal, spelling out precise and measurable goals for the year spent abroad.

### **B. RESIDENCE AND GRADES**

For the residence requirements, see “General Regulations” in the current Graduate Bulletin. [www.umc.pitt.edu/bulletins/graduate/index.html](http://www.umc.pitt.edu/bulletins/graduate/index.html)

A “B-” grade in a required course must be eliminated by repetition of the course.

## **VI. COURSE LOAD**

### **A. COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

All full-time students (and TAs and TFs must be full-time students) are required to register for at least three courses (9 credits) per term for a letter grade. At least six of these credits must count toward course requirements for the degree. The remaining three credits can be taken in FRIT, or in another department at the 1000 or 2000-level. TAs and TFs may register for a maximum of five courses (15 credits). If students register as auditors for a course (above and beyond the nine credits required), they are expected to do the reading for the course and take an active part in class discussions.

ABDs who hold a Teaching Fellowship are required to audit at least one course per term in the Department, or they can choose to participate more actively in only one course per year. In the latter case, they have to agree with the instructor on the modalities and the extent of their involvement in the course. In all cases, students must attend at least half of the class sessions to be considered in good standing. Students holding pre-dissertation fellowships are not required to audit courses.

### **B. DIRECTED STUDIES**

Directed studies will be granted in exceptional cases at the discretion of the faculty.

### **C. TA/TF Appointments and Outside Appointments**

Graduate students holding teaching assistantships from the University of Pittsburgh should devote their full time to the program of graduate study in which they are enrolled, and are expected to make satisfactory progress towards their degree. Students with these appointments may not simultaneously accept another appointment or be employed either within or outside the university without knowledge and approval from the Director of Graduate Studies and the Department Chair.

## **VII. LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS**

Candidates for the MA must give evidence of ability to read Latin, German, or a Romance Language other than their major language (French or Italian). Students may petition to the DGS to have another language appropriate to the course of study count (e.g., Creole, Wolof, Arabic, Ancient Greek). Candidates can fulfill the language requirement by satisfactorily passing a translation exam, a two-term graduate reading

course, or the equivalent of a fourth-semester language course (with a grade of “B” or better). Other types of documentation may be accepted by the DGS.

Candidates for the PhD in French Languages and Literature must give evidence of ability to read German, Latin, or a Romance language other than their major language (French or Italian). Students may petition to the DGS to have another language appropriate to the course of study count (e.g., Creole, Wolof, Arabic, Ancient Greek). Students who have satisfied the language requirement during the MA will be considered to have fulfilled this requirement for the PhD. Students may be required by their dissertation advisor to have a reading knowledge of Latin.

MA and PhD students may not use undergraduate, elementary language credits as part of the nine credit hours funded students are required to take each semester, and these credits will not count towards the 72 credit hours need in order to enroll in FTDA (full time dissertation study).

### VIII. TIMELINE AND EXAMINATIONS FOR FRENCH MA

	<b>Fall Term</b>	<b>Spring Term</b>	<b>Summer Term</b>
<b>Year 1</b>	<b>French 2710 2 other graduate seminars</b>	<b>3 seminars  MA evaluation (see below)</b>	<b>Read for MA comprehensive exam</b>
<b>Year 2</b>	<b>3 seminars</b>	<b>2 seminars plus oral and written MA comprehensive exam (see below)</b>	

Candidates for all MA degrees must take written comprehensive examinations in their program. Students in the French program must also take an oral *explication de texte*. Normally, MA candidates will be expected to complete all requirements for the degree by the end of the term in which they take their comprehensives.

The University has established a statute of limitations of four years for MA candidates. Although the department adheres to this regulation, it points out that full-time MA candidates holding Teaching Assistantships may normally not expect more than two years of financial support.

#### A. MA EVALUATION

At the end of the first full year of coursework, MA students will be evaluated by the department. The DGS in French will contact all members of the faculty with whom the student has studied or worked in view of giving feedback to the student about their performance in coursework, their teaching, and their citizenship in the department. This evaluation will be part of the annual report which all graduate students in the department complete in early summer.

#### B. MA READING LIST

The MA Reading List establishes the minimal requirements in each area for preparation of the MA comprehensive exams and may be obtained in the department

office. This list is intended to guide MA candidates in their preparation for the comprehensives.

### **C. MA COMPREHENSIVE EXAM IN FRENCH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE**

The MA Comprehensive is an examination designed to ensure that the candidates have acquired a thorough overall knowledge of French language, culture and literature, as well as a strong competency in literary analysis. It is divided into two sections, a written section and an oral section. There are two parts to the written exam: one a diachronic exam with a large scope, the other a series of more specific, targeted questions including identifications. The written exam will be in French. Each exam is four hours in length and is given on different days. This exam is given once per year, usually the week after spring break.

The oral component of the exam consists of three sections. First, students will present an *explication de texte*. For this exam, students will be given the choice of three short texts and will have 48 hours to prepare their presentation. The *explication de texte* will be done in French and should last approximately 30 minutes. The second part of the oral component will be the occasion for a discussion between faculty and MA candidates about the written comprehensive exams. Finally, faculty and students will discuss the student's seminar paper. This paper (see "IV. Programs Of Study," above) must be distributed to the members of the exam committee at least three weeks in advance of the oral exam. The oral exam will usually take place 1-2 weeks after the written exam.

For further information and the reading list, see the document "Comprehensive Exam for the MA in French Language and Literature."

### **D. POST-MA STUDENTS**

Students who complete the MA in French at the University of Pittsburgh and are subsequently accepted into the French PhD program will follow the timeline below for the PhD with MA *en route*, beginning in year 3 of the timeline. All work done for the MA (language requirement, coursework, etc.) will be directly applied to the PhD. These students will have a preliminary evaluation at the end of their first year in the PhD program (see below). Such students should begin working in the summer after their MA exams to formulate reading lists for their comprehensive exams and to articulate a possible PhD project.

## **IX. MA COMPREHENSIVE EXAM IN ITALIAN LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE**

The MA Comprehensive is a written examination designed to ensure that the candidates have acquired a thorough overall knowledge of Italian language, culture and literature, as well as a strong competency in literary analysis. It is divided into three four-hour tests.

Students prepare for the exams on the basis of the reading-list provided to them by the Italian faculty. In preparation for two of the three exams, students concentrate on two different periods of Italian Literature. Students select their periods from the 20<sup>th</sup> century and/or any combination of two other adjacent centuries. For the third written examination students are asked to prepare for a general, cross-century examination of an issue of his/her choice, relevant to the history of Italian literature and culture (for

example: the *questione della lingua*; the origins, development and demise or transformation of a literary genre; Italian identity and migration; the interrelations of literature and another discipline etc.). This exam shall include a theoretical component. Students must consult with the graduate advisor and the faculty member principally responsible for the chosen topic, in order to determine a specific, appropriate reading list for their third exam.

Candidates may take all of their written examinations at the end of their fourth term or may decide to take each of them at a different date, spreading them over the course of one or more semesters. If taken at the end of the fourth term, typically the three written tests are scheduled on alternative days, the week after Spring recess for students graduating in April or the week before Thanksgiving recess for students graduating in December. Students should discuss alternative scheduling and distribution of the tests with the DGS and petition for approval. However, written examinations should be scheduled so as to be completed at least three weeks prior to the end of the term in which the student wants to graduate.

Upon review of the written examinations, the Italian faculty conducts individual oral interviews with the candidates to inform them of the results and discuss their final paper.

**X. TIMELINE AND EXAMINATIONS FOR THE PHD WITH MA *EN ROUTE***  
(See section X.D for detailed examination timeline)

	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Spring</b>	<b>Summer</b>
<b>Year 1</b>	<b>French 2710</b>  <b>2 other seminars</b>	<b>3 seminars</b>  <b>Preliminary evaluation</b>	<b>Read for MA exam</b>
<b>Year 2</b>	<b>3 seminars</b>	<b>2 seminars plus oral and written MA comprehensive exam (see below)</b>	<b>Begin research on dissertation topic, construct reading lists for PhD comprehensive exams</b>
<b>Year 3</b>	<b>3 seminars</b>	<b>2 seminars</b>  <b>Prepare PhD comprehensive Exam 1</b> <b>Take PhD Exam 1</b>	<b>Prepare PhD comprehensive Exam 2</b>
<b>Year 4</b>	<b>Take PhD Exam 2</b>  <b>Complete and defend prospectus</b>	<b>Begin writing PhD</b>	<b>Write PhD</b>
<b>Year 5</b>	<b>Write PhD</b>	<b>Write PhD/Defend PhD</b>	
<b>Year 6 (if necessary)</b>	<b>Write PhD</b>	<b>Defend PhD</b>	

**A. PRELIMINARY EVALUATION**

In accordance with Graduate School policy, students in their first year of the PhD program will undergo a preliminary evaluation at the end of the first year of full residence. The DGS in French will contact all members of the faculty with whom the student has studied or worked in view of giving feedback to the student about their performance in coursework, their teaching, and their citizenship in the department. The purpose of this evaluation is to identify those students who may be expected to complete a doctoral program successfully, and also to identify deficiencies in the students' preparation. To satisfy this requirement, graduate students in French will meet with their adviser in the second term of residence for an evaluation of the record of performance in their first term on the basis of grades and reports from the students' instructors.

**B. MA COMPREHENSIVE EXAMS**

In their second year of full-time study, students take MA comprehensive exams. See above under MA (section VIII) for a description of the exams. The exam for students completing the PhD with MA *en route* is the equivalent of the "MA comprehensive exam" for MA students and will be given on the same dates as that exam. Students will receive one of three grades: honors with permission to continue on to the PhD, pass with permission to continue on to the PhD, conditional pass, or a terminal MA.

**C. EXPLICATION DE TEXTE**

Before taking their comprehensive examinations, PhD students must present an oral *explication de texte* in French before a jury comprised of members of the faculty. This requirement is fulfilled as part of the MA comprehensive exams for students in the PhD with MA *en route*. See above under MA (section VIII) for a description of the exams.

**D. COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATIONS AND FUNDING FOR THE PHD WITH MA EN ROUTE IN FRENCH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE**

Candidates must take written comprehensive examinations. These examinations normally should be passed at least eight months (two terms) before the degree is to be awarded. Students may present themselves for the examinations only after passing all preliminary examinations and language and other requirements, except for courses that are currently being taken.

The University has established a statute of limitations of ten years from the student's initial registration for graduate study or eight years from the initial registration for students holding an MA degree. Although the Department adheres to this regulation, it points out that students doing the PhD with MA *en route* can only receive up to **six** years of financial support.

However, to be eligible for a fifth year of support, students must complete their written comprehensive exams at the beginning of the seventh semester of support, and they must defend their prospectus by the end of the seventh semester. Students should enter candidacy by the end of their seventh semester.

The department will not renew Teaching Fellowships after the students have benefited from **six years** of support (this includes TFships, an exchange year in France, and any competitive fellowships within the University of Pittsburgh).

The exams ensure that the candidate is able to develop a scholarly and original approach to the study of French or Francophone literature and culture in a given period. The exams are also designed to help students acquire the knowledge and skills necessary for teaching in a college or university environment by addressing periods outside the area of specialization and by creating a balance between general and specialized topics. They are meant to serve as a bridge between the more general MA examination and the research project which will result in the dissertation. After completing these exams, students write a prospectus (see below).

The PhD comprehensive exams consist of two different exams, one of which is written in French and the other in English. (It is recommended that the second exam be written in the language of the dissertation.) The exam structure allows the student to articulate and explore a series of related topics or questions 1) across relevant historical periods and 2) in a more closely defined period related to the dissertation. In this way, the sequencing of the exams enables the student to progress through research and reflection necessary to the preparation of the dissertation prospectus and to receive formative feedback from faculty at different moments in the process.

### **Exam 1          Problem with Historical Coverage**

This exam consists of a question, topic, or genre studied across at least three periods of French and Francophone literature and film. Students will define their topic and historical periods in consultation with the exam advisor and committee. Historical periods need not be contiguous or of equal scope, but should be determined in accordance with the topic. The focus of this exam should not be on the area of specialization, although texts from the period of specialization may be included if appropriate.

Students will take Exam 1 at the end of their third year of the PhD program, in May (end of year 2 for students entering the program with an MA). A reading list of 30-40 titles (including at least 5 critical or theoretical sources) and a 1-2-page description of the question to be studied must be submitted to the exam committee by the first week of spring semester of Year 3. (Students may have until the week after spring break to submit a revised exam description, if necessary.) This statement presents the topic, genre, or question explored in this exam and explains the choice of historical coverage. It also informs the composition of the exam essay questions.

The exam consists of a 48-hour take-home (open-book) exam; students will have a choice of one out of two essay questions and should write between 10 and 20 typed, double-spaced pages. Students must take the exam during the first two weeks in May and must schedule the exam with the exam committee and grad secretary no later than one full month before the date of the exam.



## **Exam 2      Problem in Period of Specialization**

In this exam, the student will develop, refine, or explore a new aspect of the topic defined in the first exam in the context of the projected area of specialization of the dissertation. After the historical coverage of the first exam, the second exam allows students to deepen their engagement with a particular question or problem and expand their knowledge of key titles in their chosen area of specialization.

Students will take Exam 2 at the beginning of their fourth year in the PhD program, in September (beginning of year 3, for students entering the program with an MA). The exam consists of a 48-hour take-home (open-book) exam; students will have a choice of one out of two essay questions and should write between 10 and 20 typed, double-spaced pages. A final version of the exam reading list (25-30 titles, including 5 critical or theoretical sources) and 1-2-page description of the question to be studied must be submitted to the exam committee by June 30. (If a revised exam statement is necessary, it should be submitted by July 20.)

The written portion of the exam, to be taken no later than the first week of September, will be followed by an oral exam in French or English scheduled within two weeks of the written exam and conducted by the student's examination committee. During the oral exam, the student will answer questions on the written exam and reading list, discuss the development of the problematic across the exams, and present plans for the dissertation prospectus. Students will receive feedback on their exams and on the conception and planning of the dissertation prospectus.

### **PhD Comprehensive Exam Timetable (PhD w/ MA *en route*)**

(For PhD only: timeline begins at Year 1)

#### **Year 2/Summer**

(PhD only: Year 1/Summer) Determine Exam 1 committee (3-4 faculty members including exam advisor) and choose exam advisor. The Exam 1 advisor does not have to be your dissertation advisor. Exam advisor and committee must be agreed upon and reported to the DGS and grad secretary by May 31. Begin work on reading list for Exam 1.

#### **Year 3/Fall**

(PhD only: Year 2/Fall) Finalize reading list for Exam 1; work on exam problematic

#### **Year 3/Spring**

(PhD only: Year 2/Spring) Submit final version of reading list and exam statement to exam committee and grad secretary by end of first week of spring semester.  
\*Students may have until the week after spring break to submit a revised exam description, if necessary.  
Prepare for Exam 1 (register for PhD comp credits).

Schedule Exam 1 with exam committee and grad secretary no later than one month before projected exam date. Make contact with Exam 2 advisor (in most cases, this person will become your dissertation advisor); discuss make-up of Exam 2 committee (3 faculty members, including exam advisor) and topic.

### **Year 3/Summer**

(PhD only: Year 2/Summer)

Take Exam 1 during the first two weeks of May. Submit final version of Exam 2 reading list and statement of problematic to Exam 2 committee and grad secretary by June 30.\*  
 \*Students may have until July 20 to submit a revised exam description, if necessary.  
 Prepare for Exam 2.  
 Schedule written section of Exam 2 with exam committee and grad secretary no later than one month before exam date.

### **Year 4/Fall**

(PhD only: Year 3/Fall)

Take written part of Exam 2 during the first week of September, at the latest.  
 Take oral part of Exam 2, to be scheduled within two weeks of written exam.  
 Write dissertation prospectus (prospectus defense at the end of fall semester).

### **Makeup of PhD Comprehensive Exam Committees**

Exam 1: The student will ask a faculty member in a specialization pertaining to the field of their exam to chair the Exam 1 committee. The exam committee chair must be a member of the French graduate faculty; he/she may be, but is not required to be, the student's prospective dissertation advisor. The student, with the approval of the committee chair, will ask at least two other members of the faculty to serve on the exam committee. This committee, composed of at least three members, will guide the student in the preparation of a reading list and problematic and will also supervise the administration of the written examinations. This committee will evaluate the examinations along with other specialists who will be called upon as deemed appropriate by the faculty member chairing the committee.

Exam 2: The student will ask a faculty member in their intended field of specialization to chair the Exam 2 committee and to serve as their dissertation director. The exam committee chair must be a member of the French graduate faculty. The student, with the approval of the committee chair, will ask at least two other members of the faculty to serve on the exam committee. This committee, composed of at least three members, will guide the student in the preparation of a reading list and problematic and will also supervise the administration of the written examinations. This committee will evaluate

the examinations along with other specialists who will be called upon as deemed appropriate by the faculty member chairing the committee.

### **Evaluation of PhD Comprehensive Exams**

Exam 1: Students will receive individual written comments and a common exam grade from the exam committee within 2 weeks of the exam date. The exam is graded as Fail, Pass, or Honors, with +/- grades possible.

Exam 2: Students will receive a common exam grade for the written and oral sections of the exam (same grading rubric as Exam 1). Feedback on both parts of the exam will be given at the time of the oral examination.

Students must pass both parts (Exams 1 and 2) of the PhD comprehensive exams in order to proceed to the prospectus. A student who fails an exam may be permitted to retake the exam once according to a schedule determined by the exam advisor and committee, but no later than 3 months after the original examination.

### **XI. TIMELINE AND EXAMINATIONS FOR THE PHD WITHOUT AN MA** (for students who enter the PhD program with an MA in French or in a closely related field) (See section X.D for detailed examination timeline)

	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Spring</b>	<b>Summer</b>
<b>Year 1</b>	<b>FR2710</b>  <b>2 other seminars</b>	<b>3 seminars</b>  <i>Explication de texte</i>  <b>Preliminary evaluation</b>	<b>Begin preparing PhD comprehensive exams</b>
<b>Year 2</b>	<b>3 seminars</b>	<b>2 seminars</b>  <b>Prepare PhD comprehensive Exam 1</b> <b>Take PhD Exam 1</b>	<b>Prepare PhD comprehensive Exam 2</b>
<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Take PhD Exam 2</b>  <b>Complete and defend prospectus</b>	<b>Begin writing PhD</b>	<b>Write PhD</b>
<b>Year 4</b>	<b>Write PhD</b>	<b>Write PhD</b>	<b>Write PhD</b>
<b>Year 5</b>	<b>Write PhD</b>	<b>Write/defend PhD</b>	
<b>Year 6 (if necessary)</b>	<b>Write PhD</b>	<b>Defend PhD</b>	

**A. PRELIMINARY EVALUATION**

In accordance with Graduate School policy, students in their first year of the PhD program will undergo a preliminary evaluation by the end of the first year of full residence. The DGS in French will contact all members of the faculty with whom the student has studied or worked in view of giving feedback to the student about their performance in coursework, their teaching, and their citizenship in the department. The purpose of this evaluation is to identify those students who may be expected to complete a doctoral program successfully, and also to identify deficiencies in the students' preparation. To satisfy this requirement, graduate students in French will meet with their adviser in the second term of residence for an evaluation of the record of performance in their first term on the basis of grades and reports from the students' instructors. They will also complete and pass the oral *explication de texte* (see section XI.B below).

**B. EXPLICATION DE TEXTE**

Before undergoing their preliminary evaluation, PhD students must present an oral *explication de texte* in French before a jury comprised of members of the faculty. The student and the chair of the comprehensive examination committee (see "c" below) will agree on a work, or on a series of works, from which the *texte* will be taken. The student will receive the text 48 hours before the presentation is to take place. The student will be allowed to bring to the presentation the book from which the passage is taken as well as his/her notes, but will not be allowed to read his/her presentation. This presentation will be done in French and should last about 30 minutes, after which questions will be asked. If the *explication* is not satisfactory, the student may repeat the exercise once.

Please consult the edited volume *Explication de texte* (ed. Jean Sareil) while preparing for this exam. The text is available in the department.

**C. COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATIONS AND FUNDING FOR THE PHD IN FRENCH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE**

Candidates must take written comprehensive examinations. These examinations normally should be passed at least eight months (two terms) before the degree is to be awarded. Students may present themselves for the examinations only after passing all preliminary examinations and language and other requirements, except for courses that are currently being taken.

The University has established a statute of limitations of ten years from the student's initial registration for graduate study or eight years from the initial registration for students holding an MA degree. Although the Department adheres to this regulation, it points out that full-time PhD students may only receive up to four years of financial support as a TF.

However, to be eligible for the fourth year of support, students must complete the written comprehensive examinations by the beginning of the fifth semester of support, and they must defend their prospectus by the end of the fifth semester. Students should enter candidacy by the end of their fifth semester.

The department will not renew Teaching Fellowships after the students have benefited from **five years** of support (this includes TFships, an exchange year in France, and any competitive fellowships within the University of Pittsburgh).

The exams ensure that the candidate is able to develop a scholarly and original approach to the study of French or Francophone literature and culture in a given period. The exams are also designed to help students acquire the knowledge and skills necessary for teaching in a college or university environment by addressing periods outside the area of specialization and by creating a balance between general and specialized topics. They are meant to serve as a bridge between the more general MA examination and the research project which will result in the dissertation. After completing these exams, students write a prospectus (see below). See Section X.D (pp. 16-19) for an explanation and detailed timeline of the PhD comprehensive examinations.

#### **D. COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATIONS FOR THE PHD IN FRENCH WITH CONCENTRATION IN ROMANCE LANGUAGES**

For students working toward a Concentration in Romance Languages, the comprehensive examinations will consist of three written parts:

1. A broad problem designed by the student in the minor period, incorporating at least two of the three languages.
2. A genre or a problem studied in the two periods, covering all three literatures.
3. A French author chosen from one of the two periods, studied in relation to one of the other two languages.

For each part, the student will submit a reading list for approval by a faculty member specialized in the period(s) or area(s) in question. The student will articulate, in a page or two, a problem, in relation to which the faculty member will then prepare a series of questions for the exam.

Each of the three written exams will take up to five hours. After completing these exams, student will write a prospectus which should incorporate the two principle languages.

## **XII. LANGUAGE, DATES AND REPETITION OF THE COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATIONS**

### **A. LANGUAGE USED IN THE PHD COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATIONS**

The PhD comprehensive exams consist of two different exams, one of which is written in French and the other in English. It is recommended that the second exam be written in the language of the dissertation.

### **B. DATES OF COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATIONS**

Comprehensive examinations for the MA degree in Italian will be given by the Department in March, the week after Spring break.

The Department expects MA students in French who are applying to the PhD program to take and pass the comprehensives by March of their second year.

The **two** sections of the MA comprehensive examinations in French have to be taken by March 15 of the second year of the TAship. The exam will be given only once per year, so that all students have to take the written exams on the same day.

Students in the PhD with MA *en route* will take the first examination of the PhD comprehensive examinations (Exam 1) at the end of their third year, in May; students in

the PhD, at the end of their second year. Exam 1 must be scheduled during the first two weeks of May. Students in the PhD with MA *en route* will take the second examination of the PhD comprehensive examinations (Exam 2) at the beginning of their fourth year, in September; students in the PhD, at the beginning of their third year. The written portion of the exam, to be taken no later than the first week of September, will be followed by an oral exam scheduled within two weeks of the written exam.

**C. REPETITION OF MA AND PHD COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATIONS**

Students who fail one or more parts of the written examinations may, on the recommendation of the Department, be permitted to repeat once the part(s) failed. MA students may (if faculty is available) be given an opportunity to make up the failed section or sections of the examination over the summer.

Students must pass both parts (Exams 1 and 2) of the PhD comprehensive exams in order to proceed to the prospectus. A student who fails an exam may be permitted to retake the exam once according to a schedule determined by the exam advisor and committee, but no later than 3 months after the original examination.

**XIII. THESIS AND DISSERTATION REQUIREMENTS**

**A. THE MA DEGREE**

No formal thesis is required. Candidates for the all MA degrees must take one seminar in which a major research paper is required (see the MA seminar paper requirement, section IV.A.1). The instructor will grade the paper for form and content and decide whether it is suitable, with or without revision, to be presented to the Department in lieu of a thesis.

**B. THE PHD DEGREE**

A doctoral dissertation is required. This must meet the standards established by the University. Students should ask for the FAS booklet specifying these standards as soon as their prospectus has been accepted. Dissertations must be submitted electronically to the University. Students are responsible for completing all necessary paperwork before graduation.

**1. *The Language of the Dissertation***

Normally, dissertations are written in English, as prescribed by the Graduate Faculty. A student intending to petition for permission to write the dissertation in French, shall write at least two seminar papers in English in order to demonstrate competence in the language. The student is advised to make an early written petition to the Dean of Graduate Studies, Faculty of Arts and Sciences, and is warned that such permission may not be granted. The petition should be accompanied by a letter from the adviser and a copy of the papers written in English. In the petition, the student should present sound reasons for writing the dissertation in a language other than English. This petition must be submitted by the time of the student's prospectus defense.

## **2. *Steps in Writing the Doctoral Dissertation***

It is the student's responsibility to design a topic suitable for research resulting in a doctoral dissertation. Students are encouraged to start thinking about a topic and to seek advice from faculty members as soon as they join the PhD program.

By the end of their first year, they must already have at least a rough idea of the direction in which they want to launch their research project.

As soon as the comprehensive examinations have been passed, the student and his/her adviser should agree on a dissertation committee including at least three members of the department (including the director) and one member chosen from another department in an area of expertise relevant to the dissertation topic.

Usually during the third year (PhD only) or fourth year (PhD with *MA en route*), the student must submit a prospectus to the director for circulation among the committee members. The scope, size, organization and format of the prospectus are specified in a separate departmental document, which PhD students should receive or request as soon as they pass their comprehensive examinations.

The student then defends the prospectus in front of the committee. Upon acceptance of the prospectus by the committee, the student applies to the graduate school for admission to candidacy for the degree.

The dissertation committee must meet with the student at least once per academic year until the dissertation is completed.

The student continues research and writing under the supervision of the director. After the director has read and approved the entire dissertation, copies are distributed to the other members of the committee. The director sets a date for the defense in consultation with the candidate and with the other members of the committee. Committee members must receive their copy of the dissertation at least four weeks before the defense date.

Upon successful completion of the defense, the director sends formal notification to the Faculty of Arts and Sciences. It is the student's responsibility to make sure that the various administrative requirements for graduation are satisfied in time.

## **3. *Registration***

All graduate students must register in each term in which they are using University facilities; they must be registered for at least one credit whenever a landmark (passing the comprehensive examinations, defending the prospectus and being admitted to candidacy, defending the dissertation and graduating) has to be officially recorded.

A student who is not registered for at least three credits during a 12-month period will be transferred to inactive status and must file an application for readmission to graduate study before being permitted to register again. Readmission is not automatic nor does it necessarily reinstate the student in the status enjoyed prior to becoming inactive. When readmitted, the student must be prepared to demonstrate proper preparation to meet all current degree requirements.

There is a seven-year limit on the validity of the results of the comprehensive examination. After this deadline has passed, parts of the comprehensive examinations will have to be re-taken in order to reassess the currency of the knowledge held by the student in light of the developments newly appeared in the discipline.

#### **XIV. LEAVES OF ABSENCE**

A graduate student must apply for an official leave of absence in cases of illness or personal concern. Leaves are considered on a case by case basis and are recommended to the Dean on the discretion of the DGS. The application can be made for maximum of one year for MA students or two years for PhD students. The length and rationale for the leave of absence must be stated in advance. The leave must be approved by the dean. Only one leave of absence can be obtained by a student during their graduate career.

If the leave of absence has been approved, the statute of limitations for the degree is extended by the length of the time of the leave. However, PhD students will not be permitted an extension of the 7-year limit on the PhD comprehensive exam. PhD students must retake the comprehensive if they do not graduate within 7 years of the exam dates.

While on leave students are not permitted to use university facilities or faculty time. If a student is on an approved leave and needs to be registered to use university facilities, faculty time, or to defer loans and maintain VISA status, they must cancel their leave.

**An approved leave only holds a student's place in their class, it does not guarantee funding. If a student takes a leave, he or she may not have funding when they return.**