The Tracks and Writing Choices Available to French Majors:

There are two tracks available to those majoring in French and Francophone Studies:
1) The literature track.
2) The transdisciplinary track.

1) Literature Track:
   - All students following the Literature track in French (whether with a thesis or a senior essay) will take French 398 in preparation for the spring semester.
   - You then have an important choice to make regarding the format of your senior experience.

   a) Writing a senior essay in the spring semester of your senior year in the context of a 300 level course in the French Department.
   b) Writing a thesis during the spring semester based on preliminary work done in the fall in the context of senior conference (FRENCH 398).

French 398 will focus on a specific topic in French. It will usually focus on three texts, one of which will be theoretical and two of which being primary texts. Particular attention will be paid to research techniques, the assembling of a bibliography, and the types of resources and critical perspectives that constitute and legitimate an advanced research project.

Students will have until fall break to announce whether or not they are going to write a thesis (a 30 page minimum independent work) or an essay in the context of a 300 level course (15-20 pages).

Each choice represents different challenges and has a different calendar that students will be expected to follow closely.

a) The Senior Essay in the Literature Track:
   Those wishing to write a thesis will have a number of important deadlines to follow during their senior year.

   - Spring semester of senior year, students will take a 300 level course in French. In the first two weeks of classes s/he will consult with the professor to confirm that s/he is using the course to write the senior essay. Meetings will also be an opportunity to confirm the writing schedule for the semester (spelled out below) and to discuss potential second readers/examiners. This second reader can be an important resource throughout the semester but s/he will be most important when correcting and evaluating the final draft and participating in the oral defense.
   - Those writing a senior essay will be doing all the readings in the course plus additional readings (identified during research and specifically attached to the individual project). They will NOT be doing the regular written assignments for the
course. Rather, the final 15-20 page paper will constitute the writing portion of the grade for the course as well as serving as the senior project. **Please Note:** in order to move research ahead, students will be expected to have done all the assigned reading for the course by Spring Break.

- On the Monday two weeks before spring break, turn in an **annotated bibliography** listing readings and references. Some but not all of these works will come from the assigned reading. This will fall on Monday, February 17, 2014.

- On the Monday before spring break, turn in the **thesis statement and outline** for the senior essay. This falls on Monday, March 3, 2014.

- On the third Monday after spring break, turn in the **rough draft** of the essay. This falls on Monday, March 31, 2014.

- On the fifth Monday after spring break, turn in the **final draft**. Students will make two copies and turn one in to the first reader (the professor teaching the course) and one copy to the second reader. **Please note:** the student is responsible for assuring that both professors received this final draft. This falls on Monday, April 4, 2014.

- Oral defense will be scheduled for the first week after the end of classes. Attending will be the student, the course instructor (first reader) and the second reader. This exam will last thirty minutes. At this time, the student will be expected to speak with authority about the research and writing process and some of the intellectual ramifications of the work that s/he has accomplished. Any questions about this exam (time, format, expectations, etc) can and should be discussed with the first reader.

Please note that the grade for those writing a senior essay will be calculated according to the following formula: French 398 (40%)+spring 300 level course+oral defense (60%). Student will get a continuing enrollment (CE) for 398 and then a senior grade that combines first and second semesters plus the oral exam in the proportions described above.

**b) The Thesis in the Literature track:**
Those wishing to write a thesis will have a number of important deadlines to follow during their senior year.

**Please note:** those wishing to have a thesis count for two majors (e.g. French and Cities) must, during the first month of the Fall semester of senior year, arrange a meeting where the student and both first readers (one from each department) will be present. At this time, the exact nature of the thesis will be discussed and both professors and the student will come to an agreement about the format of the final project. At the conclusion of the meeting, the student will write up a summary of this agreement and send a copy of this to both readers. This process will assure that all parties understand the expectations of each department. Without this initial meeting and the approval of both departments, the French department will not approve the writing of a “double-counted” thesis.
The first deadline will be the announcement that the student is planning on submitting a proposal. Students intending to present a thesis proposal should make the department aware of that fact on the first Monday of October (October 7, 2014). At this time, the student will meet with the professor teaching the Senior Conference and go over the expectations for a thesis and the various deadlines involved, both during the first and the second semesters. During this meeting, the broad area of interest will be discussed and the possibility of readers (first and second) will be established. During that same week, the student will arrange to meet with the first reader and begin to discuss the composition and format of the thesis proposal.

On the first Monday of November the student will turn in a Thesis proposal (November 4, 2013). This thesis proposal will consist of a narrative in which the broad outlines of the intended project are provided and the general research area is established. This is an opportunity for the student to prove that s/he has the capacity to work independently and to think in a sustained and rigorous manner. The thesis proposal will be on a topic of the student’s choosing that entertains questions relevant to verbal cultures (this could include film, poetry, comics, various literatures etc.) in French. As a broad guideline, this document should consist of a 1000-1500 word narrative summary of the proposed project (intellectual justification, outline of methodology, etc), and a projected bibliography.

The department will meet and discuss thesis proposals during the week before Thanksgiving. In the week immediately following Thanksgiving, the department will provide the student with feedback on the proposal. At that time, students will have the opportunity to adjust the proposal according to the French department’s comments (or to shift to the Senior essay track). In some cases, the department may request very substantial changes without which the thesis will not be approved. If the student chooses to continue with the proposal, a revised version will be expected for the Monday following the last day of classes of the fall semester (December 16, 2014). The French department will meet again during exam week. Final decisions and comments will be made on the last day of exams. At this time, the student will contact the first reader and set up a tentative meeting schedule for the spring semester. Students should expect to meet with the first reader every two weeks throughout the semester and more frequently if needed.

If the thesis is approved, the student will begin research over winter break. A fully annotated bibliography will be submitted to the first reader on the first Monday of February and a full thesis outline and working plan will be submitted by the third Monday in February. At this time, a schedule will be established with the first reader for submitting chapters of the thesis. The student should expect to turn in 10 pages of work every two weeks.

A rough draft of the thesis will be submitted to the first and second readers on the first Monday in April.

The final draft of the thesis will be turned in to both readers on the third Monday in April.
– A clean copy of the thesis printed on high-quality paper will be turned in to the department at the time of the oral defense.

– The oral exam will be scheduled for the first week after the end of classes in the spring semester.

All of these dates are extremely important and you should consult with your first reader if you have any doubts about any of them or about departmental expectations.

2) TRANSDISCIPLINARY TRACK:

PLEASE READ THIS VERY CAREFULLY!
This track is for self-motivated students seeking to combine French and Francophone Studies with one or more other disciplines. Those who wish to pursue this track should begin to formulate a proposal at the time of their declaration of major. The proposal involves a thorough process of consultation and organization prior to approval. For this reason the department recommends strongly that the choice of this track be discussed as early as possible and that the initial proposal be submitted no later the first week of junior year. Only under rare circumstances will the department entertain a submission after this time.

– At the time that the student asks to declare the major in French with a transdisciplinary focus, s/he will ask a professor in the department to be the first advisor for the track. This person will help with course selection and the writing of the prospectus. The prospectus will consist of a 1500-word narrative describing the intellectual justification for the course of study and the desired result. Along with this narrative the student will submit a list of courses that would satisfy the intended transdisciplinary path being proposed. The first draft of the proposal will be submitted on the Monday, ten days before Thanksgiving of junior year. Those students who are abroad should plan on sending this document electronically by the due date. In addition, the potential secondary advisor from outside the French department will be selected at this time.

Students working in the transdisciplinary track will be expected to write a thesis, which can be written in English or French; an oral exam; and complete the following courses:

- 005 or 101, then 102 or 105
- 260 or 212 (the advanced language courses)
- Two courses at the 200 level in French in the department or their equivalent while abroad
- a minimum of two courses from outside the department at the 200 level that follow the organizing logic of the proposed transdisciplinary major
- Fr 326 *Etudes avancées de civilisation* (or any other relevant course in French)
- An additional two 300 level courses outside of the department that are consistent with the overall project
The department will meet the week before Thanksgiving and make recommendations concerning the proposal. Based on faculty comments, the student will then have the opportunity to select the traditional French track or, when necessary, to revise the proposed transdisciplinary track.

The revised proposal will be turned in on the second Monday in December. The department will meet and either approve, reject, or ask for additional revisions to, the final proposal.

Senior Year:

− Fall semester, second week of classes: Meet with first (departmental) and second (outside) readers to finalize writing schedule. You will be asked to first produce an outline, then an annotated bibliography, and finally, chapters.

− Weekend before fall break: Turn in an outline of your project along with a tentative bibliography.

− Second week after fall break: Turn in your annotated bibliography. If you have questions about what that means, make sure to ask your readers weeks in advance as it takes a lot of work to accomplish.

− First Monday in December: Submit first chapter.

− First Monday in January: Submit second chapter.

− First Monday in February: Submit third chapter

− First Monday in March: Submit rough draft of entire thesis. Draft will be returned corrected by both readers the first Friday in April.

− Third Friday in April: final draft due.

− First four days of examination period: oral defense. A clean copy of the thesis printed on high-quality paper due at this time.

Students in the Transdisciplinary track must take Senior Conference (FREN 398) in semester I to help with the writing process.

Some Other Important Dates:
The French department will host a party for seniors during first half of first semester. At this time, students should know what writing model they have been chosen for the senior experience. This will be an opportunity to meet everyone in the department and— with any luck—to enjoy the last of the warm weather. This will also be an opportunity for students and faculty in French to talk about the major and the department in an informal setting.

In the spring, at the end of the week after classes, when all exams in the department have been completed, the French department will host a wine and cheese party for seniors to honor their work and wish them well in their life after College.