

French

“Language students are most engaged when their learning is placed into a broader context. We bring that context to the classroom with culturally rich materials such as music, film, art, food, and literature.”

Devan Baty, Professor of French

Cornell College offers a range of French courses from beginning and intermediate language classes to advanced-level courses on composition and conversation, literature, film, and cultures of France and the Francophone world. The French curriculum emphasizes the deep connection between language and culture; at Cornell, the study of French is framed within cultural, historical, and geographical contexts so that students develop intercultural competence and are prepared to engage directly with Francophone communities around the world.

An official language of the United Nations, UNESCO, NATO, and 29 countries, French is a fast-growing, global language, spoken by more than 220 million people worldwide. The International Organization of Francophonie projects that the number of French speakers will rise to over 700 million by 2050, 80 percent of whom will be in Africa. France and the Francophone world also play an active part in the world economy, accounting for some 20 percent of world trade in goods.

Students of French learn about the English language as well, for as many as half of basic English words come from French. Americans need not travel to another continent to use their French, as French is an official language of Canada, and Francophone culture is alive and well in many regions of the United States.

BENEFITS OF ONE COURSE AT A TIME

Learning is accelerated with One Course At A Time. Depending on placement, students can complete the language requirement in one to three blocks. And because classes meet every day, One Course At A Time fosters a sense of community among students.

One Course At A Time also makes it easy to schedule block-long journeys to places like Aix-en-Provence and Martinique. Students can study for a semester in France or other French-speaking countries through relationships with other programs.

CURRICULUM HIGHLIGHTS

Beginner courses French 101-103 are designed to promote student development in linguistic and cultural proficiency. Successful completion of the beginning-level language course sequence prepares students to function in different communicative situations within a French-speaking context and to become lifelong language learners. All French language classes, from the beginning to the advanced level, aim to develop awareness and understanding of cultural phenomena in the Francophone world through intensive work on speaking, listening, reading, and writing in French.

Study abroad The department sponsors block-long study abroad courses every other year, led by a Cornell faculty member. Students can study abroad in France or other Francophone locations through a variety of affiliated programs. Some previous study abroad locations include Dakar, Senegal; Toulouse, Aix-en-Provence, Paris, and Nice, France; Geneva, Switzerland; and Madagascar.

Faculty Bios & Courses

DEVAN BATY

Professor of French

Teaches a variety of courses on French language and French and Francophone culture and literature. Baty's academic interests include Early Modern French literature, early French exploration of North America, relations between France and the Maghreb, translation studies and migration/immigration in the French-speaking world. She is currently developing new curricular modules that provide students with hands-on experience with translation, service learning, and the growing field of digital liberal arts. Ph.D., French, University of Wisconsin.

REBECCA WINES

Associate Professor of French

Teaches courses in French language as well as French and Francophone literature, film, and cultures, and is part of the Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies program. Her academic interests include 20th century French literature, sports studies, French and Francophone cinema, and masculinity studies. Most recently, she has developed courses about women's roles in France's salon culture and the intersections of history, tradition, and identity in Provence. She is co-editing a volume about sports and physical culture in French and Francophone literature. Ph.D., French literature, University of Michigan.



CAPSTONE EXPERIENCE

French students at Cornell complete their capstone experience in one of two ways. They may take the discussion-based FRE 411 Junior/Senior Seminar Course. The topic varies, but has traditionally focused on the in-depth study of a literary movement, genre, author, or theme. Theoretical discourses in French and Francophone studies or cultural issues are other possible foci for this course. The most recent topic of the seminar was representations in literature, film, and other media of immigrant experiences in France.

Students may also opt to do an independent study capstone project, supervised by a French professor. Students develop a research plan during their junior year, then complete the project as an independent study course during their senior year, the results of which are presented in a public forum on campus.

AFTER CORNELL

French proficiency can open doors in fields such as journalism and media, translation and interpretation, hotel management, diplomacy, international market analysis, health care, tourism, customer service, and education. France is the second largest investor in the United States and is Europe's second largest market.

There are many job opportunities in international organizations for French speakers, and bilingual candidates have an edge in the job market for U.S. companies who do business on a global scale. Nonprofit companies that work for humanitarian purposes are located throughout the Francophone world. Skills in oral and written communication, analysis, knowledge of different cultures, and the ability to adapt to new cultural environments prepare Cornell French graduates for a variety of career paths and further graduate study.

ALUMNI CAREERS

Assistant designer, Pipeworks Studio (game development company) Eugene, Oregon (Class of 2017)

English-language teaching assistant, Teaching Assistant Program in France (TAPIF), Versailles region of France (Class of 2015)

English teaching volunteer, Chilean Ministry of Education, United Nations Development Programme, Chile (Class of 2015)

Administrative assistant, Brigham & Women's Hospital, Boston, Massachusetts (Class of 2015)

Skills trainer, Opportunity Homes Inc., Decorah, Iowa (Class of 2015)

Freelance editor, writer, and translator, Chicago, Illinois (Class of 2014)

KYC/KML agent, Banque Privée Edmond de Rothschild Europe, Luxembourg (Class of 2013)

Learning behavior specialist, Chicago Public Schools, Chicago, Illinois (Class of 2013)

Fulbright English teaching assistant, Université Chouaib Doukkali, El Jadida, Morocco (Class of 2012)

Self-employed dance instructor; bilingual receptionist at Roby Receptionists, Portland, Oregon (Class of 2012)

Public information officer, UNHCR, Lomé, Togo (Class of 2011)

Case manager, Be The Match operated by National Marrow Donor Program, Minneapolis, Minnesota (Class of 2011)

Communications coordinator, Feeding Matters, Scottsdale, Arizona (Class of 2011)

Consultant, Kohl's Corporate Community Relations, Milwaukee, Wisconsin (Class of 2011)

Executive director, Access 2 Independence, Iowa City, Iowa (Class of 2011)

French teacher, Jackson Middle School, Champlin, Minnesota (Class of 2009)

French teacher, Aldine Independent School District, Houston, Texas (Class of 2007)

Account executive, Corporate Responsibility, Minneapolis, Minnesota (Class of 2006)

Account executive, Corporate Responsibility, Minneapolis, Minnesota (Class of 2006)

GRADUATE SCHOOLS ATTENDED

Master's student, MFA in Literary Translation Program, University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa (Class of 2016)

Master's student, Professional French Master's Program, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, Wisconsin (Class of 2015)

Master's degree, International Development Practice, University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona (Class of 2011)

Master's degree, teaching with Teaching Certification, Cardinal Stritch University, Milwaukee, Wisconsin (Class of 2011)