

**French and Francophone Studies**  
**Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures**  
**University of Florida**

**Why Study French?**

In an interview conducted recently with five majors in French and Francophone Studies (FFS) at the University of Florida, Dr. Carol Murphy, Professor of French, asked these students to explain why they had chosen the FFS major, how it connected to their other majors/minors, and what their plans were for the future. Here are their responses, in their own words:

**Angélique Talmor, junior, double major in FFS and Political Science (International Studies).** “My FFS major connects with my Political Science major in a number of ways. It has instilled in me a more globalized perspective on the world – something that is essential for those who aspire to work in International Affairs as I do. Also, French writers and philosophers have had a strong influence on Political Philosophy. And my background in French literature has permitted me to explore in depth the impact of Francophone writers/philosophers on the field of Political Science. The research project in which I was involved, which utilized the works of Michel Foucault, is a prime example of this. Finally, the level of French mastery I have been able to obtain through my FFS major will permit me to study abroad and take classes in French at Sciences Po Spring and Fall 2015.” (*Note: Angélique was recently selected as the UF candidate for the Rhodes Scholarship competition. Félicitations, Angélique!*)

**Nadj Pierre, senior, dual major in FFS and Cognitive and Behavioral Neuroscience.** “I would like to study medicine in France and being a French major on a premed track really helps when it comes to qualifying as adaptable to learning in another language. This also helped me get the internship in Paris available to French majors where I will study post-colonial France and politics for six weeks followed by a six-week internship in NGO medical practices. With degrees in French and Neuroscience, I hope to be able to study medicine in France. The background knowledge that I have accumulated as a FFS major would definitely come in handy in studying in the sciences abroad.”

**Ann Manov, senior, triple major in FFS, English and Spanish; certificate in Latin-American Studies.** “My education in French culture and literature complements my education in Anglophone and Hispanophone cultures and literatures. I am interested in comparative literature and cultural studies. While I do not want to presumptuously declare what I’m doing [in the future], I am intending to apply for teaching fellowships in France, Spain, and Mauritius, as well as graduate school in France – probably at Paris IV and VII – and decide between these.”

**Lidia O’Shields, double major in FFS and Russian, participant in the 4+1 (BA + MA) program.** “I originally decided to major in Languages at UF as my ultimate goal is to work for the U.S. government in some capacity where my language skills are not only useful but a vital component of my job. As I had always had a love of and some proficiency in French I added FFS

as a second major to my Russian first major in fall 2013. It was one of the best decisions I've ever made. I've not only learned so much, but I've made many dear friends, have so many new mentors from the French department faculty and saw the fruition of one of my dreams, to study in Paris, through Dr. Blondeau's Summer in Paris program during summer 2014. I entered the 4+1 at the end of last semester and began taking graduate level courses this year that will apply toward my M.A. My hopes are to attend UF's one-year MBA program after I graduate in French. Afterwards I'm planning to pursue a Ph.D. in International Relation with a focus on Diplomacy."

**Jose Cotayo, senior, major in FFS, classical musician and avid practitioner of *parkour*.**

"Frankly, I decided to major in French and Francophone Studies after thinking very intently about my position in the College of Engineering (after all, I was initially enrolled as an Aerospace/Mechanical Engineer dual-major with a minor in French). Engineering wasn't really working out for me and that's when I realized that I could actually do something with the French language. I would say that FFS connects not only to music, but to everything else I do as well. I find references to French culture, French words or expressions, French gastronomy (and I'm in heaven when I do), and countless others in my day-to-day experiences. For example, *parkour* originated in France and, if it comes to music, I enjoy playing all sorts of instruments and the modern transverse flute that's commonly used in orchestras is none other than a 'French model' flute."

### **Why Major in French and Francophone Studies at the University of Florida?**

Our **faculty** brings together scholars with diverse research interests, ranging from Old French epic poetry through post-colonial theory, from women writers in pre-Revolutionary France to contemporary French film. These nationally and internationally recognized researchers are also dedicated teachers who draw on their own scholarship to offer a variety of courses in literature, civilization, cinema, linguistics, and language. While our program readies students for the wider world, our faculty also sees itself as an integral part of the university community. Our intellectual interests lead us not only to interact with international scholars but also to team up with scholars in other departments of the university in interdisciplinary endeavors. The lectures, films, and other events we organize bring French and Francophone culture to Gainesville. Most importantly, our close interaction with students helps them to develop the communication skills and cultural sensitivity essential to good citizens of the campus and also of the world.

The **undergraduate major in FFS** at UF consists of 32 credit hours beginning with FRE 3300 (Grammar and Composition). There are three common, mandated courses for the major, as well as a requirement to take one course in each of the three main areas covered by our program: French and Francophone culture, literature and linguistics. Beyond those basic guidelines, our program allows each student the flexibility to explore a variety of disciplines within the field of French and to design his/her individualized course of study to reflect a particular interest in business, cinema, culture, language, linguistics, or literature.

Our **graduate program** offers a unique opportunity for candidates to specialize in either literature or linguistics. Students enjoy close and careful mentoring that fosters skills in academic research and foreign language teaching. Our diverse and vibrant faculty represents a wide variety

of fields within the discipline. In the literature option, which includes cultural production such as cinema studies and literature and the other arts, we offer courses ranging from the middle ages to the present. A special strength of our program is our graduate faculty's expertise and publications that span the Francophone world, including the Maghreb, Sub-Saharan Africa, Quebec, Haiti, and Asian Francophone. Our linguistics option offers a wide variety of research areas including second language acquisition, sociolinguistics of French in North America, and work on Haitian Creole. Almost without exception, students are offered a graduate teaching assistantship, allowing them to self-finance their graduate studies and at the same time gain crucial professional skills.

We offer **funding** for summer study and research through internal grant competitions for Conner and Atkin funds. Students at both the undergraduate and graduate levels can apply for study abroad funding, and graduate students may receive supplemental funding for research, as well. We encourage our students to pursue opportunities abroad through our exchange programs with Sciences Po (various universities) and the Université de Rennes (Haute Bretagne).

**Departmental / campus activities** involving French are wide and varied. UF has an active **French club** that organizes special events, conversations sessions, monthly meetings, etc. A new **mentorship program** links advanced with beginning/intermediate French students for language practice, and also brings students and faculty together to explore career opportunities. **The France-Florida Research Institute (FFRI)**, funded by the French Embassy, organizes film festivals and colloquia, and brings speakers to campus on a regular basis. Recent speakers have included French graphic novelist Annie Goetzinger and science fiction novelist Jean-Marc Ligny. UF was recently chosen as the only university in the United States to host the *Mois du film documentaire*, also through the FFRI, in November 2015.