

French Cultural Studies in a Global Context

Degree Program: Free-Standing M.A.

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Begun in 1993, Columbia's French Cultural Studies program at Reid Hall in Paris is the result of a carefully-crafted integration of American and French research practices. Courses provide students with access to the best in contemporary scholarship and theory; the experienced and dynamic staff has a long-standing commitment to international education; and the individual

attention given to students plays an important role in the success of their experience at Reid Hall.

The M.A. program in French Cultural Studies in a Global Context supplies a methodological framework for contrasting and analyzing the dynamics that exist between groups within modern French culture from the Revolution of 1789 to the present. Using various methods and approaches of cultural studies, it examines critically the many ways in which a society represents itself. Each year courses in the program emphasize several issues that pertain to the institutionalization and representation of culture, the positioning of ethnicity, races, class, and gender, and the production and reception of literary texts and artistic works.

The curriculum begins with an introduction to methodological points of entry used in cultural studies and to the socio-historical context of modern French society. Students acquire a broad foundation for cultural studies while they pursue one of two tracks that focus either on France and Europe or on France, Africa and the Middle East. In addition, students improve their French language skills in written and oral expression. Each student writes an M.A. essay (in French or English) on one particular aspect of modern France under the direction of a faculty advisor.

Courses are taught by a distinguished group of faculty whose reputation is well established on both sides of the Atlantic. The majority hold positions at different branches of the French University, the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, and the Institut d'Etudes Politiques. Faculty from Columbia and the University of Pennsylvania also teach in the program.

Study in Paris reinforces the ability to understand French language and society; to appreciate the cosmopolitan atmosphere that has long attracted intellectuals to Paris; and to analyze the relations between France, Francophone countries and Europe. The program is based at Reid Hall, Columbia University's center in Paris, which has been dedicated to French-American cultural and intellectual exchange for over one hundred years. It houses Columbia University's Institute for Scholars; hosts the prestigious Sterling Currier colloquia and other conferences, concerts and readings; and sponsors several undergraduate programs. Dating to the eighteenth century and situated in the heart of Montparnasse, Reid Hall is known for its bi-cultural atmosphere and its ongoing ties with prominent French institutions such as the *Maison des Sciences de l'Homme*, the *Fondation Nationale des Sciences Politiques* and different branches of the University of Paris. Students

attend most of their courses and meet regularly with faculty members at Reid Hall. The rest of their course work is conducted at selected institutions of higher learning in Paris.

An M.A. in French Cultural Studies can lead to further graduate work in an American Ph.D. program or in law, international affairs, journalism, or medicine; in the French University system at the doctoral level or in French professional schools; or to careers in secondary school systems in the U.S. or elsewhere; the diplomatic service, business, finance or banking; journalism, publishing, editing and translating; art and cultural organizations; political advocacy NGOs, and academic administration.

Courses

Classes are held in the fall and spring semesters (through June). Summer (July and August) is reserved for fieldwork, travel and completion of the Master's essay. All students take core courses in history and cultural studies and a course in French language, as well as a course in a French university appropriate for the topic of their Master's essay. In addition, they enroll in two courses pertinent to the track that they have chosen. Depending on their topics, students may conduct on-site research for their Master's essays in groups (organized by the Faculty Advisor and Director of Studies) or individually, including research-related visits to seats of pan-European political institutions (such as Brussels, Strasbourg, or Geneva) or to the Colonial Archives in Aix-en-Provence. They may conduct fieldwork during the summer in an African or Middle Eastern country, a region in France or another European country, depending on their track and the topic of their Master's essay.

The Columbia University programs in Paris have exchange agreements with the University of Paris VII (Denis Diderot), the University of Paris IV (Sorbonne), the *Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales* and the *Institut d'Etudes Politiques*. For access to courses at these institutions, students consult with Columbia's Academic Coordinator for French universities. Some courses that students have taken are: *Femmes et société*: Gabrielle Houbre (Université Paris VII); *L'écriture en question*: F. Marmande (Université Paris VII); *Peinture et poésie*: E. Formentelli (Université Paris VII); *Questions d'art contemporain*: S. Lemoine (Université Paris IV); *Histoire culturelle de la France au 20ème siècle*: J.-F. Sirinelli (Fondation Nationale des Sciences Politiques) and J.-P. Rioux (Education nationale); *Les relations*

culturelles internationales: L. B. Dorléac and M.-A. Matard-Bonucci (Fondation Nationale des Sciences Politiques); *Etat des études gay et lesbienne*: F. Gaspard and D. Eribon (EHESS); *Questions de responsabilité: le parjure et le pardon. La peine de mort*: J. Derrida (EHESS); *Témoignages, preuves et rumeurs du vrai et du faux dans la Première Guerre mondiale*: C. Prochasson and Anne Rasmussen (EHESS); *Afrique au XXème siècle*: E. M'Bokolo and J. Kabogo (EHESS); *Histoire urbaine de Paris*: E. Cohen (Université Paris VII); *Europe, Monde musulman*: M. et N. Blili (Université Paris VII); *Anthropologie monde contemporain*: M. Augé (EHESS); *L'histoire des relations internationales: La politique extérieure française de 1914 – 1945*: G. H. Soutou (Université Paris IV). Semester offerings generally begin in October or February; seminars held during both fall and spring generally begin in November.

French language courses are taught at Reid Hall; students are placed into one of two levels based on their proficiency. The Academic Coordinator for the French University provides help on papers written in French and on oral presentations.

Beyond the Classroom

Columbia's Academic Coordinator for French universities conducts a tour of the *Bibliothèque Nationale de France* (BNF) and the library of the *Centre Pompidou*. Students also visit specialized libraries and archives as part of their course work. Library cards for the BNF are issued to all students in the program, and access also is provided to other specialized libraries, archives and documentation centers.

Students are required to attend and participate in colloquia and conferences held at Reid Hall. Concerts and readings also take place regularly.

All students on the program take two trips as a group, conducted by Reid Hall: the first to a European city and the second to a region of France selected by the students (such as Burgundy, Brittany, Périgord, Côte d'Azur, or Provence).

Housing

An experienced agent (contracted by Columbia University Programs in Paris) works with individual students to locate accommodations that are suited to their needs. Under current arrangements, the agent's fee is 10% of the total

rent for the year (from September through August).

Schedule

The program is completed in a calendar year beginning in the fall. Classes are held in the fall and spring semesters; the latter ends at the end of June. July and August are reserved for fieldwork, travel and completion of the Master's essay.

Requirements for the M.A. Degree

The Master's program in French Cultural Studies in a Global Context requires courses totaling 24 credit points plus a Master's essay for 6 credit points. Students choose one of two tracks: 1) France and Europe or 2) France, Africa and the Middle East. All students, regardless of the track they have chosen, must take the following core courses:

Fall semester:

FRST G4510 (Practicum on Methodological Points of Entry into Cultural Studies) 2 points

FRST G4980 (Proseminar on Issues in Modern French History) 3 points

FRST G4014 (French Language: Grammar, Stylistics, Rhetoric) 4 points. Depending on the results of a French language proficiency test, students may be required to complete the non-credit course FRST G4012 (French Language: Grammar, Stylistics, Rhetoric) before taking G4014.

FRST G6510 (Advanced Seminar in Theory, Cultural Studies and Postcolonialism), part I: 2 points

Spring Semester:

FRST G6511 (Advanced Seminar in Theory, Cultural Studies and Postcolonialism), part II: 2 points

Students in the France and Europe track must also complete the following:

FRST G4200 (Culture in Contemporary France and Europe) 4 points, taken in the fall semester

FRST G4201 (Social, Political, and Economic History: Europe and France) 4 points, taken in the spring semester

FRST G4991, a course in a French university on aspects of French and/or European cultures; 3 points, taken in the fall and/or spring semester.

Students in the France, Africa and the Middle East track must also complete the following:

FRST G6240 (Seminar on Migration, Immigration, and the Impact of African, Maghreban, and Middle Eastern Cultures in France and Europe) 4 points, taken in the fall semester

FRST G6230 (Seminar on French Colonial and Postcolonial Literature and Film) 4 points, taken in the spring semester

FRST G4992, a course in a French university on Arabic language or culture or postcolonial history and/or literature; 3 points, taken in the fall and/or spring semester.

Examinations:

Two two-hour written qualifying examinations (in French) are held in June, on aspects of French cultural studies in a global context.

Master's essay:

The Master's essay, written in French or English, consists of a minimum of 50 pages, bibliography and notes. Titles of some recent Master's essays are: La relation entre le service militaire et l'identité politique française; Le compromise scolaire français: la continuation de la colonization éducatrice en Indochine entre 1920-1940; Euro Disney: from cultural rhetoric to French consumer reality; Images culturelles des flacons de parfum français; Culture noire américaine et jeunesse noire française; The theme of returning home in Vietnamese novels; Public schools and their response to immigration; Surrealism, Mexico City and Paris 1920-1935.

Advising:

The Faculty Advisor and the Director of Studies meet with students individually throughout the year to help them define their objectives, plan their research activities and choose the director of their Master's essay.

Students:

Recent graduates of the French Cultural Studies program entered with bachelor's degrees from Barnard, Bates, Boston, Brown, California

(Berkeley), California (San Diego), Chicago, Colby, Columbia, Cornell, Duke, Fordham, Georgetown, Harvard, Johns Hopkins, Kenyon, Loyola, Minnesota, New York University, Northwestern, Pomona, Princeton, Skidmore, Smith, Tufts, Virginia Institute of Technology, Wheaton, Wisconsin, Washington State, Washington (St. Louis), Yale and Zagreb.

Special Admission Requirements

Applicants should have a bachelor's degree in one of the following disciplines: Anthropology, Art History, Communications, Economics, French, History, Linguistics, Literature, Philosophy, Political Science, Religion, or Sociology and at least three years of college French or proficiency at the equivalent level.

In addition to the requirements listed below, all students must submit 1 official transcript showing courses and grades per school attended, a Statement of Academic Purpose and an essay (750-1500 words) written in French on the applicant's research interests in French cultural studies (Note: the Statement of Academic Purpose and essay in French may be combined), a writing sample and 3 letters of evaluation from academic sources. All international students whose native language is not English or whose undergraduate degree is from an institution in a country whose official language is not English, must submit scores of the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or IELTS. For more information, refer to our **Admissions Information** and **Frequently Asked Questions** pages.

DEGREE:	Master's Only
Deadline for Fall Admission	January 3 consideration for Fellowship May 1 without consideration for Fellowship
Deadline for Spring Admission	no spring admission
Resume/CV	yes
Writing Sample	*yes (see below)
GRE General	yes
GRE Subject	No
Miscellaneous	no

*A 1-2 page essay written in French on the applicant's research interests in French cultural studies.