

**University of Illinois
Department of French & Italian**

M.A. Examination in French Studies

The M.A. examination in French Studies should be scheduled in the third semester of the M.A. stage of graduate study (usually in October or November of the second year of M.A. courses).

The members of the M.A. examination committee in French Studies (three faculty in French Studies) are named by the graduate advisor in French Studies and the Director of Graduate Studies, informing the Head.

The examination is conducted in French. It has two components, written and oral, and is based on two of the four French Studies reading lists covering periods of French literature and culture (Medieval and Renaissance; 17th and 18th Centuries; 19th Century to mid-20th Century; and mid-20th Century to 21st Century including Francophone). The student, in consultation with the Advisor in French Studies, selects the two periods to be covered in their M.A. examination.

The written component of the M.A. examination in French Studies will have three sections, with choices offered within each part:

- 1) The *explication de texte* section will offer a choice of excerpts of poetry or prose, selected by the committee from texts that appear on the two reading lists chosen by the student.
- 2) The section of shorter questions may focus on a particular text, period, genre, theme, or approach.
- 3) The section of long essay questions proposes essay topics based on texts that appear on the two reading lists selected by the student.

The M.A. examination in French Studies is designed to test students' knowledge of the selected texts, their ability to discuss them critically, and the quality of their written and spoken French. Sample questions can be consulted in the department: please ask the FRIT Office Manager.

Examination logistics

The written component is taken in an exam room, on a laptop without a web connection provided by SLCL. The use of smartphones and similar devices is prohibited; only a French/French dictionary is allowed. The written component of the exam is 8 hours long in total, divided into 2 days (not necessarily consecutive): sections 1) and 2) on the first day, and section 3) on the second day. Exams are scheduled through SLCL Grad Services.

The oral component of the examination will be about 1.5 to 2 hours long and is scheduled a week or two after the written component, if the student has passed the written. (A student who fails the written component must retake it before moving on to the oral: see below.) The oral component will include a discussion of the student's written answers as well as questions about other texts from the two selected reading lists.

A combined result for both components of the exam (Pass, Terminal M.A., Fail) is reported to the Graduate College. Students who receive a "Pass" grade are encouraged to apply to the Ph.D. program in French Studies. Students who receive a "Terminal M.A." grade may not apply to the Ph.D. program.

If the oral or written component results in a grade of "Fail," it may be retaken once, usually the following semester and with the same committee. A student with two failures in the M.A. exam (including failing different components) must withdraw from the program. Appeals may be considered only on grounds of alleged unfair treatment and would be directed to the FRIT Graduate Studies committee.