

# FRENCH STUDIES AND HISTORY (PHD)

Department Website (<http://as.nyu.edu/history/>)

NYSED: 86195 HEGIS: 0312.00 CIP: 05.0124

## Program Description

The joint PhD Program in French Studies and History allows students to blend rigorous training in historical craft with a broad, multi-disciplinary exploration of the French and Francophone worlds. Housed at both the Institute of French Studies and the History department, students chart their own course between both units, exploring ideas and devising their specific research projects with a wide array of faculty and graduate students. These opportunities — as well as a program of courses and events conducted in both English and French — make our program truly unique in the field.

From year 1, students attend advanced seminars in historical methodology, conduct original research, and take courses in other disciplines of their choice, including sociology, anthropology, media studies, and gender studies. Working closely with advisors at the IFS and the History department, they explore new ideas while working toward a dissertation prospectus (to which they turn in earnest during the summer following year 2). In the History department, students take courses with faculty whose domains of expertise include the Atlantic World, European studies, gender and sexuality, Empires, capitalism, and race. At the IFS, they delve deep into French and Francophone history while working with faculty whose research revolves around the Caribbean and post-colonial circulations, education in the Maghreb, family history and new modes of historical writing, and anti-Semitism.

Because of the program's small size (2-3 incoming PhD candidates per year), faculty provide close mentorship as students devise their research questions, prepare for their qualifying exams (end of year 2), apply for grants, begin publishing and presenting at conferences, conduct research abroad, and then write up their dissertation. Beyond a few core requirements, students also have tremendous flexibility in devising their own program. They typically take one-on-one individual studies with faculty, sign up for courses at Columbia, Princeton, Rutgers, and other universities in our Consortium, and, if they so wish, learn languages (Arabic, Wolof, Haitian Kreyol, etc.) that will open new research domains. Students also participate in weekly workshops with their IFS cohort and faculty, and a monthly doctoral seminar, during which students obtain feedback on their own writing.

Most joint students spend one summer at the IFS's program in Paris, taking courses with French scholars and conducting archival research. Many take advantage of our exchange program with the Ecole Normale Supérieure, spending at least a semester within its walls. In New York, they may teach in the History and French departments and also at the Lycée français de New York. Through our in-house journal French Politics, Culture & Society and the leadership of its editor Liz Fink (a specialist of Western Africa and a graduate of the joint program), they benefit from Public Humanities initiatives that prepare them for careers within and beyond academia (writing, cultural diplomacy, secondary teaching, etc.)

The faculty are committed to building a diverse, supportive community of students from multiple backgrounds and disciplines. The application process requires a single dossier, which is read by faculty from the IFS as well as the History Department. Strong French language skills are

required (though no GRE). Some students enter our program with a B.A. while others already have an M.A.

More information on specific requirements can be found on the NYU GSAS Bulletin ([https://gsas.nyu.edu/content/dam/nyu-as/gsas/documents/bulletins/GSAS\\_Bulletin\\_2019-21.pdf](https://gsas.nyu.edu/content/dam/nyu-as/gsas/documents/bulletins/GSAS_Bulletin_2019-21.pdf)).

## Admissions

All applicants to the Graduate School of Arts and Science (GSAS) are required to submit the general application requirements (<https://gsas.nyu.edu/nyu-as/gsas/admissions/arc.html>), which include:

- Academic Transcripts (<https://gsas.nyu.edu/nyu-as/gsas/admissions/arc/academic-transcripts.html>)
- Test Scores (<https://gsas.nyu.edu/nyu-as/gsas/admissions/arc/test-scores.html>) (if required)
- Applicant Statements (<https://gsas.nyu.edu/nyu-as/gsas/admissions/arc/statements.html>)
- Résumé or Curriculum Vitae
- Letters of Recommendation (<https://gsas.nyu.edu/nyu-as/gsas/admissions/arc/letters-of-recommendation.html>), and
- A non-refundable application fee (<https://gsas.nyu.edu/admissions/arc.html#fee>).

See French Studies (<https://gsas.nyu.edu/admissions/arc/programs/french-studies.html>) for admission requirements and instructions specific to this program.

## Program Requirements

Course	Title	Credits
<b>Major Requirements</b>		
HIST-GA 3603	Approaches to Historical Research and Writing I <sup>1</sup>	4
IFST-GA 1610	19th Century France <sup>1</sup>	4
IFS course in Social Sciences <sup>1</sup>		4
"Literature of the field" courses in History Dept. (1 or 2)		4-8
IFST-GA 3720	Research Seminar: French Studies	4
<b>Electives</b>		
Other Elective Credits		48
<b>Total Credits</b>		<b>72</b>

<sup>1</sup> Taken in the first year.

## Additional Program Requirements

### Language Requirement

Because strong French language skills are required for admission to the IFS, students in the joint PhD program need not take an additional language exam. A second language may, however, be desirable for many students.

### Qualifying Exam

Students in the joint program with history must pass a three-day written Qualifying Examination at the end of the second year. Students choose three faculty members to administer an exam based on the Literature of the Field courses and a supplemental reading list developed with the faculty examiners. The first two days of the examination are devoted to European history since 1750. Students in the Joint IFS History program are not examined in a second (minor) history field, as are students in

History alone. Instead, they devote the third day of the written exam to the interdisciplinary field of French Studies. This portion of the exam will draw on their course work in French Studies, including especially work they have done beyond the field of history. A member of the Institute's affiliated faculty will work with the student in preparation for this exam. All three examiners will evaluate the three exam essays.

## Dissertation

Students must draft a dissertation prospectus no later than the end of the first semester of the third year. They must present the prospectus to the IFS Doctoral Workshop and defend it before an examination committee whose members will expect them to situate their work vis-à-vis the most relevant scholarly literature in their field. The committee for the examination consists of three faculty members: one is the student's major adviser; the other two are normally readers of the dissertation.

Finally, students must write and orally defend a doctoral dissertation. GSAS regulations govern the form of the PhD oral defense, which is held once the writing of the dissertation is completed.

## Departmental Approval

All Graduate School of Arts & Science doctoral candidates must be approved for graduation by their department for the degree to be awarded.

## Sample Plan of Study

Course	Title	Credits
<b>1st Semester/Term</b>		
HIST-GA 3603	Approaches to Historical Research and Writing I	4
IFST-GA 1610	19th Century France	4
IFST-GA	French Studies General Elective	4
<b>Credits</b>		<b>12</b>
<b>2nd Semester/Term</b>		
IFST-GA 3720	Research Seminar: French Studies	4
HIST-GA	"Literature of the Field" History Course	4
HIST-GA	History General Elective	4
<b>Credits</b>		<b>12</b>
<b>3rd Semester/Term</b>		
IFST-GA 9500	Topics (Summer Research Seminar at NYU Paris)	4
IFST-GA	Summer General Elective in French Studies at NYU Paris	4
PhD Elective		4
<b>Credits</b>		<b>12</b>
<b>4th Semester/Term</b>		
IFST-GA 3710	Rsch Sem French Studies	2
HIST-GA	"Literature of the Field" History Course	4
HIST-GA	History General Elective	4
PhD Elective		2
<b>Credits</b>		<b>12</b>
<b>5th Semester/Term</b>		
HIST-GA	History General Elective	4
HIST-GA	History Independent Study	4
IFST-GA	French Studies Independent Study	4
<b>Credits</b>		<b>12</b>
<b>6th Semester/Term</b>		
PhD Elective		4
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PhD Elective		4
<b>Credits</b>		<b>12</b>
<b>Total Credits</b>		<b>72</b>

Following completion of the required coursework for the PhD, students are expected to maintain active status at New York University by enrolling in a research/writing course or a Maintain Matriculation (MAINT-GA 4747) course. All non-course requirements must be fulfilled prior to degree conferral, although the specific timing of completion may vary from student-to-student.

**Note:** No formal coursework is required after passing Qualifying Exams, though it is possible if needed. Students are advised to register for Independent Study courses to make sure they complete 72 credits.

## Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of the program, graduates will:

1. Master the secondary literature in their chosen field as well as pertinent theoretical frameworks necessary to analyze historical forces.
2. Complement disciplinary knowledge in history with mastery of methodologies and conceptual frameworks from other disciplines in the social sciences.
3. Have the ability to locate printed and manuscript sources in libraries, archives, and databases; to read them critically; to marshal them into clear and convincing arguments that make an original contribution to the field; and to impart one's ideas orally and in writing, in works that are of sufficient quality for publication and conference acceptance.
4. Possess teaching skills in History or adjacent fields and familiarity with the workings of the academic world (publication routes, conferences, professional trajectories, etc.).
5. Be in a position to obtain a tenure-track position, a post-doctoral fellowship, or another job (within or outside academia such as in the public humanities) after completing their dissertation.

## Policies

### NYU Policies

University-wide policies can be found on the New York University Policy pages (<https://bulletins.nyu.edu/nyu/policies/>).

### Graduate School of Arts and Science Policies

Academic Policies for the Graduate School of Arts and Science can be found on the Academic Policies page (<https://bulletins.nyu.edu/graduate/arts-science/academic-policies/>).