

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
The Undergraduate Educational Policy and Curriculum Committee

Minutes

240 SH

January 30, 2025

Attending: Asha Bhandary, Rodica Curtu, Megan Gogerty, Liz Lundberg (staff), Emilie Maurel-Destruel, Sanvesh Srivastava, Amy Strathman, Rachel Young

Absent: Cornelia Lang (chair), Noelle Franzone, Anita Jung, DeAndre Steger, Julianna Pacheco

1. First the committee reviewed and approved the minutes from January 23, 2025. All approved minutes can be found [here](#).
2. Next, the committee welcomed David Hagan (DUS, French) and Meredith Gall (Senior Academic Advisor), who joined UEPC member Emilie Maurel-Destruel (DEO, French and Italian) to present proposed changes to the French BA.

Although the number of students using French courses to fulfill their GE CLAS Core World Language area is high, the numbers of students completing the French major and minor have declined in recent years. Faculty have assessed the factors that have contributed to this shift and have taken steps to change the curriculum accordingly. The overall goals of the changes are to make the major possible to complete in a shorter timeframe, for students who do not declare it in their first year; to make the major more flexible, and therefore more accommodating to students completing two majors; and to include more courses on cultural topics as well as language study, in response to students' interests. These changes are in line with recent trends in language majors here at Iowa and across the Big Ten.

Currently the French BA is organized into two subprograms (Language, Literature, and Culture; and French and Arabic) and it can be completed in 33-37 semester hours. One course taught in English can be counted toward the major, and the beginner and intermediate language courses do not count toward the major—meaning that if a student starts with no prior French language instruction, they would complete four courses (20 s.h.) in French before they take anything that counts toward the major. Students often become interested in the major in their intermediate language courses, but if they delayed taking their language courses, they don't have enough semesters left to complete the BA once they become interested in it.

Under the new plan, the French BA would eliminate the two subprograms (and students who are interested in Arabic would be directed to the Arabic Studies minor). The major would require 35 semester hours, but those hours include Intermediate French I and Intermediate French II, each of which is now worth four hours instead of five. Two courses in English could be counted toward the major, and overall the structure of foundation and elective courses would be streamlined. Although the total number of semester hours would not change by much on paper, it would feel quite a bit different to students, because they would get to take major-level courses much earlier in their time here. Students who come to

Iowa with a placement above Intermediate II would substitute two major elective courses for the language courses.

The committee discussed students' interests in cultural courses as well as other topics. The department is hoping to develop courses on French in professional contexts and French in international relations, as well as experiential learning opportunities. There was discussion about how these new major requirements provide a pathway for students who have no prior French training to complete the major without extending their timeline to graduation. By modifying the major in this way, the department hopes the major can include more students who take their first French course at the University of Iowa. The committee was supportive of this proposal. Some curricular changes can be implemented for the 2025-2026 year; the elimination of the subprograms will be effective fall 2026.

Respectfully submitted,

Megan Gogerty
Associate Professor of Instruction
Department of Theatre Arts