

FAQ: Becoming a K-12 French Teacher

Do I need to be a French major to become a K-12 French teacher?

Yes, * to become licensed to teach by the end of your four years in college. Some students decide late in their college years to pursue teaching French as a career and so choose to extend their education by earning a Masters in Teaching French that includes completing a French major and being awarded K-12 licensure.

*If you prepare to earn licensure to teach another subject e.g., Spanish, Social Studies, Biology, etc, you can also work on earning an “endorsement” in French that will allow you to teach French as well. In Illinois, the ISBE requirements for a supplemental endorsement include 18 content credits, which in most colleges is roughly equivalent to a minor, and a successful grade on a content exam. Some post-secondary institutions require more than 18 credits for an endorsement.

While private schools sometimes hire individuals with a French major or minor without licensure, those schools will likely require those individuals to earn licensure within a specific time.

How does my AP credit get applied?

Each college and university awards AP credit in different amounts. Most offer from 4 - 12 credits depending on whether the AP score is a 3, 4, or 5. This means that you can bypass taking lower level French classes and begin your study of French in college at a higher level and receive credit for the lower level courses that you bypassed.

What other ways can I receive credit?

Some colleges and universities award credit for the Seal of Biliteracy and Commendation, and CLEP and STAMP tests.

How do I choose my courses and plan a major in French with K-12

licensure? An advisor will be assigned to you, usually in the summer, before you enroll in your Freshman Year courses. That person is a very important resource. They will help you discover the courses that you will need and map out when to take them in order to meet your goals. They need to know, for example, that you would like to study abroad as a French major and that you are interested in teaching.

When should I declare my French major? This needs to happen by the second semester of Sophomore year, but can be done at any time prior. Earlier is generally better so that studying abroad can be included smoothly in your studies.

What kind of courses do French majors take?

- 100 level courses: Intermediate French. Continued development of speaking, listening, reading and writing skills incorporating contemporary cultural topics. (These do not usually count for the French major, but can be applied to other required coursework.)
- 200 level courses: Advanced Communication. Continued development of language proficiency and the expansion of students' knowledge of French and Francophone cultures.
- 300 level courses will likely focus on exploring the artistic, economic, intellectual, political, and social influences that have shaped and continue to define French and Francophone cultures. Some examples:
 - "Social Change"
 - "Vichy France"
 - "Women Writers"
 - "Paris: City of Lights"
 - "Culture and Communication"
 - "Spoken French in a Cultural Context"
 - "Contemporary France through Film"
 - "The French Revolution and Napoleon"
 - "Immigration in France 1945 to Today"
 - "Internship"
- Capstone research projects on a topic of a student's choice are generally a requirement for French majors.

Can I study abroad as a French major? Yes, study abroad is encouraged and sometimes required for French majors. This can vary: three weeks between semesters, a summer, one semester, or an entire year.

Does my financial aid apply when I study abroad? Yes, this is often the case, but is an important point to confirm with college representatives, e.g. at your school's College Fair and your advisor. Scholarship funds are also often

available for studying abroad. Financial aid eligibility may be limited for summer programs.

What opportunities in addition to coursework can I expect ?

- internships at local businesses, agencies or non-profit organizations, e.g. Quebec Government Office
- Service learning, e.g. tutoring recently arrived French-speaking immigrants
- French Club
- French Table, French/International House
- French Honor Society

When should I begin to take education classes to pursue K-12

licensure? Most students begin taking Education courses in the second semester of their Sophomore year. It is essential, however, to plan ahead with your advisor and/or French professor to map out how you will take the necessary courses in the order in which they are offered.

Can I study abroad if I am also preparing to teach K-12 French? Yes.

Planning with your advisor to map out how you will take the required Education courses in the order that they are offered, and do school visitations and student teaching will also help facilitate your studying abroad.

What kind of education courses do students take? Some examples:

“Social and Historical Issues in Education”

“Human Growth and Development”

“Methods: Curriculum & instruction in Secondary Schools”

“Equity & Social Justice in Education”

“Integrating Tech into the Classroom”

“Educating Exceptional Children”

What other requirements are there to earn K-12 licensure?

- Observations and participatory experience with children and youth
- Student teaching
- OPI Interview (Intermediate High)
- edTPA
- Licensure exams

How can I increase my “marketability” as a job candidate applying for a job in K-12 schools?

By minoring in another subject such as another world language, English language learning, history, or psychology, you can earn a “supplemental endorsement” and show a prospective employer that they can count on you to help them fill other less than full-time openings and ensure that you will have a full-time position.

Why should I pursue K-12 licensure to teach French? Because it’s a wonderful career that offers you the opportunity to share with others your passion for the French language and francophone cultures and will enrich the lives of your students and your own.

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“A Taste of Teaching”

AATF Journée Intensive en français

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