



GUIDE TO MAJORS AT YESHIVA: FRENCH

Choosing a major can be stressful, but it is important to understand that you can pursue almost any career regardless of which major you choose. While there are some exceptions, most entry-level positions simply require general transferable skills—those that can be learned in one setting and applied in another. Relevant experience through internships and activities is generally more important to employers than a major. It is best to choose an area that you find interesting and where you have the ability to do well.

What is the French Major?

The French department at YC offers language classes that take advantage of the latest technologies and helps students develop oral communication skills while discussing politics, social trends, and current events. Language classes from the introductory to advanced level help the student develop an active command of the language. Emphasis is placed on acquiring the four language skills—listening, speaking, reading and writing—within a cultural context, in order to achieve basic communicative proficiency. In addition to acquiring linguistic skills, students of French gain access to literary and artistic tradition. The department also sponsors French movie nights and conversation tables, as well as courses in French literature that address wide-ranging topics such as French conceptions of difference; the modern French novel; French theater; French literary responses to Auschwitz; French literary theory and philosophy; French poetry; and more.

What can I do with a Major in French?

The YC French department, “studying a foreign language enhances our understanding of other cultures, as well as our own. In this age of globalization, languages also create an essential link to potential economic and political partners.” Knowledge of French language and culture offers many benefits to YC students planning to pursue diverse areas of study, from political science, international relations, business and law to history, Jewish studies, literature, philosophy, cinema and medicine. Some additional career options available to French majors include:

Business/Industry

- Consultant
- Equity Research Analyst
- Foreign Exchange Trader
- Hotel Administrator
- International Banking Officer
- International Conference Planner
- Travel Agent

Communications

- Advertising Executive
- Copywriter
- Editor
- Foreign Correspondent
- Interpreter/Guide
- Journalist
- Linguist
- Travel Writer
- Web Editor

Government/Public Service

- Archivist
- Bilingual Educator
- Civil Service Employee
- Court Interpreter
- Cultural Attaché
- Customs/Immigration Officer
- Diplomat
- Foreign Service Officer
- Intelligence Researcher
- Politician
- Public Health Administrator

Social Services

- Foreign Social Worker
- Peace Corp Volunteer
- Publishing Professional

Graduate Study Required

- International Trade Economist
- Lawyer
- Museum Curator
- Professor
- TESO/ESL Teacher

Skills and Abilities

French majors gain expertise in the use of language as a means of communication. Students learn to think clearly and imaginatively, interpret sophisticated written material, and articulate their ideas in person and on paper. They also gain an understanding of and appreciation for diverse cultures. Some of the additional skills and abilities cultivated through the French major include:

Communication

- Clarifying ideas
- Communicating between cultures
- Explaining complex concepts
- Listening carefully
- Reading/Writing another language
- Summarizing ideas
- Speaking to groups
- Translating/Explaining

Critical thinking and analysis

- Analyzing and summarizing ideas
- Comparing information
- Developing critical evaluations
- Interpreting data

- Reading critically
- Thinking independently

Human Relations

- Understanding cultural diversity
- Collaborating with others
- Conversing in small groups

Research

- Developing hypotheses
- Organizing ideas/information
- Finding and utilizing resources
- Evaluating information
- Creating interpretations