

Provide a rationale for the suspension of admission or immediate discontinuation of the program.

A number of factors have contributed to this decision, including the following. The first three are contextual causes; the fourth is the immediate "triggering" cause.

- 1) Recruitment and enrollment difficulties over the last several years. At one point the French MA program boasted a fairly consistent enrollment of nine regular students (i.e. full-time students with TAs); this number has gradually decreased over the last few years. In the current 2018-19 academic year, program has only five regular students enrolled, plus one additional student (part-time, no French TAs) who should already have graduated and needs to retake one course to do so.
- 2) Retention difficulties in the last several years. While the French MA program has always had the occasional student who left the program for personal reasons, in recent years several students have been dismissed after going on academic probation and subsequently failing to raise their GPA.
- 3) Decreasing undergraduate enrollments reducing the number of first-year French sections available for graduate TAs to teach. Even if the French MA program had succeeded in recruiting its full complement of nine regular graduate students, there would not have enough sections of first-year French for those TAs to teach in the current academic year. For example, in fall 2018 the department offered only eight sections of first-year French; in the current term, spring 2019, the department is offering only six sections of first-year French. Only the reduced enrollments in the French MA program prevented this from being a problem.
- 4) Decrease in Group I faculty available to offer the necessary graduate courses. There are currently four Group I French faculty who teach all our graduate courses. One of those has announced her retirement for the end of academic year 2018-19. This leaves three Group I French faculty. It would be very difficult for those three Group I faculty to offer the necessary graduate courses for French MA students. Additionally, two of those three remaining Group I faculty are already retirement-eligible and are likely to depart in the coming years. With no replacement Group I faculty hire anticipated, and potential additional Group I retirements on the horizon, the college and department do not believe French faculty can, in the long term, offer the necessary graduate courses.

Indicate number of students currently enrolled in the program.

There are currently five regular students enrolled (full time with TAs). Of those, two are graduating at the end of the 2018-19 academic year. Of the remaining three, two have indicated that they most likely will not be continuing next year for personal reasons. As a result, there will be only one continuing full-time student with TAs in the 2019-20 academic year. Additionally, there is one other student who has completed all requirements except for one failed course that needs to be retaken.

Describe how the suspension of admissions and any plan for discontinuation of program will affect the program and the students currently in the program.

The suspension of admissions will have no effect on students currently in the program. French graduate courses are all dual-listed, and this should make it possible to offer the remaining necessary courses, with the bulk of enrollment being made up by undergraduates. If a situation should arise where undergraduate enrollment in the dual-listed course is insufficient for the course to run, the necessary courses can be completed through independent study offerings. The suspension of admissions will have no impact on comprehensive exams. We will continue to offer dual-listed courses, independent studies, and comprehensive exams as long as necessary for any continuing students until those students graduate or until they reach the time-to-degree maximum of seven years.

In terms of impact on the program, the suspension of admissions will likely become a permanent discontinuation, unless there is reason to believe that the factors causing the suspension could be mitigated.

Explain plans for notifying current students and assisting them in the completion of their degrees, when applicable.

Current students have already been notified that admissions are to be suspended, both in writing (by email) and in person (conversation with the chair of the Department of Modern Languages). Current students have been informed that they will be able to complete their course work and comprehensive exams next year as originally planned, noting the possibility of courses being replaced by independent studies if undergraduate enrollment issues come into play. They have been invited to speak to the department chair if they have any questions.

Will there be a loss of faculty or staff positions? If so, indicate when the faculty or staff members were or will be informed.

There will be no loss of faculty or staff positions due to the discontinuation.

Describe the plan for communicating the suspension of admissions or discontinuation.

The suspension of admissions has already been announced by email (with, in some cases, follow-up conversations with the department chair) to all French faculty, all first-year French MA students, and the department's Graduate Committee. The suspension of admissions is to be announced to the department at large at the department meeting of February 7, 2019. The suspension of admissions will be posted clearly on the department's graduate program web page, and on the department's Facebook page. Additional audiences will be informed by the department or by the college as directed by governing administrative offices.