



**French Studies**  
**Final Assessment Report &**  
**Implementation Plan**

<b>Faculty / Affiliated University College</b>	Huron University College
<b>Degrees Offered</b>	Bachelor of Arts
<b>Modules Reviewed</b>	French Language and Literature <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Honours Specialization</li> <li>- Major</li> </ul> French Studies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Specialization</li> <li>- Major</li> </ul>
<b>External Reviewers</b>	Dr. Isabelle Lemée Department of Languages Lakehead University  Dr. Christian Mbarga French Department St. Thomas University
<b>Internal Reviewers</b>	Dr. Laura Gribble Associate Academic Dean King's University College
<b>Date of Site Visit</b>	March 28-29, 2022
<b>Evaluation</b>	Good Quality
<b>Approval Dates</b>	SUPR-U: October 12, 2022 ACA: October 26, 2022 Senate (for information only): November 11, 2022
<b>Year of Next Review</b>	Year of next cyclical review: 2029-2030
<b>Progress Report</b>	June 2025

## **Overview of Western’s Cyclical Review Assessment Reporting Process**

In accordance with Western’s Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP), the Final Assessment Report (FAR) provides a summary of the cyclical review, internal responses and assessment and evaluation of the undergraduate module delivered by the French Program, Department of French and Asian Studies at Huron University College.

This FAR considers the following documents:

- the program’s self-study brief;
- the external reviewers’ report;
- the response from the program; and
- the response from the Academic Dean’s Office.

The FAR identifies the strengths of the program, opportunities for program enhancement and improvement, and details the recommendations of the external reviewers – noting those recommendations to be prioritized for implementation.

The Implementation Plan details the recommendations from the FAR that have been selected for implementation, identifies who is responsible for approving and acting on the recommendations, specifies any action or follow-up that is required, and defines the timeline for completion.

The FAR (including Implementation Plan) is sent for approval through the Senate Undergraduate Program Review Committee (SUPR-U) and ACA, then for information to Senate and to the Ontario Universities’ Council on Quality Assurance. Subsequently, it is publicly accessible on Western’s IQAP website. The FAR is the only document resulting from the undergraduate cyclical review process that is made public; all other documents are confidential to the Program/School/Faculty and SUPR-U.

## **Executive Summary**

Huron University has a decades-long history of teaching French language, literature and culture. The Department of French functioned as an independent unit until 2009, when it merged with the Chinese and Japanese programs and formed a larger academic unit, the Department of French and Asian Studies.

All program modules include a strong language competency component at each level and are complemented by upper-year “content” courses in literature, culture, and translation. Total enrolment across Huron French program modules in 2021 was 24 students. Enrolment across all Huron French courses in 2020-21 was 183.

To inform the program self-study, faculty member meetings about program design and future goals took place in the spring/summer of 2021. In addition, a survey was administered to current students and recent graduates in summer 2021. Consultations

with program stakeholders and the Dean's Office on the self-study report continued into the fall.

External reviewers shared a positive assessment of the program indicating that *"it is clear that the Huron French Program is offering quality programs with great student satisfaction."* They offer nine recommendations for further enhancement.

### **Strengths and Innovative Features Identified by the Program**

- Courses encourage "an understanding of and a sensitivity to different cultural perspectives" and "openness to cultural diversity" through critical engagement with French and Francophone cultural artefacts and phenomena.
- Recent efforts have integrated an examination of issues of indigenization and decolonization through the study of a variety of works across different program courses.
- The program encourages outbound mobility in the form of Huron student exchanges to Versailles and Pol de Lille, and participation in Western's exchanges/immersion experiences.
- Huron's French program was the first to establish a guaranteed pathway to Western's Althouse Faculty of Education for its graduating to become French teachers following graduation.
- Ivey/French dual degree program, a five-year program leading to a combined Ivey HBA and Huron Honours BA.
- "La journée francophone", a day of French food and performance that the French program hosts at Huron.
- Current students and recent alumni indicated a high level of satisfaction with:
  - o the small class sizes,
  - o the supportive and accessible professors, and
  - o the one-on-one time that professors devote to students.

### **Concerns and Areas of Improvement Identified by the Program**

- Limited modular enrolments
- Students mention a strong interest in more course choice and timetabling flexibility.
  - o Need to increase the course offerings that target oral French specifically and count towards the modules,
- Modular system that is somewhat confusing for students to navigate
  - o A reduction in the total number of modules offered could result in a system that is less confusing given the fine distinctions between modules. Fewer modules would also correspond better to the program's smaller faculty

complement and may leave room for more course offerings within each module.

- The viability of streaming students with little to no French experience—especially international students—into the Major, or perhaps into a Major designed with their needs in mind as presently.

### **Review Process**

As part of the external review, the review committee, comprising two external reviewers and one internal reviewer, were provided with Volume I and II of the self-study brief in advance of the scheduled review and then met virtually (due to pandemic restrictions) over two days with the:

- Acting Vice-Provost of Academic Programs
- Vice-Provost (Academic Planning, Policy and Faculty)
- Director of Academic Quality and Enhancement
- President (Huron University College)
- Provost and Dean (Huron University College)
- Registrar, (Huron University College)
- Director, Library and Learning Services, (Huron University College)
- Coordinator, French Program
- Administrative Staff
- Program Faculty
- Program Students

Following the virtual site visit, the external reviewers submitted a comprehensive report of their findings which was sent to the Program and Academic Dean for review and response. Formative documents, including Volumes I and II of the Self-Study, the External Report, and the Program and Decanal responses form the basis of this Final Assessment Report (FAR) of the Huron French Studies Program. The FAR is collated and submitted to SUPR-U by the Internal Reviewer with the support of the Office of Academic Quality and Enhancement.

### **Summative Assessment – External Reviewers’ Report**

The external reviewers indicated that *“the French Program at Huron can pride itself of a solid program, and of providing excellent instruction and students’ experience resulting in a high level of satisfaction among students.”*

#### **Strengths of the Program**

- The program offers several courses unique to Huron which put an emphasis on learning by doing (e.g., peer teaching, research creation, undergraduate research, experiential learning), and is interdisciplinarity.
- Emphasis on language competency skills, critical awareness of cultures and literatures, and complex problem-solving and robust argumentation.
- Students are introduced to diverse francophone authors, including indigenous writers, as part of questioning “the process by which authors have come to form the canon”.
- Innovative and creative ways of allowing program students to access other programs in the Western system of colleges. For example, with the Faculty of Education and the Ivey HBA.

#### **Areas of Concern or Prospective Improvement**

- Relatively low and declining enrolment, along with limited financial resources.
- Reassessment of the course offerings, sequencing, course weight, and cross-listing could help in resource management.
- There is a clear need for more faculty in order to maintain the sustainability of all modules in Huron French.

**Summary of the Reviewers’ Key Recommendations and Program / Faculty Responses**

The following are the recommendations in the order listed by the external reviewers. Recommendations requiring implementation have been marked with an asterisk (\*).

Reviewers’ Recommendations	Program / Faculty Response
<p><b>Recommendation #1</b> We recommend that the department be allowed to hire at least one full-time tenured faculty member, preferably a linguist and someone coming from France or a francophone country other than Canada. Diversity is key. This new recruit could be a Teaching-Focused faculty member.</p>	<p><b>Program:</b> The program agrees with this recommendation; however, notes that hiring from a particular country is not a practice supported by HR. The department is committed to approach the recruitment process with the aim of attracting diverse applicants.</p> <p>The suggested creation of a teaching-focused position is outside the scope of program review and programmatic decision-making, and instead falls within negotiations between the faculty union and the Administration. The academic unit will advocate for the continued existence of the program sessional position within Huron French, which is a stable, full-time teaching position.</p> <p><b>Faculty:</b> At present French is well-resourced with two tenure lines and two full-time program sessional instructors given the number of students in the program and its classes. In the event that there is an increase in enrolment, the faculty would consider an application for a third tenure-track position in French Studies.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation #2 *</b> We recommend continued review of the programs in consultation with students and other stakeholders. The department should reduce the number of sub-programs offered.</p>	<p><b>Program:</b> The program welcomes the opportunity to better focus the French program’s offerings. Discussions regarding potential curricular streamlining have begun (see the response to recommendation #3 below). The aim is to reduce the number of subprograms as suggested while making offerings increasingly unique vis-à-vis the other Western campuses.</p> <p>The program is committed to continue consulting with stakeholders regarding program restructuring, especially with students in the program and with Huron’s student-facing, academic advisors and Registrar.</p> <p><b>Faculty:</b> The faculty is in agreement with the program’s response.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation #3 *</b> We recommend that resources be transferred to different parts of the program from the following</p>	<p><b>Program:</b> The program will review courses, modules, and curricular content with the aim of streamlining courses and modules as this could strengthen the program. The following clarification with regards to the reviewers’ observations on enrollment specifics were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FRE 3602G was offered as a reading course in the year that the reviewers are referring to, and it is therefore normal that there was only one student enrolled.</li> </ul>

<p>areas. Between 2016 and 2021 some of the courses suffered from low enrollments: Courses FRENCH 3301B, 3602 G and 4100G had only one student enrolled. FRENCH 4902A had six enrollments between 2016-2017 and 2017-2018. FRENCH 3753F had 7 enrolled in 2017-2018, FRENCH 2408B and 3752F saw an enrollment of 9 students in the 2018-2019 academic year. Additionally FRENCH Studies Spec had one student enrolled in 2017.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FRE 4100G is a thesis course, and once again it is normal for it to have small enrollments. Very few students elect to write a thesis in order to fulfill their degree requirements.</li> <li>• FRE 3301 A/B typically has higher enrollments and in the specific year alluded to by the reviewers was offered as a reading course. Furthermore, this is currently the only translation course and is required for several modules.</li> </ul> <p>The French Studies Specialization had one student enrolled in 2017; however, the department is of the view that it is important to offer a Specialization module whenever an Honours Specialization module is offered. This is because students who do not meet the academic achievement component of the Honours Specialization module, but who have initially signed up for it, would not have a path to degree completion without being able to drop down into the Specialization module (which does not have the same grade requirements as the Honours Specialization).</p> <p>Several other courses within the program will likely see an increase in enrolment once the number of modules within the program have been reduced, as students will have to choose from existing programs. The aim is to create/retain module and course offerings that serve a broader range of students within the program, in the restructuring process.</p> <p><b>Faculty:</b> The faculty is in agreement with the program’s response.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation #4 *</b> We recommend that the Department of French try to recruit more actively.</p>	<p><b>Program:</b> In addition to the existing recruitment plan, which includes participation in Huron Open House events (Fall and Winter), members of the program actively correspond with potential and incoming students.</p> <p>Program members will meet with the new VP University Growth (who oversees recruitment) and the Communications team to discuss raising the profile of French within the recruitment cycle in order to meet the reviewers’ recruitment recommendations. The aim of these discussions would be to work with recruitment to set specific strategies and program enrolment targets.</p> <p><b>Faculty:</b> The faculty is in agreement with the program’s response.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation #5 *</b> Huron French should consider organizing competitions for grade 12 high school students, as well as for its own</p>	<p><b>Program:</b> The program indicated that the Japanese program organized contests for high school students in recent years, and while their event was successful by many measures, it has not led to higher program enrollments specifically.</p>

<p>students to increase students' enrolment and retention, and showcase the department.</p>	<p>The program will continue to explore other ways to increase student enrolment, such as an approach used by the history program entitled "History Day". The program will examine this successful initiative and consider adapting it to the Huron French context.</p> <p><b>Faculty:</b> The faculty reiterates support for the program's response to this recommendation.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation #6 *</b> We recommend that the French Program form a Student's French program association to enhance collective synergy, brainstorm, organize social and cultural events, organize peer help, and advocate for their needs.</p>	<p><b>Program:</b> The program supports the revival of the Huron French Club (or its equivalent) now that the pandemic measures regarding social interaction have been lifted. All student clubs and associations operate through the students' council and are student driven. The extra-curricular opportunities that are planned by the department to engage with the students include campus film nights and conversation socials.</p> <p>With regard to assessing the needs of students, the department performs formal and informal check-ins with students on a regular basis. Information gathered during the student surveying process, undertaken in the context of the self-study, will be used to further determined ways to continually improve the student experience.</p> <p>A budget for extra-curricular French activities for the coming academic year (2022-23) was recently requested. The Dean of FASS recently approved this budget (July 2022) and financial support for new extra-curricular initiatives is now in place.</p> <p><b>Faculty:</b> The faculty supports the program's response to this recommendation.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation #7 *</b> The Huron French Program needs to strengthen the study abroad programs by allowing students to spend their third year in Europe (France, Belgium, Switzerland) for credits in lieu of just Canadian settings.</p>	<p><b>Program:</b> The program notes that students have access to Huron exchanges in Versailles and Université de Lille, as well as any international exchanges offered through Western. The program will continue to welcome new partnerships that are aligned with students' needs and interests and will support all students wishing to do an exchange in a French-speaking milieu, including through expanded flexibility in accepting exchange credits for degree completion.</p> <p>Regarding where students go for their immersion experience, the program prefers to focus on accessibility and the overall language and culture skills acquired rather than focusing on nudging students towards any given geographic destination. It is more important for a student to have a language immersion experience than for them to go abroad. This is particularly important when one considers the potential high cost of studying abroad.</p> <p>The Huron Strategic Plan and FASS Academic Plan both establish student mobility such as exchanges and immersion experiences as a top priority. The Provost/Dean of FASS has indicated that more funding will be available for these types of high-impact learning practices. Thus, access to these opportunities is expected to increase and it is anticipated that more students will be able to participate without financial barriers.</p>



	<p><b>Faculty:</b> The faculty supports the program’s response to this recommendation.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation #8</b> We recommend that Huron College makes the learning of a second language mandatory for students in other relevant programs.</p>	<p><b>Program:</b> This recommendation is not within the scope of Huron French’s decision-making, but as robust supporters of language learning, program members would welcome such an institution-wide initiative.</p> <p><b>Faculty:</b> The faculty agrees with the program’s response to this recommendation.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation #9 *</b> We recommend that the Huron French Program consider offering courses for professionals, such as medical French, administrative French, French for tourism and hospitality, etc... and not just Business.</p>	<p><b>Program:</b> The program agrees that workplace readiness is a priority and will continue to support students in making connections to the workplace, such as through continued access to internships offered in collaboration with Huron’s Community Partnerships office.</p> <p>The program will continue to look for ways of creating academic courses that are of value to students and will explore offering special-interest technical courses as resources allow.</p> <p><b>Faculty:</b> The faculty supports the program’s response to this recommendation.</p>

**Implementation Plan**

The Implementation Plan provides a summary of the recommendations that require action and/or follow-up. The Program Coordinator, in consultation with the Dean of the Faculty/Affiliated University College will be responsible for monitoring the Implementation Plan.

The number of recommendations prioritized for implementation has been reduced as some are outside the scope of the IQAP review process (recommendation #1 and #8). As a result, the aforementioned recommendations will not appear in the implementation table.

Recommendation	Proposed Action and Follow-up	Responsibility	Timeline
<p><b>Recommendations #2 and #3</b> Continued review of the programs in consultation with students and other stakeholders. The department should reduce the number of sub-programs offered.</p> <p>Given low enrolments in certain courses, consider redistributing resources within the program.</p>	<p>Develop a plan to restructure modules and courses, in consultation with students, faculty, academic advisors, registrar, senior leadership and program partners.</p>	<p>Coordinator, French Program Educational Policy Committee Dean</p>	<p>Plan by spring 2023  Restructuring by fall 2024</p>
<p><b>Recommendation #4 and #5</b> We recommend that the Department of French try to recruit more actively.</p> <p>Consider organizing competitions for grade 12 high school students, as well as for its own students (i.e.: essay writers, debaters, video artists, spelling bees, creative writers) to increase students' enrolment and retention, and showcase the department.</p>	<p>Continue participation in Huron Open House events and actively corresponding with potential incoming students.</p> <p>Meet with the new VP University Growth and the Communications team to determine renewed recruitment strategies and to set program enrolment targets.</p> <p>Update recruitment materials annually to reflect unique program offerings. Materials to include detailed information on courses and modules so that students can better understand offerings at a glance.</p>	<p>Coordinator, French Program</p>	<p>By fall 2023</p>

	<p>Share materials with current students, potential recruits, and academic advising for use during current students' Intent to Register period and incoming first-year students' enrolment sessions.</p> <p>Meet with current and past Chair of History regarding the specifics of their high school recruitment strategies, in particular the "History Day" initiative.</p> <p>Consult department members and students to gauge ways to buttress student engagement (e.g., invitations to a "sample class, video artists or creative writing contests).</p>		
<p><b>Recommendation #6</b> We recommend that the French Program form a Student's French programme association to enhance collective synergy, brainstorm, organize social and cultural events, organize peer help, advocate for their needs, etc.</p>	<p>Continue offering campus film nights and conversation socials.</p> <p>Continue to assess students' needs via the established formal and informal check-ins (e.g., surveys and focus groups).</p> <p>Liaise with program students to examine ways of reinvigorating a French Club/Association.</p>	<p>Coordinator, French Program</p>	<p>By spring 2023</p>
<p><b>Recommendation #7</b> Huron French Program needs to strengthen the study abroad programs by allowing students to spend their third year abroad.</p>	<p>Encourage increased participation in immersion experiences via robust advertisement of partnerships and other immersion opportunities, such as exchanges, study abroad and the federal EXPLORE program.</p> <p>Seek out further potential partnerships and immersion opportunities both domestically and abroad, thus increasing student choice and immersion accessibility.</p> <p>Raise awareness in program courses about the opportunities that exist and why each one represents a high-impact learning experience that can increase job market outcomes and professional competency.</p>	<p>Coordinator, French Program Faculty, French Program</p>	<p>By winter 2023</p> <p>By spring 2024</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

<p><b>Recommendation #9</b> We recommend that the Huron French Program consider offering courses for professionals, such as medical French, administrative French, French for tourism and hospitality.</p>	<p>Liaise with the Community Partnerships Office to discuss potential opportunities. Advertise any French-adjacent internship opportunities. Consider offering special-interest technical courses. Engage in a discussion with Western Continuing Studies regarding possible opportunities.</p>	<p>Coordinator, French Program</p>	<p>By spring 2023</p>
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