

Examples of Possible Projects for Honors Students Majoring in French

1. Interpretation of a single, easily-accessible primary source, informed by research into existing scholarship (secondary sources). This kind of project is frequently done in FR 4109W, but it can be transformed into an Honors project if you read a greater number of secondary sources, engage with them more fully, and elaborate a more complex argument.
2. Comparison of two or more easily-accessible primary sources, informed by existing scholarship. This kind of project is also done in 4109W, and it can be transformed into an Honors project in the way described for #1 above.
3. Interpretation of primary sources not frequently cited in scholarship, or primary sources that pose particular challenges for access or for reading. This paper, too, should be informed by whatever scholarship is currently available. Examples of such primary sources include, but are not limited to:
 - Texts originally written in Old or Middle French or Old Occitan, and *read and analyzed in that language*, rather than modern French translation (or else, the writings of certain 16th-century writers whose language and style pose acute difficulties for modern readers, such as Rabelais or Montaigne)
 - Excessively long texts (multiple full-length novels from Balzac's *Comédie humaine*, Proust's *À la recherche du temps perdu*, etc.)
 - Manuscripts or early printed books (the Twin Cities possess several excellent collections, including the James Ford Bell Library, <http://www.lib.umn.edu/bell>, the Wangensteen Historical Library of Biology and Medicine, <http://wangensteen.lib.umn.edu/wangensteen>, and the Bakken Museum, <http://www.thebakken.org>); please be aware that this kind of project may require some preliminary training, since the scripts/typesets can be difficult to read.
 - Multiple mises en scène of a theatrical text or productions of an opera
 - Audio or visual materials not widely available (i.e., early films not available in VHS or DVD formats, recordings of folk songs or tales, etc.)
 - Original interviews or surveys
4. Interpretation of one or more primary sources using a critical paradigm drawn from literary theory or philosophy. As always, this project should be informed by existing scholarship on the primary sources.
5. Interpretation of French or Francophone primary sources, informed by existing scholarship, but drawing upon disciplinary paradigms or methodologies *beyond* those taught by the Department of French and Italian. This kind of project would normally only be available to double majors (and minors), since the use of disciplinary paradigms can normally only be mastered by taking multiple courses in the field. It would also require a committee member trained in the discipline in which you are working.

The above list is not meant to be exhaustive, and another kind of project could also be possible if your advisor agrees that your idea is viable.