PROGRAM REVIEW
Fairmont State Board of Governors

☐ Program with Special Accreditation  X Program without Special Accreditation

Date Submitted  1 February 2011

Program  Bachelor of Arts in French
Degree and Title

INSTITUTIONAL RECOMMENDATION

The institution is obligated to recommend continuance or discontinuance of a program and to provide a brief rationale for its recommendation:

_____ 1. Continuation of the program at the current level of activity;

_x_ 2. Continuation of program with corrective action (for example, reducing the range of optional tracks or merging programs);

_____ 3. Identification of the program for further development (for example, providing additional institutional commitment);

_____ 4. Development of a cooperative program with another institution, or sharing courses, facilities, faculty, and the like;

_____ 5. Discontinuation of the Program

Rationale for Recommendation:

_________________________________________________________
___________________________________
Signature of person preparing report: Date

_________________________________________________________
Signature of Dean Date

_________________________________________________________
Signature of Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs: Date

_________________________________________________________
Signature of President: Date

_________________________________________________________
Signature of Chair, Board of Governors: Date
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY FOR REVIEW OF BACHELOR OF ARTS IN FRENCH

Name and degree level of program: Bachelor of Arts in French

External reviewer: Dr. Mary-Anne Vetterling
Professor of Spanish
Regis College
Weston, MA

Significant findings. In her review, Dr. Vetterling offered a number of observations and suggestions:

- Dr. Vetterling had praise for our French program. She wrote, “In general, the French . . . Department [is] doing well and should definitely be funded given their overall importance in the University.” She added that the French program is “so vital to the overall strength and quality of the education your university offers its students.” Finally, Dr. Vetterling stressed “how important it is to know a second language in order to function well in many fields of specialization and in the world of the twenty-first century.”

- She also commended Dr. Hippolyte, whom she described as “very talented” and possessing “impressive expertise that shows great potential for growth in a number of very attractive directions, depending on the interests of the students at your school.”

- Dr. Vetterling suggested improving our website for the French program.

- She suggested offering bilingual courses in advanced literature courses with lectures in English and reading in French or English, depending on the students’ majors.

- She indicated that we might try to increase student interest through film festivals, a French table in the dining room, and a French club. She also asked us to consider blogs for the students and to encourage double majoring.

Plans for program improvement, including timeline. When the French B.A. program was placed on probation with the HEPC, our efforts with this program have focused on recruiting more majors and increasing graduation rates. One of the significant difficulties is the counting and reporting of majors, which does not account for double majors. The current reporting of data significantly distorts the number of majors; for example, in the spring of 2011, the “opening-day” number of French majors was reported as one; in fact, this number did not reflect twelve students who are pursuing a course of study that leads to a French major. All of the eleven students unaccounted for are French education majors or double majors. The underreporting of majors remains a grave threat to the French B.A. at Fairmont State. Even so, we remain committed to increasing majors graduating with the French B.A.

- In the fall of 2009, we instituted Immersion Day on Campus to recruit students from local high schools for our language programs. Immersion Day brings students in the schools to campus for a day of learning about language and culture in a series of activities that engage them intellectually and physically. Immersion Day shows these students that language acquisition has broadened and changed from the days when many of us studied grammar matrices and rules; the communicative approach stresses the ability to use the language and understand the culture in the “real world.” We held Immersion Day again in October, 2010 and plan a third next October.
In May, 2009 and 2010, we recruited and financially supported Fairmont State students for the HEPC’s study of and trip to Quebec City. This May, we have a dozen students who are applying for this program. Two students who have participated in the travel have become French majors.

For the last three years, French has been represented at the Internal Exhibition as part of our attempt to increase students’ awareness of the value of global languages. To that end, we are also putting together a web page on global resources.

In July, we offered French at Fairmont State’s Day Camps to expose students in elementary and middle schools to language and culture. The director of the day camps has asked us to provide similar classes again this summer.

We have begun a series of visits to local schools to share with faculty and students the advantages of understanding another culture and knowing its language. Dr. Hippolyte has visited East Dale School on 11 February 2011 and will be visiting West Fairmont Middle School in the next several weeks. We are working with Sally Morgan at Marion County Schools to schedule other class visits to high schools in Marion County to encourage students to study French for more than the required two years and to continue to study at the university level. We hope to include Harrison and Monongalia County schools in these visits and to make them a part of our spring agenda over the next three years and to measure their effectiveness.

With Dr. Erin Hippolyte serving as the Study Abroad Advisor, we have a fine opportunity to place students in immersion experiences that will enhance their desire to learn more about the language and Francophone culture. Our students have done research in Paris and studied at the University of Amiens and the University of Savoie in France. There are opportunities to study abroad in French-speaking countries for a period of one semester, one year, or a four to six-week summer program.

On campus, we are supporting study groups of both elementary and intermediate French students, planning for a student-led international film festival in spring, 2012, and exploring a French honorary in order to support students and to help them graduate with the French B.A.

Dr. Hippolyte continues to expand curricular offerings to attract more students. She has offered Caribbean Literature in Translation cross-listed with French 4426, French Literature and Culture. This cross-listing allows her to expose more students to the culture of the Caribbean and to encourage them to undertake the French B.A. The same dual-section approach to French 3314 has helped to double enrollments. The course is simultaneously offered as Introduction to Francophone Film and requires no previous knowledge of French. In this way, students can begin to cultivate interest through culture-based courses and often discover that they wish to begin the elementary language series in future semesters.

We continue to partner with other divisions of Fairmont State to encourage students to double major. At the moment, a number of students are double majoring in French and business, fine arts, and the liberal arts. As we move toward registration of new students for the fall, 2011 term, we are partnering with the Honors Program to recruit more majors among the Honors students who have had French in high school. We will also be encouraging advisors in the Academic Advising Center to encourage students to understand the value of studying languages and cultures at any level, and as a major or minor. These efforts at partnering are an on-going activity each semester.
• In July, 2011, we will host our first World Language Camp. This three-week residential experience will bring thirty rising seniors and juniors from Gear-Up schools to campus for an immersion in French language and culture. The aim of the camp is to increase students interest in Francophony and to prepare them for college-level. The Camp should be a good recruiting tool because by giving students the experience of living and studying at Fairmont State, the camp will give them the confidence that they can succeed here. We plan to offer credit by examination at the end of the camp so that the students will already have begun the French major by the time they enroll at Fairmont State.

• We continue to pursue the establishment of a Global Lounge on campus to support students studying all languages on campus. The Global Lounge would provide students with foreign-language television programs, foreign-language magazines, and camaraderie with other speakers of the language.

• We will work this summer with Information Technology to find ways to count double majors. At the moment, reporting focuses on the first major a student reports. We also need to come to consensus about how to treat education majors with a specialization in French. These students actually complete the requirements for a B.A. in French, but they do not show up on statistical reports as French majors.

Results of previous review. The previous submitted five years ago found no deficiencies or weaknesses. We continue to work on maintaining adherence to standards published by the American Council of Teachers of Foreign Language.

Five-year trend data on graduates and majors enrolled. Over the last five years, new enrollment in the French program has remained flat at one, sometimes two, students per year. Our graduation rates have also remained steady at one or two a year with a modest improvement of five graduates last May. While in absolute numbers, the increase is modest, it represents a 250% increase, which we hypothesize is due to our efforts to recruit and retain majors. We are guardedly optimistic that this increase will be sustained and even surpassed over the next several years as we concentrate on bolstering enrollments and helping students to graduate in a timely manner.

Summary of assessment model and how results are used for program improvement. This past year, faculty completed the learning outcomes for French courses that are in the general studies program. (Those outcomes are included in Appendix B.) Our initial assessment of tenses in French 1101 and 1102 indicated that students are slightly ahead of where they should be in terms of the communicative approach of the French program, but they need help to more accurately use the proper endings and grammatical functions. To that end, we have adopted a textbook that contains an online component that allows students more out-of-class exercises to help them become more proficient in this area. The online component has built-in features that will help us to assess the progress of each student and the overall effectiveness of the online material.

Data on student placement (for example, number of students employed in positions related to the field of study or pursuing advanced degrees). Three of our graduates have gone on to teach French in the schools. Three have gone on to advanced study in fields other than French, but two of these continue to take French courses or practica that involve the use of French.
PROGRAM REVIEW

FAIRMONT STATE UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE
BACHELOR OF ARTS IN FRENCH
PROGRAM REVIEW
JANUARY, 2011

PROGRAM CATALOG DESCRIPTION:

French is the language of diplomacy and is a common language of education, business and the arts. It is the official language of the European Union, the second language of the United Nations, and is spoken in 40 countries on all continents. Students taking French courses enroll in a program aimed at developing skills in reading, speaking, listening and writing the language. At the same time, students develop linguistic proficiency through cultural knowledge of the history, arts and media of the Francophone world. The program is designed to encourage links with other disciplines across campus, and welcomes those preparing for careers in diverse areas.

The program is designed to engage students in a broad scope of activities in and outside the classroom. Coursework is communicative and task-based, and students interact with the instructor in the target language beginning with the first course. An online language lab provides support outside the classroom, and multimedia primary source materials form the basis of class discussions and activities. French majors are encouraged to spend at least one semester abroad in a French-speaking country, preferably as early as possible in their studies. Study abroad develops important personal, linguistic and cultural skills that prepare students for a global world and workplace.

Advanced placement allows French majors and minors with previous experience in the target language to accelerate their program. A placement exam will determine at what level the student may begin.


**VIABILITY (§ 4.1.3.1)**

**Enrollments**

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## Graduates

### Graduates by Year and Program

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### Graduates by Program

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<td><strong>117</strong></td>
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### Service Courses

The introductory French courses (1101, 1102, 2201, and 2202) support the general studies program for Global Awareness. These courses are also an option in the Bachelor of Arts in history. All of the French courses support the B.A. in Education with French as a teaching field. In addition, French 3314 and 4426 fulfill general studies requirements in the Humanities area.
French courses were offered as dual-enrollment at Fairmont Senior High School. Plans are in development to create carefully built online courses to expand our audience to continuing education students, especially area teachers, and to make the program more flexible for all our majors and minors. Fairmont State University also plans to host an upcoming annual meeting of the WV FLTA (Foreign Language Teachers Association) and also the WV HEPC CIHE (Consortium for Internationalizing Higher Education).
**LIBERAL STUDIES REQUIREMENTS MET**

The French B.A. follows the current general studies program. See Section, “Adequacy,” below.

**ASSESSMENT**

In our initial assessment, we focused on the imperfect and conditional tenses in French, which represent the most complex grammatical feature of French 1101 and 1102 respectively. They are also key to understanding the mindset (mentalité) of the French language and expressing oneself accurately or with a certain nuance. By choosing to evaluate exercises and tasks based upon these challenging concepts and language mechanics (the imperfect tense, for example, does not exist in English), we seek to assure their solid development in our elementary language courses.

In both French 1101 and 1102, students show stronger performance on communicative tasks and less accuracy in exercises that require rote knowledge or reference to verb charts. This
is to be expected because of the methodology of the course materials and the task-based immersion approach of the instructor. However, students need to develop the detailed knowledge at the same time as their communicative abilities, in order to prevent what is known as the “communicative wall,” that is, falling into simplified habits of communication that are hard to break and transform into more complex language. If students are encouraged to use language in class, as is our current best practice, then we must assure a solid structure in which to build the intricacy and details of the language simultaneously outside of class.

In terms of the modified standards published by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), students are a bit ahead of their projected level in terms of being able to produce sentence-level utterances and respond to simple prompts and questions, as in the interview situation. These situations are familiar to the students and are the subject of much work in class, so the idea of operating within expected topics and situations during the interview is consistent with their speaking level. The writing outcomes lag slightly behind the projected level, since students’ control of the language drops off when it comes to elements used less frequently in other communicative activities. Students should be able to recombine memorized material with short sentences in writing. Instead, they are better able to do so in a controlled speaking situation. There appears to be a weakness in the students’ memorization, perhaps exacerbated by the lack of resources for repetitive practice outside of class.

**Recommendations and Plans**

We concluded that steps should be taken to maximize the available exercises to complete out of class and to minimize the time between completing these exercises and receiving feedback about their accuracy. Beginning in fall 2011, the French program will adopt an online language lab to accompany the text used in FREN1101, 1102 and 2201. Many exercises are scored automatically and provide immediate feedback. Others are returned to the instructor’s box for grading, and are a good way to gauge the students’ strengths and weaknesses regularly and to adjust class instruction accordingly. The language lab includes tutorials for particular language issues, listening exercises, open-response and multiple choice questions. Students have access to an audio dictionary to help model correct pronunciation outside the classroom. Each unit begins with an exercise to review topics in English grammar that are related to the aspects of the French language under discussion. Students are also reminded that learning French can deepen our understanding of other languages we speak. For students learning French whose native language is not English, the readiness test is a bridge to orient themselves in the comparative linguistic context of the textbook. It is expected that these online lab resources will combine and contribute to building a solid linguistic foundation to add to our students’ good communicative skills.

**ADJUNCT USE**

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### Graduation/Retention Rates

#### Fall Semester First-time Students

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#### Fall Semester Transfer-In Students

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Graduates

- BA in French
- BA in French Education
- Total

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<td>2021 Graduates</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020 Graduates</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019 Graduates</td>
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<tr>
<td>2018 Graduates</td>
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<td>2016 Graduates</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015 Graduates</td>
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<tr>
<td>2014 Graduates</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**PREVIOUS PROGRAM REVIEW RESULTS**

The previous review of the baccalaureate in French was submitted on 1 April 2006. At 7 September 2006 meeting, the Board of Governors voted to approve the report (http://www.fairmontstate.edu/admin/bog/minutes/09_07_06.pdf).

**ADEQUACY (§ 4.2.4.2)**

**Program Requirements for Bachelor of Arts in French**  
128 SEM. HRS.
- General Studies Requirements  
  41 SEM. HRS.
- French Curriculum (see below)  
  33 SEM. HRS.
- Minor  
  18 SEM. HRS.
- Free Electives  
  36 SEM. HRS.

**General Studies**

**THE FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE**  
15-16 HOURS  
(To be completed within the first 45 credit hours)  
(Students are required to complete all Developmental Skills courses within their first 32 credit hours.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>HRS.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ENGL 1104</td>
<td>Written English I *</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGL 1108</td>
<td>Written English II *</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INFO 1100</td>
<td>Computer Concepts &amp; Applications</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(or demonstrated competency)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MATH 1102</td>
<td>or above</td>
<td>3-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(excluding 1106 and courses below 1102)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMM 2200, 2201, 2202</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Designates courses with prerequisites.

**SCIENTIFIC DISCOVERY**  
8  
(Courses selected from the approved University list.)

**CULTURAL/CIVILIZATION EXPLORATION**  
9  
(Courses selected from the approved University list.)

**ARTISTIC/CREATIVE EXPRESSION & INTERDISCIPLINARY / ADVANCED STUDIES OPTION**  
6  
(Courses selected from the approved University list.)

**SOCIETY/HUMAN INTERACTIONS**  
6  
(Courses selected from the approved University list.)

**APPROVED WRITING INTENSIVE COURSE**
FREN 4441, Advanced French Composition and Conversation, fulfills this requirement.
Required Major Courses

- FREN 1101 Elementary French I 3
- FREN 1102 Elementary French II 3
- FREN 2201 Intermediate French I 3
- FREN 2202 Intermediate French II 3
- FREN 3331 French Composition and Conversation I 3
- FREN 3312 French Composition and Conversation I 3
- FREN 3314 French Civilization and Culture 3
- FREN 3321 Contemporary Literature 3
- FREN 4411 Advanced French Composition and Conversation 3
- FREN 4426 Main Currents of French Literature and Culture 3

Elective Courses (3 hours)

- FREN 1199 Special Topics in French 3
- FREN 2220 Intermediate Topics in French 3
- FREN 3310 Advanced Topics in French 3
- FREN 4998 Undergraduate Research 3

Faculty Data

Please see Appendix A

Accreditation/national standards

The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) accredits the French education program. This oversight extends to courses in the French BA, certifying them as more rigorous and, therefore, more valuable to the students.
NECESSITY (§ 4.1.3.3)

We contacted our graduates and discovered that they are working in a variety of fields. One joined the Army and used the language skills she developed as a French major to master Arabic and to be part of the Army’s intelligence service. Three of our graduates are pursuing advanced study—one in mathematics, another in journalism, and a third in clinical psychology. Of these, one continues to take French courses, and a second plans to participate in a fifth-quarter program that will provide her with an internship for an international news organization in a French-speaking country. A third graduate taught French at a magnet school in Nashville until the program was reduced; she now works as a travel planner for Loews Hotels and Resorts, helping travelers in Quebec City and Montreal. A fourth has moved on to teaching freshman orientation courses at Blue Ridge Community and Technical College after having created language and culture-based classes for a YMCA outside of Philadelphia. Yet another graduate has been working as a program coordinator for an education center that hosts camps for low-income youth and for children with medical disorders. One of our graduates reported that she has been teaching twelfth-grade English and French I and II at a private school in West Palm Beach; she plans to travel to Haiti to help translate at an orphanage.

There are similar programs at West Virginia University and the other state institutions. The B.A.in French remains a necessity for Fairmont State University’s service region because it affords students in that region an education at a relatively low tuition close to home. With the smaller scale of our campus, students appreciate the personal attention from the professor in and out of class, and the camaraderie among language students. The French program serves the general studies program and the B.A. in history. Given the extent of the Francophone regions of the world, the French B.A. makes a fine complement for students majoring in business.

Moreover, the B.A. in French serves the Strategic Planning goals of fostering high levels of teaching and learning, and of strengthening the educational, economic, and cultural well-being of our region.

CONSISTENCY WITH MISSION (§ 4.1.3.4)

The Bachelor of Arts in French trains students in the four skill areas of French language learning: speaking, listening, reading and writing, and fosters the understanding and appreciation of French-speaking cultures. In this, the French program serves the mission of Fairmont State University in fostering “individual growth, professional and career development, lifelong learning, global understanding, and a commitment to excellence in academic and community pursuit.” In the acquisition of the French language and the study of French-speaking cultures, majors grow intellectually and morally as their apprehension of the world is enlarged. They are prepared for careers as teachers, and they establish the foundations necessary to pursue training as interpreters or translators. Students of French are also well-equipped for service in business, the travel and hospitality industries, and in education. Graduates with the bachelor’s in French are also prepared for law school or graduate study in French and other fields. The program
cultivates the virtue of ongoing education, and it enhances the students’ grasp of cultures around the globe while calling students to meritorious achievement academically and civically.

The bachelor’s degree in French develops ever-higher levels of language proficiency and cultural understanding that will help students to be engaged citizens in our good Republic, which has an increasing number of French-speaking citizens. It also prepares them for employment in a range of fields not just in West Virginia or the United States, but also around the world.

The French program supports the general studies curriculum. It also serves as a teaching field in the B.A. in education.

The French B.A. shares facilities with other programs—two majors, four minors, and a master’s program—in the Department of Language and Literature. It also provides the teaching methods course for students who have elected French as a teaching field.

With reference to the University’s mission statement in the “Philosophy and Objectives” section of the current catalog (page 14),

- The baccalaureate in French contributes to the breadth of range of traditional degree programs in the arts and sciences.
- French courses are routinely offered as dual enrollment classes at high schools in Fairmont.
- French faculty serve as the study-abroad advisor, chair of the Faculty Senate’s International Education Committee, and as chair of the Internationalizing the Curriculum Committee.
- French faculty exert themselves consistently to welcome non-traditional students and military personnel, and to support their progress; the faculty are sensitive to the large number of first-generation college students.
- French faculty select textbooks with costs in mind. The faculty are preparing course materials that will soon replace some traditional textbooks.
- French faculty formally and informally counsel students about academic, career, and personal matters.
- French faculty offer cultural, recreational, and social activities that supplement and reinforce traditional classroom learning.
Erin Noelle HIPPOLYTE

Assistant Professor of French
Department of Language and Literature
Fairmont State University
1201 Locust Ave
Fairmont, WV 26554
ehippolyte@fairmontstate.edu

Education
PhD in Comparative Literature, 1999
University of Rochester (New York)
M.A. in French, 1996
University of Rochester
B.A. in English, 1993
Hamline University (St. Paul, MN)
Visiting semester, Fall 1991
American University of Paris (France)

Teaching Experience
Assistant Professor
Responsible for all courses in French program (Fall 2006-present)
FR1101 to FR4426
Fairmont State University, Fairmont WV

Instructor, French and Comparative Literature Sections, University of Rochester
French 101, 102, 103 (Fall 1993 – Spring 1999)
CLT102: Reading the Street: Urban Culture in Literature and Film
FR103c: May ’68: Resistance and Protest

Instructor, Spring and Fall 1998, Spring 1999
Department of Humanities, Eastman School of Music, Rochester, NY
French 101, 102, 112, Humanities 282 Cultures of Protest

Teaching Assistant, Film Studies Program, University of Rochester
CLT/FS/JPN 298: Japanese Animation (Anime)
CLT/FS 281: Popular Film: Sex and Violence
FR103c: Introduction to French Film

Instructor, Fall 1997 and Spring 1998, Department of Modern Languages and Classics
Hobart and William Smith Colleges, Geneva, NY / French 103, 101, 122

Grants and Awards

* Award for Excellence in Academic Advising, May 2009, Fairmont State University
* Nominated for Cyrus Vance Award for International Education in West Virginia, fall 2008
* Nominated by student for Straight Award for Innovative Teaching, spring 2008
* Co-PI, WV HEPC Internationalization Grant, Fairmont State University 2007-08
* Supervised undergraduate research grant on Appalachian and Maghrebi poetry, Fall 2007
* University of Rochester research support for dissertation work at Vidéothèque de Paris, Aug 1998
* Selected to participate in the Edouard Morot-Sir Institute in French Cultural Studies July-August 1994
Papers

« Ni putes ni soumises : Multicultural Women in France »
2007 African Literature Association Conference, West Virginia University, Morgantown, WV

« France on Fire: Ten Years of Hip Hop »
Guest Lecture at the University of Rochester, November 2006

« Génération des fils d’ouvriers: 1990s film and music cultures »
International Colloquium on 20e French Studies, 1999, Chapel Hill, NC

« Les toits de Paris: Filming the Working Class City »
1998 SCS Convention, San Diego, CA

« Rehabilitation and Carceral Urban Space: Ahmed Bouchaala's Krim »
1997 African Literature Association Conference, East Lansing MI

« Between Paris and a Hard Place: Calixthe Beyala’s Le petit prince de Belleville »
1996 MLA Convention, Washington D.C.

« Authoring Histories: Literature and Production in the Caribbean »
1995 Comparative Literature Conference, University of Rochester

Publications

« ALA à Morgantown » JALA : Journal of the African Literature Association
1:2 (Summer/Fall 2007), 182-83.


Professional Activities and Service

Fairmont State University
- Participated in HEPC statewide recruiting trips to Mexico and Turkey
- Chair, International Education Committee, spring 2007 – present
- Chair, Ad-hoc Internationalizing the Curriculum Committee
- Established relationship with online language lab, fall 2007 and fall 2010
- Campus-wide study abroad advisor
- Instructor exchange guest lectures for courses in various programs
- Substantial revision of French curriculum, fall 2006-present
- Co-organizer for International Film Festival and International Fair
- Supervisor for dual enrollment program in French at Fairmont Senior High School

Organizing Committees, University of Rochester
- Comparative Literature Conference, 1995-97 (1996 chair)
- 1998 Interrogating Subcultures Interdisciplinary Conference
- Comparative Literature Colloquium Speaker Series, 1993-7

Professional Organizations

African Literature Association
Modern Language Association
FACDIS : Consortium of WV Faculty in International Education