
Descriptions of Language Examinations

GRADUATE PROGRAM IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES

DEDMAN COLLEGE

SOUTHERN METHODIST UNIVERSITY

THE FRENCH EXAM

The study of languages is considered an integral part of the Graduate Program in Religious Studies at SMU. The examination in French is designed to evaluate the candidate's ability to use academic materials written in French effectively for scholarly research. The examination requires the translation into English of passages from recent French scholarly publications in the field of theological and religious studies.

The examination will consist of two sections, the first to be completed in one hour and the second in one hour and a half:

- (A) The first will be the translation into English of a passage in French to be selected from a longer work chosen in advance* for preparatory study. This portion of the examination is to be written *without* the use of a dictionary. [Réne Descartes -Méditations Métaphysiques \(1647\)](#).
- (B) The second will be a sight translation into English of a passage to be given at the time of the examination. The use of a dictionary *will* be permitted during this hour. The length of the text may vary but will normally be limited to one or two book pages at the most.

In evaluating the translations, comprehension and accuracy will be given greater weight than quantity, although, of course, a reasonable amount of material should be translated to demonstrate that research could be done effectively using the French language.

Students should see their examiners for recommendations of books to help prepare for the exam.

*Each student should select an item of scholarly work—a journal article or book chapter—written in French and submit this proposed selection to the examiner for approval prior to the examination. Students are encouraged to select a work in their own field of interest.

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