

Exemplary French Program: AATF

American Association of Teachers of French



Would you like your French program to become a model for others? Would you like your department to be recognized in your school, in your city or town, and on the AATF website? Then you may be a candidate for the Exemplary French Program sponsored by the AATF. Read the indicators and apply on the official form by February 15, 2026.

An exemplary secondary program should:

Indicators	Examples	Outcomes
Maintain good enrollment in French language classes over an extended period; show stability or growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Numbers in Levels 1-4 (or 5) are equal to or higher than previous years Classes have good numbers according to school criteria Program has a history of success. 	Enrollment figures for three years
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate an extended sequence of instruction in French; well-articulated across all levels Participate in AP, IB, level 5, and/or college courses in secondary program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FLES and middle school programs with an articulated sequence At least one (IB, AP, Level 5, CIS) in actual practice with examinations and results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> List of programs and enrollment figures Registration lists and grade reports
Demonstrate high teacher qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers have appropriate certification, degrees, or National Board Certification Teachers engage in presentations, publications, participation in professional associations 	Documentation: teacher CV
Engage in yearly staff development through AATF and other professional meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend at least one local or national meeting, preferably AATF Participate in state, regional or national meetings 	Verification of attendance
Implement Key Instructional Practices; provide strong Standards-based curriculum; engage in innovative and age-appropriate practices based on current methodology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use French 90% (or more) in a comprehensible way Engage students in pair and small group communicative activities Use innovative, age-appropriate activities in French Integrate culture into daily language instruction Integrate Standards into daily plan Respect diverse learning styles 	Lesson plans and examples from syllabus, curriculum, and activities.

Exemplary French Program: AATF

Indicators	Examples	Outcomes
Administer standards-based, performance assessment(s) across two levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess at least one standard of the 11 National Standards (www.actfl.org) • Use performance-based testing with a rubric • Examples: IPA, OPI 	Examples of test and rubric with results
Provide special program features and student activities; connect French to the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities that connect French students to outside resources & provide language practice outside of the classroom, such as travel abroad, exchanges, National French Week activities, National French Contest, Société Honoraire 	Documentation and description of activities
Demonstrate collaboration and support among teachers, parents, and administrators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent and administrator support • Collaborative curriculum and activities 	Letters from parents and administrators supporting the program
Demonstrate self-evaluation and a program geared to emerging 21 st century demands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program fosters practical applications and relevance • French is visible in the school and in the community • Program incorporates technology and creativity 	Narrative describing special accomplishments
Demonstrate planning for the future; motivate students to continue with French after graduation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future goals to expand the program • Well-articulated teacher goals for professional development • Planning for future resources • Students continue with French in college and workplace. 	Copy of strategic plan, self-evaluation, or goals; letters from administrator; reports from graduates

For further information, contact:

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Exemplary French Program: AATF

There are three categories for Secondary Programs:

** Indicators	Exemplary with Distinction (5)	Exemplary with Honors (4)	Exemplary (3)
Maintain good enrollment in French classes over an extended period; show stability or growth.	All French classes in a 4-5 year sequence show increase in numbers. Excellent teacher-student ratio; well-established program.	All French classes in a 4-5 year sequence have good to stable numbers. Good teacher-student ratio and program history.	First and second year classes well enrolled; 3, 4, or 5 satisfactory; Adequate teacher-student ratio and program history.
Demonstrate an extended sequence in French with well-articulated curriculum across levels	9-12 years or more (sequential program begins in grade 4 or earlier) with good articulation. More than one of AP, IB, CIS or Level 5 program with excellent assessment results	5-6 years (sequential program begins in grade 7 or 8) with good articulation. One AP, IB, or Level 5.	4 years sequential program through 11 th or 12 th grade; good articulation
Demonstrate excellent teacher qualifications	All French teachers have appropriate certification, degrees, or National Board; demonstrate professional activities	All teachers have appropriate certification, degrees, or National Board; some professional activities	All teachers have appropriate certification or degrees; adequate professional activities
Engage in yearly professional development	All French teachers participate in at least two or more local, state, or national conferences per year (one preferably AATF)	All French teachers participate in at least one local, state, or national conference or webinar per year, preferably AATF	Most French teachers participate in at least one local, state, or national conference or webinar per year (preferably AATF)
Implement Key Instructional Practices; strong standards-based curriculum	All French teachers follow key instructional practices as described with excellent examples	All French teachers follow key instructional practices as described with good examples	All French teachers follow key instructional practices as described with adequate examples

Exemplary French Program: AATF

** Indicators	Exemplary with Distinction (5)	Exemplary with Honors (4)	Exemplary (3)
Administer standards-based, performance assessment(s) across 2 levels	School or district standards-based assessment at two benchmark levels over the past three years (OPI, SOPI, IPA, etc.)	School or District-wide, standards-based assessment at one level over the past three years (OPI, SOPI, IPA, etc.)	School or District-wide, standards-based assessment on one level over the past two years (OPI, SOPI, IPA, etc.)
Provide special program features; connect French to the community	Three or more program features per school that connect French students to outside resources & provide language practice outside of the classroom; must include National French Contest and Société Honoraire	Two program features per school that connect French students to outside resources & provide language practice outside of the classroom; must include National French Contest or Société Honoraire	One program feature per school that connects French students to outside resources & provides language practice outside of the classroom; preferably National French Contest or Société Honoraire
Demonstrate collaboration and support among teachers, parents, and administrators	Evidence of excellent collaborative curriculum and activities, parent and administrator support	Evidence of good collaborative curriculum and activities, parent and administrator support	Evidence of adequate collaborative activities, parent and administrator support
Demonstrate self-evaluation and a program geared to emerging 21 st century demands	French is very visible in the school and the community in a creative and relevant program	French is visible in the school and somewhat in the community	French is visible as one of many language options
Demonstrate planning for the future; motivate students to continue with French after graduation	Evidence of future goals to expand the program ; well-articulated teacher goals for professional development; evidence of student success in college or workplace	Evidence of future goals; most teachers have goals for professional development; some students continue with French	Some evidence of program and teacher goals; some student success after graduation

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- a. **All items must be rated with 3 or above.
- b. Exemplary with distinction: (45-50 points).
- c. Exemplary with honors: (38-44 points).
- d. Exemplary: (30-37 points).

Exemplary French Program: AATF

Exemplary Post-secondary Programs

An exemplary post-secondary program should:

Indicators	Examples	Outcomes
Maintain good enrollment in French classes over an extended period; show stability or growth; French program is an on-going visible presence on campus; faculty have good rapport with students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classes have good numbers according to institutional criteria • Program has a history of success. • College/university has a language requirement • Appropriate faculty-student ratio with favorable student evaluations • Students continue with elective courses 	Course listing and enrollment figures over 2-4 years; student evaluations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer French major and minor (or graduate program) over an extended period of time with good enrollment • Participate in Interdisciplinary programs which require upper level French courses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional French major • Innovative majors, emphasizing a special feature of French, such as culture, Business, Education • Double majors • Innovative minors • Innovative graduate programs • International Business or Technology • International /Global Studies • Innovative programs or courses 	Catalogue descriptions; enrollment figures
Demonstrate high faculty qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty have appropriate degrees • Faculty have regular experience in Francophone countries • Faculty is nationally or locally recognized for their contributions in the fields of literary, cultural, linguistic, and pedagogical scholarship. 	Documentation through CV
Engage in faculty development through AATF and other professional meetings with institutional support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend at least one local or national meeting; preferably AATF • Participate and present in state, regional or national meetings 	Verification of attendance
Implement Key Instructional Practices; provide strong Standards-based curriculum; engage in innovative practices based on current methodology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use French 90% (or more) in a comprehensible way; 100% in upper level classes • Engage students in pair and small group communicative activities • Use innovative activities in French • Integrate Standards into daily plan • Create innovative courses • Respect diverse learning styles 	Examples from syllabus, curriculum, and activities.

Exemplary French Program: AATF

Indicators	Examples	Outcomes
Administer standards-based, performance assessment(s) as entrance and exit requirements for major and regular assessment in courses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use performance-based testing with a rubric <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Examples: IPA, SOPI, OPI • Standards-based course assessments 	Examples of test and rubric with results
Provide special program features and student activities; connect French to the community	Activities that connect French students to outside resources & provide language practice outside of the classroom, such as study abroad programs, exchanges, National French Week activities, festivals, French Honor Society.	Documentation with narrative of activities
Demonstrate collaboration and support among department members, colleagues, administrators, and other institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet regularly as a department to organize events, share teaching ideas, consider best practices, discuss the progress of individual students, and plan and implement curricular and co-curricular initiatives. • Maintain strong ties with other departments and institutions • Receive administrative support 	Department meeting minutes Letters from other departments Letters of support from administration and other institutions
Demonstrate self-evaluation and a program geared to emerging 21 st century demands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program is visible for special contributions to the institution and the community 	Narrative of departmental accomplishments
Demonstrate future planning for faculty and department; motivate students to continue with French in graduate school and French-related careers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future goals to expand the program • Well-articulated faculty goals for professional development • Planning for future resources • Students continue with French in graduate school, workplace, or other contacts. 	Copy of strategic plan, self-evaluation, or goals letters from administrator reports from graduates

Application and Awards:

- *Who may apply:* any K-16 program with a four-year (high school) sequence or better, or a college/ university program with a major in French. **All full-time teachers must be members of AATF.**
- *How to apply:* Submit evidence as listed above on the application form by February 15 of current year. You may submit a renewal application after three years.
- *Who determines:* AATF committee.
- *Award (valid for three years):*
 - Exemplary schools will be featured on the website for three years, with the option of renewal, and noted at the National Convention.
 - Materials will be provided for local publicity.
 - School will receive a certificate and a plaque.
 - Department will receive a voucher for materials from AATF store.