With the goal of embarking on a research and teaching career, I am applying to the PhD program in the French studies department at XXX. A French native speaker, I earned a BA in French history from Paris 1 La Sorbonne in 2004 with honors. I conducted research during my last year at La Sorbonne, and I wrote a 150-page thesis on the origins and deportation of the Jewish community of La Sarthe between 1889 and 1945 in France, entitled *La Sarthe, une communauté juive oubliée 1889-1945*, under the supervision of Denis Peschanski and Claire Andrieu. My work aimed to develop a better understanding of a small forgotten community that experienced massive deportation during WW2 as a result of the Holocaust. Until recently, most research tended to focus on large French Jewish communities such as Paris, so the idea was to cover an untold area of research. For this purpose, I have confronted archives from various written sources - public and personal archives – as well as oral sources including testimonies from survivors and living witnesses. An extract of my research was published by Editions Cheminements in 2006 under the title of *Shoah en Sarthe*, and I also authored an article in *Archives Juives* in 2009, in which I attempted to define the concept of “Jewish community” over the decades from 1889 to 1945 through the example of Le Mans.

I also had the opportunity to contribute to a conference organized by Jacques Filjakow and Serge Klarsfeld in Lacaune in 2009, in which I participated in a 35-minute panel presentation for researchers and Holocaust specialists, at which I discussed the deportation of the Jewish community and Jewish refugees from La Sarthe. My contribution was published in the form of a chapter for the collective work *Histoire régionale de la Shoah en France*, under the direction of Patrick Cabanel and Jacques Fijalkow, which was published in 2011 at Editions de Paris.

My historical research has also given me the opportunity to discuss the Holocaust with students from high schools, in partnership with the teaching team, in order for them to get a better understanding of an essential part of French history.

Since January 2020, I have been working toward the MA in Romance Languages from The University of New Orleans, during which I have taken a mix of courses on French literature and cultural studies. So far, I have a 4.0 GPA of, earned in the following courses: French literature from Louisiana in the nineteenth century; French Literature in the seventeenth century with a focus on comedy by playwrights such as Molière and Corneille; French Civilization in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, which included a mix of readings on sociology and film analysis; French documentary in the twentieth century from 1945; postcolonial literature in the twentieth century, which involved the study of novels and essays by French African writers; and Medieval Literature. I expect to graduate with the MA in Romance Languages from UNO in Fall 2021, and I should have completed all the required coursework by Summer 2021. This should only leave the Comprehensive examination for me to take in the Fall of 2021.

As for my research interests, my primary interests are mainly Colonial and Postcolonial studies. I am very interested in French Literature from Louisiana in the nineteenth century, particularly the role played by the American assimilation of French literature and its impact on writers’ production.

The study of African francophone writers in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries is also a topic I am extremely interested in, especially the literature from the “Migritude” movement and otherness issues provoked by the emigration of African writers. The representation of polygamy in literature and cinema is also a topic of interest, and I am currently working on an article that depicts the different representations of polygamy in the cinema of French-Senegalese director Maïmouna Doucouré.

I also have a keen interest in anything related to children’s literature, especially books written in the nineteenth century by female French writers under the wing of the French Catholic church, which were meant to offer education to children through carefully selected stories. My curiosity also extends to different time periods such as the Medieval age, including *fabliaux* such as “Le roman de Renart”; I am particularly interested in the contemporary representation of the fox in children’s literature, as there have been many reinterpretations of “Le roman de Renart” in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries aimed at a younger audience in the forms of novels and comics.

In relation to my initial area of research, I am extremely interested in Jewish French writers who evoke memories of trauma from the Holocaust, such as Charlotte Dalbo or Patrick Modiano. The representation of Shoah trauma in contemporary French cinema, from directors such as Martine Dugowson, is also an area I would be keen on exploring further.

I am also sensitive to female autobiographical works by writers such as Annie Ernault or, more recently, Violaine Huisman, which both refer to the parental figure in the construction of their autobiographical work.

I am very keen on joining the XXX program as I strongly believe it offers an interdisciplinary approach that would enable me to explore and strengthen my research interests. I contacted Dr. XXX in September 2020, who confirmed that my research interests would be welcomed in the French department. As XXX is currently offering additional portfolios, I would like to take the opportunity to add academic enrichment programs from the Interdisciplinary European studies portfolio or to explore new interests, such as women’s and gender studies, which would be both useful for the research interests I have previously mentioned. I also look forward to discovering the numerous French manuscripts and archives located at the XXX.

I am also excited by the opportunity of receiving training and support in teaching the French language and possibly other courses in the future. I am currently subbing at a French IB school in Round Rock when needed. I don’t have any formal training, but I have developed some experience in teaching French to students of different levels. I also currently work as a translator, so I have a good grasp of the grammatical rules in French and am able to explain them.

I have also published several short stories that received prizes or recognition in magazines, radio and other publications, so I am also hoping that I could potentially be involved in creative writing courses or contribute to the publication of a French journal at XXX that would showcase French writing.

My aim in the short and long-term is to develop the necessary skills in order to become a leading researcher in French Studies and to contribute to the comprehension of past and future literary works. I strongly feel that the French studies program at XXX could help me to achieve my goals.