

2005 NC STATE FRENCH FESTIVAL

The French Section of the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures at North Carolina State University sponsored a French Festival for Wake County middle school and high school teachers and students of French. This event was timed to celebrate the 2005 Year of Languages. 620 middle school and high school students participated. The total attendance at the event was approximately 800 people.

The event brought together students and teachers in grades 6-12 with NC State's French-studies students, French faculty, and French-speaking community volunteers who acted as judges and monitors of the seven competitions in Talent (related to French or Francophone cultures), Cultural Exhibits, Poetry Recitation, Spelling Bee, Original Group Dramatics, Theater Performance, and Traditional Songs. In addition, several school groups performed a Lip Synch Exhibition. Costumes and props celebrated the diverse Francophone cultures.

Individual students and groups won first, second, and third place plaques for their school. Teachers received a teacher-training textbook to enhance their teaching skills. Students received a Certificate of Participation, a pen with French-language slogans, and won door prizes (posters of the Eiffel Tower, the TGV, and the *Arc de Triomphe*), French-language books (*Le Petit Prince*), French-language games (*Mille Bornes*), French-language software and candy from France, Belgium and Switzerland. Teachers also received door prizes of Francophone candies, sweatshirts ("Je parle, j'enseigne, j'adore le français"), and gift certificates.

For entertainment, Michèle Darrah, President of the *Alliance française* of Raleigh-Durham-Chapel Hill and member of the NC State French faculty led a sing-along of French songs.

Informational tables from the NC State Bookstore, French Studies and Study Abroad answered questions about programs and possibilities.

Wake County students benefited from the event by being given the opportunity to apply their French-language skills to real-world and simulated situations beyond the classroom. They left the event with a greater knowledge and appreciation of diversity and other cultures. As a result of the French



Festival, Wake County teachers and administrators and the NC State French faculty have established a partnership/collaboration which has enhanced their professional relationship.

Funding for the event has been provided by grants from the AATF (national), the AATF North Carolina chapter, the Foreign Language Association of North Carolina and from funding received by the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures as part of their Departmental Teaching Award.

RESULTS OF 600 STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRES: WHY DID YOU CHOOSE TO STUDY FRENCH RATHER THAN ANOTHER LANGUAGE?

1. It's a pretty/beautiful/elegant language.
2. My parent/sibling/grandparent/friend/exchange student studied/speaks it.
3. It is the most practical/useful language for my career: work as or in NHL/dancer/chef/translator/musician/scientist/fashion designer/business/apparel marketing/international trade/artist/Doctors Without Borders, etc.
4. I wanted to take a different language than my family/friends.
5. It's the language of love/romance/girls like it.
6. I have relatives/heritage in a French-speaking country: France/Quebec/Haiti, etc.
7. I have traveled/lived in France/Quebec/England.
8. French is used all over the world.
9. I am a native speaker of Spanish.
10. I do not like/failed Spanish or I took Spanish in elementary/middle school and did not like it.
11. No room in Spanish classes.
12. I like the French culture.
13. French is easy.
14. Because African countries speak

French.

15. The French teachers are better than the Spanish teachers in my school.

Additional information on the 2005 French Festival is available at [<http://social.chass.ncsu.edu/~adlerd>]. Click on 2005 French Festival.

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