

A GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY

The elimination of the French AP Literature Exam is no secret to teachers and students whose long sequence program culminated with this prestigious and challenging exam. When the College Board announced the unexpected news that it was eliminating the Literature Exam in favor of one French Language and Culture Exam, many teachers feared the disappearance of middle school programs that, in the eyes of administrators, function as conduits for AP exams.

Anne Jensen, AATF Region IX Representative and a teacher of AP courses, recounted the sequence of events in her article that appeared in *The French Review*. She spoke for many teachers and students whose emotions ranged from surprise to shock and disappointment when the announcement of phasing out the French AP Literature Exam was announced. The overall feeling that permeates Anne's article is the lack of fairness in the process that took place. Such was the reaction of those affected by the decision in Region IV that represents the Mid-Atlantic States as well.

When the news of the elimination of French AP Literature reached Marie-Laure Hollander Hoffman, the co-president of the New Jersey Chapter, she was quite angry at the decision made by the College Board. She feared that it would sabotage the strong French Program that is in place at Westfield High School where she has taught for many years. Viviane Levy, the Co-President of the chapter, Marie-Laure and I brainstormed! Realistically, I stated that we cannot fight the College Board and that the decision is most likely irreversible. I suggested, however, that we use this opportunity to improve on what the College Board had monopolized for so many years by offering an alternative goal to students. This new approach would focus on forming partnerships with local colleges and universities. After thinking about the idea overnight, Marie-Laure was more than enthusiastic. She took the ball and ran with it.

The plan is as follows: the high school teacher who would normally prepare students for AP exams teams up with a participating university faculty member to develop a course syllabus. The high school teacher then teaches the "university course" for which students receive university credit. In some cases, they receive dual credits thus completing their units toward high school graduation while at the same time, getting a head start by earning university credits. It is a "win-win" situation for the university who may be recruiting future students of French and definitely an asset to the student who

receives college credits. The tuition collected by the University is reported to be very small. Such partnerships are not new, but they have not been fully explored in the past.

The following announcement of a workshop attested to the fact that our New Jersey colleagues are not wasting any time. The wheels of opportunity are certainly turning. The announcement regarding an informational workshop reads as follows:

Connaissez-vous *Project Acceleration*?

Under the auspices of director Peter Hynes, this program allows teachers to instruct their class in their regular high school, and have their students receive college credit from Seton Hall University. A course syllabus and teacher credentials must be approved, but once they are you are free to register students for this course. There is no obligation for your students to sign up, or any obligation on their part to continue their education at Seton Hall, but students will appreciate the fact that they will receive real college credit for the course in exchange for a very modest tuition. In addition to college credit, your students gain access to many of the resources of Seton Hall University, and your French program will also benefit and gain prestige from its partnership with Seton Hall.

We would like to invite you to this half-day session of our *Journée pédagogique* to be a member of the panel with Mr. Hynes and other Seton Hall professors, in order to share your ideas and suggestions with your colleagues and hear your input concerning this program. The workshop will also help you develop syllabi for the course.

AATF-NJ wants to help French educators in planning curricula and fill the void left by the demise of the AP French Literature Exam.

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