Director’s Note

Amalia D. Kessler
Lewis Talbot and Nadine Hearn Shelton Professor of International Legal Studies

The France-Stanford Center for Interdisciplinary Studies aims to bridge the disciplines of the humanities, social sciences, sciences, engineering, business and law, addressing historical and contemporary issues of significance for France and the United States from a broad range of perspectives. Its programs bring faculty members, researchers and students from across Stanford’s departments and schools into contact with colleagues in France, to explore issues of common intellectual concern, to advance collaborative research, and to foster interdisciplinary inquiry.

The center just celebrated its tenth anniversary in September 2013. During this time, we have funded more than a hundred collaborations between French institutions and Stanford, sponsored more than twenty conferences on a wide array of topics (from Dark Energy to Scripting Revolutions) and hosted numerous international visitors. Indeed, one of our grant recipients recently received a MacArthur Fellowship for his research on climate change.

Beginning in 2013-2014, we launched a series of new fellowship programs aimed at undergraduates, graduate students, postdoctoral scholars, and junior faculty from France and Stanford interested in undertaking an individual course of research either at Stanford or in France. With our support, these younger scholars have pursued research in a variety of fields, including mathematics, anthropology, Islamic Studies, East Asian studies and medicine. So too, we have begun annually to fund an undergraduate student in the French Department seeking to pursue research in France.

Each year, we support one major conference, and often some smaller workshops and seminars as well. Our annual conference this year was hosted at the Stanford Green Library in November 2013. Scholars from the United States, France, and Great Britain presented their research on the 19th century French socialist and workers press found in Stanford University Libraries’ Gimon Collection. In addition, the France-Stanford Center helps to sponsor the French Culture Workshop at Stanford, which brings together faculty and students from different disciplines, including French literature, History, Comparative Literature, and Art History, to examine questions relevant to French culture and society from the modern period. For more information, including a complete list of conferences and grant and fellowship recipients, please read our event highlights section:
http://francestanford.stanford.edu

We very much look forward to seeing you at our upcoming events. Please join us!
Conferences/Workshops

The France-Stanford Center invites proposals for scholarly conferences or workshops to be held at Stanford or in France. Conferences and workshops should address significant issues of common interest to scholars from France and Stanford, and particularly, but not exclusively, those subject to differences of disciplinary or interdisciplinary approach in or between the two countries.

For more information about past conferences and how to submit a conference proposal, please visit: http://francestanford.stanford.edu/conference-talks/2014_2015

Event Highlights


The 19th Century French Socialist Press at Stanford University, 1819-1871

In November 2013, the center hosted its annual conference at Stanford. Spanning from the 16th century through 1848, the contents of the Gustave Gimon Collection on French Political Economy can be broadly described as over 1000 works documenting pre-Marx economic and political thought. Ideas about the best and most just ways to organize a society, practical works for merchants, rulers, and tradespeople, theories about the roles of religion, the colonies, and industry in France are all discussed.

Religion, Literature, Society – Greek and Roman Hymnic Traditions and the Performance of Community

In April 2014, the Department of Classics hosted the conference. This conference brought together thirteen scholars from France and Stanford, with varied perspectives to investigate the full range of hymnic literature.

“Crisis” and Transformations of Contemporary Representative Democracies

The conference was held at Stanford in May 2014.

4th International Conference on Engineering Frontiers in Pediatrics and Congenital Heart Disease

The conference took place in May in Paris, France. Over seventy participants came from all over the world, from the USA and France naturally, but also from as far as Japan, Turkey or Australia. Participants particularly liked the mixture of mathematics/engineering and clinical research presented in an understandable way for both communities. This fostered lively discussions after talks and at the poster session. Three young investigators received awards from the Fondation Sciences Mathématiques de Paris. Thank you to the France-Stanford Center for Interdisciplinary Studies for making this unique interdisciplinary event possible.

“The conference was great. I really enjoyed it. The discussions were lively; everyone seemed engaged; and I loved having the chance to do Proudhon with Edward and to spend time with our French friends”. Jonathan Beecher, University of California, Santa Cruz, 19th Socialist Press conference participant.

Collaborative Research Highlights

In the spring of 2013, the France-Stanford Center sent its 8th call for proposals for academic year 2013-2014. Among twenty-three proposals received, thirteen were selected in the following fields: natural and applied sciences, humanities & social sciences, law, medicine and earth sciences. For a complete list of selected projects, please visit the following page: http://francestanford.stanford.edu/collaborative_projects/grant_recipients/2013_2014

David Lobell (2012-2013 grant recipient) was honored with a MacArthur Fellowship for research on the impact of climate change on crop production and food security.

“Climate change is one of the reasons for concern about feeding people in the future, but it is not insurmountable”. David Lobell, Woods Institute, Stanford University.

“I really appreciate the support; it has been great for our Center and our students”. Lynn Meskell, Department of Anthropology, Stanford University.

“We thank you very much for your support that helped us secure a fruitful collaboration”. Michael Smietana, Université de Montpellier, France.

“Thank you for the funding. It was a unique opportunity that turned into an excellent collaboration. I will be visiting France and Mines ParisTech in June to continue the collaboration started with your funding”. Jef Caers, Department of Energy Resources, Stanford University.

Collaborative Research

The France-Stanford Center sponsors high quality collaborative research projects likely to foster new linkages and deepen existing connections between French scholars and students and their counterparts at Stanford University. Priority is given to projects with the potential to develop new collaborations involving younger researchers, and to those leading to collaborative work on interdisciplinary issues.

For more information about past collaborative projects and how to submit a proposal, please visit: http://francestanford.stanford.edu/collaborative_projects
Student Updates

Paul Villoutreix, Université Paris Descartes, Paris. I spent five months in the mathematics department at Stanford University. I have had interesting interactions with mathematicians opening me to new perspectives in mathematics as well as in biology. I have been very impressed by the whole ecosystem between Stanford and the Silicon Valley. It has been a great experience broadening my scientific thought and my idea of academic research, and convinced me to continue my work at the interface between mathematics and biology.

Nicole Clarke, School of Medicine, Stanford University. During my time at the Institut Pasteur, I worked on a project where the ultimate goal is to provide mechanistic proof of concept that V(D)J recombination can cause oncogenic events that drive lymphomagenesis.

Riccardo Barontini, Université Paris IV Sorbonne, Paris. My stay at Stanford was deeply positive because of the rich cultural environment of the university. I learned a lot about the American university system. I think that I will be able to apply some of the things I have seen and learned at Stanford to my teaching and to my research in France.

Yanshuo Zang, Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures, Stanford University. In the summer of 2013, I completed a research project at the French Ministry of Culture and Communication based in Paris. This was an incredible journey, and the learning that took place during my trip was important to me not only on an academic level, but also personally.

Liang Peng, Institut de Géographie, Paris. My project explored the role of Heritage Ethics in the Management and Planning of Cultural Landscape and its function which could afford lessons for the protection of cultural landscape. I hope the research can be a certain reference value for the policy-making of cultural landscape planning in the future.

Alexandre Kazerouni, Sciences Po, Paris. My research project consisted in comparing the ways American museums talk about Islam and put it on display in comparison with their European counterparts. Stanford was also a platform to discuss the conclusions of my doctoral thesis on museums in the Persian Gulf.

Yuanzhi Zhang, Université Paris I, Paris. During my stay at Stanford, I conducted a study relating to the treatment of bank failure in a comparative perspective.

“Nicole’s contributions to cancer research during her fellowship at Pasteur set a good example of constructive collaboration between the Institut Pasteur and Stanford University that I hope will encourage other young scientists to apply to your program. I would also be thrilled if this internship can be a milestone for further connections between the France- Stanford Center for Interdisciplinary Studies and the Institut Pasteur Paris”. Ludovic Deriano, Institut Pasteur, Paris.

“I am grateful to the France-Stanford Center for Interdisciplinary Studies for giving me this chance to be a visiting student in the Stanford Archaeology Center of Stanford University”. Liang Peng, Institut de Géographie, Paris.

“Thanks to the postdoctoral fellowship granted to me by the France Stanford Center I could benefit from the rich and diverse academic environment at Stanford University. The funding from the France Stanford Center also enabled me to do field research in the United States at a national scale”. Alexandre Kazerouni, Sciences Po, Paris.
MaryJo Lopez, Department of French & Italian, Stanford University. I am currently researching the philosophy of Henri Bergson, the way in which it influenced American philosophers and the reception of Bergson’s philosophy in the U.S. at the Library of Congress. This research will culminate in an honors thesis which I am writing in the Philosophy Department and in a finalized English translation of Henri Bergson’s Durée et simultanéité which I am writing as a thesis for the French Department.

Louise Lu, Department of Human Biology, Stanford University. Thanks to the generous support of the FCIS Fellowship, I am spending this summer conducting research at the Institut Pasteur in Paris. I will be investigating the recent outbreaks of deadly pediatric encephalitis in Northern India and formulating hypotheses regarding environmental triggers and modes of transmission.

Shreya Ramachandran, Department of Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences/Department of Biology, Stanford University. I have spent my summer in Paris working to combine efforts between Stanford and the Paris Diderot University on a large-scale research project.

Thomas Teisberg, Department of Electrical Engineering, Stanford University. My research this summer has focused on the development of methods to more efficiently verify the correctness of safety-critical control systems written in high-level languages such as Simulink. In particular, my work has focused on applying formal methods to prove the safety of a control system written for a human-body exoskeleton designed to help paraplegic and quadriplegic individuals.

French Culture Workshop

The French Culture Workshop brings together participants from different disciplines, including French literature, History, Comparative Literature, and Art History, to examine questions relevant to French culture and society from the modern period (1650 to present). Topics of discussion include political and intellectual history, imperialism and colonialism, nationalism and national identity, immigration and minorities, gender, and francophonie. The French Culture Workshop is co-sponsored by the Stanford Humanities Center, the DLCL Research Unit, the France-Stanford Center, and the Europe Center at the Freeman Spogli Institute. Please note that the French Culture Workshop will be on sabbatical during 2014-2015. For more information, please visit: https://dlcl.stanford.edu/groups/french-culture-workshop

- Yan Slobodkin (PhD Candidate, History, Stanford) – May 29, 2014
- Judith Surkis (History, Rutgers) – May 22, 2014
- Conference - “Let There Be Enlightenment: The Religious and Mystical Sources of Rationality” – May 16-17, 2014
- Jacob Soll (History, USC) – May 5, 2014
- Michel Wieviorka (EHESS, Paris) – April 17, 2014
- Mark Braude (Fellow, Humanities+design and French, Stanford) – April 3, 2014
- Alan Kors (History, Penn) – March 13, 2014
Executive Committee

Stanford Members

Cécile Alduy, Associate Professor of French, Department of French and Italian, Stanford University

Jeffrey A. Feinstein, MD, MPH, Associate Professor, Pediatrics and, by courtesy, Bioengineering Director, Pediatric Cardiology Fellowship Program, Stanford University School of Medicine

Mark Granovetter, The Joan Butler Ford Professor in the School of Humanities and Sciences, Department of Sociology, Stanford University

Robert Gray, Lucent Technologies Professor in Communications and Networking, Emeritus Professor, Department of Electrical Engineering, Stanford University

Jessica Riskin, Associate Professor, Department of History, Stanford University

Chiara Sabatti, Associate Professor of Health Research and Policy and, by courtesy, of Statistics, Department of Biostatistics & Department of Statistics, Stanford University

French Members

Antonin Baudry, Cultural Counselor, French Embassy, New York

Bernadette Bensaude-Vincent, Professor, Université Paris I Panthéon Sorbonne

Gérard Bonneaud, Deputy Director, CNRS, Université Pierre et Marie Curie, Stanford University (SLAC)

Alain Israël, Institut Pasteur, Paris

Christophe Laux, Ecole Centrale, Paris


• Joshua Cole (History, University of Michigan) – March 6, 2014
• Karen Offen (Stanford) – February 27, 2014
• Joanna Stalnaker (French, Columbia) – February 20, 2014
• Dan Edelstein (French, Stanford) – February 13, 2014
• Anton Matystin (Mellon Fellow, French, Stanford) – November 14, 2013
• Ivan Jablonka (Associate Professor, Université Paris XIII Nord) – Oct. 21, 2013
• Paola Mattei (Fellow, European Studies Centre, St Antony’s College, University of Oxford) – October 3, 2013

Photos taken by SGS students and submitted to photo contest