Approximately 200 million people around the world speak French. Daniel Fuerst is one of them. Not only does he have a passion for the language and the culture, he’s found tremendous support for that interest at the College. Whether or not he ends up teaching French after he graduates, he is confident that it will play a role in his professional life.

Daniel studied French all the way through high school. When he came to the College, he wasn’t certain that he’d major in the language, but he knew he wanted to continue studying it. So, he enrolled in French classes right away.

“I think the most important course I took was a semester abroad in La Rochelle, France. That was the best thing that could have happened to me. La Rochelle is a beautiful, historic seaport, like a French version of Charleston. I had just turned 18, and I was getting launched into the real world. It was a bit of a culture shock, but I adjusted pretty easily and my language skills just exploded. That experience really prepared me for the rest of the courses that I’ve taken in this major.”

One thing that characterizes the department, says Daniel, is flexibility. “I took a class on Haiti, which was focused on literature. For the final paper, we had to take one of the pieces we had read and analyze it. I actually wanted to do something different. I found a documentary film about Haiti’s gay population, and I asked the professor if I could substitute that for the reading. He was very accommodating because he knows that I’m interested in film. That allowed me to write a sociologically based paper, which I find more interesting than analyzing literature.”

When he’s not studying, Daniel tutors other students in French at the Center for Student Learning on campus. In addition, he is president of the French Club. After graduating, he plans to attend law school. “You can get into law school with a major in almost any discipline, but I think having a French major will set me apart from other applicants. And beyond that, it can only help that I’m proficient in the language and have that degree on my résumé.”