College of Arts & Sciences
Modern Languages

Overview
Studying a world language is much like deciphering a code; it enables you to examine firsthand the framework of another culture. Language study provides insight into the linguistic, historical, cultural and literary worlds of other people. Such access to other cultures involves more than acquiring abstract knowledge of a language. It is the result of continual learning and practice.

In today’s global society, the rewards for engaging in language learning are almost unlimited. To quote the National Security Agency, “careers in languages are only as limited as your imagination.”

Professional options
Careers
Second language proficiency is an asset in any career, whether in the United States or abroad. Modern languages graduates apply their skills in fields including education, health and human services, business, law and criminal justice, communication, hospitality, and customer service. Specialists in modern languages become teachers, translators, interpreters, linguists or language consultants. Advanced language study also can lead to careers in the State Department, Defense Department, U.S. Information Agency, CIA, National Security Agency and many other government agencies. For students planning to attend graduate school, knowledge of a second language is indispensable.

Academics
The Department of Modern Languages offers courses in Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Hindi, Italian, Japanese, Latin, Russian and Spanish. It sponsors summer study programs in Europe and Latin America, and encourages study abroad for all of its students. It is firmly committed to communicative language teaching, and emphasizes the use of the target language (the language being studied) in the classroom.

The department publishes Studies in Twentieth and Twenty-First Century Literature, an open-access scholarly journal devoted to the study of literature written in French, German and Spanish.

Degree options
Four-semester language program sequence
Taught in the target language, levels I and II of each language introduce the student to the basic structures of the language and provide ample opportunity for building conversational skills as well as reading and writing. Students with no previous world language experience begin their language study by enrolling in the elementary course (level I) of the chosen language.

Levels III and IV build from level II with practice in all language skills: reading, writing, speaking, listening and cultural awareness. They may include intensive grammar review as well as instruction of new forms and an introduction to literature.

Depending on the language, conversation courses may be taken concurrently with or following levels III or IV, offering additional opportunity to practice for traveling, studying or working abroad.

If you have had previous language training or experience, you may be eligible to receive retroactive credit. You should take the department’s language placement examination to determine your proficiency level. Please follow the instructions on our website, k-state.edu/mlangs/enroll.html, for instructions on taking the placement exam. A modern languages faculty member will then visit with you about the results and your previous language experience in order to place you in an appropriate level. If you place at the intermediate or advanced level and satisfactorily complete the course(s), you may receive college credit for a lower-level course(s).

Advanced courses
Courses at the 400 and 500 levels refine the language skills developed in the four-semester language sequence. These courses build confidence in using the language while increasing knowledge about specific areas of language, literature and culture. They include courses on composition, conversation, civilization, linguistics, translation and the literature of the respective language, as well as language courses for business and health professions.

The 700-level courses further the student’s sophistication in spoken and written language skills and provide training in the specialized techniques of literary and cultural study, translation and linguistics.

Bachelor’s degree programs
Students wishing to major in modern languages should enroll in the Bachelor of Arts degree. Majors in French, German and Spanish follow a curriculum designed for their respective language (see web page for details: k-state.edu/mlangs/) and meet the general requirements for the Bachelor of Arts. Students completing an additional major in a college other than Arts & Sciences are eligible for the dual degree option with streamlined requirements. Literature courses in translation will not apply toward the major.

Minor
The department offers minors in Chinese, classical studies, French, German, Japanese, Russian, Spanish and Spanish translation. General requirements vary, see web page for details, k-state.edu/mlangs/. Literature courses in translation may not be applied toward a minor in the language, with the exception of classical studies.

Graduate programs
Modern languages offers Master of Arts graduate programs in French, German, Spanish and Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL). Each program requires either 30 hours of coursework, plus a comprehensive written and oral examination; or 28 hours of coursework, plus a master’s report and comprehensive exam; or 24 hours of coursework, plus a master’s thesis and comprehensive exam. A graduate certificate in teaching and learning is also available for graduate students wishing to become eligible for Kansas K-12 teacher licensure.

Points of pride
The Princeton Review picked K-State among the best colleges in the country. K-State is a national leader among state-supported universities in its total of Rhodes, Marshall, Truman, Goldwater and Udall scholarship winners.

k-state.edu/admissions/academics
The master’s program in French, German or Spanish literature is designed to help the student attain a high level of proficiency in all aspects of the language; to read, analyze, interpret and critically discuss a wide selection of works in the target language; and to synthesize the material read into an accurate and coherent picture of the target language’s literary and cultural developments. This degree is recommended for those students who wish to teach at the secondary or university level, or for students seeking to develop superior language proficiency and cultural preparation to apply in other careers in the U.S. or abroad.

The master’s program in second language acquisition, or SLA (French, German, Spanish and Teaching English as a Foreign Language), integrates language, linguistics, applied linguistics, pedagogy, culture and literature. This degree program prepares graduates to work as language instructors in higher education or enhance K-12 teaching credentials, to pursue further study at the doctoral level, or to develop superior language proficiency and cultural preparation to apply to other careers in the U.S. or abroad. The M.A. program in TEFL equips students to teach English in a wide range of contexts, both abroad and domestically.

All SLA programs are designed to strengthen target language skills and cultural awareness, develop knowledge of second language learning theories and pedagogical approaches, narrow the traditional gap in graduate study between the methods of teaching and the content areas of literature and culture, promote individual inquiry in the student’s field of interest, and develop awareness of professional standards.

Students who pursue an M.A. in second language acquisition with a graduate certificate in teaching and learning in French, German and Spanish complete graduate coursework in the Department of Modern Languages and the College of Education to apply for state of Kansas K-12 licensure. Consequently, students who wish to pursue an M.A. in SLA with a graduate certificate in teaching and learning work with advisors in both the Department of Modern Languages and the College of Education.

Faculty

The teaching faculty is devoted to the highest professional standards in both teaching and research. Numerous faculty members have received the all-university Commerce Bank and Presidential undergraduate teaching awards, and one has held the Coffman Chair for University Teaching Scholars. Doctoral degrees held by the faculty were earned at such universities as Duke, Georgia, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, New Mexico, Ohio State, Penn State, Purdue, Texas Tech and Washington University in St. Louis.

Activities

Study abroad

Our department urges students to study abroad as an essential part of their education, and strives to support them throughout the study abroad experience. Students must consult with the department to find out how courses they intend to take abroad may apply to their major or minor.

Clubs

The department sponsors various student language and culture clubs, conversation groups, guest speakers and field trips.

Research

Undergraduate research is built into our curriculum. Each year, the department hosts a poster symposium during which students have the opportunity to share their findings with the university community.

Financial assistance

The department offers scholarships for students majoring in modern languages. These scholarships include funding for study abroad programs. For more information on scholarships, courses and requirements, please contact the department or visit our home page (k-state.edu/mlangs/).

Suggested coursework

Bachelor’s degree

French: 32 hours at the 200-level or above. Required: FREN 520 and 521 (Introduction to French Literature I and II) and at least three 700-level courses.

German: 32 hours at the 200-level or above. Required: GRMN 521 and 522 (Introductory Topics in German Literature and Culture of the 18th/19th century and 20th/21st century) and at least three 700-level courses.

Spanish: 31 hours at the 300-level or above. Required: at least three 700-level courses. (Note: SPAN 408 does not count toward the major).

Bachelor’s degree “with distinction”

The department also offers a major option “with distinction.” Students seeking this option must maintain a 3.5 GPA in all courses taken toward the major while they fulfill the requirements: two additional courses, one of which must be at the 700-level.

Minor

Students wishing to minor in modern languages may do so in Chinese, classical studies, French, German, Japanese, Russian, Spanish or Spanish translation. Literature courses in translation may not be applied toward the minor.

Basic requirements are:

Chinese: 18 hours. No literature course is required.

Classical Studies: 18 hours at the 200-level or above. Must include Classics 501 and Classics 502.

French: 21 hours at the 200-level or above, must include one literature course: FREN 520 or 521 (Introduction to French Literature I or II (or equivalent)).

German: 20 hours at the 200-level or above, must include one literature course: GRMN 521 or 522 (Introductory Topics in German Literature and Culture of the 18th/19th century or 20th/21st century (or equivalent)).

Japanese: 18 hours. No literature course is required.

Russian: 18 hours, including RUSSN 551, Russian V or RUSSN 552 (Survey of Literature).

Spanish: 19 hours at the 300-level or above, must include one 500-level literature course.

Spanish translation: 18 hours including SPAN 530 or 531; SPAN 575, SPAN 771, and SPAN 774; a professional writing in English elective; and approaches to language elective.

For more information about modern languages, contact:

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