

FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT

In today's changing world it is important that students are introduced to major world languages. Unit 5 students have an opportunity to choose from French, German and Spanish language classes. The goal of each of these classes is to expose students to the culture of the respective language, and to supply students with the skills needed to communicate effectively and appropriately to their level of language study.

The department offers its courses beginning at the Middle School level. Students in 7th and 8th grades complete Level I of the language. Students in High School may begin a language at any grade. Students who do not begin at the 7th grade level typically begin at 9th grade to ensure completion of a four-year program. It is not unusual, however, for Sophomores, Juniors and even Seniors to begin language study. (See the course descriptions.)

Why should a student learn a foreign language?

- Foreign language classes can be among the most imaginative and demanding courses offered in high school.
- Some universities have a two to four year foreign language entrance requirement. Most universities require a four semester language sequence for the Bachelor of Arts Degree. Students who have completed four or five years of foreign language in high school have fulfilled a requirement in most cases. At Illinois State University, for example, eight hours of credit may be given for successful completion of a third semester course.
- Foreign language students who choose to take the placement tests at the end of their high school language studies may receive credit and/or advanced standing at the post secondary level. The Advanced Placement Test is available.
- Foreign language students will be able to compete more effectively in the global workplace.
- Speaking a second language can increase job opportunities and salary potential. Several Unit 5 graduates work for multinational firms. Many have returned to express their appreciation for the opportunity to begin language study early.
- Studying a foreign language increases an appreciation of other people and their cultures, and enhances one's own.
- Knowing a foreign language improves one's knowledge of English. About 80% of English vocabulary comes from French, German or Spanish. The study of a foreign language also enhances grammar skills. There is statistical support that foreign language students receive higher scores on the SAT and ACT.

Which Language? French, German or Spanish?

Many times students who are about to take their first foreign language have a difficult time deciding which one to choose. They may ask their parents, guidance counselors or friends for advice, due to a lack of familiarity with other language. There are misconceptions about foreign language study. Students may have heard that foreign language study is difficult. There are common perceptions about the ease and difficulty of French, German and Spanish, but all foreign languages do require a commitment to daily study. Students succeed in foreign language study because they put forth the effort to succeed.

| Language-Specific Benefits | | |
|--|---|--|
| French | German | Spanish |
| influences art, architecture, cuisine, music, philosophy and literature spoken in over 40 countries including Canada in North American helps with Latin-based vocabulary | influences art, architecture, cuisine, music, philosophy and literature the most spoken language in the European Union a Germanic language like English | influences art, architecture, cuisine, music, philosophy and literature spoken as a first language by numerous Americans helps with Latin-based vocabulary |

When choosing a foreign language keep the issues of student interest, career plans and cultural awareness in mind. Students will succeed at any language they choose if they are willing to spend time learning vocabulary, mastering grammar and participating in classroom activities.

Study of the languages offered to Unit 5 students is an excellent foundation for a broad-based humanities education. The foreign language department welcomes you to our classes and to your new experience!

Language to Address Native/Heritage Language Speakers



Students with native French, German or Spanish speaking skills and who desire to study their native language, should contact the foreign language department prior to enrolling for proper level placement based on listening, speaking, and writing abilities. **Truly fluent native/heritage speakers are encouraged to study another language thus increasing their language skills.**

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Recommendation: Students may register for French, German or Spanish language courses. Students should achieve a C average or better in language arts classes before enrolling in foreign language classes. Students who fail the first semester will not receive credit and any student with less than a C average for the entire year of study may not advance to the next level.

FIRST YEAR LANGUAGE

FOR 111/112 French I

FOR 211/212 German I

FOR 311/312 Spanish I

(Yearly 1 Credit) (7/8, 9, 10, 11, 12)

The aim of this course is to provide students with a basis for learning a foreign language as it is spoken and written today. Emphasis is given to developing the student's basic language skills-listening comprehension, speaking, reading and writing. Aural and oral proficiency is stressed. A second aim is to increase the student's awareness and understanding of the people and culture of the target language. Evaluation is based upon communicative competence, written and oral, and objective testing in content areas.

SECOND YEAR LANGUAGE

FOR 121/122 French II

FOR 221/222 German II

FOR 321/322 Spanish II

(Yearly 1 Credit) (9, 10, 11, 12)

Prerequisite: Students must have a C average or better in the preceding level in order to advance to the next level of foreign language study, or must request department approval for continuing the sequence of study. Students planning to finish the sequence of study with Advanced Placement in the target language should maintain a B average or better in each level.

This course, a continuation of the first-year program provides students with an in-depth explanation of language structure. Listening, writing and speaking skills are expanded and an understanding of the language and culture is further developed. Evaluation is based upon communicative competence, written and oral, and objective testing in content areas.

THIRD YEAR LANGUAGE

FOR 131/132 French III

FOR 231/232 German III

FOR 331/332 Spanish III

(Yearly 1 Credit) (10, 11, 12)

Prerequisite: Students must have a C average or better in the preceding level in order to advance to the next level of foreign language study, or must request department approval for continuing the sequence of study. Students planning to finish the sequence of study with Advanced Placement in the target language should maintain a B average or better in each level.

This course is directed at developing the student's

communicative skills. The students review major principles and learn fine points of structure. Students develop the necessary skills for reading in the target language. Practical application of the language is emphasized through the use of written, audio and video texts. Evaluation is based upon communicative competence, written and oral, and objective testing in content areas.

FOURTH YEAR LANGUAGE

FOR 141/142 French IV

FOR 241/242 German IV

FOR 341/342 Spanish IV

(Yearly 1 Credit) (11, 12)

Prerequisite: Students must have a C average or better in the preceding level in order to advance to the next level of foreign language study, or must request department approval for continuing the sequence of study. Students planning to finish the sequence of study with Advanced Placement in the target language should maintain a B average or better in each level.

Communication and grammar are emphasized through the culture, literature, and history of the target population. Students' understanding of native speech is enhanced through the use of video and audio texts. Evaluation is based upon written and oral communicative competence, as well as objective testing in content areas. AP testing is available upon request.

FIFTH YEAR LANGUAGE - AP

FOR 151/152 AP French

FOR 251/252 AP German

FOR 351/352 AP Spanish

(Yearly 1 Credit) (12)

Prerequisite: Students must have a B average or better in preceding level in order to advance to next level of language study, or with consent of Associate Principal.

Communication and grammar are emphasized through the culture, literature, and history of the target population. Students' understanding of native speech is enhanced through the use of video and audio texts. Evaluation is based upon written and oral communicative competence, as well as object testing in content areas. AP testing is available upon request. **AP is not an optional course.**