

# French or Spanish Teacher Education

Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures, College of Arts and Sciences



## Departmental Information

Foreign languages taught at Western Illinois University include French and Spanish. Knowledge of other languages and cultures is the foundation for successful interaction with peers, colleagues, supervisors, employees and friends from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. When a person learns another language, he/she steps outside the cognitive framework to which he/she is accustomed in order to understand people, events and processes from a new perspective. Learning languages promotes appreciation and respect for cultural diversity, can increase marketability to employers and graduate schools and opens the door to life-changing opportunities for study and work abroad.

## Major Program

The University offers Bachelor of Arts degrees in French teacher education and Spanish teacher education. The majors in French or Spanish teacher education include coursework in language, literature and culture, as well as professional education courses and student teaching. Students with prior study of a language or who are heritage speakers should complete a placement exam and are eligible for advanced placement credit after successfully completing one to two courses in the department. Minors are also available in French and Spanish.

The department is committed to promoting foreign languages both as a means of communication and as the prerequisite to cultural understanding. Classes with the prefix of FR and SPAN are taught in the target language and promote students' active use of the language in a culturally and communicatively meaningful context. Classes with the prefix FL are taught in English and allow students the opportunity to reflect critically on cultural practices and products of non-English-speaking countries and people prior to obtaining advanced proficiency in the target language.

## Faculty and Facilities

In the WIU Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures, students will be taught by experienced, dedicated professors and instructors from many different countries. Small class sizes allow for individual attention from teachers and a friendly classroom environment. In addition, the department provides free tutoring in three languages offered. The Foreign Language Computer Lab (Morgan Hall 303) is available for individual student use. The departmental DVD collection includes a variety of feature films in French and Spanish that can be checked out by students and viewed in the lab.

## Scholarships

A variety of scholarships are available for students majoring in French or Spanish teacher education. The newly established Kline Scholarship for new freshmen and continuing students provides between \$1,000 and \$10,000 annually to multiple students in the department. Several other scholarships are also available to students who qualify, and additional funding is allocated so majors may study abroad. For further information, including application forms, criteria and deadlines, see [wiu.edu/cas/foreign\\_languages\\_and\\_literatures/scholarships.php](http://wiu.edu/cas/foreign_languages_and_literatures/scholarships.php).

### Honors in French or Spanish Teacher Education

To be eligible for the Centennial Honors College, entering freshmen must meet two of the following three criteria: Have an 1160 SAT (24 ACT), have a 3.4/4.0 GPA or higher, or be in the top 15 percent of their graduating class. Transfer and current WIU students who wish to join the Honors College (including the Quad Cities Honors Program) must have a 3.4 grade point average on a 4.0 scale based on 12 SH or more. Honors credit is given for honors coursework completed at other accredited institutions. To find out more, visit [wiu.edu/Honors](http://wiu.edu/Honors). As majors in French or Spanish Teacher Education, students take courses for honors credit and, as seniors, prepare an honors thesis under the direction of a department faculty member.

### Student Activities

Students may practice their language skills in any of the weekly conversation groups/coffee hours in French or Spanish. In addition, faculty regularly sponsor film series and organize activities in cooperation with student language groups. Outstanding students of Spanish are encouraged to apply for membership in Sigma Delta Pi, a National Collegiate Hispanic Honor Society.



### Special Opportunities

Study abroad is required for teacher education majors in order to improve linguistic and cultural expertise through an extended immersion experience. A wide variety of options are available, including departmental faculty-led programs in Spain and Costa Rica, as well as programs through partner universities in various countries. The Office of Study Abroad (Horrabin Hall 8) is an excellent resource for students who wish to identify an appropriate program. Students attending approved study-abroad programs earn academic credit applicable to their degree requirements. French and Spanish teacher education majors can apply for scholarships to assist in covering the costs of FLL faculty led study abroad. For more information, see the department's website at [wiu.edu/cas/foreign\\_languages\\_and\\_literatures/scholarships.php](http://wiu.edu/cas/foreign_languages_and_literatures/scholarships.php).

### Preparing for Success

Courses in Spanish and French prepare students to pass state content exams and to complete the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL). Students are required to achieve a rating of Advanced Low on the ACTFL Proficiency Scale as determined through the OPI. Professional education courses, including EDUC 439: Foreign Language Methods, prepare students for student teaching, completion of the required professional portfolio (EdTPA) and the Assessment of Professional Teaching (APT) Exam.

### For More Information

The Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures welcomes visitors. Inquiries may be directed to Daniel Brown, associate professor of Spanish, or Luciano Picanço, department chair, at (309) 298-1558 or [languages@wiu.edu](mailto:languages@wiu.edu). The department's website may be visited by connecting to [wiu.edu/fll](http://wiu.edu/fll).

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