



WESTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

French and French Teacher Certification

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

Departmental Information

Foreign languages taught at Western Illinois University include Chinese, French (major), German (minor), Japanese, and Spanish (major). Knowledge of other languages is fast becoming a “survival” skill for everyone as the world becomes increasingly globalized. Proficiency in one or more foreign languages enables people from radically different cultures to relate better to one another through the creation of sympathetic personal relationships developed through better communication. As an important side benefit, learning another language has been shown to help in the development of other intellectual faculties in people. Plus, the euphoria of communicating successfully in a foreign language is simply irresistible!

Major Program

The University offers the Bachelor of Arts degree and the Bachelor of Arts with Teaching Option in French. The B.A. degree in French requires 34 semester hours of coursework, 24 of which (8 courses) must be at the junior/senior level. If students have had four years of high school French study, they should make sure to ask about eligibility for advanced placement credit. A French minor is also available.

The French courses offered have a strong proficiency orientation that enables students to use the language in a variety of contexts. Courses relate to language development from the beginning level, to culture studies, to the language of business and commerce, to experiences in the literary arts—always with a focus on active use of the target language.

Faculty and Facilities

When students enroll as a French major at Western, one of the department’s most experienced teachers will serve as their academic adviser, helping them with course selection and registration as well as with General Education and graduation requirements.

The department’s classrooms and offices are housed on the third floor of Morgan Hall. In the language lab, students can use a variety of audio/video materials and computer software for practice and review, or watch foreign language television programs.

Scholarships

Freshman or transfer foreign language majors with a minimum ACT composite score of 25 who rank in the top 25% of their high school class may apply for a Foreign Language Alumni Scholarship. Freshman or transfer French majors may also apply for the Jerry Purdum Scholarship in French. High-achieving foreign language majors with junior or senior standing may qualify for one of several monetary awards granted each year, and other scholarship programs are under development.

HIGHER VALUES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Honors in French

To be eligible for the Illinois Centennial Honors College, entering freshmen must have an ACT composite score of at least 28 OR have a 26 or 27 composite ACT and be in the top 15% of their graduating class OR have an ACT composite score of at least 24 and be in the top 10% of their high school graduating class. Transfer students with at least 12 semester hours and up to 59 semester hours of undergraduate courses are admitted with a grade point average of at least 3.3 OR 3.4 for 60 semester hours or more. To find out more, visit www.wiu.edu/Honors.

General honors seminars in the humanities, sciences, and social sciences provide students with the opportunity to explore key academic issues with distinguished faculty members. In the French major, students take courses for honors credit and, as seniors, prepare an honors thesis under the direction of a department faculty member.

Student Activities

Students in Foreign Languages and Literatures may join language clubs related to the language of their choice. The department boasts a record of active student involvement in organizations, and our language clubs work together with other student organizations on campus to create interesting programs and events. The department also sponsors the Zeta Chi Chapter of Alpha Mu Gamma, a national foreign language honor society.



Special Opportunities

Students of French can use and improve their language skills in Tours, France, and at the University of Laval in Quebec; students of Spanish can attend the department's WISE programs in Salamanca and Castellón, Spain, and in Guadalajara, Mexico; while students of German can attend the University of Mannheim in Germany. Students attending these and other approved study-abroad programs earn academic credit applicable to their degree requirements.

Students frequently combine second-language learning with another major in order to prepare them professionally in a career of their choice.

After College

Financial columnist Sylvia Porter was right on target when she called knowledge of a foreign language "job insurance." Countless career options are available to people who have advanced foreign language skills in addition to other areas of preparation.

The federal government is the largest single employer of persons with foreign language skills. Many local governments also need officials and employees who can speak a second language. Here are just a few other examples: personnel of multinational corporations, banking and financial officers, engineers and technicians with firms manufacturing for export, law enforcement personnel and administrators, security and loss-prevention industries, and a wide range of service agencies from social and medical to tourism and travel.

Employment opportunities also occur in library systems, publishing, journalism, communications, customs, interpreting or translating, retail sales, and other arenas. In academia, Western's foreign language teaching graduates are currently finding growing opportunities as teachers or as graduate teaching assistants. Graduate schools in a variety of disciplines seek students capable of doing research with primary foreign sources.

For More Information

The Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures welcomes visitors. Telephone inquiries may be directed to the chair of the department, Dr Andrew Lian, at (309) 298-1558, while e-mails may be sent to languages@wiu.edu. The department's website may be visited by connecting to www.wiu.edu/fl.

www.wiu.edu/fl

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