

World Languages

World Languages Curriculum Overview

It is the mission of the World Languages Department at St. Francis to prepare students for college and life by giving them the tools to effectively communicate orally and in writing with people of diverse ethnic, religious, and cultural backgrounds.

When you enter the language classroom, you'll hear students conversing in Chinese or Spanish with each other and the teacher. These conversations frequently continue into the hallways between classes, creating a positive global atmosphere in the school. Beginning with introductory-level classes, students are encouraged to use their language skills. We want students to become comfortable with speaking and writing in a second (or even a third) language. The best way to develop these skills is to speak and write a language daily. Language classes are anything but boring. Teachers use a variety of participatory, hands-on activities to motivate students so they can focus on communication.

Students also have the opportunity to travel abroad with their language teachers. In recent years, students have traveled to Peru, Ecuador, the Galapagos, and China. These trips allow students to become totally immersed in the language and culture and to experience daily life in another country first-hand.

The World Languages Department offers beginning, intermediate, and AP courses in Chinese and Spanish, allowing interested and capable students to pursue a more in-depth study of the literature and culture of their chosen language(s). St. Francis students are required to complete two consecutive years of the same language in order to graduate. Our graduates who complete four years of language study with us report themselves extremely well prepared for college-level language courses.

World Language Course Offerings

Chinese I (1 credit)

Students will begin to practice the four skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing, as well as learn about Chinese culture and society. At the end of the course, the proficiency goal is for students to be at Novice High on the ACTFL scale. Students will begin learning the pinyin Romanization system and begin to learn simplified Chinese characters. Students will be expected to complete homework every day, to participate each class in in-class activities and assignments, and weekly pinyin and vocabulary quizzes to demonstrate improving proficiency from the beginning of the year at Novice Low to the end of the year at Novice High. Students will also complete projects that will increase their knowledge of Chinese culture and society. Topics include greetings, family, dates and time, hobbies, visiting friends, making appointments, and shopping.

Chinese II (1 credit)

The course continues proficiency goals from Chinese I. Students will be expected to complete homework every day, participate in in-class activities and assignments, and weekly pinyin and vocabulary quizzes to demonstrate proficiency at Intermediate Low. Students will also complete projects that will increase their knowledge of Chinese culture and society. Topics include

studying Chinese/school life, weather, dining, asking directions, invitations, seeing a doctor, dating, home, and sports.

Chinese III (1 credit)

Prerequisite: Chinese II; permission of the instructor

This course continues language skills from Chinese I and II. The emphasis will be on conversational skills, and more challenging readings in the language in character-only materials. Students also will work on projects and reports on Chinese cultural topics, enhanced with films. Students will enhance their knowledge of grammatical structure and improve their reading and writing skills in Chinese characters. Topics include travel, school life, living quarters, Chinese food, shopping, and academic subjects.

Chinese IV (1 credit)

Prerequisite: Chinese III; permission of the instructor

This course continues language skills from Chinese III. Students also will work on more challenging projects and reports on Chinese cultural topics, enhanced with films. Students will enhance their knowledge of grammatical structure and improve their reading and writing skills in Chinese characters. Topics include dating, technology, working, education, geography, Chinese holidays, changes in China, and traveling in China.

AP Chinese Language and Culture (1 credit)

Prerequisite: Chinese IV; permission of the instructor

Enrollment in this class is contingent upon the successful completion of a summer reading assignment.

AP Chinese Language and Culture refines and further develops students' abilities in Chinese oral and formal written communication with particular emphasis on advanced conversation, reading, and formal writing based on the recommended topics and the syllabus for the AP Chinese Language and Culture examination in May. The class is conducted almost entirely in Chinese and students are required to hone their speaking skills through structured and informal activities. Students will develop written skills and practice grammar through periodic compositions. Listening skills are developed during class discussions, viewing films and movies, and listening to recordings done by native Chinese speakers. Reading skills are improved through various readings of essays and articles, newspaper articles, advertisements, and poetry.

Spanish I (1 credit)

This class is the foundation course in Spanish. Students take their first steps in reading, writing, and understanding spoken Spanish. A variety of useful topics, including family, school, self, food, weather, and clothing, are presented. Emphasis is on listening and speaking skills. Students communicate in Spanish with each other and with the teacher, using role-playing, short oral presentations, conversation cards, and other small-group activities.

Spanish II (1 credit)

This course builds upon the foundation of communication skills begun in Spanish I with special emphasis on the past tenses. The topics covered include travel and vacation, celebrations and holidays, health and health care, and chores and pastimes. The students study Hispanic life and customs with concentration on travel to Spain and Latin American countries, as well as cultural traditions and celebrations. The emphasis continues to be on using the content to communicate in Spanish, with more focus on reading and discussion than in Spanish I.

Spanish III (1 credit)

Prerequisite: Spanish II; permission of the instructor

This class advances students' abilities to accurately and effectively communicate orally and in writing in Spanish. More abstract topics – the environment, current events, the arts, jobs, and banking, among others – allow students to express themselves creatively. Students learn to state their opinions, explain likes and dislikes, refer to hypothetical situations, and persuade others. They are introduced to classical Spanish texts: *La Celestina*, *Lazarillo de Tormes*, and *Don Quijote* as well as articles from Spanish-language publications.

AP Spanish Language (1 credit)

Prerequisite: Spanish III, with a minimum grade of B, and permission of instructor

Enrollment in this class is contingent upon the successful completion of a summer reading assignment.

This course continues to build on the skills learned in previous years of study, with particular emphasis on advanced conversation, reading, and formal writing based on the recommended syllabus for the AP Spanish Language examination. Students participate in daily conversation activities and oral presentations to help them focus on particular topics outlined in the AP curriculum. Students read and discuss fiction works by noted Hispanic authors. This course prepares students to take the AP Spanish Language exam in May.

AP Spanish Literature (1 credit)

Prerequisite: AP Spanish Language, with a minimum grade of B and permission of the department

Enrollment in this class is contingent upon the successful completion of a summer reading assignment.

The curriculum of this in-depth course is determined by the syllabus of the AP Spanish Literature examination. It requires extensive reading of literary texts dating from the Middle Ages to the present. Students will write a variety of literary-analysis essays, do oral presentations and learn more advanced vocabulary.