

# FOREIGN LANGUAGE

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The language requirement prepares students to be tomorrow's conscientious and informed citizens. Knowledge of another's language and literature is an important way to begin to know a country and people. The study of a language:

1. Sensitizes students to world cultures, simultaneously making them aware of their own culture within that context;
2. Introduces students to the differences in structure, grammar, and syntax that distinguish two languages, and to the intimate links between language and cultural meaning; and
3. Contributes to the development of students' critical, analytical, and writing skills.

The Core requires that all candidates for the bachelor's degree demonstrate competence in a second language at or beyond the intermediate level. In order to achieve this level of fluency and encourage more advanced language study, students are expected to reach intermediate-level proficiency by the time they have reached senior standing. Intermediate-level proficiency in a foreign language is assessed in one of the following ways:

- An appropriate score on the SAT II subject test or Advanced Placement test, taken before matriculation to GS, as determined by relevant departments for specific languages
- Demonstrating intermediate-level competence on the language placement test administered by relevant departments or programs. Language placement tests must be taken within the first two semesters of study at GS, or, in cases where a student undertakes language study as part of a Columbia-approved study abroad program, at the beginning of the next term of enrollment after returning from study abroad.
- Approved transfer credits in foreign language study showing intermediate-level proficiency (usually two years of study)
- Approved transfer credit in foreign language showing intermediate-level proficiency (must also have a score of 6 or 7 at the Higher Level of the International Baccalaureate exam or a grade of C or better for the A-level results)
- The satisfactory completion of the intermediate level of a language sequence at Columbia, as determined by the relevant department (the fourth term of a language, usually denoted as course number 1202; please visit the website of the language department for details)
- Completing secondary education in another country in a language other than English

Fluent speakers of languages other than English must take a language placement test within two semesters of matriculating at GS to demonstrate their language proficiency. If a placement test in a particular language is not available at Columbia, students should speak with their respective GS advisors about alternative testing arrangements. Students diagnosed with a language learning disability must register with the [Office of Disability Services](#) in order to be considered for an accommodation for the foreign language requirement.

Students should speak with their GS advisors soon after matriculating at GS to discuss how they will satisfy this requirement. Because the language requirement may take four semesters to fulfill, students who have not satisfied the requirement by placement test, AP score, or transfer credit are required to begin their language study no later than

their second year at GS, and to continue enrollment in language courses each semester until the requirement has been met.

Students interested in study abroad may also begin or complete their core foreign language study in numerous summer study abroad foreign language immersion programs.