Letter to Departments

Dear Colleague,

As you know the University of Kansas is in the process of reviewing current general education requirements for graduation. As part of this endeavor, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences is also examining the additional degree specific general education requirements for BA, BS, BGS, and BFA degrees offered by the various programs and departments within CLAS. This examination and associated discussion is currently a charge before CUSA and it is in order to facilitate that discussion that you are receiving this survey. You are being contacted because your department, program, or center is directly involved in foreign language instruction. Your thorough and candid response to this survey would be very helpful to CUSA in moving ahead with any potential changes to the foreign language requirements for our degrees.

CUSA would like to develop an outcomes based justification for all degree specific general education requirements, including the foreign language requirement. Naturally, we need to use appropriate language in describing these outcomes while avoiding words and phrases that carry connotations specific to a given language or method of instruction. For example, phrases such as “ability to communicate” or “ability to translate” may be interpreted differently by different departments/languages and, furthermore, the amount of study required to achieve what is considered equivalent levels of these skills may vary widely from language to language. Thus, how would you describe the outcome that is obtained from the current 4 semester requirement for your language?

CUSA is also considering modifications to existing foreign language requirements. Among the many possible changes being discussed is the addition of a foreign language requirement to the BS degrees and a change of the BA requirement to allow a student to substitute a combination of 3 semesters in one language plus 2 semesters in a different language for the current requirement of 4 semesters in the same language. All of these changes hinge upon our understanding the educational benefit that a student can obtain from taking different amounts of foreign language (i.e., from the outcomes that we would present to justify the inclusion of these options). Thus, we would like to know your thoughts about the following:

What is the reasonable outcome to expect from a student taking 1 semester of your foreign language? Is there a demonstrable educational benefit to a student taking only 1 semester of your foreign language? In other words, could a reasonable outcomes-based justification for having a 1 semester foreign language requirement be created for your language?

What is the reasonable outcome to expect from a student taking 2 semesters of your foreign language? Is there a demonstrable educational benefit to a student taking only 2 semesters of your foreign language? In other words, could a reasonable outcomes-based justification for having a 2 semester foreign language requirement be created for your language?

What is the reasonable outcome to expect from a student taking 3 semesters of your foreign language? Is there a demonstrable educational benefit to a student taking only 3 semesters of your foreign language? In other words, could a reasonable outcomes-based justification for having a 3 semester foreign language requirement be created for your language?

What is the reasonable outcome to expect from a student taking 4 semesters of your foreign language? Is there a demonstrable educational benefit to a student taking only 4 semesters of your foreign language? In other words, could a reasonable outcomes-based justification for having a 4 semester foreign language requirement be created for your language?

Are there any other thoughts, suggestions, or comments that you would to make known to CUSA?

Thank you very much for your time in completing this survey.

Sincerely,

Chris Fischer
CUSA Chair
Re: CUSA Survey on Foreign Language Learning Outcomes

Over the past two weeks, a number of faculty in language departments and centers have worked on a document to spell out our shared vision of the outcomes of foreign language study.

Four semesters of foreign language learning contributes to KU’s general education outcomes in the following unique ways:

- Learners become participatory users of that language over time and this allows them to communicate in speech and writing with speakers from target-language communities;
- Learners develop the ability to analyze authentic cultural texts (written, oral, visual) to reveal, create and problematize meaning as only participatory users of the language can;
- Learners reflect critically on language itself as a dynamic component of the human experience and as a means of expression;
- Learners reflect on and gain insight into both their own and the target language and culture, and they become better equipped to live, work and thrive in global market place.

Below we expand on these notions and flesh out the core issues that we in language departments think that CUSA should consider in relation to foreign language acquisition and instruction. We use the word “foundational” to mean “the initial four semesters of language study” or “the level of language competence achieved in the first four semesters.”

Background
The contribution of KU’s foreign language curricula to the scope and mission of the University’s Core Curriculum is not a single quantifiable skill; rather it encompasses a process of intellectual and sociocultural inquiry consonant with all the goals of the KU Core. This intellectual and sociocultural inquiry speaks to the College’s vision of teaching “that gives insights into the past, creates answers for the present, and builds bridges to other cultures, communities and our futures.” Both the College and the Bold Aspirations initiative encourage students to become globally aware, and "learn without boundaries." Acquiring proficiency in a foreign language is a vital component in achieving goals central to the University's mission.

What is language?
Any language (be it a first, second, heritage, or foreign) is a system of meaningful signs shared by communities of users for communicating messages (a "social semiotic," as M. A. K. Halliday describes it).

What are students learning in studying a language?
Learners of this “social semiotic” in the foreign language classroom practice and acquire critical thinking, oral and written communication skills, and the creative integration of knowledge acquired across disciplines.
Foreign language learners gradually become participatory users of that language, which brings them into communication with others both within and across communities. These communities can be local (e.g., in the city of Lawrence with its diverse ethnic populations), abroad in other countries, or virtual (whether in real time or across temporal and spatial distance, as with the study of ancient civilizations).

Furthermore, through the foundational foreign language study, students come to understand more about how their first language encodes meaning and emotive dispositions by comparing it with the second language at both structural and discursive levels.

They also develop the ability to analyze authentic cultural texts (written, oral, visual) to reveal, create and problematize meaning as only participatory users of the language can. In this way, foreign language study enables the learner to reflect critically on language itself as a dynamic component of the human experience.

Why 4 semesters?
Our students engage in interpreting and expressing meanings of increasing sophistication on an expanding range of topics and with increasing success over time. It takes time for students to develop the complex cognitive skills required to assign meaning to language, from its smallest units (sounds and intonations) to its largest (extended discourse), all the while attending to the content of the target language message, its audience(s), and its pragmatic and social meanings.
Does a fourth-semester requirement mean all students take 16 credits of FL?

No. KU’s current requirement that students show fourth-semester foreign language proficiency can be met in a variety of ways: students can transfer AP credit, they can place into a fourth-semester or higher course, or test out of the requirement. These options free up a considerable number of credits for those students.

Other students begin their study of a language only at KU, choosing from one of the forty languages available to them at our research one institution. Of KU’s peer institutions, only Indiana University offers more languages than we do (46). KU’s ability to offer so many languages and cultural opportunities to our students is one of our greatest strengths.

For students who begin the study of a language at KU the length of study and depth of their engagement are the most critical factors for the level of achievement they can attain. Many of the Less-Commonly-Taught languages are of greater difficulty for English speakers because they are typologically more distant from English. Learners of these languages often require more time to achieve the same outcomes that learners reach in languages that are closer to English. CUSA will observe significant variations in the outcomes statements submitted by different departments and different languages groups.

Institutional considerations

1. Our best peer institutions (IU, Illinois, Michigan State, Oregon, Iowa, and Virginia) require four semesters of language: cutting back the language requirement, simply put, would put us in less aspiring company nationwide, and not in the league of our peers.

2. The range of languages available and KU’s language requirement have been key factors in the institution’s ability to garner US Federal Title VI funding which currently supports four centers on the KU campus (CREES, LAS, KASC, CEAS), and provides student Foreign Language and Area Studies fellowships to a fifth center (CGIS).

3. Language study in higher education is critical to US vital national interests and economic competitiveness, as the AAU noted in its 2004 report: “The United States currently has three distinct language needs. First, the country needs an educated citizenry, and one of the keys is having bilingual and multilingual citizens. … One of the United States’ long-term goals should be to encourage more citizens to learn a second language…. Second, as corporations become increasingly multinational and economies become more global, there is an economic and business imperative… Third, the US government has an urgent need for language specialists.” (AAU Report “Reinvigorating the Humanities: Enhancing Research and Education on Campus and Beyond” from April 22, 2004, p. 37 Accessed at: http://www.aau.edu/policy/article.aspx?id=7182)

In sum, foundational foreign language study enables students to recognize, observe and engage the world from alternate perspectives through a gradual learning process that begins the first semester. This progression of awareness parallels the psycholinguistic processes by which learners notice, analyze, and experiment with the second language to make new meaning. The longer the student engages this developmental process the stronger the contribution of foreign language study to the KU Core Curriculum’s goals of fostering the development of critical thinking skills, written and oral communication, and the ability to integrate knowledge into new ways of thinking. This enables the unique contribution of foundational foreign language study to KU’s mission to foster among students a respect for human diversity and an expanding cultural understanding and global awareness. In a global marketplace, KU graduates in CLAS and the professional schools find their degrees enriched by the addition of language study, since language skills open up a greater range of employment opportunities.

English is only one of many languages in which the future will take place.

CLASSICS

The Classics Department strongly supports the response authored by Bill Comer (February 24, 2012).

Please see below for responses to the survey that are more specific to Greek and Latin.

What is the reasonable outcome to expect from a student taking 1 semester of your foreign language? Is there a demonstrable educational benefit to a student taking only 1 semester of your foreign language? In other words,
could a reasonable outcomes-based justification for having a 1 semester foreign language requirement be created for your language?

1st semester outcomes: core rudimentary grammar for recognizing some very basic structures of straightforward prose narrative, inscriptions, or individual lines of poetry; simple vocabulary; grammatical and linguistic terminology. In one semester a student gains a better understanding of English grammar; an introduction to the etymologies of words in English and the Romance languages; and the beginnings of an awareness of cultural difference through contact with a new lexicon (e.g., the range of the words for “friend,” “stranger,” “person,” and “man” in Greek or Latin. And yet, only the exceptional student learns more than a “smattering” of an ancient language in one semester.

What is the reasonable outcome to expect from a student taking 2 semesters of your foreign language? Is there a demonstrable educational benefit to a student taking only 2 semesters of your foreign language? In other words, could a reasonable outcomes-based justification for having a 2 semester foreign language requirement be created for your language?

2nd semester outcomes: complex grammar, further lexicon. After the second semester, a student appreciates more cultural nuance - forms of thought, contingencies, dependencies, possibilities, causal relationships, etc. Because there is so much interaction between Greek and Roman culture, there is a clear educational benefit to one year of Latin for students who have a minimum 4 semesters of Greek (and vice versa). But standing on its own, the main justification for one year of study of Latin would be that a student gains better understanding of the English language and a very general idea of the value of studying other cultures.

What is the reasonable outcome to expect from a student taking 3 semesters of your foreign language? Is there a demonstrable educational benefit to a student taking only 3 semesters of your foreign language? In other words, could a reasonable outcomes-based justification for having a 3 semester foreign language requirement be created for your language?

3rd semester outcomes: The student gains intimate knowledge of one or more important primary texts, usually a body or poetry or other work of world literature (e.g. by Plato, Lysias, Cicero, Catullus, Horace). Here cultural exploration takes off and language becomes a real window into culture, not just a set of tools; this is more active and applied learning. A student learns to recognize the value of close reading, learns to appreciate an unfamiliar genre, and becomes more aware of complex differences between cultures.

What is the reasonable outcome to expect from a student taking 4 semesters of your foreign language? Is there a demonstrable educational benefit to a student taking only 4 semesters of your foreign language? In other words, could a reasonable outcomes-based justification for having a 4 semester foreign language requirement be created for your language?

4th semester outcomes: In the fourth semester the student becomes deeply conversant with the most central works of literature in the classical canon (Homer for the Greek student; and Virgil for the Latin). Without three semesters of preparation, the student would be capable of basic comprehension of short excerpts, but would not gain significant familiarity with poetics, the art of translation, the artistic use of language, the social and cultural context of epic poetry, different registers of speech, cultural nuance, or methods of literary interpretation, etc. The student’s acquisition of the ability to read a foundational text of western culture (Homer or Virgil) in the original justifies having a 4 semester foreign language requirement.

**FRENCH & ITALIAN**

We are pleased to have the opportunity to provide more detailed information regarding term-by-term proficiency as it relates to French and Italian, and lend our support to the statement that has been signed by many colleagues describing the importance of language study in the university curriculum: the foreign language proficiency requirement equips KU students for an interconnected world in which they can be the initiators of rich conversations in a vast array of fields and professional settings, and provides them the most direct path to understanding other cultures. It makes students better communicators, analysts, and critical thinkers, and adds an interdisciplinary dimension to their work - thus contributing to the development of core skills that enrich other areas of study. The vast majority of public and private institutions in the AAU recognize the four-semester target as the appropriate benchmark: the fact that KU does too puts us in the kind of company we seek to keep.
Foreign language study forms a dynamic connection with majors and minors across disciplines, and it is important to design the proficiency requirement to be a solid research skill that can be of practical use.

Value of the 4th-semester proficiency requirement

It is clear from various research studies on oral proficiency\(^1\) that there is a significant difference in proficiency between students who have completed two as compared to only one year of university-level foreign language study. While the latter achieve a level of proficiency ranging from Novice to Low-Intermediate, as described by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages\(^2\), students who have completed two years of university-level foreign language study achieve considerably higher proficiency levels ranging from the Mid-Intermediate to Low-Advanced.

It should also be noted that our aspirational peer institutions in the AAU also maintain a 4th-semester proficiency requirement, recognizing the value of reaching a level of competence in foreign language/culture (which are inseparable) that allows our students to meaningfully interact with people, events, texts and perspectives of a language and culture other than their own, in order to be competitive and fully participatory members of our interconnected world.

Finally, we would like to emphasize that the 4th-semester proficiency requirement is exactly that, a proficiency requirement, and not a requirement of a certain number of credit hours/semesters of study. While some students choose a new language and start with the first semester, some students test out of the language requirement altogether (having had sufficient language study prior to university) and take no foreign language classes at all. Many students test into 4th semester and take only 3 hours of language, or 3rd semester and take only 6 hours of language, etc.

**TARGETED LEARNER OUTCOMES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMPETENCIES</th>
<th>2ND YEAR (semesters 3-4)</th>
<th>1ST YEAR (semesters 1-2)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Students who successfully complete the second-year sequence are able to:</em></td>
<td><em>Students who successfully complete the first-year sequence are able to:</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Speaking</td>
<td>Engage in communicative exchanges on a variety of topics related to their daily life, and to handle a variety of routine tasks and social situations. They can narrate and describe in all major time frames. Their speech is generally not error-free, but they can be understood by native speakers unaccustomed to dealing with non-natives.</td>
<td>Handle a limited number of uncomplicated communicative tasks in straightforward social situations and on predictable/basic topics necessary for survival in the target-language culture. Their pronunciation, vocabulary, and syntax may be strongly influenced by their first language. They can usually be understood by sympathetic interlocutors used to dealing with non-natives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>Meet a variety of practical writing needs, and able to narrate and describe events and situations in different time frames. Despite some errors, the writing is comprehensible to natives not used to the writing of non-natives.</td>
<td>Meet basic practical writing needs, create short and simple conversational-style sentences on highly predictable content areas and personal information. There may be many errors in grammar, word choice, punctuation, and spelling; but their writing is understood by natives used to the writing of non-natives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening</td>
<td>Understand the main facts as well as supporting details of short, oral,</td>
<td>Understand simple, sentence-length speech, in a variety of basic personal and social contexts.</td>
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\(^1\) E.g., Freed, 1987; Magnan, 1986; Thompson, 1995; Tschirner, 1992, 1996; among others.  
\(^2\) Example of a ‘Novice’-level speaker in English: [http://actflproficiencyguidelines2012.org/speaking#example-Novice](http://actflproficiencyguidelines2012.org/speaking#example-Novice)
<table>
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<tr>
<th>authentic narratives, descriptions, explanations, and instructions on familiar topics or contexts.</th>
<th>Comprehension is generally accurate with highly familiar and predictable topics although a few misunderstandings may occur.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading</strong></td>
<td>Comprehend the main ideas as well as supporting details of conventional authentic narrative and descriptive written texts with a clear underlying structure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Culture</strong></td>
<td>Demonstrate a general understanding of a variety of perspectives, practices and products of the culture studied. Comprehend the idea that everyone perceives the world through culturally conditioned categories.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Native Language Development</strong></td>
<td>Refine and deepen their understanding of their own language through comparisons with the structures of the language studied.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These learning outcomes align with the 2012 and with the *ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines 2012* (http://actfproficiencyguidelines2012.org/) and with the *Standards for Foreign Language Learning / Preparing for the 21st Century* (www.actfl.org).

References:

**GERMANIC LANGUAGES & LITERATURES**

Please find below the German Language Learning Outcomes formulated as abilities students acquire by the end of the 4th semester and 2nd semester of studying German at KU. In concert with the Common Foreign Language Statement submitted to you by Bill Comer, we in German consider 4 semesters the minimal reasonable length of the language proficiency sequence. Only at this point does student proficiency in secondary public discourses start to emerge. For comparison, we are providing the 2nd semester outcomes, when students are only able to talk about themselves in rudimentary ways and can be barely understood by the target language community members not accustomed to learner language.

Sincerely,
Nina Vyatkina
GERMANIC LANGUAGES & LITERATURES – 4TH SEMESTER LEARNING OUTCOMES

4th semester of German (total of 240 contact hours)

German 216

German language performance: students can comprehend German (reading and listening): recognize most words and phrases and identify main ideas and some supporting details in texts related to everyday topics; with preparation time and scaffolding (e.g., dictionary), also in some secondary public discourse texts (e.g., newspaper articles, short stories) infer meaning of some unfamiliar words in new contexts and some of the author’s intent produce German (speaking and writing): express own meaning; create with language initiate and maintain a conversation (ask and answer questions using mostly connected sentences and some complex sentences) use common conversational and politeness markers although there may be some confusion about the message, be generally understood by those unaccustomed to interacting with language learners write personal narratives with elements of consequential explanation (e.g., describe a person who you respect and explain why) and, with preparation and scaffolding, 1-2 page long secondary discourse texts (e.g., interpretation of a short story) use multi-clause sentences, sentence and discourse connectors, and different time and mood frames be most accurate when producing simple or compound sentences in everyday discourse texts (descriptions and personal narratives); accuracy decreases when using complex structures and creating and expressing own meaning, especially in secondary discourse texts Dispositions: students can interpret, compare, and contrast selected aspects of German-speaking countries and regions interpret, compare, and contrast German and American culture phenomena using print and media resources, find information about German-speaking culture artifacts (authors, books, music, films…) in both English and German develop an appreciation for selected literary texts and other products of German-speaking culture recognize and describe selected historical figures or events of the German-speaking cultures or related to German-American connections take a personal stance toward and discuss selected controversial sociocultural topics (such as environmental issues or ethnic stereotypes) in the context of German-speaking and American cultures

2nd semester of German (total of 150 contact hours)

German 108

German language performance: students can comprehend German (reading and listening): recognize key words and phrases and identify main ideas embedded in familiar contexts (related to everyday topics) produce German (speaking and writing): maintain simple conversation (ask and answer basic questions using simple sentences and some strings of sentences) use some basic conversational and politeness markers be understood by those accustomed to interacting with language learners write simple descriptions and personal narratives in form of short coherent paragraphs (e.g., describe a person, town, daily routine, trip) be most accurate when producing memorized phrases and simple sentences in present tense; accuracy decreases with attempts to produce complex sentences and narratives in past tense Dispositions: students can name other German-speaking countries in addition to Germany recognize that there is regional variation in German language and culture recognize some cultural similarities and differences between the US and German-speaking countries in personal and some public settings, such as pastimes, dating, and holidays recognize some German-language culture figures and phenomena search German-language websites and find concrete factual information related to familiar topics (attractions of an Austrian city; German train schedule) using media resources, find and recognize some contemporary German-speaking culture figures and artifacts (e.g. musicians, songs) and discuss them in English; compare German and American pop culture phenomena

LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES

Query about language requirements

The different language departments have been meeting and exchanging documents to address the questions about language teaching and requirements at KU and, rather repeat information you will receive from them, I will just include some information about the value of learning some of the less commonly taught languages (LCTLs) here at KU. We offer several of these through the Center for Latin American Studies: Kaqchikel Mayan, Quichua, Miskitu (indigenous languages), Portuguese, and Haitian Creole. I begin by summarizing a report on these languages authored by Marc Greenburg and his committee (of which I was a member) a few years ago:
KU is a leader in the field of LCTL instruction in terms of capacity. Our strength is in the integration of languages with meaningful pursuit of the study of selected world areas, which in turn contributes to the strength of international programs at KU as a flagship university. According to a 2006 survey by the MLA and funded by the US Department of Education, “Interest in language study has been increasing steadily since 1998. While the study of the most popular languages, Spanish, French, and German, continues to grow and together represents more than 70% of language enrollments, their dominance is slowly decreasing in the face of growing interest in languages such as Arabic (up 127%), Chinese (up 51%), and Korean (up 37%).”1 Students nationwide are beginning to recognize that in an increasingly globalized, multi-polar world success in careers requires engagement with other nations and cultures in their languages. America is for the first time experiencing the kind of brain-drain that Europe experienced after its wars and revolutions in the previous two centuries; the rare Americans with both know-how and foreign-language skills are being drawn abroad by global business opportunities.2 The U.S. government has also emphasized the need for increasing capacity in the knowledge of foreign languages with the National Security Language Initiative, which identifies Arabic, Chinese, Indic (Bengali, Hindi, Punjabi, Urdu), Korean, Persian, Russian, and Turkic as current critical needs. The academy, on the other hand, has long understood the need for language study as an essential tool for the acquisition of knowledge and the creation of new knowledge.

KU has grown significantly in its offering of critical and less commonly taught languages over the last fifteen years. In addition to established departments of European languages, Spanish & Portuguese, French & Italian, Germanic, Slavic, and Classics, as well as East Asian Languages, KU has in recent years added Arabic, Turkish and Central Asian, African, and South-East Asian languages. In terms of the number of languages offered, KU has surpassed all of the universities of the Great Plains, including the historical regional leader, University of Texas at Austin, a campus with nearly twice the student body of KU. Offering the committee some details about two of the Indigenous languages offered through Latin American Studies will illuminate why these can be particularly advantageous to our student’s understanding of the world.

**Quichua:** With 6-10 million speakers, Quichua is the most widely-spoken Indigenous language in the Americas. Learning Quichua is a meaningful adventure that exposes students to the ideas of an indigenous American culture that is drastically different from Euro-American cultures and languages. By stepping outside of their own culture, they learn to see themselves, their culture and the world through new eyes. They enrich their understanding of human experience through knowledge of one of the America’s great but too little known civilizations. There are only 13 other US universities that offer Quichua regularly.

**Kaqchikel Mayan:** There are between 4-6 million modern Maya who are divided into many different ethnic groups who speak around 30 distinct indigenous languages. Learning an indigenous language, such as Kaqchikel, exposes students to the important field of language revitalization. Although there are more than 6,000 spoken languages in the world right now, it is projected that at least half of those will disappear over the next 100 years if something is not done. Languages disappear when they are no longer valued by their speakers or when external pressures by a dominant language lead to language shift. Language revitalization is the field of linguistics that studies these minority languages and develops strategies to ensure their continued survival.

Like Quichua, learning a non-Western language like Kaqchikel will stretch the learner’s understanding of the diversity of human language. The Mayan languages, including Kaqchikel, have several very interesting features which most speakers of European languages have never encountered. These include unique pronoun and verb systems, complex ways of counting and numbering, and unusual ways of ordering verbs and nouns within a sentence. Learning Kaqchikel also opens research possibilities in many fields. In many parts of rural Guatemala where Kaqchikel is spoken, inhabitants have very limited fluency in Spanish. Having some ability to speak Kaqchikel allows students to interact with these people, giving them unique insights into their customs and culture to which a non-speaker would not have access. There are only three other US universities that offer Kaqchikel mayan.

I know that the other language departments will address the question of number of semesters required, but obviously these very different, non-European language classes, while offering the advantage of smaller class sizes, do require longer reaching any level of competency. We are fortunate to be able to offer students three semesters of these languages as classes, which may be followed up with independent studies or field work abroad.

1 Modern Language Association. “New MLA Survey Shows Significant Increases in Foreign Language
RUSSIAN, EAST EUROPEAN & EURASIAN STUDIES

I know that studying foreign language is very labor and time-intensive, but it is so worthwhile for expanding one's world, really making the world "one's oyster," and expanding employment opportunities.

What is the educational benefit or outcome that your majors obtain from completing the existing foreign language requirement? We are curious to know your thoughts both in terms of a general benefit, as part of any liberal arts education, and that which is specific to your major and discipline.

The foreign language requirement for our majors has a number of serious benefits:
1. studying a foreign lang. allows a portal into another world, another culture, another mentality
2. studying a foreign lang. allows the student to learn the structure of English better than they learn it in school
3. studying the language and then living abroad enlarges the world and opens more employment opportunities

Do you believe that students taking fewer than 4 semesters in a single foreign language would still be able to achieve the outcomes that you would want? Again, please comment both in terms of general liberal arts education and the specific needs of your majors and discipline.

No. Frankly, to get to good proficiency in a harder language (other than French, Italian, and Spanish) one needs at least 4-6 semesters. And to study abroad with courses in the FL one needs at least 4 semesters.

If the foreign language requirement was changed so that fewer than 4 semesters in a single foreign language were required, would your department institute a major requirement for 4 semesters in the same language?

My two programs, Slavic and REES, certainly will keep the 6 semester requirement.

Do you believe that the education benefit or outcome desired from the foreign language requirement for your majors could be obtained by a student taking part in a study abroad experience or by taking courses focused on the cultures of foreign countries/societies?

No, there is nothing that expands one’s life world better than actually developing a personality, friendships, and life experience in a foreign language.

If your department offers a BS degree, please comment on the feasibility of mandating a foreign language requirement for the BS degree? How many semesters of a foreign language could be included in your current schedule (assuming that other general education requirements may change)? Is there an education benefit or outcome from adding a foreign language requirement to your BS degree?

SLAVIC LANGUAGES & LITERATURE

Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian (BCS) Language Learning Outcomes

4th semester BCS (total of 240 contact hours)
Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian 208
Language abilities
Comprehension
Students can comprehend straightforward texts (written and spoken) on everyday topics. With scaffolding (e.g., reference materials, teacher’s guidance) they are also able to access some texts beyond that scope, such as newspaper articles or short stories.
Expression
Students can express themselves in speaking and writing about familiar topics and everyday needs in major time frames. They can also ask questions to obtain simple information for basic personal and social needs. Their discourse is often more than a sentence long and in writing quite regularly of paragraph length.

Language knowledge
Students have substantially broadened basic vocabulary and have a fairly good control of basic forms and syntactic patterns with familiar vocabulary. They have partial control or conceptual knowledge of more complex language features, such as verbal aspect, verbal government, or word order. Their language includes simple and some complex sentences; they are also able to use some sentence and discourse connectors.

Dispositions
Students:
- compare and interpret various aspects of B/C/S and American life, culture, and values;
- recognize and contrast specific features of individual BCS-speaking countries and their cultures;
- gain some knowledge about literary and/or other artistic creativity of the target cultures and develop appreciation and interest in it;
- gain some basic information about educational, political, and social systems of the BCS-speaking countries.

2nd semester BCS (total of 150 contact hours)
Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian 108
Language abilities
Comprehension
Students can identify main ideas, key words and phrases in familiar contexts, related to everyday topics. They rely heavily on extralinguistic support and background knowledge in deriving meaning.
Expression
Students can express the most basic everyday topics and needs in speaking and writing at the sentence level, mainly in present tense. In writing they can string together some simple sentences on a very familiar topic. They mostly rely on practiced/memorized material.

Language knowledge
Students have been introduced to the basic BCS syntax and verbal, noun, and adjectival morphology. They have conceptual knowledge of the basic grammar and some control of it, mainly with the most frequently used vocabulary and structures. They are aware of differences between English and BCS in the use or semantic scope of certain lexical items and phrasing. They have been introduced to the Cyrillic script to be able to access Serbian written sources.

Dispositions
Students:
- gain factual information about geography, history (basic orientation), and culture of BCS-speaking countries through explanations in English as well as through reading original texts in the target language;
- are introduced to some cultural figures and phenomena of BCS-speaking countries;
- recognize differences in various aspects of BCS and American life and culture, in values and perceptions.

Russian Learning Outcomes

4th semester of Russian (Major track – total of 350 contact hours)
Russ 208
Language Knowledge
Having been introduced to all of Russian’s high-frequency vocabulary, morphology and syntax, students show mastery of basic usage patterns and forms for familiar vocabulary, and only partial or conceptual control of highly-complex features (participles, prefixed verbs of motion, verbal aspect, indirect speech).

Abilities
Can comprehend (with scaffolding from instructor/reference materials) straightforward texts (written, audio, or video) on everyday topics. Students have ability to interpret, compare and contrast the different cultural perspectives and values found in some texts.

Can express themselves about familiar topics and on immediate needs, primarily at the sentence level, and in both present and past time. On the most familiar topics sentences may string together into rudimentary paragraphs in speech, and regularly do so in writing, when they have time to reflect on linguistic accuracy.

Dispositions
Student gain awareness of differences in perceptions, values between Russian and American culture and can reflect on such differences.

Develop an appreciation for select literary texts and other products of Russian culture.

4th semester of Russian (non-major track 290 contact hours)
Language Knowledge
Students have a deeper knowledge of Russian’s fundamental grammar and morphology, with a broader basic vocabulary than at the end of Russ 108. They have a conceptual knowledge of verbal aspect and prefixed verbs of motion, which allows them to interpret meaning with greater precision in texts.

They have greater focus on vocabulary development for reading and recognition.

Abilities
Can comprehend (with scaffolding from instructor/reference materials) straightforward texts (written, audio, or video) on everyday topics. Students have ability to interpret, compare and contrast different cultural perspectives and values found in some texts.

Can express themselves about familiar topics at the sentence level. On the most familiar topics sentences may string together into rudimentary paragraphs in writing, but rarely do so in speech.

Dispositions
Student gain awareness of differences in perceptions, values between Russian and American culture and can reflect on such differences. Several of the texts in the course allow students to probe the legacy of Soviet culture in contemporary Russian life.

2nd semester of Russian (Contact hours: 206)
Russ 108
Language Knowledge
Students have been introduced to the basics of Russian noun, adjective and verb morphology and the very basics of syntax. They have control only of most basic structures for the most frequent and well-known vocabulary.

They have some awareness of vocabulary clusters that are used very differently in Russian and in English (to have / to ask / to study / to get married)

Abilities
Can comprehend basic information from straightforward texts written primarily to them or a general audience.

Can express themselves about familiar topics primarily at the sentence level, mostly in present time. In writing, students can string together into rudimentary paragraphs to express familiar and some novel information/ideas.

Dispositions
Student gain concrete factual information about Russian cultural figures, patterns and phenomena, primarily from English sources, but from selective original language sources as well.

**SPANISH & PORTUGUESE**

**4TH SEMESTER LEARNING OUTCOMES**
Upon successful completion of the fourth semester of foundational Spanish studies, students are able to:

1) Comprehend the main ideas of a variety of genres of authentic written texts directed at a general audience, and with guidance be able to analyze more nuanced aspects of the texts with respect to language use in its cultural context.

2) Comprehend Spanish language use that is directed at them and be able to understand the main ideas of spoken language intended for a native audience; more importantly students will develop the ability to identify specific areas of misunderstanding and request clarification to facilitate comprehension.

3) Communicate their ideas both orally and in writing in such a way that native speakers unaccustomed to non-native Spanish will be able to comprehend these ideas, though this spoken and written language use will be far from error-free. Students develop and perform a formal oral presentation to share insights based on their final research projects. By the end of the 4th semester Spanish, successful students’ language use will align with the description of Intermediate-Mid to Intermediate-High proficiency for both speaking and writing, as described by the American Council of Foreign Language Teachers (ACTFL), which serves the KU Core goal of fostering the development of oral communication skills.

4) Develop and refine their ability to write effectively in Spanish through guided journal writing and a structured, process-oriented approach to formal composition. Students develop a 1,000-word paper informed by guided research into a topic of personal interest that relates to the content of the course. The KU Core Curriculum goals of promoting the development of critical thinking skills, written communication, and the ability to integrate knowledge into new ways of thinking are advanced through this process.

5) Demonstrate broad cultural awareness of the Spanish-speaking world and the ability to relate this awareness to their understanding of their own cultural experiences. This outcome fosters a respect for human diversity and promotes an expanding cultural understanding and global awareness, as articulated by the KU Core Curriculum.

6) Demonstrate the ability to analyze social issues from more than one perspective through the development of cultural sensitivity and more nuanced critical thinking skills. This intellectual development is demonstrated in the realization of the final research project, which serves as a comprehensive capstone assignment for the entire foundational sequence.

7) Use technology to access the virtual Spanish-speaking world independently and effectively in order to broaden their range of information sources, which also serves to promote critical and creative thinking as well as digital fluency.