

# MODERN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES

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## College of Liberal & Creative Arts

Dean: Dr. Andrew Harris

## Department of Modern Languages and Literatures

Humanities Building, Room 475

Phone: (415) 338-1421

Website: [mll.sfsu.edu/](http://mll.sfsu.edu/) (<http://mll.sfsu.edu/>)

Chair: Charles Egan

## Mission

The Department of Modern Languages and Literatures at San Francisco State University offers a comprehensive curriculum designed to help students develop the linguistic and cultural knowledge and skills necessary to contribute to a multilingual, international society. Proficiency in another language gives students access to parts of the human experience closed off to those who are monolingual, and provides vitally important skills that will aid them in their further academic endeavors and in virtually any career path they choose. The study of a foreign language gives students the interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational tools to communicate effectively with people of diverse backgrounds, and to thrive in international occupations; the study of linguistics exposes them to the deeper structures of language and their role in the construction of reality; the study of culture and society allows them to understand and appreciate other ways of life; and intensive analysis of literary texts in languages other than English helps them develop critical thinking skills. As they challenge themselves with new structures and ideas, our students develop an international perspective that will serve them and help them serve others at home and around the world.

## Program Scope

### Bachelor of Arts

The Department of Modern Languages and Literatures offers courses leading to the Bachelor of Arts in Chinese, French, German, Italian, Japanese, and Spanish. The department also offers minors in these languages and a minor in Russian. Programs are designed for students who are planning to use foreign languages in professional careers, as well as for students who wish to acquire an appreciation of the cultures of other peoples. On offer are courses in language, conversation, composition, reading, linguistics, culture, and literature. Some of the programs offer courses in business and translation-interpretation, and literature and culture courses in English.

Students who have had foreign language experience before enrolling at San Francisco State University should consult with an adviser in the specific language program for placement in the proper course in which they can receive credit.

A multimedia foreign language laboratory is open to all students enrolled in any class in the department. Basic level courses usually require preparation using audio and video resources and web applications located in the multimedia language laboratory.

### Major

The Bachelor of Arts requirements for each modern language is different. For specifics, please check each language program's bulletin description. It is also suggested that students intending to major in a modern language consult with an adviser in the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures early enough to assure proper scheduling of essential courses.

### Minor

Students wishing to take a minor in a modern language must complete between 18 and 24 units of lower- and/or upper-division courses – the requirements for which vary with each language program. For specifics, please check the language program's bulletin description or consult with an individual language program adviser.

Upper-division courses in the modern language programs are, in general, conducted in the language under study.

### Master of Arts

The department offers the Master of Arts in Chinese, French, German, Italian, Japanese, and Spanish. The various master's programs provide advanced instruction in culture, language, and literature. A limited number of graduate teaching associate positions are available for students engaged in graduate study in the programs. The M.A. programs are designed to prepare students for a variety of careers. M.A. graduates often become teachers in private or public secondary schools, in community colleges, or in universities after completing doctoral studies.

### Admission to Programs

Students seeking admission to a master of arts program must have completed an undergraduate major comparable to the major in the appropriate language and literature at San Francisco State University.

Applicants without such a major may be admitted conditionally after developing, through consultation with advisors, a program of studies to establish the equivalent of that major. Courses prescribed for equivalency may not be credited toward the master of arts program.

Students in all Master of Arts programs are required to have a GPA of at least 3.0 in their undergraduate major.

### Advancement to Candidacy

In addition to meeting all the general university requirements, students prior to advancement to candidacy must:

- Meet all conditions required by the language of concentration.
- Where required, complete with a grade of A or B the course MLL 701 Seminar in Academic Writing and Research Methodology.
- Demonstrate written English proficiency as required by each language program. Both native and non-native speakers of English must meet this requirement.
- Demonstrate oral and written proficiency in the language of concentration.

If students are unable to meet the above requirements for advancement to candidacy, they may be advised to enroll in additional courses prior to being considered for candidacy. In such cases, the courses will not be credited toward the master's degree.

## Demonstration of Exit-Level Language Proficiency

Exit-level level proficiency in the language studied is demonstrated by satisfactory completion of written and oral comprehensive examinations, or in some language programs, by completion of a research project or master's thesis. See the language program bulletin description for specifics.

## International Programs

For undergraduate majors or minors, the department recommends an overseas experience of academic and cultural studies. Students who participate in the International Programs (<http://bulletin.sfsu.edu/resources/international-programs/>) of the California State University may undertake an academic year at certain designated major institutions of higher learning located outside the United States. All students in the overseas language programs should consult with an adviser in the specific language to ensure that courses taken abroad can be applied to the major, the minor, or the degree at San Francisco State University. For the Chinese, French, German, Italian, Japanese, and Spanish B.A. programs, at least half of the units required for the major must be taken at the home campus.

Similarly, for the minor, at least half of the units required must be taken at the home campus. There may also be limits in the other language programs. For graduate students in the German and Italian M.A. programs, a maximum of 9 units from recognized study abroad programs will be accepted for the degree. For graduate students in the Chinese, French, Japanese, and Spanish M.A. programs, a maximum of 12 units will be accepted for the degree.

## Special Courses

In addition to the languages listed above, courses in Russian, Arabic, and Persian language, literature, and culture, as well as a Minor in Persian Studies, is also available to students. Students may also use their language coursework towards area studies minors such as the Minor in Pacific Asian Studies, the Minor in Middle East and Islamic Studies, and the minor in European Studies.

## Career Outlook

Some careers require a foreign language as a primary skill. For those employed in teaching foreign languages, culture, and literature, and for those who work as interpreters and translators, a high degree of fluency or near-native competency is required. On the other hand, there are a great number of career alternatives open to people who possess good competency in one or more foreign languages. Local and state agencies, as well as the federal government (such as the State Department, the Department of Defense, the Immigration and Naturalization Service, the Peace Corps), often have openings for people with language skills. Further employment possibilities are in multinational companies with significant global operations (international marketing and accounting firms, international banking, and other international business), advertising, journalism, publishing, communications, and information services, media and entertainment, travel and tourism, the hotel and restaurant industry, health care, as well as in the arts. Competency in one or more foreign languages will open the door to many exciting careers.

## Programs

- Chinese (<http://bulletin.sfsu.edu/colleges/liberal-creative-arts/foreign-language/foreign-languages-literatures-chinese/>)
- French (<http://bulletin.sfsu.edu/colleges/liberal-creative-arts/foreign-language/foreign-languages-literatures-french/>)
- German (<http://bulletin.sfsu.edu/colleges/liberal-creative-arts/foreign-language/foreign-languages-literatures-german/>)
- Italian (<http://bulletin.sfsu.edu/colleges/liberal-creative-arts/foreign-language/foreign-languages-literatures-italian/>)
- Japanese (<http://bulletin.sfsu.edu/colleges/liberal-creative-arts/foreign-language/foreign-languages-literatures-japanese/>)
- Pacific Asian Studies (<http://bulletin.sfsu.edu/colleges/liberal-creative-arts/foreign-language/minor-pacific-asian-studies/>)
- Persian (<http://bulletin.sfsu.edu/colleges/liberal-creative-arts/foreign-language/foreign-languages-literatures-persian/>)
- Russian (<http://bulletin.sfsu.edu/colleges/liberal-creative-arts/foreign-language/foreign-languages-and-literatures-russian/>)
- Spanish (<http://bulletin.sfsu.edu/colleges/liberal-creative-arts/foreign-language/foreign-languages-literatures-spanish/>)