

# Major Possibilities: Modern Languages

*Chinese, French, German, Spanish*



## Career Services

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### Summary

- Careers related exclusively to language proficiency are limited and are usually filled by native speakers. But combining language proficiency with other skills sets enhances opportunities in government, business, medicine and health care, law enforcement, teaching, technology, the military, communications, industry, social service, and marketing.
- A person fluent in more than one language can have an advantage over peers in the workforce. When applying for a job, your potential employer will know that you can help them expand their clientele.
- Professionals who know other languages often travel more and exchange information with professionals in other countries throughout their careers.
- If you have not grown up learning more than one language, becoming fluent in another language takes dedication and hard work, but it is definitely possible. And since you learn *how to learn* languages, learning the next language is easier.

### Modern language major synopsis

The Modern Languages and Literatures Department offers majors in French, German, and Spanish and an independent major in Chinese. Majors are expected to acquire a strong grasp of language and a working knowledge of literature, culture and film. The capstone experience, an integrative project in which students undertake significant writing and research in the target language, provides a solid grounding that prepares students as much for graduate work as for sophisticated original projects in many fields.

#### Chinese

The Chinese language is the most widely spoken language in the world, with over 1.2 billion people speaking it, according to [www.chinese-language.info](http://www.chinese-language.info). There are many job opportunities for a graduate fluent in Chinese because China is one of the fastest growing markets in the world economy.

#### French

French is used as the official language of 22 countries and is the co-official language of several others, including Belgium, Canada, Haiti, Madagascar, and Switzerland. French is spoken in both North and South America, North Africa and sub-Saharan Africa, the Caribbean, the South Pacific, and, of course, Europe. It is a Romance language, meaning that it was derived from Latin.

#### German

German is one of the Germanic languages, related to Danish, Norwegian and Swedish, Dutch, as well as to English. It is used as the official language of Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, and parts of Italy and Belgium. According to [www.germanlanguageguide.com](http://www.germanlanguageguide.com), German is the most widely spoken native language in the European Union.

#### Spanish

Spanish, a Romance language, is of great importance to people in the United States because of our neighbor to the south, Mexico. If you are interested employment stateside, fluency in Spanish would greatly enhance your ability to find a job. Spanish is also spoken as the official language in Spain, most of South and Central America, and parts of the Caribbean.

### Language learning tips

- Through study abroad or other means, visit a country whose people speak the language you are learning, and learn the culture and customs of that country.
- Read foreign newspapers and magazines to keep up with world events.
- Listen to popular music in the language you are learning.
- Learn good communication skills in your second language. Most students of foreign languages cannot speak as well as they can read and write. Practice speaking aloud. Take oral presentations seriously.

### Sample job titles

#### Industry and Commerce

Accounts Management  
 Administrative Services  
 Banking/Finance  
 Conference Planner  
 Consultant  
 Correspondent  
 Diplomacy  
 Engineering  
 Hotel Administration  
 Import/Export

#### Operations Management

PR Representative  
 Sales Representative  
 Technical Researcher  
 Translator/ Interpreter  
 Travel Writer  
 Tour Guide

#### Arts, Media, and Entertainment

Advertising Manager  
 Archivist

#### Book Reviewer

Broadcasting  
 Columnist/Commentator  
 Copy Writer  
 Editor  
 Linguist  
 Media Specialist  
 Museum Curator  
 Production Manager  
 Radio/TV Archivist  
 Technical Writer

#### Tour Guide

Translator/Interpreter

#### Government, Service, and Education

Civil Service Employee  
 Cultural Officer  
 Customs Officer  
 Diplomat  
 Drug Enforcement Agent  
 FBI Agent

## ***Sample job titles, continued***

Foreign Service Officer	Journalist	National Security Agent	State Department
Health Services	Law Enforcement Agent	Peace Corps Volunteer	Teacher
Immigration Officer	Linguist	Social Worker	Translator/Interpreter
Intelligence Specialist	Mission Worker	Service Officer	United Nations

## ***Sample internship employers of SU students***

APAICS - Washington, DC	Lawyers Bureau – Cordoba City, Argentina
CIA Internship Program	Pace University - New York City, NY
CSIS – Washington, DC	Magazine Publishers of America
Council on Foreign Relations - New York	The American University - Washington DC
Delegation of European Commission	The Carter Center - Atlanta, GA
FBI Internship Program	The Museum of Modern Art
Global Experiences Internships	The Roswell Group - New York City, NY
ICADS Internship Program	

## ***Sample full-time employers of SU grads***

Assistant Director (Language Stars)	Federal Law Enforcement Officer (U.S. Secret Service)
Community Organizer	Financial Advisor (Erben Associates)
Content Editor (Expert Village)	Legal Assistant
Contract Administration (National Instruments)	Legislative Correspondent (TX House of Representatives)
English Teacher (Peace Corps)	Service Coordinator (AmeriCorps)
Director for Strategic Partnerships (National Hispanic Institute)	Teacher
Family Advocate (Casa Marianella)	

## ***Professional associations***

American Association for Applied Linguistics: [www.aaal.org](http://www.aaal.org)  
American Association of Teachers of French: [www.frenchteachers.org](http://www.frenchteachers.org)  
American Association of Teachers of German: [www.aatg.org](http://www.aatg.org)  
American Association of Teachers of Spanish & Portuguese: [www.aatsp.org](http://www.aatsp.org)  
American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages: [www.actfl.org](http://www.actfl.org)  
American Literary Translators Association: [www.utdallas.edu/alta/](http://www.utdallas.edu/alta/)  
American Translators Association: [www.atanet.org](http://www.atanet.org)  
Association of Language Companies: [www.alcus.org](http://www.alcus.org)  
Institute of Linguists: [www.sil.org](http://www.sil.org)  
Linguistic Society of America: [www.lsadc.org](http://www.lsadc.org)  
Modern Languages Association: [www.mla.org](http://www.mla.org)  
National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators: [www.najit.org](http://www.najit.org)

## ***Additional Web resources***

ALS International Languages: [www.alsintl.com](http://www.alsintl.com)  
Bilingual Career: [www.bilingualcareer.com](http://www.bilingualcareer.com)  
German Language Guide: [www.germanlanguageguide.com](http://www.germanlanguageguide.com)  
International Career Resources: [www.duke.edu/~lpmaskel/intl\\_general.html](http://www.duke.edu/~lpmaskel/intl_general.html)  
International Languages Page: [www.ilovelanguages.com](http://www.ilovelanguages.com)  
Language Jobs: [www.languagejobs.org](http://www.languagejobs.org)  
Overseas Jobs: [www.overseasjobs.com](http://www.overseasjobs.com)  
Overseas Job Opportunities: [www.escapeartist.com](http://www.escapeartist.com)  
Spanish Language Information: [www.omniglot.com/writing/spanish.htm](http://www.omniglot.com/writing/spanish.htm)  
Teaching English abroad: [www.transitionsabroad.com/listings/work/esl/index.shtml](http://www.transitionsabroad.com/listings/work/esl/index.shtml)  
TwoLingos.com: [www.twolingos.com/jobs/index.php](http://www.twolingos.com/jobs/index.php)  
U.S. Department of State: [www.state.gov/careers/](http://www.state.gov/careers/)

## ***Career Services' print resources***

Careers for Foreign Language Aficionado & Other Multilingual Types	Inside Secrets to Finding a Career in Travel
Great Jobs for Foreign Language Majors	Jobs for Travel Lovers
Opportunities in Foreign Language Careers	Jobs in Paradise: The Definitive Guide to Exotic Jobs Everywhere
Adventure Careers 2nd Ed	Nice Job!: The Guide to Cool, Odd, Risky, and Gruesome Ways to Make a Living
Adventures Unlimited	Opportunities in Airline Careers
The Back Door Guide to Short Term Job Adventures	Opportunities in Travel Careers
Careers for Travel Buffs & Other Restless Types	Sunshine Jobs: Career Opportunities Working Outdoors
Careers in Travel, Tourism, and Hospitality	Vault Career Guide to the Fashion Industry
How to Get a Job with a Cruise Line 5th Ed	Work Your Way around the World

