Major Possibilities: Languages, Literatures, and Cultures
Chinese, French, German, & Spanish

Quick Facts

- Careers related exclusively to language proficiency are limited and usually filled by native speakers. But combining language proficiency with other skill 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 with language proficiency often travel and communicate with international colleagues more throughout their careers.
- If you didn’t grow up learning multiple language, becoming fluent in another language takes hard work, but it is possible. Potential employers will recognize your effort. And once you learn how to learn languages, the next language is easier.
- Internships help shape professional identities, develop 21st century career-readiness skills, and make meaning of the academic experience.

Modern Languages, Literatures, and Cultures Synopsis

Majors are offered in French, German, and Spanish, and minors in French, German, Spanish, and 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. Students often pair their major or minor with expertise in another discipline. For information on the language placement exam, consult the course catalog.

CHINESE

The Chinese language is the most widely spoken language in the world, with more than 1.3 billion speakers – that’s 1/6 of the world’s population. There are many job opportunities for a graduate fluent in Chinese because China is one of the fastest growing markets in the world economy and, correspondingly, political relationships with China are increasingly important.

FRENCH

French is used as an official language in 29 countries, 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 Europe. While about 220 million people speak French today, a French demographic project estimates approximately 700 million people will speak French by 2050.

GERMAN

German is related to Danish, Dutch, English, Norwegian and Swedish. Used as the official language of Germany, Switzerland, Austria, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, and parts of Italy and Belgium, German is the most widely spoken native language in the European Union.

SPANISH

Spanish is of great importance to the United States because of neighboring Mexico. If you are interested in employment stateside, fluency in Spanish will 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. It is the second most prevalent first language in the world (after Mandarin Chinese).
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.
- The most valuable language-learning experience is immersion.
- Read foreign newspapers and magazines to keep up with world events.
- Listen to popular music in the language you are learning.
- Most language students cannot speak as well as they can read and write. Practice speaking aloud. Take oral presentations seriously.

Sample Job Titles

Accounts Manager
Advertising Executive
Anthropologist
Archivist
Banker
Broadcaster
Civil Service Officer
Columnist
Conference Planner
Consultant
Copywriter

Correspondent
Cultural Specialist
Diplomat
Editor
FBI/CIA Agent
Financial Analyst
Foreign Service Officer
Health Services
Hotel Manager
Immigration Officer

Int’l Relations Specialist
Intelligence Specialist
Journalist
Law Enforcement Agent
Lawyer
Legislator
Linguist
Media Specialist
Mission Worker
Museum Curator
National Security Agent

Operations Management
Public Relations Officer
Researcher
Sales Representative
Social Worker
Teacher
Technical Writer
Translator/Interpreter
Travel Writer
Tour Guide
Urban Planner

Sample Internship Employers of SU Students

APAICS – Washington, DC
Austin-Travis County Mental Health Center – Austin, TX
CIA Internship Program
Colorado Springs Gazette
Council on Foreign Relations – New York
Delegation of European Commission
FBI Internship Program
Georgetown ISD – Georgetown, TX
Glasshouse Policy – Austin, TX
Global Experiences Internships
US House of Representatives – Washington, DC
ICADS Internship Program

Lawyers Bureau – Cordoba City, Argentina
Mitchell Elementary School – Georgetown, TX
Office of Attorney General Child Support Division – Austin, TX
Magazine Publishers of America
Sojourner Tours – Georgetown, TX
Southwestern University Language Departments – Georgetown, TX
The American University - Washington DC
The Carter Center – Atlanta, GA
The Museum of Modern Art
The Roswell Group – New York City, NY
US House of Representatives – Washington, DC

Sample Full-Time Employers of SU Grads

Administrative Coordinator (Baylor College of Medicine)
Assistant Director (Language Stars)
Bill Analyst (Texas Senate Research Committee)
Business Development Manager (Paladin)
City Year Corps Member (City Year)
Community Organizer (La Union del Pueblo Entero)
Content Editor (Expert Village)
Case Manager/Life Skills Teacher (SafePlace-AmeriCorps)
Development Associate (Habitat for Humanity)
Editorial Assistant (Benchmark Education Company)
ESL Instructor (Houston Community College)
Director for Strategic Partnerships (National Hispanic Institute)
Family Advocate (Casa Marianella)
Federal Law Enforcement Officer (U.S. Secret Service)
Financial Advisor (Erben Associates; Edward Jones)

Flight Officer (US Navy)
Interpreter (Bluebonnet Trails MHMR)
Language Assistant (Ministry of National Education, France)
Legislative Correspondent (TX House of Representatives)
Paralegal (Baker Botts LLP, Florida Immigrant Advocacy Center)
PR Director (Dale Johnson Systems, Inc.)
Program Coordinator (Congressman Pete Sessions)
Residential Life Coordinator (The Village School)
SEO Specialist (Webvega)
Service Coordinator (AmeriCorps)
Teacher (Peace Corps, Mariposa Montessori, Fulbright Commission)
Technical Sales Representative (National Instruments)
Therapeutic Child Care Specialist (Helping Hand Home for Children)
Professional Associations

American Association for Applied Linguistics
American Association of Teachers of French
American Association of Teachers of German
American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese
American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages
American Literary Translators Association
American Translators Association
Association of Language Companies
Summer Institute of Linguistics
Linguistic Society of America
Modern Language Association
National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators