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Part of our responsibility as an institution of higher education is to prepare Iowa’s students for living in a pluralistic and multicultural world here in the United States and abroad. A crucial part of this is proficiency in English and at least one other language. The courses we offer through the DWLLC for the CLAS Core World Languages (WL) requirement impart a skill, which sets it apart from many of the other general education courses offered at the University of Iowa. Skills can be understood as providing students with ‘ways of learning’, or a set of abilities that allow them to deepen and expand their knowledge in a particular field. Learning a language can be regarded as a ‘way of learning’ within this framework. The only way to reach true cross-cultural understanding is through sustained interaction with others in their native language and by reading literature and learning about culture first hand – not in translation and not with subtitles. The WL requirement is the only CLAS Core requirement that provides students entry to these international and cross-cultural experiences. The development of language skills allows students to develop a deeper, sustained understanding of other cultures and people.

The purpose of this report is to provide actionable information, which can be used to identify areas where changes are required and build upon areas where we are already successful. To this end, we provide an outline of the curricular goals of the WL requirement, followed by enrollment figures from Fall 2012 to Fall 2018, encompassing the formation of the DWLLC to the present. We then provide feedback from surveys conducted with DWLLC students in their fourth semester of language classes, followed by survey results of WL instructors. In the final section, we present a list of objectives for the WL requirement moving forward.

1. Description of the WL requirement

1.1. Curricular goals

The CLAS Core Area Outcomes for World Languages specify that "Students will be able to read, speak, and understand the language as described in the course descriptions, and will develop enhanced understanding of the culture(s) in which the language is (was) used."

Courses offered by the DWLLC in the CLAS Core World Languages area are designed to align with the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) World Readiness Standards for Learning Languages, also known as the ‘Five Cs’. The Five Cs represent five broad goal areas for language learning, each of which is associated with two or more standards emphasizing development of skills and knowledge that can be employed beyond the classroom context.

**ACTFL Five Cs:**
**Communication:** Learners communicate effectively in a variety of situations and can employ their language skills in interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational modes.

**Cultures:** Learners develop cultural competence and understanding in relation to the products, practices, and perspectives of the target language culture(s).

**Connections:** Learners explore connections to other disciplines and use the language to explore unique perspectives of the target language and its culture(s).
Comparisons: Learners compare their language to the target language and their culture to the culture(s) studied to develop better understanding of the nature of language and cultural phenomena.

Communities: Learners use the language to interact in classroom, campus, and global communities.

The ACTFL Five Cs and the associated standards are at once broad and specific; developed in cooperation with broad set of World Language professional organizations, the ACTFL standards provide a guide to instructional design and learning goals that is applicable to the full range of modern spoken languages, signed languages, and classical languages. The ACTFL standards are connected to a series of ‘Can-Do’ statements, which instructors can use for both formative and summative evaluation purposes, to capture the different competencies students demonstrate as they develop proficiency. The ‘Can-Do’ statements provide proficiency benchmarks and performance indicators linked the ACTFL Proficiency Scale, reflecting growth in the command of linguistic forms, the range of communicative contexts, the complexity of tasks, and cultural and pragmatic knowledge that develop with extended study of a second language.

Many UI students begin their study of DWLLC languages at the beginner level, while others (particularly in Spanish, French, and German) often begin at higher levels based on previous – typically high school – course work. And some language programs (e.g. Spanish, French, Russian, and Arabic) regularly have heritage speakers in their courses. Languages such as Arabic, Chinese, Korean, and Russian, which are structurally very different from English, may have different language proficiency outcomes at the fourth semester than languages with greater structural similarity. By framing our goals in terms of the ACTFL standards, we can maintain consistency across the different language programs and ensure comparable education experiences and outcomes for the wide range of students who enroll in our courses.

1.2. Fulfilling the WL requirement over four years

Students have a number of different options to fulfill the WL requirement prior to their arrival on campus. (see GE CLAS Core: World Languages webpage). These options are explained on the website and if students have questions, advisors and admissions counselors are available to help.

Data from the 2016 and 2017 freshmen cohorts (Source: CLAS Dean’s office, p.c.) is provided in Figure 1. It shows that by Fall 2018, **58% of freshmen had fulfilled their WL requirement prior to starting their undergraduate program in CLAS.** A further 31% had either transferred credits towards the requirement or had begun to take courses to fulfill it. Only 11% of these second or third-year students had not yet started the requirement.¹

¹ International students whose native language is not English are exempt.
In Fall 2018, CLAS implemented the new Sample Plans of Study through MYUI. This interactive tool will help students plan their course of study to optimally meet the WL requirement. DWLLC faculty and instructors have been encouraged to work closely with advisors across the College and the Academic Advising Center to make sure they understand how the WL requirement sequence is structured so as to maximize the probability of timely graduation. As this is the only CLAS Core requirement that requires a sequence, advising proves to be particularly important to graduation. Moreover, even for students who begin their WL requirement when they first arrive at the University of Iowa, they can complete it within two years and continue with their language studies and complete majors or minors before graduation.

2. Enrollment in WL requirement

2.1. Overall enrollment figures: 2012-2018

University of Iowa undergraduate students can fulfill their CLAS Core World Languages requirement by taking courses in 14 different languages, 12 offered by the DWLLC and 2 by the Department of Classics. Figure 2a provides an overview of the enrollment figures for all languages offered by the DWLLC from Spring 2013 to Spring 2018, the years immediately following its creation. Figure 2b provides enrollment figures for all languages, excluding Spanish. We present overall enrollment data including and excluding Spanish because Spanish enrollments are approximately three times higher, across all semesters, than any other language. This is partly due to the fact that all public high schools in Iowa (that we are aware of) and most of those in neighboring states from which UI draws its undergraduate population teach Spanish as one of their foreign language options. Some schools offer other languages in addition to Spanish, but not all. Thus, most students have studied at least one year of Spanish prior to arriving at University of Iowa. Spanish is also the most widely spoken language other than English in the United States, which means that students have often had direct personal contact with speakers of the language, motivating them to study it further at college. On a more anecdotal level, students interested in careers requiring interaction with the public (health services in particular) often regard Spanish as ‘useful’ or ‘important’ for their future goals.
Overall, enrollment has remained relatively stable over this period, with the major fluctuations occurring from fall to spring semester, rather than year-to-year. Enrollments are consistently higher in the fall semester (on average, 15% higher), which may be due to students finishing their language requirement in the fall (various languages offer intensive courses once a year, e.g., Portuguese) or alternatively, students opting to take only one WL course per year and preferring to do so in the fall. While this trend can lead to certain staffing challenges, inter-semester enrollment differences have shrunk over the past two years.
The WL requirement enrollment numbers have gone up over the past three years, even as the number of freshmen enrolled in CLAS has gone down (about -20% - with fluctuations – according to data from the Registrars Office). This could be due to a number of factors. First, the number of high schools in Iowa offering foreign languages at the middle school level has gone down over the past few years, which may lead to increases in the number of students who do not fulfill their four-year requirement at high school and therefore need to take the full four-semester WL requirement. Second, there are students who take more than one language during their undergraduate career to fulfill degree requirements and/or gain additional skills and they may not take a full sequence or register for non-consecutive semesters.

2.2. Individual language enrollment figures: 2012-2018

In Appendix A we provide enrollment data for each individual language, from 2012-2018. We divide the data into two sections, one for languages with average enrollment greater than 200 students per semester and a second set of data for languages with average enrollment less than 200 students. In general, individual language enrollments have remained consistent over the six-year period (with approximately 2-3% fluctuation from semester-to-semester, due to the fall-spring variability noted above). Swahili and Korean are notable, however, in that these languages have shown consistent upward trends in enrollment and considerable growth over this period (7% and 5%, respectively). Again, Spanish is by far the most heavily enrolled language offered by the DWLLC (approximately 38% of total enrollment over the 2013-2018 time period), followed by French and German (approximately 11% each) and American Sign Language (also at approximately 11%).

3. Student and instructor feedback on WL requirement: internal survey of Intermediate II students, ACE scores and instructor surveys (Spring 2018)

3.1. Internal survey

In Spring 2018 we conducted an online survey of students enrolled in the Intermediate II level of all languages offered in the DWLLC. We selected this level because it is the final semester of WL requirement study and therefore was most likely to include students who had previously studied their chosen language at the University of Iowa. The survey was sent out by email and instructors gave their students five minutes at the end of one class period to complete it. We first present the break-down of student respondents by language group. We then present student responses to the question “Why did you decide to take the language you are currently studying?” followed by responses to open-ended questions related to student impressions of their course. The actual survey questions are available upon request. Figure 3 shows the distribution of the students enrolled in WL classes at the Intermediate II in Spring, 2018:
3.1.1. Internal survey: student motivation for studying their chosen language

Student motivation for taking a particular language to fulfill the WL requirement varies tremendously across languages and across students. The students were asked to select among ten options in response to the question ‘Why are you taking [language]?’. They also had the option to write a personalized response. As can be seen, the different languages demonstrate distinct patterns in terms of student responses. Appendix B provides a break-down of all the responses to this question by language.

For all languages, personal interest played a strong role in motivating students’ enrollment. Particularly noteworthy is American Sign Language, for which 54% of students said they were taking it for personal interest. American Sign Language has consistently had high enrollment numbers (comparable to German and French) over the past six years. Out of 93 respondents, only five said that ASL was offered at their high school, suggesting that a very high percentage had started their ASL WL courses at the University of Iowa.

Spanish is the language taken by the overwhelming number of WL students (approximately 37% from 2013-2018, see §2) and it is also the language most widely-taught in high schools across Iowa and most widely-spoken language other than English in the United States. Student motivation for taking Spanish reflects these two facts, which together account for 57% of the stated reason for taking that language. There were also a number of students who responded that their motivation for taking a particular WL was for family reasons and heritage connections (Russian community, Chinese parents).

Overall, enrollments in all language have remained steady or increased across the six-year period studied and student motivation is grounded in personal motivation, professional interest and high school language offerings. When combined with the enrollment figures in the preceding section, this data provides a strong argument in favor of continuing to offer a wide variety of language options as a possibility to meet the WL requirement. Students can explore languages and have access to cultures and experiences that they may not have considered previous to starting their undergraduate degree in CLAS.

![Percentage of students enrolled in each language (Intermediate II, Spring 2018)](image-url)
3.1.2. Internal survey: student opinions on their language courses

Survey results: What we do well: The positive comments focused overwhelmingly on how the WL requirement has helped students gain insight into new cultures and ways of expressing themselves (see Appendix C). This is the major goal of the WL requirement – to help students develop cross-cultural understanding through learning another language, which in turn opens them to new experiences and knowledge. It is particularly encouraging to see that these comments held across all languages, even those that are typologically very different from English and require more work to master.

Students of Korean and Japanese commented that they have developed an appreciation for the pragmatic aspects of language. Korean and Japanese both have a system of honorifics that is very different from English. To be a truly proficient speaker of these languages, students must develop pragmatic and linguistic knowledge in tandem.

Another important comment made by students relates to the fact that learning a language allows one to learn more languages. This reflects an awareness of the metalinguistic knowledge second or third language acquisition affords – the ability to understand how languages ‘work’ and apply this knowledge to new and varied languages.

Survey results: Where we need work: The majority of comments from students in Intermediate II (Spring 18) were positive but we did receive some comments that will be taken into account moving forward. In particular, students commented on the relative difficulty of certain languages (e.g., Arabic) and the need for highly qualified instructors to teach them well. Other students commented that the courses were more difficult than they expected and yet others commented that in fact they were easier. A few also mentioned that learning a language is, in general, challenging.

Out of the 835 students who responded to this survey, very few commented that they felt four semesters of a WL was burdensome and they resented having to fulfill the WL requirement (see Appendix C for selected comments from the survey – full set of comments are available upon request). Most of these particular comments were made by students taking Spanish which, as mentioned above, is the language with by far the greatest number of students and at times, serves as the WL requirement ‘default’ for many.

As a committee, we were expecting a much higher number of negative comments. We are of the opinion that this relatively low number reflects if not agreement with the WL Core Requirement, at least recognition that it is worthwhile and not detrimental to students’ undergraduate training.

3.2 ACE Results

In this section we present the results from the ACE surveys completed by students in all DWLLC WL requirement courses. The ACE surveys analyzed by this report include are from Fall 2016 and Spring 2017, for the 12 languages offered by the DWLLC (n = 3 408). Figure 4 shows most of the students taking a WL requirement agree with the statement that they have improved their abilities to understand and speak the language studied throughout the semester. The third question confirms the results from the
internal survey in terms of student appreciation for the cultural aspects of the languages they are studying and the contribution of the WL requirement to helping students become global citizens.

![Bar chart](image)

**Figure 4.** ACE surveys for all languages (Fall 2016 and Spring 2017)

### 3.3. Internal survey: WL instructor feedback

In Spring 2018 we conducted an online survey of instructors teaching in the Intermediate II level of all languages offered in the DWLLC. The survey questions are available upon request. Thirty instructors from 11 different languages completed the online survey. The majority of the instructor that completed this survey were lecturers (n = 15) and graduate teaching assistants (n = 5) with the remaining ranking as fixed-term faculty and tenured.

The results of the instructor online survey were widely positive and confirmed the other results presented in this report. Most of the instructors defined the current curriculum and teaching approach as effective. Moreover, the instructors confirmed the central role of the ACTFL´s World Readiness Standards for Learning Languages in all DWLLC WL requirement courses. The results were consistent across all languages and reflected the positive results obtained by the student surveys.

The majority of comments from the instructors were positive but we did receive some comments upon which we can build moving forward. In particular, a few instructors commented that the current curriculum materials do not follow the current pedagogical approach adopted by the department. They were mostly concerned about the fact that some textbooks are overdue for an update and by the lack of teaching materials for less commonly taught languages. As a committee, we recognize the importance of working on reducing the few issues noted by the instructors in their comments.

### 4. Role of Language Media Center in WL requirement support and instruction

Instructors and students taking WL courses in the DWLLC make use of a wide range of teaching and learning technology available in the Language Media Center. According to the [ACTFL 21st Century Skills Map for World Languages](#), helping learners make use of authentic materials by means of current
technology should play an important role in all language programs. Some examples of how instructors and students use technology in the WL requirement courses are as follows:

- Course management system: uploading materials, online assessments (quizzes and exams), submitting work, recording and uploading videos, watching videos created by instructors, discussion forums, Peer review, Turnitin, synchronous communication
- Video recording: skits, instructor created videos, video assessments, recorded pair discussions, video based final projects
- Online workbooks: drilling, tutorials, activities, listening, speaking
- Internet: explore target culture, google maps, google drive for sharing vlogs, Padlet social media board for sharing ideas
- Email: cross-cultural communication (pen pal), communication with students
- Powerpoint/Keynote: class presentations by students, material presentation by instructors
- Virtual Exchange: Skype/Zoom individual to class, individual to individual longitudinal exchange
- Digital Production/digital stories: Storybird, iMovie, final cut, e-book posters
- Live polling: turning point for review, mentimeter, poll everywhere
- Teleconferencing: Zoom for weekly sessions and office hours, Skype for virtual exchange

Instructors in the DWLLC have access to technology through different units on campus but many use the resources, both facilities and staff services, in the Language Media Center (LMC) to consult with LMC experts on how best to use technology in their teaching and for implementing their projects. It is clear that by this list of examples (which is most likely not exhaustive), that DWLLC General Education instructors are meeting many of the 21st digital skills for instructors. However, continued professional development in the area of technology and teaching is highly encouraged and instructors can find opportunities at the University of Iowa both through the LMC as well as the Center for Teaching administered through the Office of Teaching, Learning & Technology and the College of Education. There are also numerous professional organizations and peer-reviewed journals that promote the development of instructor and student skills in the use of technology for language teaching and learning.

5. Conclusions and looking forward

In conclusion, internal survey and ACE results indicate that students and instructors are, overall, satisfied with the WL requirement and with the range of courses currently offered. This does not mean, however, that there is no room for improvement. The committee members represent a wide selection of instructors from across the DWLLC and, after consulting with our colleagues and students, have come up with the following suggestions to build upon what we do well and improve where necessary.

5.1 Looking forward

One of the major challenges facing the CLAS Core WL requirement at the moment is connecting it to further language study and resisting the tendency of many students to view it as a necessary, but not integral, part of their undergraduate education at the University of Iowa. We suggest that Departments in the DWLLC encourage faculty to interact more with the students taking the WL requirement – in particular, through class visits and presentations. Related to this is the need to deepen and strengthen the ties between the World Languages CLAS Core requirement and the majors offered in the Division to encourage students to continue with linguistic and cultural studies beyond the CLAS Core sequence. In
what follows we list further ideas to continue strengthening these connections and enriching the experience of WL requirement students:

1. Since the placement tests for various languages were selected over a decade ago, it is important to re-visit them and make sure they align with current WL goals and objectives. It will be necessary to review and revise the placement tests for world languages that students have typically studied at high school (WebCape: Spanish, French, German).

2. Review and revise where necessary the tests for students who are heritage speakers of a language other than English. Think about what the WL CLAS Core means for heritage speakers (esp. Spanish but also Chinese, French, Russian, etc.).

3. Design and promote about study abroad opportunities for students in the CLAS Core program.

4. Create closer links amongst the instructors in the CLAS Core program to foster exchange of ideas, teaching techniques and mutual support.

5. Encourage faculty to visit CLAS Core courses to discuss the major-level courses and encourage students to continue.

6. Encourage CLAS Core students to participate in extra-curricular activities that provide additional opportunities to practice their linguistic skills and deepen their cultural experiences with the target language.

7. Propose an update to the wording of the CLAS Core World Languages Area Outcomes: [https://clas.uiowa.edu/faculty/area-outcomes#World%20Languages](https://clas.uiowa.edu/faculty/area-outcomes#World%20Languages)

8. Ensure that all instructors are familiar with the ACTFL standards and work with them to discuss how their particular courses meet the goals and descriptors included in them. Sample Syllabus Language- model language to reflect ACTFL standards.

9. Think about how to incorporate the can-do statements into our language classes – focus in addition to grades.

10. Professionalization opportunities for Instructional Track faculty and Graduate Students.

11. Standing DWLLC committee on pedagogy and instructional innovation.
Appendix A

By-semester enrollment for each language (Spring 2012 – Fall 2018).

Group A: Average enrollment greater than 200

y-axis= total enrollment numbers
x-axis = semester

Group B: Average enrollment less than 200

American Sign Language
French
German
Spanish
Arabic
Chinese
Appendix B

Spring 2018 Intermediate II Student survey: motivation for taking the language

1. Arabic (n=40)

2. ASL (n=93)
3. Chinese (n=25)

4. French (n=136)

5. German (n=65)
6. Italian (n=48)

7. Japanese (n=75)

8. Korean (n=13)
9. Portuguese (n=22)

10. Russian (n=15)
11. Spanish (n=313)

12. Swahili (n=4)
Appendix C

Selected Comments from the Internal Survey

Positive Feedback

Arabic
It's okay to be uncomfortable, but it's not okay to stay uncomfortable. I grew confident in speaking in front of others. I grew confident in being wrong and being corrected. I definitely matured after taking my first Arabic class.

Taking Arabic has opened me up to the parallels between other languages romance and not. I will absolutely be learning more languages in my life and Arabic has given me that confidence and made me excited to try. Also, I find the grammar and differences from English fascinating so I’ve really enjoyed that.

I have gained a deeper understanding of Arabic culture that I would not have gained solely through Middle Eastern politics courses.

ASL
By taking this class, I have learned a lot of Deaf Culture, and everything that encompasses what being Deaf really means. I have gained knowledge about degrees of being Deaf and many other perspectives. I also have learned how to have a basic conversation with a Deaf person.

I have learned that we shouldn’t look of being deaf is a disability, because it’s not. You wouldn’t say someone speaking Spanish has a disability, so I don’t think that speaking asl is a disability either.

I think the most significant thing I have learned after taking ASL classes is the importance of understanding what the word "language" means and what makes a language. Most of my friends don't understand and will never understand the reason why I take ASL so seriously and why I try to advocate heavily for the importance of the language and why in fact it is a language and it's because of the cultural knowledge I have obtained over the course of 3 years.

I would say the most significant thing I've learned is how Deaf people see themselves. What I mean is Deaf people often times do not want to be hearing and love being apart of Deaf culture. Which is something most hearing people do not know.

Chinese
I just really appreciated how they really did break down the language and made us start from the very beginning which was very different than the “program” my high school had….I learned so much taking 1 year than I did taking 3 years at the high school I went to.

I have learned that actually speaking to native speakers is so much harder than talking to my peers and teachers. With the Chinese corner events I have the opportunity to try to improve speaking to native speakers, though.

French
Learning French has broadened my awareness of how culture makes an impact on language. English (esp. American English) speakers often articulate/structure concepts in a much different way than French speakers. As a result of this realization, I have explored the potential reasons behind this difference.
I have learned a lot about other cultures and things that I never would have learned about otherwise, I feel I’d have a positive experience visiting a french speaking country as this class has prepared me

I took Spanish in high school but never really understood much of it after 4 years and after only 3 semesters taking French at UI I feel I have a grasp way beyond what I thought possible given my past experience trying to learn a foreign language.

**German**
I have improved immensely in my comprehension and vocabulary in German throughout my classes here at iowa and my professor has been a significant influence on me. He has taught me many new things and his style of teaching has very good, I look forward to coming to class every day. My love and interest in languages has improved as well

German classes at UI have taught me that sometimes the best way to learn a language is to just immerse yourself in it. I was really worried about getting into the more advanced language classes because they are mostly taught in German, but that really helped me both with comprehension and speaking.

The best part about studying German at UI was getting to learn German culture along with the language.

It was great to listen to music, learn about German food, etc.

**Italian**
The most significant thing I’ve learned by taking Italian at Uiowa was general concepts to better learn foreign languages. It was always difficult for me to get a strong grasp on sentence structures, conjugations and appropriate times for their uses and through this course I feel as if those points were clearly explained. Overall I really enjoyed my languages learning experience at Uiowa.

Just a better understanding of languages around the world, not just English and Italian, and how to understand how other languages are constructed so that if I did want to pursue another language besides English or Italian, I would know how other (most) languages are constructed differently than how they are in English.

Within aspect to taking this language it has prepared me more to read, write, and speak in Italian. The culture is very interesting to learn about and will serve me well for future reference.

**Japanese**
I have learned the basic foundations of a language, syllabaric alphabet, and system of grammar that is wildly unlike English. The fluidity of Japanese in spite of its highly-ordered structure has been fascinating to explore as someone whose familiarity extends only to English and a few traces of Romance Languages

How to be polite and how to show respect to people of other cultures and backgrounds.

**Korean**
I think the most significant aspect of the class is learning about a culture so different from American society. Korean has a different alphabet and sentence structure, but it is so much more than that. The alphabet was built from the ground up by King Sejong and his scholar-officials. They created vowels based on their spiritual beliefs and their consonants based on the manner and place of articulation. The sentence structure and grammar is so intertwined with the culture. There are honorifics and levels of
politeness and this is all based in the Confucian, Buddhist, and general spirituality of the country. It is a fascinating language and really expands one's understanding of culture and society.

I realized just how much fun it is to learn a new language. It had been an interest of mine for a long time, but now I know learning languages is definitely a hobby.

Being confident in the classroom makes a difference. Language learning is built on the confidence to make mistakes sometimes and keep going. Confidence creates an attitude that cultivates learning in the classroom and outside the classroom and can be one's most valuable ally in acquiring a new language. It's helped me re-conceptualize issues in my other classes (international relations) from a non-US-centric standpoint.

**Portuguese**

By taking Portuguese classes at the University of Iowa, my mind has been opened to a new culture. I've learned about Brazil and other Portuguese speaking countries and their culture and way of life. It has made me want to access the real culture and visit Brazil!

I've learned that it is similar to many other languages which can help with traveling to other countries, including Brazil or Portugal.

**Russian**

I’ve learned a lot about a culture that I otherwise wouldn’t have known about. The environment of the classroom is very great. We always have a really good time

Learned where I originate from and love learning more about my language and culture in the United States.

I have learned how to effectively study and use my time. Russian requires a lot of outside work to even obtain a basic level of comprehension, let alone to become fluent in the language. I have also learned more about Russian culture and why they say and do the things they do. My Russian professor often likes to make vocabulary easier to remember, so she does word trees and links the roots of words to their meanings.

**Spanish**

I have learned a lot more about my own culture and other Spanish speaking cultures. I have also learned a lot more about the grammar and linguistics about my native language and topics of debate surrounding the language that I never knew existed prior to my Spanish classes at UIOWA.

I've learned to see the world through a different lens, learned to appreciate other cultures and the people and traditions and stories associated with them.

The cultural differences in healthcare can be significant, and you need to treat people of different cultures with the care they are accustomed to.

**Swahili**

I have learned amazing things about the East African culture. It has allowed me to broaden my cultural expanding and also appreciate a different side of our world.
I have learned that developing strong ties with other students and a sense of community can be such a strong motivation for happiness and comradery. In addition, I enjoy the Swahili culture and how happiness and community are everyday components to their lives.

**Negative Feedback**

**Arabic**
My experience taking Arabic at UI hasn't been the greatest. I took Arabic classes all four years in high school, and the classes offered here have paled in comparison. That being said, the most significant thing I have learned by taking Arabic at UI is to ask questions and seek the help you need.

The quality of instruction matters—enormously—however, there seems to be an unfortunate outcome that "anyone available" is assigned to be a language instructor. Students really wonder why the costs they endure to study language is not met with the equivalent benefit of learning from highly qualified/experienced professors. It is unclear why elite language instructors are not recruited, considering the importance and difficulty of a language such as Standard Arabic.

**ASL**
We don't offer enough ASL classes. ASL is used in America far more than I had realized. I think it's a unique language and important to learn. Not to mention that it has the possibility to impact everyone. You probably won't suddenly be forced to move to Germany and therefore it's helpful to learn their language now. However, anyone, and any of their loved ones, can lose their hearing at anytime. It seems more relevant to individuals and society than we appreciate. I had to be on a waiting list for almost two years to get into the class. If others encountered the same issue, they may have not waited. If there is a demand to learn the language then it should be met.

**Chinese**
How difficult it is to learn a new language

**French**
I do not like the entire approach to language learning. Much like how math (my major) is taught at lower levels, I think the approach completely misses the mark and focuses too much on memorization tricks and not enough on deeper comprehension of what is going on.

It is challenging to attempt to participate in a class discussion when you do not fully understand the language being spoken. I understand it is important to hear and speak the language but it feels forced most of the time. Not the instructor’s fault.

**German**
I have no affinity for foreign languages. You know how some people shouldn’t dance because they’re horrible at it? That’s me, except with speaking non-English languages. I wasn’t good with Spanish in middle school and high school, and I’m still not good with German in college.

That only 2 semesters worth of language should be necessary

**Italian**
In all honesty, I have not learned much from this course. I take responsibility for most aspects of that, but I know others in the class don't understand a lot of what is going on. Yet we continue to go through the chapters at an accelerated pace.
The most significant thing I have learned by taking Italian classes at UI is that for a GE requirement, it is pretty easy to fall under the radar and not do very well. I am not saying that the teachers are not invested in your education and strive to help you do better, but I am saying that for a class that is 4 or 5 semester hours just for Elementary courses, if you even get somewhat of a bad grade or anything that is not an A in the course, your GPA is largely and negatively affected. While it is every students responsibility to do well in a course, sometimes the ability to comprehend things at a certain pace affects the outcome of your grade in a negative way.

Japanese
N/A

Korean
Who the is professor decides whether it will be a good class.

That the UI language course requirement can be detrimental to college learning.

Portuguese
That taking any language with a 10-year gap from your last language class is extremely difficult

Russian
Nothing

Spanish
I don’t want to take anymore language classes now

The classes are much harder at UI than they were in high school, but they truly focus on preparing you for real world interactions with the language

The only class I have taken is the one I’m currently in (intermediate Spanish). Some of it has been review of high school. The only new thing I’ve been presented with (so far) is indirect/direct pronouns.

It is a waste of time. you should not force your students to learn a language. I understand learning other cultures, but language does not make a student more well-rounded.

The most significant thing I've learned while taking Spanish is that 4 semesters of mandatory Spanish is ridiculous. This is a waste of precious 20 semester hours that I could put elsewhere toward classes that I find interesting and would help my future career. I don't plan on using Spanish ever again unless it is to order drinks at a bar or check into a hotel in Cancun. The fact that I will never use this again points toward the fact that this is a waste of time. 20 semester hours is 6 classes and a 2 hour class. That's a possible minor right there, or maybe at least a certificate, but no, I had to spend it learning how to conjugate estar. My level of Spanish has improved, will I be any good at it, no. I have less time speaking it than a 4 year old child and that child would do better than me at the tests. To think that a person should be at the level that you require after 4 semesters of Spanish is loco. You wanted an answer before I could go to the next page, here it is. 20 semester hours of a language that I'll never use again is a waste of my time and money.

Swahili
N/A