

LANGUAGE STUDY AT NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY - GUIDE FOR ADVISERS -

This FAQ document is designed to help advisers navigate the information available on the [Language Resource Center website](#) related to language learning on our campus.

In this index you will also find key words and commonly asked topics to help users find information in a quicker and more efficient manner.

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FAQ | LANGUAGE STUDY AT NORTHWESTERN

Where to find general information on language study at Northwestern

- the Language Resource Center home page: lrc.northwestern.edu
- Click “Language Learning” Tab
- Explore the menu on the left-side of the screen

The screenshot displays the website's header with the Northwestern logo and 'WEINBERG COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES'. Below is the 'LANGUAGE RESOURCE CENTER' title and a search bar. A navigation menu includes 'About', 'Language Learning', 'Language Instruction', 'Community', and 'Make a Gift'. A large banner image features the 'Language Resource Center' text over an archway. Below the banner is a 'CENTER HIGHLIGHTS' section with three cards: 'LANGUAGE LEARNING [For Students and Advisers]', 'LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION [For Faculty and Instructors]', and 'COMMUNITY [For Partners and Other Units]'. A sidebar on the right lists 'LANGUAGE LEARNING' categories: Language Requirements, Language Study, Language Placement, AP and IB Language Credit, Language Learning Support, Study Abroad, For Graduate Students, Research, Internships and Post-Graduation Opportunities Abroad, and Language Program Contacts. Arrows indicate the flow from the main content to the sidebar.

What are the language requirements in all Northwestern schools?

Info: <https://lrc.northwestern.edu/language-learning/language-requirements.html>

Also, information about Weinberg:

- [Standard ways to fulfill the language requirement](#)
- [How to demonstrate proficiency in a language not taught at Northwestern*](#)
- [Language requirement fulfillment by coursework in non-English-language high schools*](#)
- [Seeking accommodations for students with disabilities](#)

*** IMPORTANT:** In these cases, new students must submit a petition by the end of their first quarter at Northwestern to Weinberg-OUSA.

What languages are offered at Northwestern?

Info: <https://lrc.northwestern.edu/language-learning/language-study/>

- List of individual languages offered on campus
- Table with information on the course sequences offered, minor/major offerings, summer session offerings, and Northwestern/affiliated study abroad programs
- List of languages programs and their respective home departments
- Pass/No pass policies in language courses

What are placement and validation tests?

- **PLACEMENT TEST:** Given to place students into an appropriate language class. Most languages offer the test online. Some languages require oral and essay writing tests as a part of the placement process.
- **VALIDATION TEST:** Following the placement test, given to ensure fulfillment of the Weinberg two-year language proficiency requirement (LPR). Validation test often consists of a speaking test, and/or a writing test. Validation may also be requested when the placement test result is not conclusive and needs further assessment.

Who must take the placement test?

In most languages:

- All students with any prior knowledge (formal or informal) of a language other than English. Prior knowledge can come from studying a language in elementary, middle or high school, speaking/being exposed to the language at home, and/or through self-study.
- Heritage language speakers who grew up speaking a language other than English at home, even if they have a very little knowledge of its writing system, must also take the placement test.
- Those who grew up or lived in a country where the language was spoken and have any knowledge of it, and whether they can read or write it, must take the placement test.

Some language programs also place students based on their AP scores; Hindi and Urdu also accept IB scores (see below) for placement purposes.

IMPORTANT: There may be some exceptions to the general policies above. Students should read the instructions posted on each language department website before accessing the online placement test when available, and make sure to follow them carefully.

What to do when a student knows multiple languages?

It is strongly recommended to have them take the placement test in all the languages that they know, starting with the language that they are most confident and comfortable with, and then in the other language(s). If they cannot take the placement test in a second or third language before the set deadlines, students can contact the individual language department to see if they can take the placement test at a later time.

How can a student be placed in a language course and/or have their proficiency validated to satisfy the Weinberg language proficiency requirement?

Info: <https://lrc.northwestern.edu/language-learning/language-placement.html>

Placement and proficiency validation procedures vary from language to language. Placement and proficiency validation in individual language courses may be based on:

- a) results of the placement test, followed by a validation test
- b) AP language exam scores (not used for Chinese and Japanese)
- c) IB scores (only used for Hindi-Urdu)

See [AP and IB Credit page](#).

Except in cases where students are placed in a language course or have their proficiency validated by **b)** or **c)** above, students must take the placement test first. Afterwards, if their proficiency seems high enough to fulfill Weinberg's two-year language proficiency requirement, they must take the validation test.

IMPORTANT: Some languages require speaking and essay writing tests as a part of the placement process. In such languages, completing the online placement test is not the end of the process. Students should follow the instructions given by the language department as to what to do after submitting the placement test. Students must complete this process promptly in order to get their placement results in a timely manner, and before any registration deadlines.

-Click each language name in [Language Placement](#) to see the placement procedures and instructions for a specific language. Information on placement tests is updated in May each academic year.

Where can I find the online placement tests?

Info: <https://placement.madstudio.northwestern.edu/>

- Students must read the instructions for their specific language placement test carefully before starting the test.
- Results can typically be accessed through the same link.

What is the validity of the language placement test results?

Info: <https://lrc.northwestern.edu/language-learning/language-placement.html>

- Between 1-2 years for most languages, except for German (4 years)
- Information about the validity of placement test results for individual languages in purple box (right side)

Can a student be placed in a language course based on their AP or IB score?

Info: <https://lrc.northwestern.edu/language-learning/advanced-placement-credit.html>

- It depends. Please read the information on the previous page.

Who is the contact person if I have questions?

- List of language program administrators:
<https://lrc.northwestern.edu/language-learning/language-program-contacts.html>
- For other questions email languageresourcecenter@northwestern.edu

What if a student wants to take a language not offered at Northwestern?

Info: <https://lrc.northwestern.edu/language-learning/language-study/languages-not-offered-at-nu.html>

- BTAA-CourseShare information
- BTAA-CourseShare request form and procedures
- Considerations and implications when taking language courses through CourseShare
- Other programs for graduate students who are in the doctoral program: Chicago Metropolitan Exchange Program and BTAA Traveling Scholar Program

IMPORTANT: Availability of intended courses is not guaranteed. Generally, this option is not recommended for the purpose of fulfilling Weinberg's two-year language requirement.

What if a student already speaks or knows a language not taught at Northwestern?

Info: <https://weinberg.northwestern.edu/undergraduate/degree/language-proficiency-requirement/proficiency-in-a-language-not-taught-at-northwestern.html>

- Process of validating a language not taught at NU
- Petition for proficiency testing based on attending a non-English high school

IMPORTANT: Students must submit the petition by the end of their first quarter at Northwestern.

Where can I find information about study abroad programs?

Info: <https://lrc.northwestern.edu/language-learning/study-abroad/>

- Global Learning Office
- Affiliated Programs
- Northwestern Exchanges
- Global Engagement Studies Institute (GESI)
- Journalism Residency Abroad
- Semester in Qatar
- Scholarships and funding opportunities

IMPORTANT: Language placement procedures for study abroad returnees:

<https://lrc.northwestern.edu/language-learning/study-abroad/language-placement-procedures-for-study-abroad-returnees.html>

What options for language study exist for non-traditional students?

Info: <https://lrc.northwestern.edu/language-learning/for-non-traditional-students.html>

- School of Professional Studies (student-at-large program and summer session)
- Non-Degree Special Student (NDSS) Program
- Norris Mini-Courses (non-credit recreational language courses for adults)

Can graduate students learn languages on campus?

Info: <https://lrc.northwestern.edu/language-learning/for-graduate-students.html>

- Language courses offered at Northwestern pending program permission
- English language program for graduate students in preparation for teaching
- English learner resources
- Funding opportunities

IMPORTANT: If language proficiency is required for a graduate student, and if the graduate student is planning to enroll in courses at Northwestern, they must take the placement test in that language as soon as they arrive on campus so that the language department can identify an appropriate class or for the graduate student to find out where they are in their language study.

Are there post-graduation opportunities for students involving language learning?

Info: <https://lrc.northwestern.edu/language-learning/research-internships-and-post-graduation-opportunities-abroad.html>

- Research and internships abroad
- Teaching assistantship program
- Career abroad

Questions?



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