

2025 Student Language Survey Impact Report

Overview

As part of the Purple Prep onboarding process, incoming students across Northwestern were invited to participate in a language survey designed to assess their prior experience with non-English languages and their interest in future language study at Northwestern. A total of **1,835 students (78%)** out of 2,350 students (First-Year and transfer) responded to the survey, representing all undergraduate schools.

Key Findings

Note: Because many survey fields allowed open-ended responses, students often listed multiple languages in areas such as those they have studied or plan to study. Additionally, regional dialects and variations in how language names were reported may affect the consistency of the data. As such, a margin of error should be considered when interpreting these statistics.

- **98%** reported **studying a language other than English during high school**, with **over 40 distinct languages** represented
- AP/IB Credits
 - **440 (23.9%)** indicated receiving non-English language **AP credits**
 - **35 (2%)** indicated receiving non-English language **IB (HL) credits**
- **99 (5.4%)** reported attending a **non-English high school**
- **1001 (54.6%)** reported **extensive exposure to a language other than English** at home or another context, with almost **90 different languages** represented
- **904 (49.3%)** could possibly be identified as **heritage language speakers**
 - These are students who reported extensive non-English language exposure but attended a high school where English is the primary language of instruction.
 - **733** of these may be heritage speakers of **languages taught at Northwestern**
- **1336 (72.8%)** plan to **study a language at Northwestern**. Some indicated more than one language.
 - Some indicated studying languages taught at Northwestern
 - Some indicated languages **that are not** taught at Northwestern