

# The Foreign Languages Newsletter

Clark University · Worcester, Massachusetts

New-Student Edition, Vol. XXI No 2 · August 2002

## A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

This is a special edition of the *Foreign Languages Newsletter* for new students. The information given below should be a useful addition to materials you will receive during Orientation.

At the end of this newsletter there is a coupon you can return to us once you know your Clark Box number. That way we can keep you up to date on activities sponsored by Foreign Languages, such as films, guest speakers, and social occasions. Meanwhile, we invite you to visit our web site at [www2.clarku.edu/departments/foreign](http://www2.clarku.edu/departments/foreign).

Welcome to Clark and Foreign Languages!

*Carol D'Lugo*

### *Is there a language requirement at Clark?*

No, but every student is expected to take at least one course that deals with the interrelation between language and culture. This is called the Language and Culture Perspective, or "LP" for short.

### *What is the LP?*

The Language and Culture Perspective is one of six Perspectives courses that all students take to fulfill the Program of Liberal Studies. Although all elementary and intermediate language courses, and some that are more advanced, offer LP credit, students may also satisfy the LP by taking courses offered periodically in English, for example certain courses in Communications, that examine how language reflects and complements culture.

At the back of the course selection booklet you'll find a list of courses that fulfill the LP. Our Department offers the LP in Chinese, French, German, Classical Greek, Hebrew, Japanese, Latin, and Spanish.

Most courses offer the LP for one semester's work. Please note, however, that for beginning language courses, designated as 101-102, students are required to complete two semesters in order to receive credit.

### *How do I know which course is the right level for me?*

During Orientation there are various placement tests, among them the Foreign Languages Placement Exam, which is scheduled for **Saturday, August 24, from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. in Estabrook Hall, room 302.**

The "exam" is really more like an interview. You will either be asked to take a short placement test or instructed on how to register for a course. Students who take the test confer afterwards with a professor who teaches that language. By talking to you and getting some information about your background, we can better advise you about which level is best for you.

Once the appropriate level is determined, you will be given a confirmation slip that guarantees you a place in the course in question. Save that slip and present it to your instructor on the first day of class.

Language Placement generally occurs before you meet with your advisor, so you can plan your schedule knowing you have a secured place in at least one class. If it later turns out that you have a conflict with another required course, for example one that you must take for a potential major, contact the coordinator of your chosen language as soon as possible, so that you can be placed in another section.

### *Must all students take the Language Placement Exam?*

No. Come to this session only if 1) you plan to continue your language studies, or 2) you want to begin studying a new language.

Please note, however, that in order to take a foreign language at *any* level, including the elementary courses, you must come to the and get your name on a class list. Students on the Department lists are guaranteed a place in the class. Those who try to register without going through placement will be admitted only if there is room.

### *Suppose I had four years of French or Spanish in high school, but I don't think I learned much. Could I just start over?*

No. Our rule is that regular beginning courses (101-102) are closed to anyone who has had two years of that language. The Department reviews high school transcripts to make sure students are not over-qualified for a class.

In French and Spanish, however, we do offer an intensive one-semester beginning course that builds on the experience you've had in high school. Students in these

intensive courses have studied the material in the past but may have forgotten much of it. Since their purpose is to refresh knowledge, these one-semester courses move at a faster pace than the two-semester beginning courses.

***How many students are there in a typical class?***

The official capacity for a language class is 20. Actual enrollments may vary from seven to 20.

Our goal is to present language in an active engagement with students, so that they have the maximum opportunity to develop linguistic skills. Small classes are obviously ideal for this purpose. Most language classes also have discussion sessions with teaching assistants; these are either native speakers or language majors who have spent time abroad.

***Are study abroad programs limited to language majors?***

Language majors are required to complete at least two units of study abroad, but other students regularly sign on as well: language minors, students in the International Studies Stream, and others who want to have a competitive advantage when entering the job market in their discipline - Business, Government, International Development, Geography, Psychology, or any other field in which knowledge of another language is helpful.

***What are the requirements for a language major?***

The specific courses will vary according to the requirements of each discipline (see the *Academic Catalog*). In general terms, the major requires eight units of credit, two of which must be completed in a study abroad program, as well as five related courses to be determined in consultation with your major advisor.

Some courses are required, such as the capstone course, usually given in seminar form for seniors. Also required for all Foreign Languages majors is "The National Imagination," a multi-disciplinary team-taught course offered every spring, that examines concepts of national identity in three different cultures. We encourage students to take this course by their sophomore year.

The other related courses are chosen with an eye toward future plans. For example, students who contemplate a career in teaching would naturally take related courses in Education, while someone who wants to work for the State Department would add courses in Government. Students with double majors ordinarily take fewer related courses, especially when the disciplines intersect.

***Does Clark have a language lab?***

At Clark, as in most colleges and universities, the traditional language lab has evolved into a media center. Our Language Arts Resource Center (LARC) is located on the fourth floor of Goddard Library. There you will find tapes to complement language instruction (audio and video); SCOLA, which provides satellite broadcasts from around the world; and a series of audio stations and video stations that can accommodate both foreign (PAL/SECAM) and US (NTSC) videos.

*Some useful names and addresses:*

**Department Chair**

Carol D'Lugo, Estabrook Hall 304, 793-7494

**Secretaries**

Zinta Moskalew, 793-7234

Joanne Berg, 793-7342

**Director of LARC**

Constance Montross, 793-7251

**Program Directors and Coordinators**

Ancient Civilization: Paul Burke, 793-7365

Japanese and Chinese: Alice Valentine, 793-7726

Comparative Literature: Kenneth Hughes, 793-7354

French: Michael Spingler, 793-7730

German: Kenneth Hughes, 793-7354

Hebrew and Jewish Studies: Everett Fox, 793-7355

Spanish: Carol D'Lugo, 793-7494

THE FOREIGN LANGUAGES NEWSLETTER is published by the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures, Estabrook Hall 301, Clark University, Worcester, MA 01610. Please send news items and announcements of coming events to Newsletter Editor, care of the Department, or call us at (508) 793-7342, 793-7234.

If you are not yet on our mailing list, please fill out this coupon and return it to us so that we can keep you fully informed of Foreign Languages Department activities.

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