



World Language Course Offerings

Frequently Asked Questions

Is a World Language required for graduation?

To be eligible for an Advanced Diploma from Fairfax County Public Schools, students must take either (1) three years of the same language or (2) four years of two different languages (two years of one and two years of another). The standard diploma does not require World Language study.

Is World Language study important to colleges?

Many colleges require that students take a World Language, with a large number recommending that students continue language study throughout high school. In their decisions, admissions officers often give additional points to students who reach upper levels in their language study. Studying another language enhances students' college admission qualifications and opens additional doors through activities and awards such as Honor Societies, internships, contests, and the opportunity to participate in the Governor's Academy for World Languages. World Language study also improves vocabulary and writing skills in English.

Can I/my child skip a level?

No, the sequence is Level 1, Level 2, Level 3, Level 4 and a choice of AP Language or level 5 (for Spanish and French). Exceptions are made for native speakers or students who have spent extended time in the country of the language they are taking. Exceptions can only be made by taking a placement test. See your counselor or Ms. Marcos to arrange the placement exam.

What about Advanced Placement (AP)? Can I/my child go to AP from level 3?

No, level 4 provides a full year of new vocabulary and upper-level grammar instruction. Students score better on the Advanced Placement exam after completing level 4. (For more information about AP, continue reading below.) Exceptions may be made for native speakers currently at any level. Counselors or Ms. Marcos can administer the exam during returns.

I/my child speak(s) Spanish at home. What is the best placement?

It is important to take our placement test to determine the best level of Spanish for a native speaker to begin. Woodson students may take the exam with their counselor or with Ms. Marcos, while Frost students may take it with Mr. Joo.

I/my child earned an A, B, or C in level 1. Can they repeat level 1 at Woodson for a stronger foundation or higher grade?

It is not advisable for students to take the same course in which they already received a grade of A, B, or C. The material will be repetitive and the experience is likely to be much less engaging for the student. In addition, if the same level course is taken more than once, the student will receive only one credit on their transcript. At levels 1 through 4, the first part of quarter 1 offers many opportunities for review of the previous year's instruction. Students find that instruction to be enough review to proceed with the next level.

What if I/my child earned a D?

It is recommended that students who earn a D in a World Language class repeat the course next year or take it during summer school. A grade of D indicates a lack of adequate understanding of the subject matter to proceed to the next level.

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Are Latin and ASL easier than other languages since there is no speaking involved?

No, all languages taught involve academic study and production. Quizzes and tests are at the same level of rigor in all languages. Students should take the language of greatest interest to them.

Is there a GPA bump for upper level World Language courses?

Yes, regular level 4 and 5 World Language students receive a +0.5 GPA bump because these courses are on a par with Honors classes. Advanced Placement and Dual Enrollment 4 students receive a +1.0 GPA bump.

Tell me about Dual Enrollment

For the 2023-24 school year, we will have additional level 4 options --Spanish 4 Dual Enrollment and Latin 4 Dual Enrollment. Successful completion of this course (A, B, C) will lead to 6 college credits from NOVA. There is no NOVA or national final exam, although there may be a Woodson final. Students should be aware that to earn the NOVA credits, they will have to earn an A, B, or C using the ***NOVA grading scale, which includes zeroes for work not turned in and grades lower than 50%***. Dual Enrollment will be a more rigorous and fast-paced course than regular level 4, so students planning to take multiple APs might want to consider their workload before enrolling.

Note: To qualify to take Dual Enrollment Spanish 4 or Latin, students must meet one of the following criteria: 1. Cumulative high school GPA of 3.0 or higher; 2. PSAT - ERW score of 390 or higher; 3. SAT - ERW score of 480 or higher; 4. ACT - 18 or higher on both.

Tell me about Advanced Placement

Woodson offers Advanced Placement Spanish and French. Students engage in critical thinking, analysis, and discussion in those languages. There is an emphasis on speaking and writing production. The courses prepare students to take the College Board national AP exams. The exams are graded on a scale of 1 to 5. Many colleges offer credits for successful AP exam scores of 4 or 5 (occasionally of 3). The amount of credit granted varies by college. To find out about the policy of an individual college, contact that institution's admissions office.

Are there any FCPS options after AP Language?

For Spanish only, there is an AP Spanish Literature and Culture course offered online. Students read and analyze literature from the Middle Ages to the present time. Interested students should see their counselors or Ms. Marcos (Department Chair) for additional information.