

Why Learn a Foreign Language?

Source: [St. John's University](#)

In a world that is increasingly interdependent, we can no longer afford to remain monolingual. Success depends in large measure on the ability of an individual to function as a member of a global society. Learning foreign languages is no longer a pastime: it is a necessity.

The Study of a Foreign Language

- helps you to expand your view of the world
- encourages critical reflection on the relation between language and culture
- expands your opportunities for meaningful leisure activities (such as travel, viewing foreign language films, watching foreign TV programs)
- develops your intellect (encouraging good learning habits, memorization, combining course content and skills in a meaningful way)
- exposes you to modes of thought and viewpoints that are available only in the foreign language and its culture
- helps to build practical skills that may be used in other disciplines
- fosters your understanding of the interrelation between language and human nature
- teaches and encourages respect for other ethnic groups
- contributes to the development of your personality
- contributes to the achievement of national goals, such as economic development
- increases your sense of self worth.

A Foreign Language Opens Up Job Opportunities for You

In the routine performance of their jobs, many people are called upon to use their foreign language skills. In large metropolitan areas such as New York, knowing a foreign language seems almost an essential aspect of urban living. Many jobs require knowledge of at least one foreign language. Some of the most important include:

The U.S. Government

The United States Government employs Americans who have foreign language skills on a regular basis. The Internal Revenue Service hires people with foreign language skills to handle routine investigations, audits, and communications with United States nationals who speak a foreign language. Other agencies and departments such as the CIA, the FBI, the State Department, the DEA, and the US Armed Services, to name a few, make ample use of people with foreign language skills.

American and International Business

Knowing a foreign language is an important asset for many foreign companies doing business in the US and for US-based international companies. Business leaders know that the ability to communicate with others in their own language is essential in marketing American products abroad.

In Education

The study of Foreign Languages is increasing and the need for teachers will grow accordingly.

Foreign languages are taught in Elementary, Junior and Senior High Schools, in the Universities, and in private schools.

In Public Relations

Knowing foreign languages and their cultures can make the difference between success and failure. The Chevy Nova failed in Latin America because the marketer did not realize that 'No va' in Spanish means "It does not run."

In Social Services

The social services deal with so many diverse groups that not knowing foreign languages can and in many cases does hamper their ability to serve the public adequately.

Health Care

The same thing can be said for Health Care, Police Enforcement, and the Courts. The ability to communicate with non-English speaking Americans can often make a difference between life and death

“An Overseas Stint Can Be a Ticket to the Top”

Many US multinational companies long trumpeted the importance of overseas assignments for middle managers. But these days, even the executive suite is going global. With nearly every industry targeting fast-growing foreign markets, more companies are requiring foreign experience for top management positions.

So take a chance and pursue that foreign language while abroad! Review the Language Abroad Information Sheet, which provides admissions requirements and language of instruction for all SJU Approved Semester Abroad Programs. The CIP office can help you decide which program would be best for your language of study and/or additional major. Contact the study abroad advisor for more information: ctomlins@sju.edu