I. Foreign Language Requirements for M.A. Programs

Most Elliott School M.A. programs require proficiency in one foreign language. The methods to meet this requirement vary depending on the program as described below.

[NOTE: The MA program in International Science and Technology Policy and the Master’s program in International Policy and Practice do not have a foreign language proficiency requirement.]

Requirements for Global Communication, International Affairs, International Development Studies, International Studies (MIS), and Security Policy Studies*

Students are required to be proficient in a modern foreign language to receive the degree. This language proficiency requirement may be fulfilled through one of the following options:

- Having earned a grade of a B or higher in a sixth semester university-level advanced language course completed no more than three years prior to enrollment in the Elliott School’s Master’s Degree Program.

- Having earned a grade of a B or higher in a sixth semester university-level advanced language course at GW (or another higher education institution approved by Elliott School Academic Programs including the Elliott School exchange partner institutions) while enrolled in the Elliott School’s Master’s Degree Program.

[NOTE: If you believe that you have already fulfilled your foreign-language requirement, you should complete and submit the attached Request for Confirmation of Completed Language Requirement form to Academic Advising].

- Passing the Elliott School-administered foreign language proficiency reading and speaking examination at the required level of proficiency (see section III). Students may take the proficiency examination at any point during their enrollment. Proficiency exams are offered once in the fall and once in the spring semester. (Note: MIS students should plan to take the first scheduled examination after they arrive at GW.) Students will have three opportunities to pass the proficiency examination administered by the Elliott School. Failure to pass the exam for a third time will result in dismissal from the program.
• Achieving the required proficiency level in a reading and speaking examination administered by an Elliott School-approved foreign-language assessment institution at the student’s expense while enrolled in the Elliott School’s Master’s Degree Program.

• Demonstration of the required foreign language proficiency level in a foreign language professional skills course offered through the Elliott School. The instructor will test the student during this foreign language skills course to determine if the required proficiency level has been achieved. (see section IV)

*Security Policy Studies MA students* may take the Statistics Option in lieu of foreign language proficiency. This option may be fulfilled by demonstrating proficiency, by a grade of B or better, in one of the following graduate-level statistics courses:

- IAFF 6501 (Quantitative Analysis for International Affairs Practitioners)
- IAFF 6198 Advanced Quantitative Analysis (preferred course for students with advanced statistics backgrounds)

With prior approval of the Program Director, other statistics courses may be used to satisfy this option.

**Requirements for Asian Studies, European and Eurasian Studies, Latin American and Hemispheric Studies, and Middle East Studies:**

Students in the MA regional studies programs are required to be proficient in a modern foreign language that is used in their region of study (consult each academic program to determine which foreign languages qualify) to receive the degree. They must fulfill this foreign-language requirement by passing both the reading and the speaking proficiency examinations administered by the Elliott School at a level required by the academic program. Advanced-level language coursework during or prior to enrollment at GW cannot substitute. Foreign-language proficiency examinations will be offered during the fall and spring semesters. Students may take the examination at any point during their enrollment and will have three opportunities to pass the proficiency examination administered by the Elliott School. Failure to pass the exam for a third time will result in dismissal from the program.

[NOTE: When a student’s native language is not English, and is not a language used in their region of study (for example a student who is a native speaker of Chinese in the Middle East Studies program), that student must still demonstrate proficiency in a modern language used in their region of study by passing the Elliott School language proficiency examination.]

**Requirements for International Trade and Investment Policy (ITIP):**

Students are required to be proficient in a modern foreign language to receive the degree. This language proficiency requirement may be fulfilled through one of the following options:
• Having earned a grade of a B or higher in a fourth semester university-level advanced language course completed no more than three years prior to enrollment in the Elliott School’s Master’s Degree Program.

• Having earned a grade of a B or higher in a fourth semester university-level advanced language course (or another higher education institution approved by Elliott School Academic Programs including the Elliott School exchange partner institutions) while enrolled in the Elliott School’s Master’s Degree Program.

[NOTE: If you believe that you have already fulfilled your foreign-language requirement, you should complete and submit the Request for Confirmation of Completed Language Requirement form to Academic Advising.]

• Passing the Elliott School-administered foreign language proficiency reading and speaking examination at the currently required level of proficiency. Students may take the proficiency examination at any point during their enrollment. Proficiency exams are offered once in the fall and once in the spring semester. (Note: MIS students should plan to take the first scheduled examination after they arrive at GW.) Students will have three opportunities to pass the proficiency examination administered by the Elliott School. Failure to pass the exam for a third time will result in dismissal from the program.

• Achieving the required proficiency level in a reading and speaking examination administered by an Elliott School-approved foreign-language assessment institution at the student’s expense while enrolled in the Elliott School’s Master’s Degree Program.

• Demonstration of the required foreign language proficiency level in a foreign language professional skills course offered through the Elliott School. The instructor will test the student during this foreign language skills course to determine if the required proficiency level has been achieved. (see section IV)

II. On-Line Self-Administered Diagnostic Examinations

Students who are in M.A. degree programs with a foreign-language proficiency requirement and who did not meet this requirement with university-level course work prior to enrollment must take an on-line self-administered diagnostic examination in the foreign language that they would like to use to demonstrate the required proficiency. This diagnostic examination must be taken before the end of the first semester after enrollment; and students will not be able to register to take the Elliott School foreign language proficiency examination without first taking the on-line diagnostic examination. Students who wish to enroll in an Elliott School 1-credit professional skills language course must also take the relevant diagnostic examination before registration and receive a score in at least the “intermediate-level” range.
The Elliott School currently offers on-line diagnostic examinations in the following languages: Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish. Students are exempt from the diagnostic examination requirement if they intend to fulfill the language requirement in a language that the Elliott School does not offer a diagnostic test.

Students may take the on-line diagnostic examination in more than one language. If a student would like to re-take the diagnostic examination in the same language, one should not do so unless an interval of at least two months has passed. These diagnostic examinations provide only a rough estimate of one’s language proficiency. Therefore, a certain score is no guarantee that one will pass the proctored language proficiency test at the required level.

Students may access the diagnostic examinations through the following links:

- Arabic Diagnostic Exam

- Chinese Diagnostic Exam

- French Diagnostic Exam

- German Diagnostic Exam

- Italian Diagnostic Exam

- Japanese Diagnostic Exam

- Korean Diagnostic Exam

- Portuguese Diagnostic Exam (students should also take the Portuguese oral exam)

- Portuguese Oral Exam

- Russian Diagnostic Exam

- Spanish Diagnostic Exam
III. Required Levels for Foreign Language Proficiency

The following are the required proficiency levels for languages offered on a regular basis at the George Washington University:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th><strong>Reading</strong></th>
<th><strong>Speaking</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>Advanced (MES students) Intermediate High</td>
<td>Advanced (MES students) Intermediate High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intermediate Low (ITIP only)</td>
<td>Intermediate Low (ITIP only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>Intermediate High</td>
<td>Intermediate High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intermediate Low (ITIP only)</td>
<td>Intermediate Low (ITIP only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>Advanced Intermediate Low (ITIP only)</td>
<td>Intermediate High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intermediate Low (ITIP only)</td>
<td>Intermediate Low (ITIP only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>Advanced Intermediate Low (ITIP only)</td>
<td>Intermediate High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intermediate Low (ITIP only)</td>
<td>Intermediate Low (ITIP only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hebrew</td>
<td>Intermediate High</td>
<td>Intermediate High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intermediate Low (ITIP only)</td>
<td>Intermediate Low (ITIP only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italian</td>
<td>Advanced</td>
<td>Intermediate High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intermediate Low (ITIP only)</td>
<td>Intermediate Low (ITIP only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>Intermediate High</td>
<td>Intermediate High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intermediate Low (ITIP only)</td>
<td>Intermediate Low (ITIP only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>Intermediate High</td>
<td>Intermediate High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intermediate Low (ITIP only)</td>
<td>Intermediate Low (ITIP only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persian</td>
<td>Advanced (MES students) Intermediate High</td>
<td>Advanced (MES students) Intermediate High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intermediate Low (ITIP only)</td>
<td>Intermediate High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portuguese</td>
<td>Advanced Intermediate Low (ITIP only)</td>
<td>Intermediate High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intermediate Low (ITIP only)</td>
<td>Intermediate Low (ITIP only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian</td>
<td>Advanced (EES students) Intermediate High</td>
<td>Intermediate High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intermediate Low (ITIP only)</td>
<td>Intermediate Low (ITIP only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>Advanced Intermediate Low (ITIP only)</td>
<td>Intermediate High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intermediate Low (ITIP only)</td>
<td>Intermediate Low (ITIP only)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The following are descriptions of the required proficiency levels:

**Reading --- Intermediate Low**

The student can understand some facts and main ideas in simple connected texts dealing with basic personal and social needs. These texts would have a clear and simple structure and provide information with which the student is familiar or is required to make only minimal suppositions. The student may make occasional errors in understanding.

**Reading — Intermediate High**

The student can fully understand simple connected texts dealing with basic personal and social needs; comprehend main ideas and information in texts at the next higher level featuring description and narration. Structural complexity may interfere with comprehension; e.g., basic grammatical relations may be misinterpreted and temporal references may rely primarily on lexical items. Some difficulty with the cohesive factors in discourse may be evident, such as matching pronouns with referents. While texts do not differ significantly from those at the Advanced level, comprehension is less consistent. The student at this level may have to read material several times for full understanding.

**Reading — Advanced**

The student can easily read and understand several paragraphs if the text has a clear underlying structure and familiar sentence patterns. The student comprehends the main ideas and facts but misses some details. Comprehension arises from situational and subject matter knowledge as well as increasing control of the language. Texts at this level include descriptions and narrations such as short stories, news items, bibliographical information, social notices, personal correspondence, business letters and simple technical material written for the general reader.

**Speaking --- Intermediate Low**

The student can handle a limited number of communicative tasks and social situations successfully, ask and answer questions, initiate and respond to simple statements, and engage in face-to-face conversation. The conversation, however, will contain frequent linguistic errors and will be very restricted in manner and scope. Vocabulary will be sufficient to discuss the most elementary needs, but there will be frequent misunderstandings. The Intermediate-Low speaker is generally understood by sympathetic interlocutors.

**Speaking — Intermediate High**

The student can handle most communicative tasks and social situations successfully and can initiate and sustain a general conversation with strategies appropriate to diverse circumstances and topics, but errors are evident. Limited vocabulary causes some hesitation and may produce unexpected circumlocution. However, there is emerging evidence of connected discourse (i.e., the ability to speak in whole paragraphs), particularly for simple narration and/or description. The Intermediate-High speaker is generally understood by interlocutors, who are unaccustomed to dealing with speakers at this level, but repetition may still be required.
**Speaking — Advanced**

The student at the Advanced level participates in informal conversations related to school, leisure, and home life, and at times in formal situations in these environments. Advanced speakers can carry on a lengthy conversation in all tense forms although aspect may be occasionally lacking. During narrations or extended speech they are able link sentences together with smooth conjunctions. Some literal translations and false cognates still appear, showing the speakers’ reliance on native structure. The conversation flow of an Advanced speaker remains substantive with only occasional hesitation, grammatical errors, self-correction, and sometimes generic vocabulary. They are understood by native speakers who do not have the habit of understanding non-natives, or are able to make themselves understood with repetition or rephrasing.

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**IV. One-Credit Professional Skills Language Courses**

The Elliott School currently offers one-credit professional skills language courses (IAFF 6504) in the following languages: Arabic, Chinese, French, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish. Students with intermediate-level proficiency may take these courses to improve their language ability and to prepare for the language proficiency examination. In order to enroll in these courses, students must first take the online diagnostic test (see section II) in the corresponding language and achieve a score in at least the intermediate-level range. For non-regional studies M.A. programs, students may fulfill their language requirement by demonstrating the required level of language proficiency in the context of this one-credit course through an evaluation administered by the instructor. Students in the M.A. regional studies program may use this one-credit course to improve their language skills, but they must still take the Elliott School language proficiency test.

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**V. International Students and Non-Native Speakers of English**

**English for Academic Purposes (EAP) Placement Course**

All students whose native language is not English or who are not citizens of countries where English is the official language are required to take an EAP course before classes begin if they scored below 620 on the paper-based, 260 on the computer-based, or 105 on the internet TOEFL exam. The courses are designed to facilitate the successful completion of the degree program.

Any of the 3-Credit EAP graded courses can substitute for a maximum of 1-credit hour of the Elliott Schools professional skills course requirement and will count toward the students degree as long as the student’s Elliott School degree program allows professional skills courses. Other EAP course credits and EAP courses taken by students in degree programs that do not allow professional skills courses will not count toward the degree.
VI. Timeline

- On-line self-administered diagnostic examination (must be taken by the end of the first semester and before registering for the language proficiency test or the 1-credit professional skills language courses).
- English for Academic Purposes (EAP) Placement Examination (late August)
- Pre-registration for the Fall semester foreign language proficiency tests (October)
- Fall semester foreign language proficiency tests (November)
- Pre-registration for the Spring semester foreign language proficiency tests (February)
- Spring semester foreign language proficiency tests (March-April)

[NOTE: Currently enrolled students will receive via-email the pre-registration announcement for the foreign language proficiency tests from the Office of Academic Advising and Student Services.]