

Undergraduate Degree and Graduation Information

Bachelor of Arts Requirement Using a Second Language

The Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) degree may be conferred upon students who complete the major requirements for their chosen field of study and have functional proficiency in at least one language other than English. The B.A. degree recognizes these students as having acquired the foundation for enhancing their ability to communicate, work, and study in an internationalized world. The B.A. signifies that these students have chosen to develop, through the equivalent of at least four semesters of coursework, both practical language skills and a comparative perspective on their own language and culture. The B.A. second language requirement fosters an awareness of the culturally conditioned nature of the students' assumptions about the world, and it better equips them with the mental agility needed to understand ways of thinking different from their own as they encounter the diversity of professional and personal relationships, as well as the intellectual and practical challenges of their future careers.

The second language requirement of the B.A. degree involves student demonstration of functional language proficiency over a sustained period of time, typically 14 credits of coursework. Given the sequential nature of language courses, the assessment of their abilities across the range of skills in speaking, reading, writing and listening comprehension is continuous and demanding. For this reason, NDSU requires that those students who have prior language-learning experience or who present language examination scores (CLEP, etc.) take, at minimum, the exit-level (202) course in order to verify their broad functional ability and basic cultural competence. It is important to note that the language requirement is not defined in credits but in terms of proficiency or communicative competence in all four skills of speaking, reading, writing and listening comprehension.

To fulfill the B.A. language requirement a student must demonstrate competence equivalent to that normally attained after four semesters of college study (NDSU level 202). Competency may be demonstrated in the following ways:

1. Completion in any second language of coursework at the NDSU 202 level or its equivalent with a grade of 'C' or better. Note that this requirement cannot be fulfilled by coursework taken pass/fail.
2. Successful completion of any second language course with a grade of 'C' or better that has the equivalent of NDSU 202 or higher as a prerequisite.
3. For students having previously passed the CLEP Examination (<http://catalog.ndsu.edu/past-bulletin-archive/2024-25/academic-policies/undergraduate-policies/credit-by-examination/#newitemtext>) in French, German or Spanish with a CLEP score high enough for second-year college credit (59 in French, 60 in German and 63 in Spanish) or the AP exam (<http://catalog.ndsu.edu/past-bulletin-archive/2024-25/academic-policies/undergraduate-policies/credit-by-examination/#apexamtext>) with a minimum score of 4 in French, German or Spanish, taking one additional college-level language class at the 202 level or higher in order to demonstrate competency in all four skill levels. Students must complete this course with a 'C' or better.
4. English satisfies the B.A. language requirement for students whose official, certified transcripts demonstrate that their secondary or higher education was completed in a language other than English. It is the responsibility of the student to provide all necessary untranslated, official documentation to the Department of Modern Languages (<https://www.ndsu.edu/modernlanguages/>) for verification. No credit will be awarded.
5. Students who are unable to provide the above mentioned certified documentation but who are native speakers of languages other than English may fulfill the second language requirement through proficiency in English by successful completion of the three-semester General Education English composition sequence and by passing an additional English (ENGL) course with a 'C' or better. Students having completed this sequence may apply to the Department of Modern Languages (<https://www.ndsu.edu/modernlanguages/>) for a waiver of the Second Language requirement.
6. Requests for determination of proficiency in languages not taught at NDSU are considered by the Department of Modern Languages (<https://www.ndsu.edu/modernlanguages/>). If a student would like to demonstrate proficiency through testing in a language that is not taught at NDSU, it is his/her responsibility to arrange for such testing. The proficiency test must be completed by a faculty or staff member at a college or university; the evaluator must hold at least a master's degree (in any discipline). The test must evaluate reading, writing, listening and speaking through the fourth semester (intermediate NDSU 202) college level. The student must provide documentation from the evaluator which includes a copy of the test, a letter from the evaluator assessing the level of proficiency, and a statement of the evaluator's credentials, including an explanation of his/her expertise in the language being tested, if the evaluator does not teach that language at the college level. No credit is awarded but proficiency requirement is fulfilled.