

Guide to the WSP Language Requirement

How do I pass the language requirement?

Competence in a foreign language is an integral part of the World Studies Program. To fulfill the World Studies Program language requirement, students must do one of the following:

1. Pass an oral proficiency interview in a foreign language at the intermediate or advanced level as measured by ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages). Students must pass the oral proficiency exam one month prior to their graduation date. Testing is arranged through the international office by request of the student.
2. Successfully complete intermediate (second-year) language study. At least two semesters of this work must occur at Marlboro and must conclude with a grade no lower than a B.

What languages can I study at Marlboro?

Marlboro offers Arabic, French, Mandarin, and Spanish regularly, in addition to Latin and Greek. WSP students hoping to pass the proficiency exam may test in any language, though special justifications must be made for Latin and Greek, as the purpose for the language requirement is first and foremost to prepare students for communication competency in a living language.

Other languages not typically offered at Marlboro may be studied through small group tutorials, guided self-instruction and study abroad. Marlboro offers funding for students hoping to study less commonly taught languages. For more information, please see the [Languages](#) page.

When should I schedule my test?

For students opting to take the oral proficiency interview (OPI) they may schedule the test any time during their tenure at Marlboro. Many students choose to take the test immediately after their return from internship. Testing must be completed one month prior to graduation. Scheduling the OPI with ACTFL often takes several weeks, so students should plan accordingly. When students are ready to schedule their OPI, they should schedule an appointment with the director of international services, Maggie Strassman, to review the process.

What is the OPI like?

For speakers of common languages (Spanish, French, Portuguese, etc) a computer-based test may be possible. For all other languages, a phone interview is scheduled. The interview usually lasts 20-30 minutes, and starts off at a lower language level, and progressively increases complexity until the tester is confident that they have found your peak language ability. For more information, please visit [ACTFL's OPI testing website](#).