

Why Foreign-Language Study is a Good Idea for Every Student

We assume if you have reasons to learn a particular language (to study, work, travel, or live abroad or for resources not fully available in English translation), you already know why it is important. **Here are reasons to study *any* language besides English or whatever you regard as your native language:**

- 1. Many employers, professional schools, and graduate schools** see serious study of a second language (potentially, a double-major) as evidence that you can (a) put yourself more easily in others' (colleagues', clients') shoes and (b) communicate more effectively even in English.
- 2. You will never know your own language and culture more deeply than by studying another--**by looking at it from the outside. Learning to thrive with the unfamiliar is often linked to creativity in many intellectual and professional contexts.
- 3. Language learning teaches you to think more clearly** and sharpens your brain's ability to make sense of the world.
- 4. Deep study of another culture through its language** brings home how much of value will never be made available in English.
- 5. Puzzling out another language and culture will help you understand (and empathize with) the difficulties of non-anglophone immigrants, colleagues, clients, and travelers** in the U.S., even if you never leave American shores.
- 6. Learning another language *well* makes it easier to learn *any* language in the future.** Even if you never need this, **the experience--especially if you study abroad--will make you far more confident in your ability to face any intellectual or professional challenge.**
- 7. Foreign-language courses fit easily into study plans:** offered on highly varied schedules, they provide a stimulating (and fun!) break from problem-set driven, heavy-reading or arts courses.

Wesleyan offers:

- Arabic language and culture: <http://www.wesleyan.edu/academics/faculty/aaissa/profile.html>
- American Sign Language: <http://www.wesleyan.edu/lctls/courses.html>
- Classics (Greek and Latin): <http://wesleyan.edu/classics/>
- East Asian Studies (Chinese, Japanese, Korean): <http://wesleyan.edu/ceas/>
- German studies: <http://wesleyan.edu/german/>
- Hebrew language and culture: <http://www.wesleyan.edu/academics/faculty/dkatz01/profile.html>
- Romance Languages & Literatures (French, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish): <http://wesleyan.edu/romance/>
- Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies program: <http://wesleyan.edu/russian/>
- Any other language: <http://www.wesleyan.edu/lctls/silp.html>