

Foreign Languages and Literatures

Course 21F

The rich and varied curriculum in MIT's Foreign Languages and Literatures Section offers students the chance to develop the expertise in world languages and cultures that many professionals require. Today, scientists and engineers function in a global market; they rely on primary sources published in other languages, attend international consortia, and often find themselves interacting across national, cultural, and linguistic borders. Therefore, government and industry often give preference to job applicants who are proficient in a foreign language. Students at MIT have the unique opportunity to combine an extraordinary professional training with a first-rate humanistic education. MIT's educational mission involves providing students with the tools for sensitive involvement in the global community. In this way, the Foreign Languages and Literatures Section (FL&L) contributes significantly to the internationalization of an MIT student's education.

Foreign Languages and Literatures at MIT

The Foreign Languages and Literatures section at MIT offers subjects in Chinese, French, German, Japanese, Portuguese, Spanish, and English Language Studies (ELS). FL&L's classes provide an authentic linguistic experience through the use of the most advanced technologies, including cutting-edge digital interactive and web-based projects. Students can explore literatures in the original languages or in translation. They can study culture and film; they can analyze the linguistic underpinnings of second language acquisition and bilingualism. The section also offers a series of subjects under the rubric Studies in International Literatures and Cultures. These subjects, offered in English, give students both a specific and comparative focus on foreign cultures.

Along with the regular semesters, FL&L offers a number of programs including intensive introductory language subjects and study abroad opportunities in

France, Germany, and Spain over the January Independent Activities Period (IAP). For those interested in acquiring Chinese or Japanese quickly, these two languages are offered in the Very Fast Track mode along with the regular track.

Center for Bilingual/Bicultural Studies (CB/BS)

The Center for Bilingual/Bicultural Studies (CB/BS) provides students with unique opportunities to participate in research projects involving various aspects of bilingualism and biculturalism. CB/BS hosts an annual seminar series featuring cutting-edge work on topics related to bicultural identity. Through the annual Isabelle de Courtivron student writing prize, the CB/BS recognizes outstanding undergraduate writing relating to bilingual and bicultural issues. The Center also sponsors visiting scholars, film series, lecture series, and conferences focusing on issues of bilingualism and biculturalism.

Undergraduate Program

Students may choose a full or double major in FL&L or a joint major with engineering or science. In addition, students majoring in a field of science or engineering may elect to minor in a designated area of the Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences (HASS).

The Minor Program requires students to complete six subjects in a given field from a curriculum arranged into at least three levels or tiers. Students electing to complete a Minor Program in Foreign Languages and Literatures (Chinese, French, German, Japanese, or Spanish) or in Regional Studies (African and African Diaspora, Applied International, Asian and Asian Diaspora, Latin American and Latino, Middle Eastern, or Russian Studies) will begin to acquire mature competence in the study of foreign languages and cultures. Students who complete a Minor Program will also satisfy the HASS concentration requirement in that field of study.

Concentrations are available in a given language, literature, or culture in the original language or in English. Concentrations should be arranged on an individual basis in consultation with a designated advisor in each language group.

Extracurricular Opportunities

The faculty of FL&L are committed to promoting cross-cultural critical thinking and to providing diverse opportunities to live and work in international contexts. MIT students are encouraged to work and study abroad. The MISTI Program provides international internship opportunities in Brazil, China, France, Germany, India, Israel, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Spain, and the African continent. In addition, students have the option to cross-register at Wellesley College or Harvard University. Relevant subjects taken at qualified institutions here and abroad can fulfill MIT's science, engineering, and humanities requirements.

The MIT community works hard to draw together the diverse talents and cultural perspectives of our student and faculty bodies around a common set of educational values and purposes. Foreign cultures are well

represented on the MIT campus. International students from over 100 foreign countries comprise more than 25 percent of MIT's total undergraduate and graduate enrollment. MIT has three language-specific living groups — French, German, and Spanish — where students speak the foreign language in their everyday activities.

Contact Information

Students interested in studying foreign languages at MIT should contact:

The Foreign Languages and Literatures Office, MIT
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Cambridge, MA 02139-4307

Phone: (617) 253-4771

Website: <http://web.mit.edu/fl/ww/>

The MIT Course Catalog contains further information on the Institute, including all graduate and undergraduate courses and programs. Please visit the MIT Course Catalog website for more details at <http://web.mit.edu/catalog/index.html>.

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