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Twenty-First-Century Language Education at the University of Maine:

A Road Map

by Gisela Hoecherl-Alden

Abstract

The University of Maine Flagship Match program is designed to recruit students from neighboring states and offset enrollment declines. However, language faculty retrenchment at the university a decade ago, combined with the effective double-degree programs with languages, STEM, and other subjects that other regional flagships offer and recent changes in New England's K–12 graduation options, makes it harder for UMaine to attract high-performing students. If the university wants to compete with others in New England and attract students who focus on global professional issues, it has an opportunity it cannot afford to miss. Adapting one of the language education models other universities have successfully implemented may be the way to move forward in the twenty-first century, making the University of Maine an important regional player.

Die Grenzen meiner Sprache bedeuten die
Grenzen meiner Welt
(*The limits of my language form the limits
of my world*)

—Ludwig Wittgenstein

INTRODUCTION

Sometime last year, billboards advertising the University of Maine's Flagship Match program began greeting commuters at Boston's Kenmore Square bus and subway stations. It is now late winter. Victory parades for both the Red Sox and the Patriots are a distant memory, Fenway Park is hibernating under a blanket of snow, and the commuter stations on the square have entered their quiet season. There is one billboard left, and its reach has drastically diminished from appealing to thousands of sports fans and tourists to just the residents, employees, and students heading to Back Bay apartments or the campus of a nearby university. The question is: Why advertise the University of Maine here?

As it turns out, this is one of several billboards in the region promoting a proactive initiative designed to offset UMaine's enrollment struggles and attract qualified out-of-state students by guaranteeing that incoming, academically qualified students from selected states will pay the same tuition and fee rate as their home state's flagship institution (Gardner 2018; Lefferts 2015; Megan 2015). UMaine is trying to appeal to future students preparing for an increasingly digitized and globally connected labor market. Given language faculty retrenchment in the University of Maine System (UMS) after the financial crisis of 2008 and more recent proposals for language program cuts (Gallagher 2019), however, technological preparation may be an attainable goal, but the institution may be unable to prepare its students for effective global communication and intercultural literacy.

To provide a possible road map, this article outlines the emerging profile of twenty-first-century students, shows how UMaine compares to other regional players, and identifies some current challenges in postsecondary language education. It concludes by outlining viable models UMaine could adopt to ensure graduates it seeks to attract through these billboards are prepared for the changing labor market and can compete successfully with those graduating from other flagship institutions in the Northeast.

TWENTY-FIRST-CENTURY STUDENTS

Undoubtedly, technology simplifies global interactions—on a rudimentary level, even across

languages and cultures. Yet, although Google Translate currently functions in more than 80 languages, cultural and linguistic idiosyncrasies of each language continue to render machine translation inadequate for interpersonal transactional meetings with multicultural partners. As a result, global companies increasingly hire college graduates who, in addition to science, technology, engineering, mathematics (STEM), or business training, have significant language skills. As recent studies (Damari et al. 2017; Oxford Economics 2012; Strauss, 2017) have found, language proficiency—in addition to graduates’ business acumen or knowledge of STEM—ensures successful job placement.

...although Google Translate currently functions in more than 80 languages...idiosyncrasies of each language...render machine translation inadequate...

These so-called soft skills sought by global companies read like the learning outcomes of syllabi in innovative, proficiency-based language courses: agile thinking, ability to navigate complex situations and work collaboratively and creatively, and effective oral and written communication skills (Oxford Economics 2012). These skills are also desired, as it turns out, by medical schools, which increasingly seek humanities-educated candidates who can apply empathy, tolerance for ambiguity, emotional appraisal of self and others, resilience, and intercultural communication abilities to their future profession (Mangione et al. 2018; Ofri 2017). Thus, to ensure that students learn to understand, evaluate, synthesize, analyze, and present in-depth information in two or more languages, public and private institutions across the country have begun offering majors in STEM, business, hospitality management, international relations, and social sciences that are carefully integrated with innovative language programs and immersive study abroad and internship rotations.

TRADITIONAL UNIVERSITY LANGUAGE PROGRAMS

Although all of the above are precisely the skills well-rounded humanities majors acquire through careful analysis of literary, visual, and historical documents in a second language, public universities like UMaine continue to divert funding to those fields that provide students with job skills needed immediately upon graduation, but that depreciate quickly (Paxson 2013). When institutions align higher education with short-term needs of business and industry, they all too often cast lower-enrolled humanities subjects as a waste of resources. Within UMS, this rhetoric has persisted for decades, and the most recent attempts to eliminate the two remaining degree programs in French and Spanish at UMaine (Gallagher 2019) seem to suggest that there has been little change in the institution’s strategic thinking.

It is no secret that language acquisition requires a significant time commitment,¹ and as UMaine’s own dean of the College of Education points out, the length of time it takes to succeed professionally widely exceeds institutionally allotted instructional face time (Reagan and Osborn 2002). However, although no other academic discipline “is asked to defend its existence the way foreign language education is usually challenged” (Reagan and Osborn 2002: 11), language faculty often fail to explain how foreign language study ties into other aspects and “goals of both liberal and vocational education” (Reagan and Osborn 2002: 20). In addition, while linguistics and literature scholars believe that the intrinsic value of what they do should be obvious in today’s interconnected world, they often have to leave the teaching of lower-level language courses and the recruiting of new language learners to part-time faculty. This is partially a function of the research institution, since professional recognition is linked to research achievements, not language teaching. The traditions that shape the research university, combined with the devaluation of language pedagogy and practical applications of spoken language, create instructional hierarchies and a language-content divide. UMaine’s language department, for example, remains largely predicated upon the curricular model instituted in the middle of the twentieth century, in which “humanists do research while language specialists provide technical support and basic training” (MLA 2007). To address the nation’s

growing language crisis, the Modern Languages Association (MLA), therefore, has been calling for a substantive overhaul of the prevailing narrow model of undergraduate education, to replace “the two-tiered language-literature structure with a broader and more coherent curriculum” and enable students to achieve “deep translanguing and transcultural competence” (MLA 2007) so desperately needed in the twenty-first century.

Because of long-established departmental and curricular structures, language faculty across the United States seldom communicate the following to their prospective students, colleagues in other disciplines, and institutional leadership:

- When students analyze a French literary text from the seventeenth century or a contemporary German-Turkish novel, they learn much more than facts about literature of pre-Revolutionary France or postunification Germany. As they interpret the texts, language students learn how to craft persuasive essays, work with feedback, disagree and compromise with others, engage in intercultural comparisons, and create effective public presentations (Krebs 2018)—all in a language not their own! This, in turn, means language programs are preparing the kind of employee who would be an asset to a healthcare management team in a multicultural society, a multinational team of scientists, a designer of multilingual communication software, or someone who helps a company acquire new markets.
- When students experience communicating in a language or culture not their own, they develop empathy, resilience, flexibility, and tolerance, whereas monolingual English speakers cannot become truly empathetic citizens of the world.
- Monolingual professionals have to rely on the information partners and competitors are willing to translate for them without being able to verify it for themselves or they need to find other sources that might provide alternative models and information needed to make the best decisions.
- By eliminating humanities subjects with a more global, intercultural focus, administrators restrict university expertise and under extreme circumstances can control what kinds of expertise is available by “limiting the access of citizens to knowledge” (Reagan and Osborn 2002: 13).

LANGUAGE EDUCATION AT PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS IN THE NORTHEAST

A little less than a decade ago, UMaine along with the University of Southern Maine (USM), University of Northern Iowa, University of New Mexico, University of Nevada at Reno, University of Southern Mississippi, and SUNY Albany cut languages and other humanities programs (Berman 2011; Bunsis 2011; Foderaro 2010). Although it has become increasingly evident that those program eliminations did little to alleviate budget shortfalls, they have had unintended but far-reaching consequences. These cuts have ensured the following:

- Only wealthy or scholarship-supported students can acquire broader, deeper, and more diverse skills and knowledge that will allow them to prosper in many careers because they can study at elite or better-funded out-of-state institutions (Krebs 2018).
- Less privileged students will be trained for restricted job capabilities currently needed in the economy, but their narrowly focused education will not allow them to retool easily when their jobs are outsourced or become obsolete.

Entire regions—including the state of Maine—now lack varied opportunities for significant language study....

- Entire regions—including the state of Maine—now lack varied opportunities for significant language study (Flaherty 2018), ceding more influence to private or better-funded out-of-state institutions and further cementing an intellectual and educational divide between the rich and the less affluent.
- Graduates find themselves at a competitive disadvantage in an increasingly multicultural, multilingual society (Abbot and Brown 2006; Stewart 2007; Strauss 2017) and do not qualify for the growing number of job openings for bilingual speakers (Flaherty 2016; Flannery 2017; Harrison 2017).

- Recruitment of certified language teachers in K–12 schools is disrupted (AAAS 2017; Smith 2015) and precipitates an already severe shortage of language teachers.
- International students continue to arrive on campus as intercultural expertise (Foderaro 2010) and language learning opportunities disappear. For those already proficient in their own language and English such opportunities may influence which US institutions they choose.²

The following table illustrates how UMS eliminations of its language programs affected the state’s language enrollments between 2009 and 2016. To provide some context, the table includes enrollment numbers from all four-year institutions in the Northeast, while the totals for Maine include Bates, Bowdoin, and Colby Colleges and UMS, and then lists UMS enrollments separately. UMS language enrollments between 2013 and 2016 reflect only lower-level instruction in languages other than French and Spanish,

which does not lead to functional proficiency needed in the workplace.³

Although the UMaine mission states that the university seeks to address “complex challenges and opportunities of the 21st century” by ensuring that graduates learn to “contribute knowledge to issues of local, national, and international significance” (<https://umaine.edu/about/mission-2/>), the institution is currently not adequately equipped to fulfill all of these goals. The state faces major challenges, ranging from an aging population (Moody 2011), a significant increase in non-English-speaking immigrants (AIC 2017), a decline in high school graduates (Seltzer 2016a), diminished degree options in languages and other humanities, and a dire shortage of language teachers. UMS is currently only equipped to train advanced speakers of French and Spanish, which already ensures that companies or school districts needing employees with knowledge of Chinese, German, Japanese, or Latin already have to recruit out-of-state candidates.

The Flagship Match program has resulted in a 54 percent enrollment gain of out-of-state students (Seltzer 2016b).⁴ Yet, the academic caliber of these recruits does not appear to compare to those who apply to neighboring states’ more selective flagship institutions (Seltzer 2016b), which offer more varied opportunities for intercultural and language training. Clearly, the authors of the Flagship Match have offset the diminishing numbers of Maine’s high school graduates with out-of-state students, but they have not considered the global turn in the regional economy and the changing educational goals of their future students. Some issues UMaine administrators need to consider include the following:

- Ninety-five percent of today’s American university language students no longer pursue training as language and literature professionals or future language teachers, but rather major in other fields and seek to develop proficiency in a second language to enhance career opportunities (Berka and Groll 2011; MLA 2007). Given that UMaine seeks to “attract bright young people to the state who will stay and work in Maine” (Megan 2015), and 386,200 jobs in Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Vermont are created by foreign-owned companies,⁵ UMaine must create the kind of language programs that ensure its graduates can compete with those from neighboring states’ flagship institutions.

TABLE 1: Language Enrollments in Maine and the Northeast, 2009–2016

Language	Year	Northeast	Maine	UMS
Chinese	2009	16,014	237	49
	2013	15,926	267	12
	2016	14,625	216	27
French	2009	47,045	1,126	572
	2013	43,575	950	426
	2016	39,393	943	430
German	2009	17,133	409	227
	2013	15,613	241	72
	2016	15,132	260	69
Japanese	2009	11,644	147	19
	2013	11,137	164	116
	2016	12,352	150	20
Spanish	2009	132,665	1,728	754
	2013	120,914	1,543	738
	2016	112,393	1,320	346
Latin	2009	7,215	264	129
	2013	6,098	230	69
	2016	6,081	129	31

- In 2018, Maine became one of 33 states that graduate college-bound high school students with the Seal of Biliteracy, an accreditation for high school seniors who demonstrate proficiency in two or more languages.⁶As we have begun to see at Boston University, students who have earned the seal are requesting college credit, similar to Advanced Placement, and seek either college-level instruction in advanced, professionalized language courses in their second language or opportunities to acquire proficiency in a new language that was not available in their K–12 institutions.
- UMaine’s competitors in the region, the Universities of Connecticut (UConn), Rhode Island (URI), New Hampshire (UNH), and Vermont (UVM), all offer significantly more language degree programs than UMaine does (see Table 2).

To put these numbers into perspective, consider that a total of 369 students were enrolled in language courses at UMaine in 2016, which constitutes roughly 3 percent of UMaine’s total undergraduate population. By comparison, 10 percent of UConn, 16 percent of UVM, 8 percent of UNH, and 35 percent of URI undergraduates studied a language.⁷ The numbers clearly demonstrate that more diverse language learning opportunities are essential if UMaine seeks to recruit and retain gifted students.

Currently, UVM and UNH, like UMaine, offer traditional, discipline-based language majors, albeit with more language options. Effective faculty advising allows enterprising students to graduate with double majors in other fields and a language. At UNH and UVM, however, language faculty are increasingly asked to defend themselves against proposed cuts every time there is a perceived budget shortfall. At UConn and URI, on the other hand, carefully articulated

interdisciplinary programs and innovative curricular approaches ensure effective linguistic and intercultural preparation of their graduates. Solid enrollments as well as almost perfect job-placement rates have made the double-degree programs competitive, allowing both institutions to be selective in recruiting high-performing students to these signature programs.

TABLE 2: Language Degrees Offered by the University of Maine and Its Competitors*

Flagship	Chinese	French	German	Italian	Latin	Spanish	Other Languages
UMaine	0	x	0	0	0	x	0
UConn	x	x	x	x	0	x	0
UNH	x	x	x	0	0	x	Russian
URI	x	x	x	x	x	x	Portuguese
UVM	x	x	x	x	x	x	Classical Greek Japanese Russian

* x = advanced courses taught; 0 = only basic language instruction or none at all

When compared to the options available at UConn, UNH, URI, and UVM, a rather sobering picture emerges for prospective UMaine students who are interested in language study. This may explain why UMaine is unable to attract the same kinds of high-performing students who attend neighboring flagships, where language enrollments for fall 2016 are much higher (Table 3) (again, bearing in mind, that UMaine’s numbers for languages other than French and Spanish only cover basic language instruction).

TABLE 3: Language Enrollments in Fall 2016 at Five Area Flagships

Language	UMaine	UConn	UVM	UNH	URI
Chinese	3	248	95	49	191
French	106	723	323	208	486
German	50	597	134	117	450
Japanese	14	40	193	35	164
Spanish	165	1,085	768	568	1,109
Latin	31	36	68	100	91

Given the lack of opportunities for globally minded, outward-looking students at UMaine and competition from other regional flagships, the question is: Can UMaine really afford to continue offering traditional majors in French and Spanish and not start developing interdisciplinary programs in which well-articulated language learning plays a significant role?

SUCCESSFUL MODELS AT OTHER PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

Because of language faculty retrenchment nearly a decade ago and upcoming retirements, UMaine currently has a unique opportunity to redesign existing and create new language programs that are flexible enough to meet the needs of twenty-first-century students and global employers. Public institutions that have already strategically invested in cutting-edge language instruction and the creation of dual majors have seen substantial enrollment increases (Flaherty 2018).

Five state universities have parlayed combinations of business, STEM, and world language courses into effective student recruitment tools and nearly perfect job placement for their graduates. These universities provide various models for UMaine to emulate.

- URI’s International Engineering program allows students to earn a double degree in engineering and either Chinese, French, German, Italian, or Spanish in five years with well-articulated internship rotations abroad.
- UConn has collaborated with the German state of Baden-Württemberg to create scholarships for study abroad and internships at German companies for their dual-degree German and engineering students. Other dual degrees, without the same level of scholarship support, exist in French, Spanish, and Chinese. All dual degrees have a mandatory fourth year abroad.
- The University of Arkansas, Fayetteville (UArk) created a similar program for German.
- At the University of Northern Arizona (NAU), majoring in interdisciplinary global programs allows students to combine their STEM, business, or hospitality studies with integrated language studies in Chinese, French, Japanese, German, or Spanish and internships abroad.
- Iowa State University (ISU) offers dual majors in languages and cultures for professions, where

TABLE 4: Fall 2016 Enrollments for Articulated STEM, Business, and Language Majors

Language	ISU	UConn	URI	NAU	UArk
Arabic	69	174	26	64	95
Chinese	166	248	191	74	126
French	234	723	486	379	539
German	239	597	450	246	325
Italian	–	581	376	75	159
Japanese	–	40	164	124	116
Russian	53	–	27	–	32
Spanish	994	1,085	1,109	1,591	1,621

students combine degrees in Chinese, French, German, Russian, and Spanish with majors in agriculture, business, and engineering.

The percentage of undergraduates taking languages for fall 2016 at these five institutions clearly reveal the popularity of these programs: UConn, 10 percent; URI, 35 percent; ISU, 5 percent; NAU, 9 percent; and UArk 14 percent.⁸

While the institutional structures and funding models at these universities are similar to those at UMaine and any one of these successful approaches could be adapted easily, the faculty makeup of their language programs differs markedly from that of UMaine’s language-literature department. They include both scholar-teachers with specialties in literature and linguistics as well as faculty trained in digital humanities (Thompson Klein 2015), proficiency- and content-based instruction, and language for professional purposes. The administrations in these institutions have clearly realized that international business, hospitality, and STEM subjects are inherently global and that the humanities and language education provide avenues for more-nuanced approaches to problem solving through the development of critical thinking and clear communication skills.

Their interdisciplinary curricula and the space university administrations have provided for divergent faculties to collaborate across disciplines and with sites abroad have translated into excellent recruitment opportunities and higher enrollments. Most of all, the high job-placement rate of their graduates clearly demonstrates that students with a proficiency-based degree in a

world language “are technically adept as well as linguistically and culturally savvy, and find themselves optimally prepared for the global market place” (Berka and Groll 2011: 2).

WAYS FORWARD FOR UMAINE

When UMS eliminated multiple language faculty positions, the flagship campus remained committed to retaining advanced-level instruction in French and Spanish. Recently, USM has also begun rebuilding language programs with new linguistics majors that include French or Spanish concentrations (Margolin 2018). Both institutions place the responsibility for teaching language foundations on the shoulders of adjunct faculty, which enables them to state publicly they offer a variety of opportunities for language learning to their students. While not technically false, such statements fail to clarify that the level of language instruction cannot lead to functional proficiency required for the workplace. In addition to misleading the public about the depth of instruction available in languages other than French and Spanish, relying solely on contingent labor is also problematic for a variety of other reasons:

- Although students pay regular tuition rates for these courses, adjunct faculty are hired on a class-by-class basis, are poorly paid, and have neither the larger curricular picture needed to develop students’ functional proficiency, nor the time, resources, or institutional support to develop a well-structured program of study.
- With their job security tenuous at best, they also do not feel free to make far-reaching changes to course content or to adjust pedagogical approaches.
- Adjunct instructors rarely receive opportunities for professional development needed to keep abreast of effective research-based language-teaching techniques and up-to-date instructional technologies.
- Their status explains their hesitancy in promoting rigorous classroom discussion of issues from several points of view and therefore deprives undergraduates of critical debates that are essential to informed citizenship (Swidler 2017).

As the examples from institutions mentioned earlier clearly demonstrate, (re)building language programs in

the traditional mid-twentieth-century image is no longer a sustainable option. With Maine and other states in UMaine’s catchment area poised to accept growing numbers of high school graduates with the Seal of Biliteracy, UMaine’s language faculty must urgently engage with the state’s K–12 language enterprise, participate in national language debates, embrace the digitization of the humanities, and create advanced, specialized content courses. Already, German-STEM graduates from Augusta’s Cony High School are forced to seek higher education possibilities outside of Maine.⁹ The creation of feasible pathways in French and Spanish that involve more than literary analysis for students who already come with significant language expertise becomes all the more pressing, as does developing genuine capacity for training in other languages. Both require thoughtful investments, which UMaine, as the state’s flagship campus, can no longer afford not to make.

...(re)building language programs in the traditional mid-twentieth-century image is no longer a sustainable option.

In the short term, UMaine could appoint a curriculum director who can help faculty design an effective twenty-first-century curricular framework for existing language programs. Current French and Spanish faculty would be guided to reframe the way they teach and embrace proficiency-based, task-oriented, and outcomes-aligned instruction. This would require a shift away from traditional language courses to those where students go beyond studying linguistic structures or interpreting literary texts to ensure that students also analyze other types of second language materials and learn how to craft their own multimedia messages. Since employers also rely increasingly on teams of people with diverse cultural and linguistic training to work together, project-based language courses will also help students innovate and develop leadership skills and knowledge of their own strengths and weaknesses. Such courses are designed to help students understand that “multilingual communication is intrinsic to today’s

scientific collaboration and progress” (<http://www.gala-global.org/inclusion-language-stem>).

To effect necessary changes, the curriculum director provides language faculty with time to study and discuss effective curricular models (Maxim et al. 2013; Paesani et al. 2015) and innovative approaches to teaching language (Pérez 2018) or literature (Viakinnou-Brinson 2018). The curriculum director also encourages professional development to guide curriculum development and facilitate interdisciplinary collaborations with other faculty. As the curriculum takes shape, close collaboration with the study abroad office and career and community outreach entities on campus can link language study to local and international internship opportunities and career readiness. Finally, nurturing connections to school districts will also help build sustainable recruiting pipelines from K–12 programs.

...UMaine’s future language faculty must have the ability to build interdisciplinary language programs from the ground up.

Once the framework is established, UMaine’s future language faculty must have the ability to build interdisciplinary language programs from the ground up. However, supporting new instructional approaches and nontraditional faculty specialties demand both a change in search-and-hiring parameters as well as in tenure requirements (Nguyen 2018). Rather than anchoring a new language program around a traditionally trained tenure-track faculty member, UMaine could recruit faculty who focus on language acquisition or content-based language pedagogy research and teaching. To recruit such innovative faculty, however, UMaine must offer a clearly delineated promotion path, funding for relevant professional development, and a salary comparable to the regular professorial rank’s.

This does not mean there is no longer a place for literary or linguistic analysis. In fact, some of the more traditional courses remain central to the twenty-first-century language major. Language faculty just need to

collaborate more with faculty in different disciplines and diversify their course offerings. Collaborations with STEM faculty who have redeveloped general education courses to make the sciences more accessible for nonscience majors can lead to language courses that appeal to a variety of students. For example, after working with a faculty member who teaches the chemistry of cooking (Wolf 2012), language faculty could add instructional units on the science and environmental sustainability of specific traditional cuisines. Collaboration with a physicist who teaches students to analyze where cartoons and movies get physics wrong (Rogers 2007) would add interesting discussion options to a film course. Alternatively, students could analyze similarly problematic descriptions in science fiction novels, thus acquiring science-related vocabulary and communication skills in another language. Language faculty could also work with colleagues in mathematics and computer science on digital humanities’ projects to teach students to apply computational and statistical approaches to interpreting literary texts through quantitative digital text mining and visualizations. Conversely, a linguist’s collaboration with computer science faculty could facilitate students’ analyses of various machine-learning techniques in processing speech-to-text or other applications of machine translation.

Based on the premises of Stonybrook University’s Alda Center for Communicating Sciences, UMaine’s language faculty should also shift their focus to training language students how to communicate information about nonhumanities fields to lay audiences in two languages. In collaborating with the career center, language faculty could invite representatives from organizations that develop or work in machine translation and talk about jobs in their organizations. Language students will quickly understand that even the most effective machine translators still require vast amounts of human-generated linguistic data that takes into consideration specific expressions and grammar.

Both linguistics and literary scholars can start by making clear to their students that linguistic inquiry is about clear communication and literary analysis teaches them how to tell their stories. They start with a question, build suspense, create a turning point, provide a resolution, and learn to present their information to general audiences without field-specific jargon (Alda 2017). As a result, all students in these courses learn to present information clearly in a second language.

OUTLOOK

Observations about UMaine’s attitude toward language education from the past—frustratingly—still hold true (Lindenfeld and Hoecherl-Alden 2008; Smith 2015), but they were made before the financial influx of the Flagship Match program and the establishment of the Seal of Biliteracy. Yet UMaine now has a unique opportunity to create cutting-edge, innovative academic language programs. As has been true for state institutions elsewhere, revitalized language programs will attract higher-performing students to UMaine and simultaneously feed the job market’s demand for bilingual and interculturally proficient employees. The University of Maine is at a crossroads, where it can seize the opportunity or further cede the recruitment of high-performing students to other regional state or elite private competitors. Given what is at stake, the adjustments are small and the costs are minimal, but they will yield positive results for the state and the region. 🌊

ENDNOTES

1. The Foreign Service Institute determines that it takes native speakers of English a minimum of 600 hours of intensive instruction to achieve the kind of proficiency to function professionally in those languages most closely related to English (French, Spanish, Portuguese), 900 for German and Swahili, and over 2,000 hours for Arabic, Chinese, and Japanese. See <https://www.state.gov/m/fsi/sls/c78549.htm>.
2. At my own institution, Boston University, annually up to 24 percent of the students are international students. Although international students in the College of Arts and Sciences can test out of the two-year language requirement with their native language, most decide to enroll in a language that is new to them to build additional proficiency.
3. This number and all subsequently cited numbers come from the Modern Language Association’s language enrollment database: https://apps.mla.org/flsurvey_search.
4. Compared to out-of-state students at the University of Rhode Island (56 percent), the University of New Hampshire (58 percent), and the University of Vermont (77 percent). See <https://www.collegexpress.com/lists/list/percentage-of-out-of-state-students-at-public-universities/360/>.
5. Of the 386,200 jobs, 40,500 are in French, 34,700 jobs in German, 6,000 in Swiss, and 23,800 in Japanese companies. Source: <https://www.germanbusinessmatters.com>.
6. For the map, see <https://sealofbiliteracy.org/>. While the seal is designed to help students recognize the value of bilingualism, different states and school districts award the seal for differing levels of language ability, which makes granting language credit a little more complex than accepting Advanced Placement scores.
7. Undergraduate enrollment numbers can be found here: UMaine: <http://www.maine.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Fall-2016-Enrollment-Report.pdf?565a1d>; UConn: <https://datausa.io/profile/university/university-of-connecticut/>; UNH: <https://www.education.nh.gov/highered/research/documents/distance-undergrad.pdf>; URI: http://profiles.asee.org/profiles/7464/print_all; UVM: <https://www.uvm.edu/~oir/sbinfo/fsave.pdf>.
8. Undergraduate enrollment data for 2016: NAU: <https://www.azregents.edu/sites/default/files/public/2016%20Fall%20Enrollment%20Report.pdf>; ISU: <https://www.registrar.iastate.edu/sites/default/files/uploads/stats/gender/g-race-resf16.pdf>; UArk: <https://oir.uark.edu/students/enrollment-reports/fall2016enlrptssummary.pdf>.
9. In 2018, Cony High School in Augusta became one of 13 in the United States to join a worldwide program of schools that combine strong German instruction and effective STEM education, which provides students with up to \$15,000 in annual grants to attend language and STEM-related activities across the country or for study abroad opportunities. For information on the program, see <https://www.pasch-net.de/en/udi.html>.

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