

THE LANGUAGE FLAGSHIP: CHANGING THE WAY AMERICANS LEARN LANGUAGES

The Department of Defense is the largest employer, both civilian and military, of Americans with skills communicating in other languages. NSEP recognized that in order for the Department of Defense and the broader U.S. national security and foreign affairs community to meet current and future needs for a globally trained workforce, it must rely on our national education system to graduate high school and college students with facilities in languages critical to our future.

The Language Flagship is a partnership between the Federal Government and the education community, with the goal of building language programs that produce professionally proficient language speakers in Arabic, Chinese, Hindi Urdu, Korean, Persian, Portuguese, Russian, Swahili, and Turkish. The Language Flagship consists of several components; including the Language Flagship Program; providing institutional grants for research in the field of language education and for the development of language learning tools and assessments; the oversight and management of K–12 Flagship programs; and a Pilot Flagship/ROTC Initiative. The Language Flagship strives to graduate students that will become future contributors to and employees of the Department of Defense and the broader national security community.



Persian Flagship student with instructor at Tajik State National University in Dushanbe, Tajikistan.

FLAGSHIP PROGRAM

The Flagship Program is comprised of undergraduate students currently enrolled at 26 programs at 22 universities focusing on Arabic, Chinese, Hindi Urdu, Korean, Persian, Portuguese, Russian, Swahili, and Turkish.¹ The goal of the Flagship Program is to graduate students from a variety of majors with an Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) Level 3 proficiency² in one of The Language Flagship's target languages. As a result, the Flagship Program creates a pool of qualified individuals in a variety of professions who are linguistically and culturally competent in a language and area of the world critical to U.S. national security. To achieve this goal, Flagship students combine and integrate their language studies into their majors by taking content courses offered in their target language. Moreover, Flagship students are recruited from a wide variety of fields from international studies to mathematics to biology. Thus, the Flagship Program provides opportunities for students from a variety of disciplines to become professionally proficient in one of Flagship's target languages.

The design of the Flagship Programs is based on years of experience, research, and evidence demonstrating that advancing students to professional-level language proficiency takes a systematic approach that combines both domestic and overseas study. Flagship programs'

¹ The 2011 Flagship Fellows are included in Appendix I. 2011 Boren – Flagship Scholars and Fellows recipients are included in Appendix J.

² For a complete description of ILR's proficiency scale, see Appendix A.

curricula, both domestically and overseas, focus on proficiency-based advancement in all four modalities of language learning: reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

To achieve professional-level proficiency in a targeted Flagship language, programs have redesigned the typical university language curriculum and have replaced it with intensive language training starting at the beginner level and building through to the ILR 3 level. Programs provide:

- Weekly group and individual tutoring;
- Integrate content-based instruction and courses across an array of disciplines at the advanced and superior levels;
- Provide immersive learning environments, such as language houses; and
- Sponsor cultural clubs and events, which give students additional opportunities to use and improve their language.

Flagship Language	2010 UG Enrollment	2011 UG Enrollment
Arabic	256	315
Chinese	403	372
Hindi Urdu	45	24
Korean	32	35
Persian	24	29
Portuguese	-*	25
Russian	150	205
Swahili	22	8
Turkish	N/A	-†
	932	1013

* The Portuguese Flagship Program was created as a 2011 initiative to expand the Language Flagship Program's critical target languages

† The Turkish Flagship Program was created as a 2011 initiative to expand the Language Flagship Program's critical target languages and the U.S. the program does not have any enrollees for 2011.

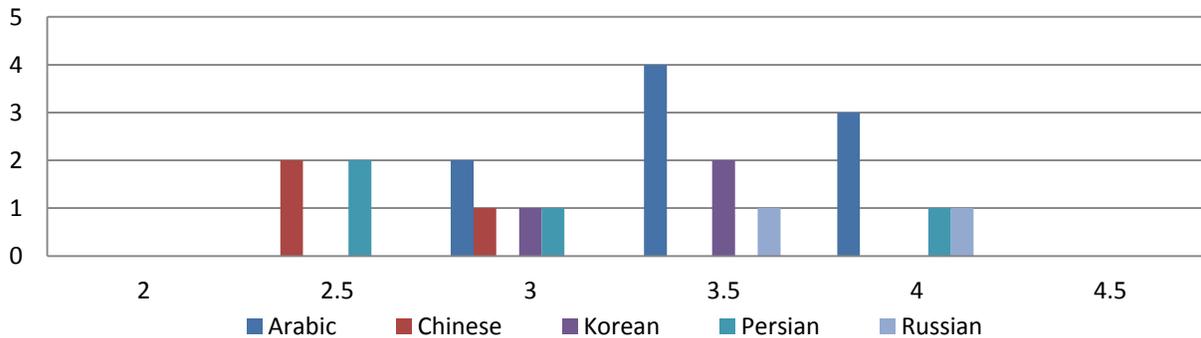
Flagship programs build on what the students have learned in the classroom; set goals for their individual progress; and provide on-going assessments to ensure that students are developing their linguistic skills and meeting the standards of the Flagship program.

In addition, all Language Flagship students are required to complete an academic year overseas at an Overseas Flagship Center program. The overseas Flagship programs articulate and collaborate with their domestic Flagship counterparts. This ensures optimal results for the students, and in language proficiency gains. The Flagship model ensures students have direct exposure to experience with the culture of the country and region in which their target language is spoken.

Students participate in the overseas program once they have reached an ILR Level 2 with the goal of achieving an ILR Level 3 (professional proficiency) by the time they complete this capstone year. While overseas, students are required to take language classes, directly enroll in classes in their major at a university in the country where they are studying, and participate in a professional internship. Both the direct enrollment classes and the internship are conducted in their target language and give the students an opportunity to understand and participate in both academic and professional environments. The majority of students also live in a "home-stay" while abroad, which provides them with an opportunity to operate in their target language for the majority of their day and gain a deeper understanding of the culture in which their target language is spoken.

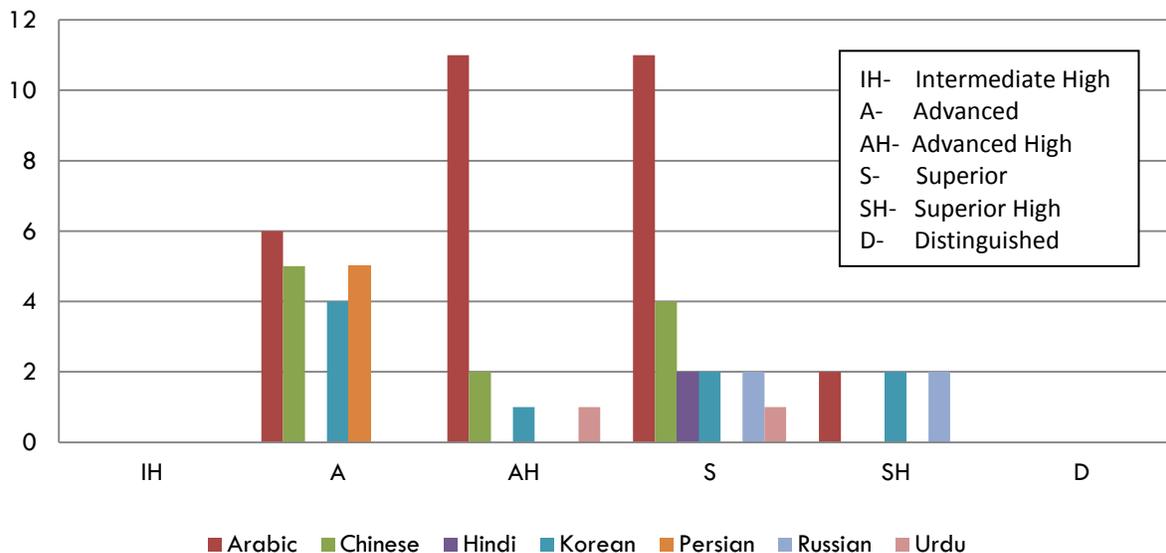
In 2011, 64 undergraduate and graduate students completed the Overseas Flagship Program. Of this group, 21 students took the official Foreign Service Institute (FSI) oral proficiency test, 81% (17) scored at ILR Level 3 or higher, and 100% scored at or above ILR Level 2+. Furthermore, 57% (12) scored at ILR Level 3+ or higher.

Boren-Flagship Scholar and Fellow, and Flagship Fellow 2011 Final ILR Speaking Proficiency



All overseas Flagship students were required to take the ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI), and again all students scored in the advanced and superior ranges.³ Out of 61 students who completed the ACTFL OPI, 67% (41) scored in the Advanced High range or higher, and 44% (27) scored in the ILR 3 or ACTFL Superior range or higher. Flagship participants who achieved an ILR 3 or ACTFL Superior, or higher, include: students of Arabic (13), Chinese (4), Hindi Urdu (2), Korean (4) and Russian (4).

2011 Flagship Capstone Students ACTFL Final Speaking Proficiency



³ See Appendix A for a listing of the ACTFL proficiency scale.

In the 2011 cohort of 64 students, almost half (31) were enrolled in the Arabic programs that were disrupted by the events of the Arab Spring, with students relocating from programs in Damascus, Syria and Alexandria, Egypt to the Arab-American Language Institute in Morocco (AALIM) in Meknes, Morocco. As a positive effect of this move, those Boren Scholars and Fellows who were tested for proficiency in the Moroccan dialect scored highly, demonstrating a high-level ability in two or three Arabic dialects, a development of interest to the field of Arabic language pedagogy. Based on the expected numbers of students in the pipeline preparing to study in Overseas Flagship Programs for next year, The Language Flagship is planning for a significant increase in the numbers of capstone students to enroll in 2012.

Building on these promising achievements by undergraduate students, The Language Flagship is implementing a number of program improvements to increase the percentage of Overseas Capstone students who complete with ACTFL Superior or ILR Level 3 proficiency. Selection criteria for the Overseas Capstone programs are being tightened across the board so that admitted students must demonstrate an ACTFL Advanced proficiency level (ILR Level 2) before moving on to the capstone experience. Overseas academic programs are undergoing review and adjustment for rigor and effectiveness in language instruction, and efforts are underway for additional teacher training for overseas instructors and articulation of domestic and overseas language curricula. Assessment protocols are being normalized for students participating in the Chinese Overseas programs in order to clarify standards for student progress, and assessment instruments in the Arabic field are being examined for their ability to accurately reflect skills gained speaking and understanding the various Arabic dialects, as well as more formal communication in Modern Standard Arabic.

Recent Language Flagship graduates have taken positions with the U.S. Air Force, law enforcement, the World Bank, and the Peace Corps. In the private sector, recent graduates are using their skills in international trade, finance, biomedical and health services, and education. Many graduates are also pursuing graduate study in fields such as international studies and diplomacy, law, and medical and health sciences.

INSTITUTIONAL GRANTS

The Language Flagship provides institutional grants to universities to develop language programs that produce professionally-proficient language speakers in a number of critical languages. Flagship institutions re-engineer their Flagship language curriculum with the goal of graduating students at ILR Level 3 proficiency. In order to reach this proficiency, The Language Flagship has developed a model, which integrates interventions and assessments that exceed the rigor and results of the typical language curriculum.

The Language Flagship model offers intensive language instruction from beginner through superior levels, opportunities for intensive summer study, peer tutors throughout the program, and content courses in the target language at advanced and superior levels. In order to receive Language Flagship Certification, Flagship students are required to complete an articulated year abroad at an Overseas Flagship Program in their target language and reach ILR Level 3 proficiency.

The Language Flagship institutions also produce cutting-edge research and are leaders in the field with respect to language education pedagogy, assessment, and integrating technology into language learning. NSEP provides institutional grants to Language Flagship institutions to support collaborative efforts on research and the creation of materials and tools.

The collaborative nature of the program at the institutional level is one of the key strengths of The Language Flagship program. In addition to collaborating on research, directors of Flagship programs participate on a number of Academic Councils and committees which address policies regarding pedagogy and logistics within their target languages and for The Language Flagship program as a whole. This unique partnership between higher education and government has been the foundation for creating this highly successful results oriented program.



Students at the Brigham Young University Chinese Flagship Program.

FLAGSHIP K–12 PROGRAMS

The Language Flagship continues its investment in the development of new models to improve critical foreign language education in the K–12 (kindergarten through 12th grade) system nationally.

The Language Flagship supports the continuing development of the Michigan State University K–12 Arabic language curriculum and standards, which have been adopted by school districts in Michigan and across the country in major metropolitan areas including Chicago and Boston. This curriculum has been enhanced by a partnership with the Arabic StarTalk programs nationally, and in collaboration with the Federally funded Arabic K–12 program of the National Capital Language Resource Center.

In September 2011, The Language Flagship launched a consortia effort led by Brigham Young University and the Utah State Department of Education to develop and improve K–12 Chinese



University of Oregon Chinese Flagship student plays a game in Chinese with students at Portland Public Schools Chinese program.

language instruction. The new effort enlists leading K–12 experts, State Education Agencies in South Carolina and Oklahoma, Local Education Agencies in Arizona, California, Michigan, Mississippi, New York, Oregon and Wyoming, and Chinese Language Flagship Programs. The model to be developed includes full articulation for dual immersion programs in elementary schools, followed by enhanced language instruction in middle and high schools. The consortia effort will work on curricular standards, teacher training, and proficiency assessment issues.

As a national demonstration project, The Language Flagship supports the University of Oregon and Portland Public Schools K–12 Chinese language curriculum and instruction program. The core Mandarin immersion program takes place at Woodstock Elementary School, Hosford Middle School, and Cleveland High School with a World Language Institute for heritage learners at Franklin High School in Portland, Oregon. Six schools also participate in the Chinese World Language programs, which offer four years of instruction in Mandarin Chinese with Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) options. There are currently 467 students in Mandarin immersion programs in all grades. Five students comprised the first graduating class, with three achieving ACTFL Advanced Low proficiency in Mandarin and two at ACTFL Intermediate levels. Four out of those five students entered the University of Oregon Chinese Flagship. As freshmen, they placed into the advanced-low level Chinese Flagship Topics course (Modern History, Politics of China, and Body Wellness) with junior, seniors, and graduate students. Feedback has been positive, with one student reporting that “learning here is different, challenging, and with a purpose.”

The goal for the Flagship Pilot K–12 Programs continues to be the development and demonstration of articulated critical language instruction that contributes to a national pipeline of high school students graduating with critical language skills that can be applied in a variety of international fields. On the programmatic level, Flagship K–12 Programs increase the pipeline of new students able to advance quickly into substantive content learning in critical languages at university-level Language Flagship Programs and achieve professional-level language proficiency.

2011 HIGHLIGHTS OF THE LANGUAGE FLAGSHIP

In 2011, The Language Flagship expanded their efforts in the following strategic areas:

1) PARTNERSHIPS WITH ARMY AND AIR FORCE CADET COMMANDS

In 2011, The Language Flagship launched partnerships with the Army and Air Force Cadet Commands to graduate ROTC students at an ILR Level 3 in one of the Flagship target languages. The Army Cadet Command is developing a plan to provide Foreign Area scholarships for Army ROTC Cadets to enroll in Flagship programs and provide flexibility for Cadets to continue enrollment for a fifth year if necessary in order to complete the Overseas Flagship program with additional support from NSEP. The Air Force Cadet Command is similarly developing plans to place Cadets in Flagship programs and explore the options necessary in order for Cadets to complete all Air Force ROTC requirements plus the academic requirements of the Flagship program. These partnerships are in addition to the Pilot Flagship/ROTC Initiative described in the next section of this report.

2) EXPANSION TO TURKISH AND PORTUGUESE

In 2011, The Language Flagship program conducted competitions to build Turkish and Portuguese Flagship programs. Indiana University, Bloomington was selected to create a Turkish Flagship program, which will bring undergraduate students of Turkish to ILR Level 3 proficiency. The program will also develop opportunities for advanced students of Turkish to develop proficiency in Uzbek. Indiana University is currently in negotiations with several Turkish institutions of higher education to launch an Overseas Flagship Program. The University of Georgia, Athens, received a Portuguese Flagship program grant. This program will focus on Brazil. The University of Georgia will expand existing cooperation with the São Paulo State University system to provide students the opportunity to directly enroll in classes in their

major fields and pursue internships in this economically vital region. The expansion of Language Flagship Programs in Turkey and Brazil represents an investment that will create a pipeline of U.S. undergraduates with deep knowledge of these two countries. This investment is strategically important to U.S. national security, particularly for global economic development.

3) **BOREN/ FLAGSHIP SCHOLARS AND FELLOWS**

In 2010, NSEP created a bridge between The Language Flagship and David L. Boren Scholarships and Fellowships, which expanded in 2011. The ultimate goal of this collaboration is to create greater pathways for outstanding Flagship students to enter into Federal Government service.

As outlined in the Boren Awards section of this report, Boren Scholarships and Fellowships provide students with resources to acquire skills and experiences in areas of the world critical to the future security of our nation. In exchange, students commit to seek employment in the Federal Government. Boren Scholarships and Fellowships promote long-term linguistic and cultural immersion overseas that allow American students to develop vital global competencies. Flagship students who receive Boren Scholarships and Fellowships may apply that funding to the yearlong immersion at an Overseas Flagship Program partner university where they directly enroll in courses in their fields of study and engage in professional internships or other experiential activities.



Flagship students at University of Texas study language with their peers.

In 2010, 14 Flagship students in Arabic, Chinese, Korean, Persian, and Russian from 12 Flagship institutions were awarded Boren Scholarships and Fellowships. In 2011, NSEP awarded 15 Boren Scholarships and Fellowships to Flagship students studying Arabic, Chinese, Korean, Persian, and Russian. The Flagship program plans to increase the numbers of Flagship students who apply and receive Boren Scholarships and Fellowships by expanding outreach and funding opportunities.



University of Oklahoma Arabic Flagship students walk with university President David L. Boren

In 2010, NSEP also worked with the Foreign Service Institute (FSI) to test Flagship students who were awarded Boren Scholarships and Fellowships. These tests were conducted at the Foreign Service Institute in the summer of 2011 and assess the students' linguistic proficiency at the end of their Overseas Flagship Program. Of the 10 students that have currently tested, 8 (80%) of them received an ILR Level 3 or higher on their FSI speaking test and three (30%) received an ILR Level 4 or higher on their FSI speaking tests. NSEP plans to continue testing Flagship students who have received Boren Scholarships and Fellowships

at FSI.

4) PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

The Language Flagship is dedicated to promoting opportunities for U.S. institutions of higher education to develop specialized programs in languages important to the future of the nation. It is working with business and non-profit partners to develop internship and scholarship opportunities for Flagship students and to advance foreign language and international education.

On December 7, 2011 the University of Rhode Island Chinese Language Flagship hosted the Rhode Island Language Summit in Providence, RI. More than 50 representatives from state government and social service agencies, business, higher education, and K–12 Rhode Island schools convened to discuss local needs for foreign language proficiency in a variety of fields. Rhode Island business leaders who run international firms stressed the need to develop engineers and managers with cross-cultural skills and foreign language proficiency to manage both design and production teams. These teams span the U.S., Europe, Asia, and Latin America. Business leaders, as well as local social service providers in the state, stressed a particular need for more speakers of Chinese, German, Portuguese, and Spanish, with additional need for Vietnamese, Russian, and African languages.

The International Engineering Program (IEP) at the University of Rhode Island (URI), which combines engineering, foreign language study, and an overseas experience, including a paid engineering internship, was singled out by business leaders. The IEP program is expanding to offer Chinese in cooperation with the Chinese Language Flagship at URI, and business leaders stressed the importance of Chinese for managing international design and production teams and in the field of cyber security. URI will convene a series of follow-up workshops with local participants to develop a language roadmap strategy to present to state government officials. The roadmap will outline a plan for developing Rhode Island's expertise in the languages in highest demand for business development and social welfare.

5) CERTIFYING RESULTS AND TRACKING ACCOUNTABILITY

The Language Flagship is designed to be results based and track student progress toward defined program benchmarks for foreign language proficiency. The Flagship Certification System (FCS),⁴ was first initiated in 2010, and is now fully operational. The FCS is a tool used to review individual student progress throughout the Flagship program. The system is designed to time-sequence student assessment; thus, individual Flagship institutions have the capacity to evaluate progression of students through coursework and cohorts. The expectation is that the FCS will provide a single database for individual Flagship programs, and the students themselves, to monitor progress from initial registration through academic and professional careers.

Most importantly, this system provides a formal mechanism for certifying program graduates. Domestic Flagship Centers partner with NSEP to monitor the ability to validate each student's progress, completion, and recommendation for Flagship Certification. Within the FCS, programs will report completion of domestic program, overseas coursework, and the overseas

⁴ FCS is also known as the Student Certification System, as it has also been adapted for Project GO and will be adapted for the EHLS program

internship/work experience (including a description of that experience). Programs will then submit final assessments for graduating students and make recommendations regarding whether individual participants merit full Flagship Certification. Flagship Certification will be based on completing domestic and overseas Flagship requirements and the students' foreign language proficiency assessment scores. Clearly demonstrating the proficiency outcomes for Flagship students is the cornerstone of The Language Flagship's effectiveness and success.

THE FUTURE OF FLAGSHIP

2012 marks the 10-year anniversary of The Language Flagship program. Accordingly, several events are being organized that will focus on sharing results of the Flagship model with the greater academic community; discuss what has been learned in regards to language learning and teaching; and examine what needs to be accomplished in the future. Dissemination of Flagship practices and interventions in language programs across the country is a key component in the larger effort to improve language proficiency outcomes in U.S. higher education and increase the pipeline of linguistically and culturally competent graduates. In addition, The Language Flagship will hold its first Language Flagship National Student Meeting, with the goal of developing an alumni network to inform Flagship undergraduates about potential employment opportunities in the Department of Defense and in the greater national security community and to demonstrate Flagship results to hiring managers in national security fields.



Students prepare for celebration at the Portland State University Russian Language Flagship Center.

In 2011, The Language Flagship increased its number of institutions, languages, and number of students enrolling and graduating from the program. In 2012, The Language Flagship aims to further increase enrollments and Program graduates. These students and graduates are poised to provide a well-trained workforce that, upon graduation from the program, possesses a high-level of language proficiency and cultural knowledge critical to U.S. national security. As such, graduates of The Language Flagship are ideal candidates for many positions within the Department of Defense and the broader national security and foreign affairs community, and can provide linguistic and cultural skills and insights that are highly valued and necessary for positions related to national security.

The Language Flagship program is addressing a national need to create a cohort ideally suited for national security positions; creating effective programs nationally that successfully teach language at the ILR Level 3 in a number of critical languages; and providing the nation with cutting-edge research on how best to teach and learn critical languages from ACTFL Novice to Superior levels.

2011 FLAGSHIP PROGRAMS

ARABIC	PERSIAN
Michigan State University University of Maryland University of Michigan University of Oklahoma University of Texas, Austin <i>Alexandria University, Egypt*</i>	University of Maryland <i>Tajik State National University, Tajikistan*</i>
CHINESE	PORTUGUESE
Arizona State University Brigham Young University Hunter College Indiana University San Francisco State University University of Mississippi University of Oregon University of Rhode Island Western Kentucky University Pilot Program <i>Nanjing University, China**</i>	University of Georgia, Athens <i>Sao Paulo State University, Brazil***</i>
HINDI URDU	RUSSIAN
University of Texas, Austin <i>Jaipur Hindi Flagship Center, India***</i> <i>Lucknow Urdu Flagship Center, India***</i>	Bryn Mawr College Portland State University University of California, Los Angeles University of Wisconsin, Madison <i>St. Petersburg State University, Russia*</i>
KOREAN	SWAHILI
University of Hawaii, Manoa <i>Korea University, South Korea***</i>	Indiana University <i>State University of Zanzibar, Tanzania*</i>
	TURKISH
	Indiana University
	PILOT FLAGSHIP/ROTC CENTERS (CHINESE)
	Arizona State University Georgia Institute of Technology North Georgia State College and University

* Overseas Flagship Center administered by American Councils for International Education

** Overseas Flagship Center administered by Brigham Young University and American Councils for International Education

* Overseas Flagship Center administered by domestic partner