

Language Requirements for the MARSLAC Program

MARSLAC students must demonstrate proficiency in one primary language. Based on their level of language proficiency and their research interests, students will consult with the Director of Graduate Studies to determine how they will achieve and then demonstrate proficiency.

Students must demonstrate intermediate to advanced proficiency (in accordance with ACTFL standards). The primary language will be either Spanish or Portuguese, although other hemispheric languages might be used if they are directly relevant to the student's research (i.e. French for French speaking Caribbean countries). Proficiency in the primary language is demonstrated through a language proficiency test administered by the Department of Spanish and Portuguese or by completing a 4000-level Spanish or Portuguese class with a grade of B or above. With prior approval from the Director, native speakers and those with demonstrable extensive prior language experience may also place out of this requirement.

Please note: Only 4000-level language courses count as electives toward the 30-point requirement and no more than two language classes may be counted toward the degree requirement.

How to fulfill language proficiency for the primary language (Spanish or Portuguese):

1. Student may take a Reading Proficiency Exam administered by the Department of Spanish and Portuguese. The test is scheduled twice a semester and by appointment during the summer. Please see their website ASAP to get updated information on dates and procedures (<http://www.columbia.edu/cu/spanish/undergraduate/placeexam.html>).

MARSLAC students are not required to take the undergraduate placement examination, but it is helpful if a graduate student wants to determine his/her level prior to the reading exam. In order to demonstrate an intermediate-advanced level in Spanish or Portuguese, students must score higher than 625 points. Below that score, they will be placed in the appropriate elementary or intermediate Spanish course.

For more information, refer to the link:

<http://www.columbia.edu/cu/spanish/resources/proficiencyexam.html>

2. Student can also fulfill this requirement by taking a 4000 level or above course with a grade of B or above.

3. Native speakers or students who obtained a BA or graduate degree from institutions with instruction provided exclusively in Spanish and English may be exempt with approval of the Director of Graduate Studies.
4. Students who had a semester abroad in a Spanish or Portuguese speaking country may be exempt with approval of the Director of Graduate Studies.

For more information, please contact the MARSLAC Student Affairs Coordinator at ek2159@columbia.edu