

## Language Proficiency Assessments

In order to ensure fairness to any and all students who seek accreditation of their language skills for academic credit, ISU will accept certification via LTI (Language Testing International), an organization affiliated with ACTFL (the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages). ACTFL has developed assessment tools based on decades of research in foreign language acquisition. LTI provides accreditation for schools, universities, and other organizations for a growing list of over 100 languages. Here is a link to the accreditation for academic credit in higher education:

<https://www.languagetesting.com/lti-for-organizations/academic>

**Please see the guidelines below for choosing the appropriate assessment and to determine what credit your score will earn.**

### *Which Assessment Should I Take?*

LTI offers five different assessments for earning college credits in reading, writing, speaking, and listening, only three of which are acceptable for credit at ISU. Credit for LAN 112-116 requires active proficiency in **writing and/or speaking**. ISU will therefore only accept assessment of oral skills and/or writing proficiency (not reading or listening). We will accept any of the following three assessments:

- **The Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI)** (required for World Languages Teacher Education programs)
- **The Oral Proficiency Interview – Computer (OPIc)** (this assessment is typically cheaper than the OPI conducted by a live person)
- **ACTFL Writing Proficiency Test (WPT)**

While the reading and listening exams (RPT and LPT) may be sufficient to show reading knowledge in another language for some graduation programs, these skills are not sufficient to meet the graduation and General Education requirements of the College of Arts and Sciences at ISU.

### *How well do I have to speak/write to earn credit?*

#### **ACTFL Proficiency Levels and FSI Categories of Difficulty for Native Speakers of English**

The criteria for determining levels of proficiency can be found here:

<https://www.languagetesting.com/pub/media/wysiwyg/manuals/actfl-assessments-brochure.pdf>

Assessing proficiency gets even trickier when you add in the relative difficulty for native speakers of English to learn other languages:

<http://aboutworldlanguages.com/language-difficulty>

Hence, it is important to calibrate the expectations for different languages.

In the chart below, we give two rankings to reflect the range of abilities in **speaking** and **writing** that are typical of language classes at different levels. The low-end score is the minimum level of proficiency required to meet graduation and General Education requirements. The high-end score is a better predictor of success in the next course in the sequence.

Difficulty level (see link above for more information)	Expectations for completion of LAN 112 (two semesters of college coursework or equivalent)	Expectations for completion of LAN 115 (three semesters of college coursework or equivalent)	Expectations for completion of LAN 116 (four semesters of college coursework or equivalent)
<b>Graduation / General Education Requirements met</b>	Meets CAS graduation requirement	Meets requirement for BA degree; Qualitative Reasoning	Language and the Humanities
<b>Category I</b> Offered at ISU: French, German, Italian, Latin, Portuguese, and Spanish.*  Also includes Afrikaans, Danish, Dutch, Norwegian, Swedish, and others.	Novice High / Intermediate Low	Intermediate Low / Intermediate Mid	Intermediate Mid / Intermediate High
<b>Category II-III</b> None offered at ISU.  Includes Farsi, Hindi, Polish, Russian, Tagalog, and others.	Novice Mid / Novice High	Novice High / Intermediate Low	Intermediate Low / Intermediate Mid
<b>Category IV</b> Offered at ISU: Mandarin and Japanese.*  Also includes all varieties of Arabic, Cantonese, Korean, and others.	Novice Low / Novice Mid	Novice Mid / Novice High	Novice High / Intermediate Low

\* For languages offered at ISU, you do *not* need to utilize the services of LTI. Please see the department of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures ([www.LAN.illinoisstate.edu](http://www.LAN.illinoisstate.edu)) for more information on our proficiency exams (111-116 for all languages; also 214 for Spanish) for academic credit and our self-placement exams for courses offered. Note that students who complete a language course at ISU with a C or better can earn up to eight hours of CAP credit.

**ISU values linguistic and cultural diversity at home and throughout the world, and we encourage all students to continue to develop their language skills and cultural knowledge throughout their education and beyond.**