

**Program Report: Keene State College**  
**Teacher Certification in French and Spanish**  
**Section I: Context**

**Narrative:**

The Bachelor of Arts degrees in French and Spanish at Keene State College provide a foundation for the active use of the target language in K-12 teaching. This report covers both languages because they are housed together within the Department of Modern Languages in the School of Arts and Humanities. Program requirements are virtually identical. We will provide more detail and separate candidate evidence for each language.

Courses specific to teacher education are taught in the education department (known by the acronym ESEC: education, special education, early childhood). For the past several years, modern language methods preparation has been covered by an adjunct, who is a full-time public school teacher of French. Modern Languages is now conducting a full nationwide search for a new tenure-track position in Spanish and methods. This person will be responsible for teaching the methods course, supervising students' field experience, and their student teaching. We anticipate that this new faculty member, who will begin teaching in fall 2007, will provide an important link between our two departments (Modern Languages and ESEC), and we view the authorization of this new faculty line as evidence of the College's strong commitment to teacher preparation in French and Spanish.

Before further describing our major programs, we must explain that the College finds itself in the midst of an all-encompassing academic transition to offering four rather than three-credit courses, which will be largely complete in the 2007-2008 academic year. Our elementary and intermediate language courses have always been four credits, since we recognize the need for intense, constant practice in order to acquire an active command of the language. However, our courses in conversation, composition, literature, culture, and our advanced seminars will now become four credit courses. Content will be consolidated, so that we teach the same amount (or more) material in fewer classes. We will drop some courses not relevant to teaching (i.e. Commercial French) and the first semester of Intermediate French and Spanish (201) will no longer be considered part of the major. If approved by the necessary curriculum committees, this move to four credits will take effect in fall 2007.

A second major academic transition at Keene State College is the adoption of a new Integrative Studies Program to replace our old general education curriculum. This integrative program will consist of eleven courses (44 credits), and will also be implemented in the fall of 2007. The requirement that all Arts and Humanities majors achieve intermediate-level proficiency in a foreign language will be replaced with a requirement that all of these majors take a single language course, at whatever level fits their prior knowledge. That change will reduce the Modern Language Department's need to staff heavily enrolled elementary and intermediate courses. We therefore anticipate being able to devote more faculty time and effort to our growing major programs in French and Spanish.

Among the stated outcomes for the College's new Integrative Studies Program are two categories particularly relevant to the preparation of foreign language teachers:

**Diversity:** Students will be able to:

- recognize how differences shape approaches to identity, knowledge, and power.
- apply diverse perspectives and experiences to develop disciplinary arguments.

**Global Issues:** Students will be able to:

- approach global issues from multiple perspectives in deriving solutions to potential conflicts.
- critique a discipline through the lens of other cultural values.
- demonstrate a commitment to analyzing and/or solving global issues.

Our major programs in French and Spanish are very similar. Proficiency at the Advanced Low level (see ACTFL guidelines) is expected of all French and Spanish majors pursuing teacher certification. The Modern Languages Department emphasizes the importance of the semester abroad requirement as cultural and linguistic preparation of our future teachers. Each student is counseled individually in regard to specific requirements and interests. Upon their return we interview them to assess their growth, their cultural and linguistic knowledge, and their oral proficiency. Opportunities for students to demonstrate their proficiency are embedded in each of the courses leading towards the major. These include, but are not limited to, oral presentations and tests, projects, writing samples, portfolios and student-driven videos.

## **Technology**

Instruction takes place in media-equipped classrooms, and a 25-station state-of-the-art fully networked computer lab where students can use CD-Rom instructional software and electronic workbook programs. The new general education requirements specify media literacy for all students, including Internet research and the use of e-mail and PowerPoint. Many instructors use Blackboard, and all communicate with students via e-mail.

The specific requirements and features of each major are described separately in the attachments to this section. More details are given here below:

## **The French Major**

The French Major sequence emphasizes linguistic and cultural preparation, developing students' ability to function with increasing sophistication in a francophone milieu. FR 350: Study in France or Québec is the pivotal course marking the student's progress towards the requisite language proficiency and understanding of francophone culture. We have a direct exchange agreement with the University of Upper Brittany in Rennes, France. Our students may study there for a semester or a year, paying the same costs as they would incur at Keene, while French students from Rennes spend a year in Keene under similar conditions. As a member of the Québec New England Exchange, we also offer our students similar opportunities in French-speaking Canada. The post-semester abroad interview provides an opportunity to demonstrate their new competencies. By offering programs in both Québec and France we give students an opportunity to explore the geographic area that is of interest to them. The immersion experience

provides the background to return to our campus with a more inquisitive and expanded perspective upon which the students can base their last year of studies.

Our direct international exchange programs also afford our students a valuable opportunity prior to their study abroad to converse with native French speakers from Rennes or Québec who interact with students on all levels as resource persons, teaching associates and lab tutors. Their presence increases students' level of confidence through informal conversational situations.

Building upon their experience abroad, students begin the final preparation for teaching both in required post-FR 350 courses such as FR 405 (Contemporary French Usage) and FR 495 (Seminar) and, as appropriate, through contract coursework (FR 498: Independent Study). They may also work as departmental tutors, lab assistants, teaching associates or resource persons. Students electing to further their cultural or literary studies may do so by designing an independent study (FR 498) in consultation with the appropriate language professor.

FR 290: ST: Franco-American Women's Voices explores regional French cultural issues of particular interest. The French Department is committed to the importance of the Franco-American presence in New England. French is the heritage language of many of our students, although they may be only dimly aware of what this means. The interdisciplinary FR 290 course (cross-listed as AMST 290 and WS 290) provides an in-depth study of the Franco-American presence in New England past and present. Students from this course frequently present at the College's annual Academic Excellence conference and may submit articles or creative work to The Forum (Franco-American Center, University of Maine, Orono).

### **The Spanish Major**

Our Spanish program draws upon the increasing Hispanic presence in the US, as well as benefiting from the expertise of native speakers from Latin America. Since 1988 we have had a relationship with Pontificia Universidad Católica in Quito, Ecuador. Each year a visiting professor lives on campus and teaches 24 semester hours in the Modern Language Department. One of their important responsibilities is a Spanish 290 (Special Topics) course in a specific area of their expertise. Most recently our visiting professor from Ecuador offered a seminar on Latin American dictatorships of the 1970s and 1980s. In addition to the visiting professor from Quito, we have a Contract Lecturer (full-time, benefited, non tenure-track position) from Mexico who teaches in Spanish and Women's Studies, incorporating multicultural studies and feminist studies into our course offerings, frequently as a Spanish 290 course.

SP 350: Study in Spain or Latin America is the pivotal 12-credit course that defines the student's progress toward the requisite language proficiency combined with the understanding of Hispanic culture. Many students choose to spend a semester at the Pontificia Universidad Católica or the University of San Francisco in Quito, Ecuador. We also offer programs in Seville and other sites. Programs in both Latin America and Spain enable students to explore the geographic area of their particular interest. The immersion experience provides the background to return to campus with a more inquisitive and expanded perspective upon their last year of studies.

Building upon the required semester abroad experience, students demonstrate their new competencies in courses such as SP 405 (Contemporary Spanish Usage) and Spanish 495 (seminar) and as appropriate, through contract coursework (SP 498: Independent Study) or as departmental tutors, lab assistants teaching associates or resource persons. Students electing to further literary, language or cultural studies may do so by designing an independent study in literature (SP 498) with the appropriate language professor.

**For teacher preparation in French and Spanish (K-12 certification)** the following education courses (known by the acronym ESEC: education, special education, early childhood) are required (34 credits): ESEC 100, 150, 250, 282, 320, 385, 386, 450, and 460 (Student Teaching). The following course is highly recommended: ESEC 387, Creating Social Contexts for Learning. Aside from the required coursework and clinical experiences offered in our education department, qualified students have several earlier opportunities to explore informally their interest in teaching. In the past two years they have been invited to teach beginning French and Spanish in a new charter school in Keene. They also tutor in our language lab, where they hold open hours for students, and may work for our ASPIRE program, which provides extra tutoring services for first generation college students.

### **1. State and Institutional Policies:**

Our programs offer initial teacher certification with the Bachelor of Arts degree in either French or Spanish. In May 2006 we successfully completed the process of New Hampshire state certification of our teacher preparation programs, valid through August 2011. Our direct involvement in the creation of the New Hampshire Standards for Modern Languages allows us to understand the connections between professional ideals and the reality of state certification criteria that our students must meet. New Hampshire does not require comprehensive standardized examinations for the licensure of foreign language teachers.

### **2. Field and Clinical Experiences:**

Our teacher education program includes a variety of courses where students have field-placement experiences:

ESEC 150: Development, Exceptionality & Learning I: Students participate in a service learning assignment requiring a minimum of 15-20 hours in the field in a volunteer capacity. In their volunteer placements (working with children from birth to age 8 is recommended), students observe and interact with children of a particular age group, journaling their experience and writing an analysis paper on their experience at the end of the semester as a final project.

ESEC 250: Development, Exceptionality & Learning II: In-school and after-school program placements. Students spend 10-20 hours with school-age children logging their observations and interpreting the data in relation to course reading on development, cognition and exceptionalities. This Service Learning Project is then used as a student work artifact when they apply to the Teacher Education program.

ESEC 385/386 Methods and Field Experience; ESEC 460: Student Teaching: All students in the French and Spanish programs are required to successfully complete these three courses, typically

during fall and spring of their senior year. Both are taught and supervised by an adjunct faculty member in ESEC, who is also a full-time high school French teacher. Student teaching placements are arranged by the Teacher Education/ Graduate Studies (TEGS) Office at Keene State, and follow the same general guidelines regarding lesson and unit planning, expectations for solo teaching responsibility and professional behavior. Student teachers stay in the same setting for 14 weeks; the instructor for Methods and Student Teaching travels to that school to supervise their performance. General expectations regarding the student teaching experience are outlined in the R.O.U.T.E. Handbook and specific programmatic expectations are detailed the Student Teacher Handbook customized for Modern Language certification.

### **3. Admission, retention, and exit from teacher certification programs in French and Spanish**

Generally students declare a major in French or Spanish by the midpoint of their third semester at Keene State College; they *must* declare a major before registering for their sixty-first credit hour. No particular grade point average is required for continuation as a language major, but students must have a cumulative grade point average of 2.5 to study abroad. Courses taken at the foreign study site must be graded C or above in order to be accepted for transfer back to KSC.

To be admitted to *teacher education*, students need to have completed three education courses (ESEC 100, ESEC 150, ESEC 250) with a grade of C or better, and must have passed the PRAXIS I Pre-Professional Skills Test required by the state of New Hampshire. They must have completed a minimum of 36 credits (12 from KSC) with a GPA of 2.5.

Students admitted to *student teaching* must have completed at least 90 credits, including core courses in education (ESEC 100 through ESEC 320) with a grade of C or better and a GPA of 2.5. A cumulative GPA of 2.5 and completion of content major requirements with a GPA of 2.5 are also required.

All students must successfully complete a Methods course and concurrent field experience in their certification area to be eligible for student teaching (ESEC 383/386 for elementary, ESEC 384/386 for middle school, and ESEC 385/386 for secondary). Before being admitted for student teaching, all students go through an application process, outlined in the R.O.U.T.E. Handbook. Students apply for student teaching the semester prior to placement. At the time of application, students schedule an interview with the Director of Teacher Education and Graduate Studies and provide a transcript of all academic coursework. The complete application, including a criminal records check, is reviewed by the Director to assure that the student meets the criteria for student teaching. All coursework related to the student's certification option must be completed prior to student teaching (ESEC 460/465), except for ESEC 450, which is taken concurrently with the student teaching experience.

### **4. Relationship of Modern Languages Programs to KSC's Conceptual Framework:**

The conceptual framework of Keene State College's Teacher Education Programs relates closely to the goals of our Modern Languages Department. Students in all academic disciplines preparing for teacher certification are expected to "be advocates for social justice and equity, . . . possess intellectual and personal integrity, and [be] responsive to the needs of students in a

changing, multicultural world.” The Teacher Education Program further strives “to prepare education professionals who understand the world from multiple perspectives,” clearly a goal best reached through the study of other languages and cultures. We quote further from the Teacher Education Program’s Mission and Values statement:

The demographics of the KSC student body and of the region in which we are located do not yet reflect the diversity of the United States and of the world. Because of that fact, we are especially committed to guiding our students to move beyond their “home town” perspectives in order to develop an understanding and respect for the peoples of the world and for the impact of globalization on our cultures and on our educational systems.

It is clear to Modern Languages faculty that the best way for students to move beyond their “hometown perspectives” is to study abroad – as we require that our French and Spanish majors must do. On the other hand, honesty compels us to note that neither the Teacher Education Program nor other disciplines offering teacher preparation require students to study abroad, to learn about globalization, nor even to study a foreign language!

## **5. French and Spanish Program Assessments**

Our past history of assessment has been to require that students’ language proficiency and cultural knowledge be assessed within the courses which they take. We also place faith in our study abroad requirement, certain that students will need to demonstrate adequate levels of listening comprehension and speaking proficiency in order to survive when immersed in the target language abroad. We verify their oral proficiency by interviewing them both before and after study abroad. Their performance in the courses they take in Quito or in Spain, in Rennes or in Quebec, is also graded by the foreign institutions in which they enroll. The state of New Hampshire, which has just finished re-accrediting our teacher certification programs in French and Spanish – has judged these embedded forms of assessment adequate.

Because New Hampshire does not require any licensure tests in languages, our past practice has not included such tests. Nevertheless, the standards to which we are held prove rigorous and exhaustive. They detail numerous aspects of familiarity with target cultures, as well as knowledge of grammar and vocabulary, linguistics and pedagogy. The state not only requires that our program as published and our course syllabi address these standards, the New Hampshire Council of Teacher Education also visits campus to inspect “artifacts” (student work samples) collected from our classes to verify student output.

Preparation for NCATE accreditation will prompt us to initiate national standardized tests. We plan to adopt the Praxis II tests of Content Knowledge and will also formalize our oral proficiency testing procedures by requiring the ACTFL Oral Proficiency test.