

Cheat Sheet for Foreign Language Advising Lancaster Campus

The following statement comes from the *Placement and Testing* page [<http://www.cas.sc.edu/dllc/Geninfo/testing.html>] within the *Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures* page on the USC Columbia website.

The University of South Carolina requires that all students achieve proficiency in one foreign language. All newly admitted students (freshman as well as transfer students) must take a Placement Exam (Phase I), and receive a score in the language studied previously. Usually this is the language studied in high school. Placement Exams are given during Orientation...and students should refer to information sent to them when they are accepted for admission.

The Phase I placement test is a general test designed to place students into introductory courses all the way through to 300-level classes. This test was developed by a major university, and is administered using web-based software. Some questions will be very easy; others will be able to be answered only by high level students. This is an adaptive test, designed to adapt the questions presented to the student according to how the student answers previous questions. The more questions a student answers correctly, the more challenging the questions become. Some questions are designed to see what vocabulary a student knows; others are context-based, and ask students to interpret information in a very short passage. The test is entirely computerized and multiple choice. The phase I test should take approximately 30 minutes. If a student scores high enough, he/she will then need to take a phase II test. Student will receive results of Phase I test within 24 hours.

NOTE: USCL is set to begin using the online test in Summer 2011.

Possible scores and corresponding coursework:

F1/S1 → take FREN/SPAN 109 then 110 (two semesters)

F2/S2 → take FREN/SPAN 121 then, for students with majors in College of Arts and Sciences and School of Music (except Music Educ. majors), FREN/SPAN 122. NB: This is also the “place-out” score for some majors like pharmacy and education. FREN/SPAN 121 is FREN/SPAN 109 and FREN/SPAN 110 in one semester. **Students who must take 122 because of their major and who began in 109 thus take 109, 110, 122.**

F3/S3 → take FREN/SPAN 122

F4/S4 → must take the Phase II test to see if you can place out of your college’s 122 requirements

General Remarks:

- ❖ Students should be encouraged to complete their foreign language coursework, if required, as early in the college career as possible. Putting it off only allows for time to forget things learned in high school.
- ❖ Be aware that on the Lancaster campus course sequence can potentially pose a problem for some students. Currently, FREN/SPAN 109 and 121 are offered during the Fall semester and FREN/SPAN 110 and 122 are offered during the Spring semester. Additionally, SPAN 109 and 121 are offered most Summer Session I terms and SPAN 110 and 122 are offered most Summer Session II terms. Students need to be aware of this. There is the chance that a student would have to wait 8 months after completing FREN 110 to take FREN 122.
- ❖ **Students cannot take a given placement exam but once.** Their first score on a given exam is binding. A student cannot take for credit a course lower than his/her indicated placement level; for example, a student with an F3/S3 cannot take FREN/SPAN 121 for credit.
- ❖ Students absolutely **should not** be encouraged to do poorly on purpose on the exam; if they do so, they will have more semesters of language to take, perhaps unnecessarily.
- ❖ Students should **never** be told **not** to take the exam (unless it has been more than 5 years since language instruction or they have never taken the language).
- ❖ Transfer students who have no previous college FL coursework and who previously studied the language in high school **do need** to take the exam.
- ❖ Native speakers of a given language **cannot** take that given placement exam to obtain credit. [EX. A Hispanic student cannot obtain foreign language credit by taking the Spanish Placement Exam and placing out.]
- ❖ If five (5) or more years have passed since the student has studied the foreign language, s/he **does not** need to take the placement exam and should enroll in FREN/SPAN 109. If students in this situation want to take the exam to try to place out of the requirement, they may take the exam.
- ❖ If a student has never studied the language, there is no need to take the placement exam. The student should enroll in FREN/SPAN 109 and his score [remember every student at USC needs a Foreign Language placement score] should be officially recorded as F0/S0.
- ❖ **WHILE WE DO NOT PUBLICIZE OR ENCOURAGE THIS LAST SCENARIO**, a student may place him/herself up a course, but s/he does so at his/her own risk. The student must sign an official form stating this. (EX. André placed into FREN/SPAN 121, but wants to enroll in FREN/SPAN 122. He can do this at his own risk and must sign a form to that effect.)