

CEPC Green Sheet 06/07-08

At the April faculty meeting CEPC will move the approval of a policy for accepting foreign language transfer credit.

Proposed FOL Transfer Credit Policy:

New matriculating students are expected to complete their Foreign Language (FOL) requirement with a course or courses taken at St. Olaf. Students entering with previous training in a foreign language must take the relevant placement test. If they decide to complete the FOL requirement in that language, they must take and pass the necessary course(s) according to the placement test results and the FOL policy for the specific language. Students who place higher than the last course normally required to complete the FOL requirement may be eligible to take a proficiency exam. Please consult individual departments for information about their FOL policies.

New matriculating or new transfer students who have taken college-level foreign language courses at another institution may receive elective credit for those courses, within the maximum number of pre-college credits allowed by St. Olaf, if the courses are deemed appropriate by the registrar. To complete the FOL requirement in that language, such students must take the relevant placement test and follow the procedure described in the preceding paragraph.

If new matriculating students or new transfer students wish to complete their FOL requirement with courses in a language not taught at St. Olaf, the course(s) must comply with college policy for completion of the FOL requirement, as determined by the Registrar.

After a student matriculates, under special circumstances, the Registrar, in consultation with the appropriate foreign language department, may grant permission to a student to complete the final course for the FOL requirement through summer intensive or semester courses (through a leave of absence) taken at another institution.

Students who enter St. Olaf College with a native language other than English may have their FOL requirement fulfilled by showing evidence of their native language.

These students must prove completion through eighth grade in their native language; or they must provide a high school transcript that shows they completed their high school

requirements in their native language; or they may take a St. Olaf College proficiency test.

Rationale for the motion:

“St. Olaf, a four-year college of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, provides an education committed to the liberal arts, rooted in the Christian Gospel, and incorporating a global perspective. In the conviction that life is more than a livelihood, it focuses on what is ultimately worthwhile and fosters the development of the whole person in mind, body, and spirit.”

Given the emphasis on global perspective in the first paragraph of the St. Olaf College Mission Statement stated above, foreign language proficiency is a very important part of the St. Olaf student’s education. Many of our incoming students already have studied one or more languages. St. Olaf has, over time, adjusted the FOL requirement in view of the capabilities of these incoming students. Once again, there is a need to adjust the requirement in view of our expectations of the foreign language proficiency of our students and the pre-college language classes they are taking.

More students are taking their pre-college language courses through College in the Schools or through local community colleges. We are finding that many of these students are placing at or below a course they took while they were in high school.

This new policy will recognize our students’ efforts to gain language skills (by granting them St. Olaf graduation credit for their pre-college language courses) but still require them to demonstrate (by sufficiently high performance on an exam, or by successful completion of an FOL course at St. Olaf) that they have achieved the proficiency level we expect of our graduates.