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2003-2004 Academic Year

## **An Introduction to Foreign Languages at Harvard**

"When undergraduates here choose to pursue language studies, for some a sort of personal transformation takes place. With the exception of tutorials, these classes are rated higher than any other group. And the ratings transcend any one particular language or group of languages. Whether it is the Romance languages, or Germanic languages, or Asian languages, or Slavic languages, or Classical languages—all of these are singled out by [respondents] as classes in which they feel they grew significantly." This was the finding of a survey of Harvard graduates in a project to assess and evaluate their college experience. Overall, the report found enormously strong support expressed for foreign language studies. In the words of the report, "advice to current undergraduates, boiled down to its essence [is]: take as much as you can. An impressive 94 percent of alumni say this." This response is in spite of the fact that most entering freshmen have strong foreign language experience and could place out of the College language requirement. Yet graduates recommend against this course of action, urging students to take more advanced courses, study abroad, and even to take more than one foreign language.

The reasons for taking foreign language courses (and courses taught *in* a foreign language) are many, and no single rationale will respond to the needs and interests of all students. But given below are some of the reasons why you might want to consider studying foreign language at Harvard, and some information to help you choose among the many offerings.

### **Why Study a Foreign Language**

#### **Small classes**

Foreign languages are taught in classes with limited enrollment—frequently 5-10, and rarely more than 20 students. Small class size facilitates contact with the instructor and increases each student's share of class participation. Students regularly spend time working with each other both in and outside of class. Assignments are paced at regular intervals, often with frequent written work and substantial feedback. In addition, students are frequently encouraged to engage with the work assigned on a personal level, as well as on the more

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\* Harvard Assessment Seminars Second Report, 1992

objective level of the topic content. That content can vary from an elementary introduction to a language and culture to specific topics, such as postwar German literature and journalism, 20th century Chinese fiction and drama, Russian press and television, or Italian for business. Foreign language courses often stress comparative culture, focusing on contrasting perspectives of familiar phenomena and events, thereby broadening students' basis for interpreting such phenomena and enriching their own perspectives. The interactive approach used in language courses in pursuing these topics is frequently considered by students to be a special source of pleasure and enjoyment.

### **Career Opportunities and International Internships**

In an increasingly interconnected world, knowledge of a foreign language can facilitate business and social transactions and provide knowledge crucial for success in a multicultural environment. This lesson is not new for Americans, although it has often been ignored. It is said that Benjamin Franklin's success in securing French support for the American colonies, support that was crucial in the War for Independence, can in large part be attributed to his knowledge of French language and culture.

An increasing number of jobs today require an understanding and knowledge of a foreign culture. In the world of business such experience may not be sufficient in and of itself, but combined with another subject area or concentration it frequently puts job candidates at a distinct advantage. Harvard students with language backgrounds have gone on to jobs of extraordinary interest and variety, from heading United Way in Moscow to working with Japanese politicians to archaeological excavation in Central Asia—business, cultural, and diplomatic positions in virtually every corner of the world.

For students who would like to explore career opportunities while still at Harvard, there are a number of options available through the International Experience Program at the Office of Career Services. One such program, the Weissman International Internship Program, funds travel and living expenses for second and third-year students who have secured internships in foreign countries. This year's interns are working in locations as diverse as France, Germany, Russia, Mexico, Malaysia, Thailand, Benin, and Kenya.

But the advantages of language training, ancient or modern, are also clear in ways which may be less evident. In an era in which undergraduate training may tend towards the pre-professional, the professional schools themselves (particularly law and medicine) have looked upon language acquisition as an indication of a student's ability to think analytically and systematically to acquire

a large body of information. Each year a number of students will actually graduate concentrating in a language and literature department, while having completed pre-med training. In short, work in the languages, far from closing out options, keeps those options open.

### **Intellectual interest**

Student evaluations of language courses demonstrate that interest in the subject matter is high. In many languages and departments students can choose from a range of courses, which may vary in their emphasis on particular skills or on particular topics. Many language courses combine language study with literature, but many others focus on non-literary texts, or use literary texts in non-traditional ways. Others use music, film, or television to promote language study. Still others are devoted to specialized topics in history and civilization. Often the line between language courses and topic courses (in literature, history, or politics) is a fine one, and many students derive special pleasure from studying topics of interest to them *in* a foreign language, either in core offerings or in individual departments. The challenge of such courses, and the resulting accomplishment, is a special source of satisfaction for many students.

### **Study Abroad**

Harvard encourages study abroad in a host of foreign programs and institutions. The application process is a relatively simple one, but students must plan their program of study in advance and apply for credit through:

The Office of International Programs  
University Hall, Ground Floor South  
Director Jane Edwards  
(617) 496-2722 oip@fas.harvard.edu  
[www.fas.harvard.edu/international\\_programs](http://www.fas.harvard.edu/international_programs)

Study abroad is encouraged for virtually all students at Harvard and not only for concentrators in foreign language. For those who have not experienced it there is nothing quite like seeing a foreign culture—and inevitably also your own culture—through the eyes of another.

### **Language and culture**

It has often been said that language is the key to culture, but this expression is rarely explained. For many students of a foreign language initial understanding comes at a moment when two parallel texts, ostensibly direct

translations of one another, quite clearly do not mean the same thing, and no matter how one tries to adjust them, something essential is "lost in the translation." But what is the nature of this loss, and why do we so frequently feel it as a "loss" and not merely as a "difference"?

One source of insight into this question is provided by a better understanding of the link between the words of a language and what they represent. Rather than being mere labels for objects and concepts that exist universally across cultures, words function as representations of the collective experience of the speakers of a particular culture. Words "mean" what the speakers of a culture have come to agree that they mean, and those meanings are shaped by the unique history of that particular culture. Perhaps most revealing, words have not only direct referential meaning, but also associations—with current and past events, with attitudes, and ultimately with cultural values. What, for example, does the word *tradition* mean to speakers of American English, British English, French, Russian, Chinese, or Swahili? What is the time frame for *tradition*, and what does it encompass? Is it viewed as an essential foundation for the present and future or as an impediment to progress? Is it viewed positively or negatively, or do different attitudes toward tradition divide society? Has it always been so? Consider personal *identity*. Is *identity* viewed in terms of the individual, as in the United States, or is it inescapably intertwined with the individual's place in society, with relation to a social collective? Has it been an issue to engage writers and thinkers over time, or has it not figured prominently in a culture's intellectual history?

Such questions are inextricably linked with language and can be explored only superficially, if at all, through translation. Understanding a culture's language provides the entree into the system of meanings and history in which that culture is preserved and transmitted. Not only words reveal these meanings, but also phrasings, the construction of discourse, and the combination of language and behavior through social ritual. Understanding a foreign language can reveal ways of seeing the world which may be inexpressible in one's own language. In the continuing exploration that is education, such understanding provides depth and breadth in the investigation of issues fundamental to the individual and to societies.

## Which Language to Study

Do you continue with a language you have already studied, or begin a new one? Should you choose a language that is relatively familiar to you, or step outside of your previous experience to study one that is entirely new? Perhaps you already know the answers to these questions, or perhaps this brochure will suggest possibilities, but in any case it may be helpful to discuss your options with knowledgeable people at Harvard. Bear in mind that with such a broad range of offerings, few freshman advisors (except, perhaps, professional linguists) possess the kind of knowledge that will help you make an informed choice among languages. Advisors must juggle enormous amounts of information and can hardly be expected to be experts in every discipline. Even the best advisors may be limited by their own experience or even unduly influenced by it.

### Languages Taught at Harvard (by Department)

Celtic	Classics	East Asian	English	Germanic
Early Irish	Latin	Chinese	Old English	German
Early Welsh	Classical Greek	Japanese		Dutch
Modern Irish	Modern Greek	Korean		Swedish
Modern Welsh		Manchu		Old Norse
Modern Scottish Gaelic		Mongolian		Middle High German
Modern Breton		Tibetan		
		Vietnamese		

Linguistics	Near Eastern	Romance	Sanskrit and Indian	Slavic
Indo-European	Arabic	Catalan	Sanskrit	Russian
Hittite	Hebrew	French	Urdu-Hindi	Ukrainian
Old Church Slavonic	Akkadian	Italian	Tibetan	Polish
	Sumerian	Portuguese	Thai	Czech
	Syriac	Spanish	Pali	Croatian, Serbian, and Bosnian
	Armenian		Nepali	
	Persian			
	Swahili*			
	Turkish			
	Yiddish			
	Old Iranian			
	Middle Iranian			

\*Beginning in 2003-04, a new program in African languages will be offered by the Dept of African and Afro-American Studies

The best place to get more information about language offerings is in the departments where the languages themselves are taught. Many departments have faculty who are in charge of language programs, who will be well-informed about course offerings and students' experiences. They can discuss course content, refer you to specific instructors, relate experience of other freshmen in their courses, and assist with placement questions. They can often provide advice about study-abroad opportunities or future employment options, or at least direct you to other sources of information. Don't be shy about approaching such faculty, even if your questions are exploratory. They are eager to share their experience and their interest with new students.

Harvard offers instruction in the ancient and modern languages listed in the table on the previous page. Some languages not listed here may be available through departments by special arrangement. In the second part of this brochure, each department presents an introduction to its offerings and information about faculty to contact with questions, along with their office addresses and phone numbers.

The descriptions in this brochure are designed to whet your appetite. More information is available from faculty at the Language Advising Session on Friday, September 12, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. in Boylston Hall (see Freshman Calendar) or in their departments.

### **Language Citations and Planning Your Language Study**

You can earn a Language Citation by taking four half-courses in the same foreign language above the first-year level, at least two of them at the third-year level or beyond. Language and literature/civilization departments have their own lists of approved courses but, in general, any language or literature course given in the foreign language will count toward a citation, which will appear on your official transcript.

A Language Citation allows you to offer proof, upon graduation, of a high level of competency in a foreign language, an advantage when applying for graduate programs, grants, or employment. If you are interested in obtaining a Language Citation during your four years at Harvard, plan ahead, as you will benefit more from your language study if you take courses in consecutive semesters. You also may want to plan your courses around a study-abroad or work-abroad experience. You can find out more about Language Citations at the Freshman Language Advising Session during Freshman Week (see Freshman Week Calendar), in the "Handbook for Students" or at language and literature-civilization departments.

## **Celtic Languages**

The oldest extant Irish and Welsh texts date from the sixth century, justifying the claim that the Celts possess the oldest non-classical literature of Europe. Such genres as heroic poetry and saga, eulogistic and elegiac poetry, history and law, satire and parody, wondertale and myth, are all richly attested in Celtic literature from earliest times to the twentieth century. Celtic tradition has influenced both the Latin and the vernacular literatures of medieval Europe, being the source, e.g., of the Arthurian cycle. Celtic studies also entail such related subjects as the archaeology of the ancient Celts, history and social institutions of the Celtic countries, and the precarious interaction of the latter-day Celts and English- and French-speaking majorities.

The Celtic languages comprise two groups: the Goidelic (Gaelic) group is represented by Irish, Scottish, and Manx; the Brittonic is represented by Welsh, Cornish, and Breton. Of these, four are still spoken: Irish and Scottish Gaelic, Welsh, and, in northwest France, Breton. The Celtic Department offers instruction on a regular basis in Old and Middle Irish, Middle Welsh, Modern Irish, Modern Welsh. Modern Scottish Gaelic is offered occasionally, and Breton less so. The emphasis in the older languages is on providing the student with a sufficient grasp of the grammar to begin reading the wide array of texts still extant. Many of these have been edited with students in mind and most editions have a full glossary and notes designed to help the student through the more difficult passages. The emphasis in the modern languages is on both reading and speaking. For more advanced students, there is ample opportunity to read and study the classics of early and modern Celtic literature in the original language.

The Celtic languages and their literatures have been taught steadily at Harvard for over a hundred years, with a separate department established in 1940. Undergraduates with a strong interest in Celtic usually choose Folklore and Mythology as a concentration, for it allows Celtic as an area specialization. In any case, undergraduates are welcome to enroll in any of the language courses offered by the department, including those marked "primarily for graduate students."

### **For further information**

The Department of Celtic Languages and Literatures is located in the Barker Center, Warren House, 12 Quincy St., telephone 495-1206. URL: <http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~celtic>

## Classical Languages

The **Greek** and **Latin** languages provide access to the two cultures and literatures that have been immeasurably influential in the tradition of Western civilization, broadly defined. The Department of the Classics offers a variety of courses for those who wish to explore the linguistic and literary heritage of ancient Greece and Rome, of Medieval Latin, of Byzantine and Modern Greek. By sophomore year, or in the freshman year with some prior language background, students can be reading in Greek—to name just a few—the works of Homer, the lyric poets, the Greek tragedians or Plato; in Latin, Cicero, Catullus, Horace, Virgil and Ovid; the rich tradition of medieval Latin, of Byzantine Greek, or the poetry of Cavafy in Modern Greek. The department offers beginning and beginning intensive Ancient Greek and Latin, and beginning Modern Greek, courses of interest in themselves for the linguistically curious, but also ones which are directed at preparing students for further study in the languages and literatures of the ancient world, and in the traditions that continue from that world through to the present.

Greek, and particularly Latin, are also of great relevance to a number of other areas of study. As the parent language of French, Italian, Spanish and other Romance languages, Latin reveals a great deal about the mechanics of those languages, and about their relationships to each other. Likewise the major literary genres of these national languages, as of English, from epic to lyric to drama to the novel, all have their roots in the two Classical literatures. At the same time both Greek and Latin provide access to the technical foundations of the disciplines of law and medicine, and concentrators in Classics have gone on to Law School and Medical School as well as to careers in teaching at all levels.

Through its own courses, and through concentration credit for courses in other departments and in the Core Curriculum, the Classics Department encourages its students to appreciate the whole range of classical civilization from the Bronze Age to Byzantium and medieval Europe. Its faculty provides instruction in the major fields of classical study—language, literature, archaeology, history, philosophy, and religion. In conformity with its conviction that Classics lies at the root of many important academic subjects, the department supports a large number of joint concentrations with other departments. It is hoped that a Classics graduate will have acquired the kind of humane education that has distinguished so many of the great men and women who have shaped Western culture. The department also supports study in Athens or Rome, generally in the junior year.

**For further information**

The Department of the Classics is located on the second floor of Boylston Hall (Boylston 204). For further information about the department, or to make an appointment with the Director of Undergraduate Studies, call 459-5216. The Classics Department website can be found at [www.fas.harvard.edu/~classics](http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~classics).

## **East Asian Languages**

Harvard offers instruction in a variety of East Asian languages, including classical and modern Chinese, classical and modern Japanese, Korean, Manchu, Mongolian, Vietnamese, and literary Tibetan. Speakers of these languages make up approximately one quarter of the world's population, and the increasing political and economic prominence of the countries they represent have made their study of critical importance in recent years, not only for practical career goals, but also for an understanding of the comprehensive range of human experience on this planet. They are offered within the Department of East Asian Languages and Civilizations, which also houses three fully-staffed subprograms in Chinese, Japanese, and Korean language.

Harvard's reputation as a prominent center for the study of East Asia, combined with opportunities to pursue advanced language training, offers our students diverse avenues to explore these languages and cultures. Department courses attract a wide range of students—most, in fact, from concentrations other than East Asian Studies. Many intend to integrate language training with a concentration in the humanities or social sciences. Others are motivated by personal interests such as family history, an attraction to the modes of artistic expression, or career design.

Classes are small, with ten to twelve students per section. We strive for a fast-paced tempo, stimulating material, and a congenial, fun atmosphere that retains a respect for individual learning styles. A palpable sense of camaraderie builds among classmates from a shared sense of accomplishment in the language. This draws both students and teachers into new perspectives on language, learning, and culture.

### **Chinese**

The Chinese Language Program offers one of the most extensive curricula in Mandarin Chinese to be found at any American university. Mandarin is the official language of government administration, broadcast media, and international commerce in the People's Republic of China and Taiwan. It also shares official status with English in Singapore. Modern Standard Mandarin—a term that describes the language as taught to non-natives— is based on the Mandarin of northeast China, of which Beijing is the political and cultural center. Mandarin speakers comprise approximately 70% of the nation's population.

We offer classes for those who have never heard a word of Chinese, as well as for those who come with some previous experience. Our intermediate and advanced courses improve conversation and reading and writing skills so our

students can discuss issues and events, do research, and/or prepare for careers requiring international experience. In addition to the four sequential, year-long courses of instruction, we offer classes designed for targeted audiences: Mandarin for Cantonese speakers, advanced conversational Mandarin, and Literary Chinese, consisting of two year-long courses which cover two thousand years of written Chinese history, literature and thought. We also offer several courses tailored for students with some level of bilingual ability in Mandarin and English.

In recent years, we have offered Cantonese Chinese for students with an intermediate level of proficiency in Mandarin. Cantonese is spoken throughout the southern coastal province of Guangdong and Hong Kong. This region has a dramatic commercial and political history and is leading the economic growth and restructuring that is reaching across China.

Each year, a handful of Harvard students spend one or two semesters in residence at language schools in China—typically at the best known universities in China and Taiwan. Students report that their time abroad contributes not only to language enrichment but also to a rare and lasting view of Chinese society and culture.

### **Japanese**

Japanese is the language spoken by 120 million natives of the Japanese islands and by an additional 2 million people outside of Japan, primarily in Brazil and the United States. Parallel to the emergence of Japan as the world's second greatest economic power over the past several decades, its language is increasingly becoming a medium of communication on the international business scene, not only in Asia, but across the globe, including the United States. Japan is also the home of one of the world's oldest continuously existing civilizations. The study of Japanese is thus rewarding not only for its practical benefits, but also for the introduction it offers to a rich cultural and literary tradition still largely unknown to the majority of Westerners.

Harvard offers a full course of study in standard Japanese, the dialect of Japanese spoken in Tokyo and the areas surrounding it. The elementary course (Japanese Ba, b) assumes no background in the language and develops basic survival-level skills in the language, including the ability to read and write *hiragana*, *katakana*, and approximately 200 Chinese characters. Additional characters are introduced successively throughout the second and third years. At the end of the third year, students will have been exposed to the majority of the 1,945 characters established as "common use" characters (*jooyoo kanji*) by the Ministry of Education in Japan. Advanced students with an interest in

literature may take courses in classical Japanese and *kanbun* offered by the literature faculty in the Department of East Asian Languages and Civilizations.

To respond to the diverse needs of our students and to equip them with the practical language skills needed to function in an increasingly internationalized and competitive marketplace, the Harvard Japanese Program commits itself to a proficiency-based teaching philosophy and its implementation at all levels of instruction. This means a commitment to accuracy and creativity in the use of language and to a parallel mastery of all four skills of speaking, listening, reading, and writing—even at the advanced levels, where increasingly complex reading tasks traditionally dominate class time.

The integration of in-class learning with the extra-curricular life of students is an essential part of successful language learning, and the Japanese Language Program actively encourages such integration. For example, the program sponsors a host-family program through which third-year students are put in contact with volunteer expatriate Japanese families in the Boston area. Students in this program meet with their host families for language and cultural exchange throughout their third year of study. The program also sponsors summer work internships at corporations in Japan for intermediate and advanced students of Japanese. The host companies not only provide summer salary and housing for students, but, in some cases, also pay travel costs to Japan and back.

### **Korean**

The Korean Language Program, one of America's oldest and most comprehensive, is central to a vibrant and growing Korean Studies community at Harvard. The recent establishment of an endowed professorship in Korean literature and expanding activities of the Korea Institute have complemented Harvard's longstanding leadership in the field of Korean history. The rise of The Republic of Korea as an important trading nation in the global economy has fueled a growing interest in acquiring language skills useful for academic, cultural and commercial interaction with this dynamic land of 45 million. Issues and problems related to the eventual reunification of the ROK with the Democratic People's Republic in the North also make mastery of the Korean language an asset for students pursuing professional careers in international security affairs or government service.

Instruction in Korean is offered at all levels of proficiency: There are courses at the beginning, intermediate and advanced levels, as well as reading and translation courses for advanced students cultivating skills for textual research in history and the social sciences or for studies of literature, art or religion. Coursework at all levels focuses on speaking proficiency as well as on reading

and writing. From the elementary level students gradually acquire a repertoire of the Chinese characters (*hanja*) necessary for full reading proficiency.

Beginning classes assume no background in Korean. A considerable number of students at the beginning and intermediate levels are Americans of Korean ancestry; however, these classes also include men and women of diverse backgrounds with a broad spectrum of personal and professional interests in studying Korean. Undergraduates and graduate students concentrating on other East Asian countries often find that a knowledge of Korean language is useful for their scholarly endeavors. Professionals in such fields as law and business increasingly undertake the study of Korean for career opportunities or for the access it provides to a society commonly regarded as a model for other industrializing countries.

The Korean Language Program encourages students to explore opportunities to study in Korea, including for credit, at language institutes affiliated with leading Korean universities. In some cases summer programs of overseas language study may qualify for financial support from such sources as the Korea Foundation. Language study by graduate students may also be supported by sources which are monitored by Harvard's Korea Institute. The Korean Language Program further encourages students to participate in extra-curricular activities ranging from "language tables" in the undergraduate houses to dramatic events and presentations by visitors from Korea. The large number of native speakers of Korean living in the Boston area represent another valuable resource from which students in the Program benefit. Opportunities also exist in Korea for summer internships with business enterprises, financial institutions, civic groups, or government agencies.

### **Manchu**

Manchu is offered for a full academic year in alternate years. Manchu, together with Chinese, was the official language of the last dynasty ruling China. Historical, religious, and literary works, as well as documentary sources have been written in Manchu from the early 1600's, and Manchu continues to be used by the Sibe, a minority nationality in China. As archival research in the People's Republic of China uncovers increasingly large collections of Manchu documents, knowledge of Manchu has become essential for original research in a variety of areas, ranging from the pre-dynastic history of the Manchus, to ethnic history, frontier history, and most areas of institutional history from the 17th to the 19th centuries.

### **Mongolian**

Classical Mongolian is offered for a full academic year in alternate years. The program, which focuses on reading and translating ability, is aimed at introducing mostly graduate students to Classical Mongolian as a research tool for their work in history, linguistics, religion, and other areas of research. The first course is mainly devoted to getting students acquainted with the Mongol script, vocabulary, and basic grammar. It includes simple readings from standard historical and religious texts. The spring course focuses on more advanced grammatical knowledge and is meant to introduce students to a wider variety of texts, ranging from the pre-classical to the modern.

### **Vietnamese**

Harvard is one of the few universities in the USA that has been offering Vietnamese for many years. Vietnamese is the official language of Vietnam, spoken by 70 million people in Vietnam and approximately 2 million overseas Vietnamese including about 1 million Vietnamese Americans. It belongs to the subfamily of Mon-Khmer languages in the Austroasiatic family of languages. Vietnamese has three main dialects: northern, central, and southern. The dialectal differences concern both the vocabulary and the phonetic system. However, Vietnamese everywhere understand each other despite these dialectal differences. All of the Vietnamese language courses offered at Harvard introduce the contemporary Hanoi dialect.

Vietnamese language courses provide students with the basic ability to understand, speak, read and write Vietnamese through an interactive and communication-oriented approach. Texts vary from readings on Vietnamese culture, ads taken from Vietnamese newspapers and magazines, short stories, poems, texts on Vietnamese geography, history, culture, and customs. Audio tapes, video clips, and similar materials are used to enhance students' listening skills.

### **For further information**

We encourage interested students to contact the Undergraduate Concentration in East Asian Studies, telephone 495-8365, with questions, and to visit the Program's offices at 9 Kirkland Pl. to meet with its faculty and staff members at any time.

The main offices of the Department of East Asian Languages and Civilizations are located at 2 Divinity Avenue, telephone 495-2754. The offices of the Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Vietnamese Programs are located at 5 Bryant Street, telephone 495-2961, web site <http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~eal>.

## English

"Old English" or "Anglo-Saxon" is the name for the English language and literature in the Early Medieval period, as well as for the period itself, c. 410-1100, in England. *Beowulf* is the most famous representative text, but the period produced a large body of literature remarkable in many different ways. In the restructured course offerings on this period the English Department offers a sequence of courses designed to synthesize many elements of the culture-history, art, religion, and literature-in its teaching of the language. Old English is sufficiently different from modern English that it must be learned as a foreign language, but unlike many others it can be learned quickly. Students are able to read sophisticated poetry by the end of the first term.

The basic sequence of courses is a fall and a spring term course, "Introduction to Anglo-Saxon Language and Culture" (English 102 and English 103), each organized around a specific topic that will shape the direction of the translations and outside reading. The themes and mixture of cultural elements will change and be signalled by varying subtitles in the course listings. Recent themes have included Representations of Women, Interpretations of the Past, Elegiac and Wisdom Poetry, The Old English Epic, and Heroic Poetry and its Social Contexts. The goal of these courses is to give a reading knowledge of Old English within a fuller understanding of some significant aspect of Anglo-Saxon culture.

### **For further information**

The Undergraduate English Department is located on the first and second floors of the Barker Center, 12 Quincy Street, telephone 495-2533. Interested students are also encouraged to contact Joseph Harris (495-9488), Daniel Donoghue (495-2505), or Nicholas Watson (495-0969). The English Department website can be found at [www.fas.harvard.edu/english](http://www.fas.harvard.edu/english).

## Germanic Languages

Whether you're interested in philosophy or literature, business or government, film, art, or music, you are invited to explore the resources of the Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures.

The Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures at Harvard is one of the oldest German departments in the United States. We offer a variety of courses in the languages spoken in Northern and Central Europe: German (the native tongue in Germany, Austria, Liechtenstein, and parts of Switzerland), Dutch (the language of the Netherlands and the Flemish regions of Belgium), Danish, and Swedish. We also offer courses in the older Germanic languages, Middle High German and Old Norse.

### German

Since the Middle Ages, people of the German-speaking regions of Europe have played a significant role in the cultural history of the world. Figures like Kant, Marx, Nietzsche, and Freud have had a pronounced impact on the development of modern thought. Goethe, Kafka, Bertolt Brecht, and Thomas Mann are but a few of the internationally renowned writers who have contributed to a rich literary tradition. And what would the classical music repertoire be without the works of Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, and Schubert?

From early history to the upheavals of the twentieth century, Germany and Austria have also played major roles on the world political stage. Today, with the central position of Germany and Austria in the European Union, knowledge of the German language is crucial for understanding the social, economic, and political changes that will affect not only Europe but the rest of the world as well. And next to English, German is the leading language of business in Europe.

If you would like to begin the study of German in your freshman year or if you would like to improve your present command of the language, the Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures offers courses ranging from elementary to advanced levels. For beginners we have German A (the regular full-year elementary course) and German Bab (an intensive course that covers a year's material in one term). At the intermediate level there is the sequence German Da-German Db. Our advanced courses focus on contemporary Berlin (German 60), German for business (German 65), current developments in Germany, Austria, and Europe (German 68), and stylistic analysis (German 193).

Because our classes are generally small (10 to 12 students), we are able to provide the practice and individual attention essential for developing fluency in speaking, understanding, reading, and writing in German. It is our goal in the

language program to provide our students with communication skills for professional and personal use and to afford them the opportunity to explore the diversified cultural spectrum of the German-speaking world through readings, film, and other media. Outside the classroom students can broaden their language abilities and cultural awareness by joining weekly “German tables” in the houses, where students meet over lunch or dinner to engage in German conversation with faculty members and native speakers, and by attending films, lectures, and other cultural activities. A particularly exciting venture is our Work Abroad Program, which places qualified students in summer jobs in Germany and Austria. Other valuable resources in the area include the Minda de Gunzburg Center for European Studies, which hosts European scholars in a number of different fields, and the Goethe-Institute Inter Nationes in Boston.

Aside from our language offerings, the Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures presents a rich and diverse selection of courses, from philosophy and poetry to film studies, literary criticism, and both classic and contemporary literature. The various concentration options are designed not only for students who choose to pursue graduate studies in literature but also for students who elect to follow careers in medicine, law, government, business, and other areas. The department encourages concentrators to study abroad at a German or Austrian university either for a term or for a full year.

### **The Scandinavian Program (Swedish and Danish)**

From the exploits of the Vikings to the plays of Strindberg and the films of Ingmar Bergman, the history and culture of Scandinavia present a fascinating area of study. In our Scandinavian program, we feature courses in elementary and intermediate Swedish, elementary Danish, and Old Norse. Outside the classroom, a weekly “Swedish table” affords students an opportunity to further develop their conversational skills. A concentration, as well as independent study, in the area of Scandinavian Studies is also available within the department.

### **Dutch**

During various periods in history, the Low Countries have played a pivotal role in the political, social, and intellectual development of Europe. And names such as Rubens, Rembrandt, Vermeer, and Van Gogh attest to the heights attained by Dutch and Flemish art and culture. As an introduction to this multifaceted region of Europe, the Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures offers an annual course in elementary Dutch.

**For further information**

The Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures is located on the third floor of Barker Center, 12 Quincy Street. For inquiries about German and Dutch, please contact Dr. Sylvia Rieger (office: Barker Center 348; phone: (617) 495-3548; e-mail: [rieger@fas.harvard.edu](mailto:rieger@fas.harvard.edu)). For questions concerning the Scandinavian program, please contact Annette Johansson-Los (office: Barker Center 344; phone: (617) 496-4935; e-mail: [alos@fas.harvard.edu](mailto:alos@fas.harvard.edu)). For information about Dutch, please contact Dr. Charles Lutcavage (office: Barker Center 356; phone: (617) 496-4926; e-mail: [lutcavag@fas.harvard.edu](mailto:lutcavag@fas.harvard.edu)). The German Department website can be found at [www.fas.harvard.edu/~german](http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~german). We look forward to meeting with you.

## Linguistics

Linguistics stands at the crossroads of the humanities and the sciences, and much of its special appeal derives from the interplay of intuition and rigor which the analysis of human language demands. The Department of Linguistics offers courses in both theoretical and historical linguistics.

Theoretical linguistics is concerned with the universal principles by which languages are structured. It not only deals with cross-linguistic comparison but also with the in-depth study of individual languages, in order to determine the limits within which languages may vary. Since humans alone possess language, the study of language provides an important window to the understanding of the human mind. Subfields of theoretical linguistics include syntax, the study of sentence structure, and phonology, the study of the sounds and sound systems of language.

The second emphasis of the department is historical linguistics, which attempts to understand the processes and principles by which languages change through time, and by which specific linguistic features come into existence. It also seeks to reconstruct extinct languages for which there are no written records, and to determine relationships among languages through the comparative method. The department is particularly strong in the field of Indo-European Linguistics, the study of the language family that includes English as well as the ancient classical languages, Greek, Latin, and Sanskrit.

The implications of linguistics are broad and interdisciplinary. Modern linguistics has provided a well-developed theory of a very complex domain of human knowledge. Therefore it has been a central arena of debate for philosophers of mind as well as psycholinguistics. Furthermore, since linguistic models of languages are formal, linguistics has a mutually beneficial relationship with computer science and artificial intelligence. Linguistics also offers a firm understanding of the nature of language to literary scholars and language teachers. Finally, to the extent that language reflects culture, the reconstruction of an extinct language can shed light on the physical surroundings and the social institutions of its speakers, and thus is of interest to anthropologists, sociologists, and archaeologists.

Languages taught in the Department of Linguistics include: Indo-European, Hittite, and Old Church Slavonic. In addition, a broad range of other languages are studied in courses with a specialized linguistic focus.

**For further information**

Contact the Department of Linguistics at 495-4054 or [lingdept@fas.harvard.edu](mailto:lingdept@fas.harvard.edu), or visit us on the third floor of Boylston Hall in Harvard Yard. For questions about the Core curriculum or the undergraduate concentration in Linguistics, contact the Head Tutor, Javier Martin-Gonzalez ([jmartin@fas.harvard.edu](mailto:jmartin@fas.harvard.edu)), or the Assistant Head Tutor (495-2549 or [ling-aht@fas.harvard.edu](mailto:ling-aht@fas.harvard.edu).) Our website can be found at [www.fas.harvard.edu/~lingdept](http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~lingdept).

## Near Eastern Languages

Have you ever considered the archaeology of the ancient Near East, or reading the Gilgamesh Epic in the original Akkadian? Have you considered exploring the richness of Medieval Islamic and Judaic civilizations through Arabic, Hebrew, and Persian sources? Are you interested in comparing religions, literatures and politics of the varied and complex areas of North Africa, the Middle East, and Central Asia?

The Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations offers a large number of ancient and modern languages that cover a vast historical, geographical, and disciplinary area: Akkadian, Arabic (Classical, Modern Standard, and Levantine vernacular), Aramaic, Amharic, Armenian, Ethiopic, Hebrew (Classical and Modern), Iranian (Avestan, Old Persian, Middle Persian: Sogdian and Khotanese), Persian, Sumerian, Swahili, Turkish (Ottoman and Modern) and Yiddish. Language study at NELC has always been distinguished by small classes and close contact between student and teacher.

Undergraduates may elect to study one or several languages as a component of one of the Department's areas of concentration:

- Akkadian and Sumerian Studies
- Arabic and Islamic Studies
- Archaeology of the Levant
- Armenian Studies
- Hebrew Bible
- Indo-Muslim Culture
- Iranian and Persian Studies
- Jewish Studies
- Semitic Philology
- Turkish Studies
- Yiddish Language and Literature

Undergraduates may study one or more NELC languages in conjunction with another department or discipline, informally, or through a combined concentration: Anthropology, Comparative Literature, Fine Arts, Government,

History (ancient, classical, medieval, and modern), Linguistics, Philosophy, the Study of Religion, and Sociology.

Students interested in combining their language study with a wider geographical or cultural area of specialization may consider studying a NELC language within one of the following university centers:

- Center for Middle Eastern Studies: Arabic, Hebrew, Persian, Turkish
- Inner Asian and Altaic Studies: Armenian, Iranian, Persian, Turkish
- Center for Jewish Studies: Hebrew, Yiddish
- African Studies: Amharic, Arabic, Swahili

The Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations encourages its students to pursue summer language study at programs established in Israel, Turkey, Morocco, Egypt, Jordan, and Yemen. Graduates in NELC languages have gone on to rewarding careers in teaching and research, archaeology, international law, finance and diplomacy.

**For further information**

The Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations is located at 6 Divinity Avenue, telephone 495-5757. The NELC website can be found at [www.fas.harvard.edu/~nelc](http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~nelc).

For questions concerning the undergraduate program, please contact Professor William Granara, Director of Undergraduate Studies, Fall 2003 (phone: 496-9065, email: [granara@fas.harvard.edu](mailto:granara@fas.harvard.edu)), or Professor Peter Machinis, Director of Undergraduate Studies, Spring 2004 (phone: 495-0333, email: [machinis@fas.harvard.edu](mailto:machinis@fas.harvard.edu)).

## Romance Languages

At Harvard, you can study Catalan, French, Italian, Portuguese or Spanish, as a total beginner or at whatever level you reached in high school. Through our many courses in language, literature, and culture, you can study the Romance world of the past or look into what is going on today in France, Spain, Latin America, Italy, Portugal and Brazil, as well as in other countries and regions where Romance languages are spoken. You will learn about these places and peoples by reading their literature, reading the press, or watching television news programs transmitted by satellite or via the web. Many of our courses use feature films, and a number include computer-based materials.

As you can see from the variety of offerings listed in the Courses of Instruction, we recognize that Harvard students are a diverse group who have many different reasons for studying the language or literature of a given culture. In our department, whose languages are spoken on five continents, as well as in the South Pacific, you can read many of the classic authors who have defined Western thought and civilization as we know it, as well as those who are voicing the ideas and experience of emerging nations. While united by the common language group to which they all belong, each of the sections of our department, French, Italian, Portuguese and Spanish has something special that can enrich your Harvard experience.

### Catalan

Joan Mirós whimsical sculptures and paintings, Antoni Gaudí's supple buildings, Salvador Dalí's irreverent creations, Pau Casals' lilting music, Mercè Rodoreda's subtle and sensitive prose: these are only some of the modern manifestations of Catalan culture, whose rich and vibrant history includes some of the world's most famous epic and lyric poetry and some of its most sophisticated and ancient political formations. A language of approximately nine million people in parts of Spain, France, and Italy, as well as Andorra, Catalan is an important European language that does not enjoy, however, the support and visibility of a sovereign nation-state apparatus. Barcelona, the capital of Catalonia, is one of the world's most visited cities, with extraordinary cultural and natural offerings. Valencia and the Balearic Islands (most notably, Mallorca), each with its own particular forms and traditions, attest to the diversity of the language. At present, the department offers beginning courses in Catalan, with the possibility of independent study and directed reading and research at the intermediate and advanced levels.□

## **French**

Sooner or later, regardless of your special interests or the concentration you may choose, during your years at Harvard you will feel the influence of France. Historically, France and its culture have played a major role in areas as diverse as philosophy, sociology, political science, cuisine, dance, art and cinema, as well as literature and literary theory. Today, French studies encompass the literature and culture of the entire French-speaking world both inside and outside of France, including many countries in Africa and the Caribbean, Belgium and Switzerland in Europe, and our northern neighbor, the Canadian province of Quebec. Some students are attracted to French by the beauty of the language; others are fascinated by the desire to study or live in France or in a francophone country and realize that to do so, they need to know the language. Along with language, courses in French in the Department of Romance Languages and Literatures allow students to study intellectual currents or literature, including the canon (the classics of French literature), contemporary philosophy and criticism, feminist writings, contemporary civilization, and francophone novels, poetry and cinema.

## **Italian**

Although you may not know it, you already speak Italian. Opera, piano, tempo, pasta, pizza, maestro and soprano are just a few examples of words that you use without realizing their Italian connection. But Italian is more than food and music. For you at Harvard, studying Italian will be like going beyond a few coastal resorts that you may know to explore a new and rich continent. There you will find that Italian is indeed the language of good things in life, but also the vehicle of a glorious tradition of masterpieces and landmarks of our civilization from Dante and Machiavelli to Pirandello and Fellini.

## **Portuguese**

Have you ever heard of Fernando Pessoa, the poet who sang with three voices? Have you ever seen images of Rio's colorful Carnival? Heard the sultry cadences of that most famous of bossa novas, "The Girl from Ipanema?" Moved to the rhythm of a samba? Do you remember the voyages of Vasco da Gama and Ferdinand Magellan? How about Brazil's thrilling World Cup victory? If you answered yes to any of these questions, you are already familiar with Luso-Brazilian culture.

But there is so much more. By studying Portuguese at Harvard, you will learn all about a culture known worldwide for its warmth, music, and poetry. You will find that Portuguese, spoken by almost 200 million people, is a language of both

great lyricism and great humor. And you may just learn how to dance and write poems yourself!

### **Spanish**

Spoken by more than 300 million people in the Iberian Peninsula, the Americas, North Africa and the Philippines, the Spanish language can claim a present and future as significant as its past. With Spanish now in wide use in the U.S., many people study Hispanic language, literatures and cultures for practical and professional reasons. But they find much more than nuts and bolts in the extraordinary language which has given world literature great geniuses like Cervantes, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, García Lorca, Borges, García Márquez, several Nobel laureates, and a stellar cast of enduring fictional archetypes (Celestina, the pícaro, Don Juan, Don Quixote and Sancho). Spanish courses at Harvard draw on a history rich in adventures and encounters: from the time of Spain's multicultural past, through the Christian Reconquest and global expansion, struggles for independence and democracy in Spain and in the Americas, to the growth of vibrant Spanish-speaking communities in North America. Courses in both Spanish and Latin American literature explore such areas as the relation between history and fiction, popular culture and film, poetic and narrative traditions and experimentation, the construction of national and social identities through literature, and women's writing.

### **For further information**

For information about the Department of Romance Languages and Literatures and about language study, literature courses, or concentration in French, Italian, Portuguese, and Spanish, you can consult the department's website at [www.fas.harvard.edu/~rll](http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~rll) or call (617) 495-2524. You are also welcome to visit us and to speak with our Undergraduate Advisers in Boylston Hall.

## **Sanskrit and Indian Studies**

India has fascinated the western imagination since Herodotus and Alexander, and more recently, Indian philosophy and religion have had special appeal for Americans. If you are interested in Tibetan Buddhism, in the ancient Indian epic, the Mahabharata, or in the religious poetry on Shiva or Krishna, the Sanskrit Department is the place to go!

Sanskrit has remained the sacred language of India, just as Latin was in medieval Europe-or still is at Harvard's Commencement! Sanskrit, supposed to be the language of the gods (devabhasha), is used not only in ceremonies and rituals of all kinds but also in official functions and on the radio. You can even use it as lingua franca in all of India and Nepal when traveling-provided you more or less restrict your conversation partners to Brahmins.

We have taught the ancient and modern forms of various Indian languages, ranging from the Archaic Sanskrit of the Vedas, the Classical Sanskrit of poets such as Kalidasa, to the late medieval and modern Hindi/Urdu of Kabir and Premchand. We include a whole range of other languages such as Nepali, the language of the Gurkhas of Nepal, Pali, the language of the oldest Buddhist canon, Thai with its still largely unexplored literature in several dialects within Thailand and with those of the closely linked Lao, the Shan of Burma and Ahom of Assam. Finally, Tibetan with its vast store of indigenous-not necessarily Buddhist-literature and with the Buddhist texts translated from Sanskrit, but lost in their homeland, India.

This kaleidoscope may already indicate that we teach Indian languages in close combination with a study of the civilizations of the subcontinent and its surrounding areas. Even in our beginner's classes we must necessarily explain such basic concepts as "dharma", what an old Indian chariot looks like, or what kind of offerings sons, to this very day, must perform for their deceased fathers. Without the knowledge of such details many passages in our texts would remain nothing but grammatical exercises, and that is not the reason why we study Indian languages.

Actually, these days such study is no longer strictly academic. As we can read in the press-and not only on the business pages-India has liberalized its economy and is becoming one of the world's largest consumer markets. While the business language is (Indian flavored) English and probably will remain so, Hindi/Urdu is supposed to be(come) the national language of India/Pakistan; the

knowledge of other regional languages is desirable if one wants to stay longer in the area or do research there.

If you come from a family with its roots somewhere in the subcontinent, you might want to study your mother tongue further so as to be able to read in it and to converse freely during visits. In this regard, if you are particularly interested in learning Hindi and Urdu, the most widely spoken languages in South Asia, we encourage you to consider our introductory and intermediate courses in which you will learn to sing the latest Hindi/Urdu songs from Indian cinema along with grammar, reading and writing. Previous students have found these courses to be an enjoyable way of fulfilling the college language requirement. (Note: The introductory course is taught every alternate year.)

Even if your specialization is in mathematics or biology, you are welcome in this Department. Many students opt for a double major, with a reduced course load in both areas of studies. In fact, to quote our former President Derek Bok, "Harvard was probably the only institution with large numbers of football players and outstanding mathematicians all flocking to Sanskrit." Still, our classes are small, and each student gets a lot of personal attention.

When it comes to job prospects... to have done Sanskrit means to be able to do anything, such as one of our former concentrators who took over a fish farm for his relative in Venezuela. Of course, you could also run a large research program in Nepal, if you prefer that. Others have gone to the Voice of America, to the press, to museums, or to teaching in one college or another.

#### **For further information**

The Department of Sanskrit and Indian Studies is located at 2 Divinity Ave., 495-3295, 496-8570, fax 496-8571. For information on individual languages contact Ali Asani (Urdu/Hindi), Parimal Patil (Sanskrit/Pali), Leonard van der Kuijp (Tibetan) and Michael Witzel (Sanskrit, Nepali, Thai). The Department of Sanskrit and Indian Studies website can be found at [www.fas.harvard.edu/~sanskrit](http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~sanskrit).

## Slavic Languages

For over a thousand years of recorded history the places and peoples of the lands of today's Eastern Europe and Russia have excited the curiosity and drawn the interest of visitors from East and West. Key to these peoples and cultures are the Slavic languages—Russian, Ukrainian, and Belorussian to the east, Polish, Czech, and Slovak to the west, and Slovenian, Croatian/Serbian, Macedonian, and Bulgarian to the south. All of the Slavic languages are closely related to each other, but they are also related to the Romance and Germanic languages, including English, and to others in the Indo-European family. In spite of the linguistic similarities of the Slavic languages, in culture, religion, history, and political tradition these countries and peoples have followed different paths—paths that have frequently crossed in the creation and disintegration of empires in the constantly changing political landscape of Eastern Europe.

The Slavic department offers instruction in five of the Slavic languages: Russian, Ukrainian, Polish, Czech, and Croatian/Serbian. Most students who take these courses start as beginners although there is a rich variety of offerings at the intermediate and advanced levels. Russian offers the greatest diversity in course offerings, but the other Slavic languages are well represented. Most students in Slavic language and literature courses are not concentrators (although the department has a fully developed concentration program with several options for specialization), but rather students who are combining the study of one or more of these languages with other concentrations and interests. Many students are attracted to the combination of Russian (or another language) with literature, history, government, economics, social studies, mathematics or science—in fact, students from virtually every concentration available at Harvard are found in the department's classes. Whether students plan careers in business, law, public service, medicine, education, or academe, study of these languages provides an added dimension to the educational experience and insight into cultures with very different experiences and attitudes. Students in the sciences may find special practical benefits, since over 28% of the world's scientific literature is produced in Russian, offering immediate access to scientific literature without the intermediate step of translation. In spite of the difficulty of these languages, students can attain a rewarding level of fluency in just a few semesters of study.

As in most languages at Harvard, classes are small and students work closely with both faculty and other students in a highly interactive format for effective language learning. In addition to language there are, of course,

literature, history, government, and courses in other fields to choose from. Outside of class there is an array of choices, from campus-based language tables to Russian television, film series, concerts, and the incredibly rich resources of two centers and one institute which focus on this area of the world. The Davis Center for Russian Studies, the Minda de Gunzburg Center for European Studies, and the Ukrainian Research Institute bring together specialists from all over the world to offer a daily variety of lectures and events concerning the languages, literatures, history, politics, and cultures of these nations. For those interested in current events, Harvard is a frequent stop for political leaders, both established and rising hopefuls, and many Harvard faculty maintain close ties with people and projects in these countries. Off campus but still locally convenient there are even more opportunities, since the Boston area's large émigré population supports cultural events, restaurants, stores, and even a Russian newspaper. Students wishing to study abroad will receive help in choosing from a number of options, and those seeking the experience of working abroad in these countries can receive guidance in how to go about job-hunting.

### **Russian**

Russia has long fascinated the Western imagination, with its huge land mass extending eastward from the center of Europe to the Pacific, its sui generis Christianity, its culture walled off from the European Renaissance by two centuries of Tartar occupation and then, after another two centuries, forcibly and imperfectly harnessed to European models by Peter the Great, its self-image—no less than the image held of it by outsiders ----- replete with accumulated contradictions and mysteries. In the nineteenth century this autocratic society astonished the world by producing several generations of brilliant novelists, playwrights and poets whose art, broadly accessible and profoundly democratic, touched depths of human experience seldom plumbed before. The main character in Tolstoy, Dostoevsky and Chekhov seemed to Virginia Woolf to be the human soul itself, presented with unprecedented fullness, directness, and variety. But by the time she wrote of these matters in the early 1920s, Russia had already passed through a brilliant Silver Age of modernist experiment in all the arts, and was now embarked on one of the defining experiences of the twentieth century, the great, tragic and utopian experiment of Communism, which ended with unforeseen abruptness (and with consequences still unforeseeable) in 1991. Here is endlessly fascinating material for students of human nature, modern writing in its many forms, political theory and practice, history, economics, high culture and mass culture—and it is available for first-hand exploration through an incomparably rich and expressive

language which, once acquired, can be used to open new doors throughout a lifetime.

Whether you are interested in the language, culture, literature, or history and politics, you will find courses to exercise both your linguistic abilities and your mind, and a friendly community of students and faculty eager to welcome you to this fascinating area of study. The department's Russian program has the largest selection of courses of any college or university in the country, with a number of innovative "topic courses" at the intermediate and advanced levels. Study here or study abroad, in dozens of locations from European Russia to Siberia, for a unique and unforgettable language experience.

### **Ukrainian**

Ukrainian is the the second largest Slavic language, with some 46 million speakers living in Eastern Europe, Central Asia, as well as North and South America and Australia.

Studying Ukrainian gives motivated students a unique opportunity to discover the psychology, history and culture of the land that for centuries had been a battleground of three rival European Empires - Austro-Hungarian, Russian and the Ottoman.

With many possibilities for travel and study in Kyiv, Lviv, Kharkiv, and other centers of independent Ukraine, the time has never been better for students to develop Ukrainian language abroad and at home. Explore the rich and diverse heritage of Ukrainian literature from its exuberant folklore through the powerful poetry of Shevchenko to the lean precision of the twentieth century avant-garde - from the legends and history of Kyiven Rus to the glory and turmoil of Cossackdom to the haunting legacy of Chernobyl. With Ukrainian you have an important tool for understanding the growing political and economic power of Ukraine in the Eastern European context, as well as the acute problems that plague many post-Communist nations.

The Department offers a full year of Ukrainian, followed by special courses and tutorials depending on student interest. Harvard is a center of Ukrainian studies and there is an unusually rich offering of courses in literature, history, and government. Summer study is convenient at Harvard, and study abroad in Ukraine is encouraged.

### **Czech**

The oldest Czech literary document (a spiritual hymn) dates from the end of the 11th century—by the fourteenth century Czech possessed all the genres current in medieval literature and stands comparison with all the Western

literatures of its time. After a decline connected with the Kingdom of Bohemia's loss of independence in the seventeenth century, the language and literature were re-cultivated at the end of the eighteenth century. Today about ten million people speak Czech as their first language. Several twentieth-century Czech writers have achieved an international reputation, including Jaroslav Hašek, Karel Čapek, Josef Škvorecký, Milan Kundera and Václav Havel. The Czech Republic is one of the liveliest and most popular countries in Europe for foreign tourism, trade and investment, with Prague long a magnet for western visitors.

The Department offers a full year of Czech study followed by special courses and tutorials depending on student interest. Study abroad is encouraged through Charles University in Prague.

### **Polish**

Polish is the language of a nation which, with its almost 40 million people today, is the largest ethnic group in Central Europe. Its more than a thousand year long history, one extraordinary even by Central European standards, has included periods of political dominance and triumphs of the libertarian spirit intertwined with those of catastrophic defeats and subjugation to neighboring powers. Yet it is precisely this continuous facing of real or potential adversity that produced the incomparable cultural phenomenon which is Polish literature. Often tragic but always witty, steeped in both the local and all-European tradition, yet daringly innovative, serving weighty causes and still self-ironic and irreverent, it boasts an astonishing number of fascinating figures. Renaissance and Baroque courtiers and country squires entertaining their friends with poems and tales, Catholic bishops writing caustic anti-conservative satires during the Age of Enlightenment, great Romantic bards and Positivist novelists of the nineteenth century whose pens were mightier than any swords, and the world-famous poets, fiction writers and playwrights of our times: all of them make studying Polish language and literature one great and highly rewarding intellectual adventure.

The Department offers one year of Polish followed by special courses and tutorials depending on student interest. Study abroad is easily arranged through the Kosciuszko Foundation.

### **Croatian, Serbian, and Bosnian**

The unity achieved in 1918 on the territory that was to become Yugoslavia was but a brief minute in the long and tumultuous history of these South Slavs. Although the many dialects united in name as Serbo-Croatian (spoken by the largest proportion of the population) are sufficiently similar to be considered one

language, patterns of religious allegiance, local independence, invasion and conquest have exerted powerful forces for separation. Croatia, Catholic rather than Orthodox, and once part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, uses the Latin alphabet and has long had ties to the West. Serbia, Orthodox in religion but invaded and defeated by the Ottoman Empire at Kosovo in 1389, uses the Cyrillic alphabet and has traditionally looked to the East. The Ottoman occupation of Bosnia and Hercegovina resulted in the adoption of Islam by a significant portion of the population, further complicating the picture. Through centuries of migration, communities of diverse ethnicity and religion have struggled to co-exist on this embattled territory.

After the break-up of Yugoslavia, speakers of Serbo-Croatian returned to the use of separate designations for their languages: Croatian, Bosnian, Serbian. Yet this political act does not revoke their linguistic similarity. As you study Croatian and Serbian you will learn the pattern of similarities and differences between these two variants, while choosing one to be the variant you will learn to speak and write, and you will become familiar with Bosnian as well. Knowledge of Croatian, Serbian, and Bosnian is your first step toward an in-depth understanding of these intricate societies, their history and realities from the Middle Ages to the present. Travel abroad or use the languages right here: work with refugees, listen to great rock-and-roll, pursue research using original texts, engage in debates on the current armed conflicts, discover the complexities of the Balkans. Savor the beauty of these spoken languages, their magical poetry, prose, folklore, films.

#### **For further information**

The Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures is located on the third floor of the Barker Center, 12 Quincy St., department telephone: 495-4065, department email: [slavic@fas.harvard.edu](mailto:slavic@fas.harvard.edu). You are invited to stop by, call, or email the department with any questions. For questions about language you may wish to contact Professor Patricia Chaput, Director of the Language Program, e-mail: [chaput@fas.harvard.edu](mailto:chaput@fas.harvard.edu), telephone: 495-4065. For literature or combining a Slavic language with other subjects see the Director of Undergraduate Studies -- Professor Sue Brown, (office: Barker 328; email: [sbrown@fas.harvard.edu](mailto:sbrown@fas.harvard.edu); phone: 495-2457). The Slavic Department website can be found at [www.fas.harvard.edu/~slavic](http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~slavic).

## Course Planner

**2003-2004**

Fall	Spring

**2004-2005**

Fall	Spring

**2005-2006**

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Fall	Spring

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