Why Study Language, Literature, and Culture?

Studies show that studying language and culture improves cognitive and critical thinking abilities. It also improves one’s chances in the job-market. Majoring in a program in which people and cultures are studied through the language of their expression and creation provides the tools necessary for an understanding of diverse societies and international partners, and in today’s global economy, this is increasingly what employers seek. Government agencies, multinational corporations, and nongovernmental organizations are now more than ever calling on people who can speak, read, and write in more than one language and think from more than one angle. Employees who can communicate effectively and appreciate cultural differences are crucial to international collaboration and trade, and are often seen as a bridge to an untapped client pool.

why Jewish Studies?

Humanities, a Jewish Studies major not only trains students in a field, it also teaches them how to analyze texts and weigh evidence, interpreting data, and summarizing and presenting information. Jewish Studies majors will develop a variety of skills that are attractive to employers across all fields. Some of the top skills you may develop include:

• Using original sources
• Critique
• Ability to read, reflect, and multiple points of view/
cultures
• Creative and quick thinking
• Synthesizing information
• Analyzing texts and information
• Evaluating results
• Time management skills
• Evaluating results
• Comparing/contrasting
• Analyzing texts and information
• Synthesizing information
• Creative and quick thinking
• Understanding of culture and language from a historical perspective

In the National Association of Colleges & Employers' (NACE) 2011 Job Outlook, the skills and abilities such employers are seeking were listed in order of importance. The top ten skills were:

• Communication (verbal)
• Strong work ethic
• Teamwork
• Analytical skills
• Initiative
• Problem-solving skills

Organizations consistently seek candidates who possess a collection of “transferrable skills” - skills acquired through your classes, extracurricular involvement, experience, and hobbies that are applicable to virtually any position. The skills listed above all fit into this category and students in the Arts & Humanities, as noted by professionals and academics alike, participate in a rich curriculum that develops their skills in many, if not all, of these areas and beyond, making them extremely marketable and valuable to potential employers. In the current Recruiting Trends report put out by the Collegiate Employment Research Institute, nearly 40% of employers indicate that they will seek candidates across “all majors,” focusing more on the skills and abilities needed in the organization than on a specific academic discipline.

What Skills Does a Degree in Language, Literature, and Culture Provide?

Language, Literature, and Culture majors develop a variety of skills that are attractive to employers across all fields. Some of the top skills you may develop include:

• Finding solutions to intricate problems
• Effective written and oral communication
• Perceiving the world from multiple points of view
• Understanding of complex problems
• Capacity to discern patterns/structures
• Gathering information
• Ability to read, reflect, and critique
• Using original sources
• Expertise in team building & collaboration
• Interpreting data
• Careful listening capacity
• Summarizing and presenting information
• Time management skills
• Evaluating results
• Comparing/contrasting
• Analyzing texts and information
• Synthesizing information
• Understanding of culture and language from a historical perspective

Studying language, culture, and literature in an SLLC program in Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Hebrew, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Persian, Portuguese, Romance Languages, Russian, or Spanish can open the gate to a broad array of careers in the complex service and information economy we are now part of.
What Can I Do With a Language, Literature, and Culture Degree?

A Language, Literature, and Culture degree can be shaped to fit a variety of disciplines. According to the University Career Center & The President’s Promise most recent graduate survey, ARHU students have recently entered a range of dynamic industries, including:

- Government, Academia/Education, Communications/Media, Non-Profit/Philanthropy, Health Services/Health Care, Advertising, Technology, Food & Hospitality Services, Entertainment, Social Services and more!

Sample job titles include:

- Archivist
- FBI Agent
- Police Officer
- Civil Service Employee
- Bilingual Educator
- Peace Corps Volunteer
- Foreign Diplomat
- Translator
- Intelligence Specialist
- Copywriter
- Interpreter
- Tour Guide
- Foreign Service Officer
- Cultural Officer
- Sales Representative
- Human Resources Director
- Editor
- Proofreader
- Investment Analyst
- Travel Journalist
- International Banking Officer
- Paralegal
- Museum Curator
- Business Analyst
- Professor
- Negotiator
- Lawyer
- International Trade Specialist
- National Security Agent
- Linguist
- Cross-cultural Specialist
- Tour Guide
- Foreign Service Officer
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- Museum Curator
- Business Analyst
- Professor
- Negotiator
- Lawyer
- International Trade Specialist
- National Security Agent
- Linguist
- Cross-cultural Specialist

Gaining Experience With Your Degree

It’s never too early to start your search for experience. Ideally, you should begin at least one semester in advance. Make an appointment to talk with the University Career Center & The President’s Promise and/or your department internship coordinator and faculty advisor. Research shows that having an internship (or multiple internships) drastically increases your ability to obtain a fulltime position upon graduation, especially since most employers use their intern pool as a direct talent pipeline. The most recent NACE Internship & Co-op Survey reported that 44.6% of employers’ hires came from their internship programs. The College of Arts & Humanities ensures that students can have an internship experience prior to graduating, offering numerous credit-granting courses for experiential education at the college and departmental level.

Internships enable students to gain a sense of what it would be like to work in a particular field as they develop marketable skills and establish contacts that may lead to a job offer upon graduation. To get started, visit the University Career Center & The President’s Promise website (www.Careers.umd.edu) and sign up for a Careers4Terps account, a free web-based job posting service, to search for internships and employment.

Have questions? Need an appointment? Contact Kate Juhl, Program Director
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