

LANGUAGE STUDIES at SAIS EUROPE

The Language Program offers classes that prepare students to fulfill the language graduation requirements at SAIS. An adequate preparation for any career in international relations requires the ability to use at least one foreign language for professional purposes. SAIS language courses are tailored to meet the students' professional needs while integrating language skills with the interdisciplinary curriculum of the school. A wide range of up-to-date materials on economics, energy, international relations, history and politics will ensure that students develop the vocabulary and communication skills that are relevant to their studies and career goals. Students engage in debates, essay writing, presentations and simulations.

Languages offered at SAIS Europe are Arabic, English, French, German, Italian, Russian, and Spanish. Courses are taught from the beginner through the advanced level, with the exception of English, which is offered only at the advanced levels.

LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS FOR ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

M.A.I.R.:

- Native English speakers are required to pass a proficiency exam in one of the following languages offered at SAIS:

Both Campuses	SAIS Europe Only	Washington, DC Only
Arabic	German *	Chinese ***
English	Italian **	Indonesian
French		Japanese
Russian		Korean
Spanish		Persian (Farsi)

* May be available through virtual instruction for second-year students at SAIS DC

** Second-year courses may be offered at SAIS DC

*** MAIR candidates at SAIS Europe can take classes at the Confucius Institute, University of Bologna

- Non-native English speakers must either pass the English Proficiency Exam or take Advanced-level English courses until they successfully complete the Advanced-High II level.
- PhD students only need to pass the reading proficiency exam to meet their second foreign language graduation requirement.

M.A.G.R.:

- Non-native English speakers must pass the English Proficiency Exam or 2 semesters of English courses.

M.A.I.A.:

- Native English speakers are required to pass a proficiency exam in one of the foreign languages offered on campus at SAIS Europe (Arabic, French, German, Italian, Russian, and Spanish).
- Non-native English speakers must pass the English Proficiency Exam

M.E.P.P.:

- Non-native English speakers must sit the English Proficiency Exam in order to ascertain whether they need extra English instruction during the academic year.

M.I.P.P.:

- Non-native English speakers must pass the English Proficiency exam or 2 semesters of English courses.

One-Year Diploma:

- Native English speakers must pass a proficiency examination in one of the modern foreign languages offered at SAIS Europe or successfully complete two semesters of study in any of those languages.
- Non-native English speakers must pass the English Proficiency Exam or successfully complete two semesters of English courses.

N.B.: At SAIS, a **native English speaker** is a person who meets TWO of the following criteria:

- English is the main language of communication between you and one of your caregivers;
- English is an official language in the community where you grew up before high school;
- English is the language of instruction in the high school you attended

MINIMUM PROFICIENCY LEVELS

The following chart describes the minimum levels that SAIS students must attain in order to fulfill their graduation requirement, if they choose to reach it through one of the languages offered at SAIS Europe:

Language	Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing
Arabic	ACTFL Intermediate Mid or CEFR B1	ACTFL Intermediate Mid or CEFR B1	ACTFL Intermediate Mid or CEFR B1	ACTFL Intermediate Mid or CEFR B1 *
English	ACTFL Superior or CEFR C2	ACTFL Advanced High or CEFR C1	ACTFL Superior or CEFR C2	ACTFL Superior or CEFR C2
French	ACTFL Intermediate High or CEFR B1.2	ACTFL Intermediate High or CEFR B1.2	ACTFL Intermediate High or CEFR B1.2	ACTFL Intermediate High or CEFR B1.2 *
German	ACTFL Intermediate High or CEFR B1.2	ACTFL Intermediate High or CEFR B1.2	ACTFL Intermediate High or CEFR B1.2	ACTFL Intermediate High or CEFR B1.2 *
Italian	ACTFL Intermediate High or CEFR B1.2	ACTFL Intermediate High or CEFR B1.2	ACTFL Intermediate High or CEFR B1.2	ACTFL Intermediate High or CEFR B1.2 *
Russian	ACTFL Intermediate Mid or CEFR B1	ACTFL Intermediate Mid or CEFR B1	ACTFL Intermediate Mid or CEFR B1	ACTFL Intermediate Mid or CEFR B1 *
Spanish	ACTFL Intermediate High or CEFR B1.2	ACTFL Intermediate High or CEFR B1.2	ACTFL Intermediate High or CEFR B1.2	ACTFL Intermediate High or CEFR B1.2 *

* Optional for MAIR candidates

PROFICIENCY EXAMS

Proficiency exams are meant to ascertain whether candidates have reached the minimum levels required for graduation purposes.

The exams are administered three times a year, usually in September, January and May (please refer to the current academic calendar for the exact dates). Proficiency exams consist of four separate sections: Listening Comprehension (60 minutes), Reading Comprehension (90 minutes), Written Expression (90 minutes) and Oral Expression (30 minutes). When students pass the four sections of the proficiency exam, they will receive an "S" (satisfactory) on their transcript. Those who do not pass all components must retake only the parts that they failed.

The results of the proficiency exam do not count towards the overall GPA. Upon request, the Registrar's office can issue a SAIS certificate with the results of each section. Please note that the SAIS certificate is not equivalent to an ACTFL or CEFR certification.

To be eligible to take the proficiency exam in any language (except English, which is mandatory for all non-native English speakers), students should either:

- successfully complete level 4 of language instruction at SAIS
- successfully complete level 5 of the online placement test (equivalent to the end of level 4)

N.B.: Students who are unable to sit the exam during the official dates can take it privately, with [LTI](#). Please note that students who choose to take the exam with LTI will do so at their own expenses. LTI will charge for four separate exams (listening, reading, speaking and writing).

ENGLISH REQUIREMENTS

In addition to the TOEFL, IELTS, or CEP exams required for admission purposes, all non-native English speakers must take the English Proficiency Exam during Orientation Week. Those who pass it will have fulfilled the language requirement for non-native English speakers. Those who do not perform satisfactorily will need further training in English in order to succeed in their studies at SAIS and they will therefore be required to take either the Advanced English course or the English Writing Workshop. The English Department will decide which course students must take based on their exam scores.

The **Advanced English** course consists of three 90-minute classroom sessions per week plus tutorials. This comprehensive course prepares students for the SAIS English Proficiency Exam and coursework at SAIS. It enhances academic writing and reading skills; listening comprehension of lectures and debates; and presentational and argumentative skills. Students in Advanced English cannot enroll in another language course. N.B.: successfully completing two semesters of Advanced English fulfills the language requirement for the One-Year Bologna Center Diploma.

The **English Writing Workshop** consists of two 90-minute classroom sessions per week. It is designed to help students to pass the English Proficiency Exam and perfect writing skills for coursework at SAIS. Students enrolled in the English Writing Workshop may also enroll in another language course.

*Non-native English speakers who have successfully passed the English Proficiency Exam (Reading and Writing) and yet wish to polish their academic writing skills should refer to the SAIS Europe Writing Center page. The Writing Center also caters to native English speakers who wish to hone and refine their writing skills.

For more detailed information please refer to the [Entry and Exit Requirements for Non-native English Speakers](#).

LANGUAGE COURSE OFFERINGS

Languages offered at SAIS Europe are Arabic, English, French, German, Italian, Russian, and Spanish. Courses are taught from the beginner through the advanced level, with the exception of English, which is offered only at the advanced levels (see previous section).

Language courses are offered pending enrollment and the minimum enrollment number is of five students. Level 1 courses (Novice) are offered only in the Fall semester. Continuation of the Fall courses will be guaranteed in the Spring semester. Level 5 courses (beyond the minimum proficiency level) are offered only in the Spring semester.

***Chinese** classes are provided to MAIR students through a partnership with the [Confucius Institute](#) at the University of Bologna. Detailed course syllabi and scheduling details can be found [here](#). For further information please use this [email](#).

Students may enroll in only one language course per semester, with the exception of the English Writing Workshop, which can be combined with another language course.

ARABIC and RUSSIAN

Since the minimum level required for graduation purposes in these languages is Intermediate Mid II (attainable at SAIS in four consecutive semesters of language instruction) instruction is offered at the following entry levels:

- Level 1: Novice (Fall semester only)
- Level 2: Novice High
- Level 3: Intermediate Low
- Level 4: Intermediate Mid I
- Level 5: Intermediate Mid II and above / Advanced-level courses (Spring semester only)

FRENCH, GERMAN, ITALIAN, SPANISH

Since the minimum level required for graduation purposes in these languages is Intermediate High (attainable at SAIS in four consecutive semesters of language instruction), instruction is offered at the following entry levels:

- Level 1: Novice (Fall semester only)
- Level 2: Intermediate Low
- Level 3: Intermediate Mid I
- Level 4: Intermediate Mid II
- Level 5: Intermediate High and above / Advanced-level courses (Spring semester only)

ITALIAN CONVERSATION MEETINGS

Italian conversation meetings are designed to facilitate student integration into life in Italy. Meetings are held once a week (90 minutes) by a teaching assistant and are not entered on the transcript.

These meetings do not constitute the equivalent of a regular Italian language course. They are offered as an opportunity to maintain the language skills that students have acquired during pre-term courses in Italian.

These meetings are not suited for beginner-level learners. Students who wish to learn the basis of the Italian language should enroll in the Pre-Term Italian courses that are available in the Summer (Intensive Italian and Survival Italian) or in the Novice-Italian (Level 1) classes that are always offered in the Fall semester.

COURSE POLICIES

- Language courses do not count towards the overall number of courses required for any of the SAIS degree or diploma programs.
- Credit is given in the sense that enrollment in a language course or the English Writing Workshop always results in a letter grade being recorded on the student's transcript (A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, D and F).
- Language courses may not be audited, as they require regular attendance and constant participation.
- Attendance at language courses is mandatory. Please refer to the syllabi for the allowed number of absences.
- Students may withdraw up to the end of the 10th week of class and receive a W grade on their transcript. This does not affect their GPA. After the end of week 10, it is no longer possible to withdraw.
- The grade of I (Incomplete) is not used for language courses.
- All deadlines for adding or dropping a language courses are indicated on the [academic calendar](#).

PLACEMENT TESTS (DIAGNOSTIC, ENTRY-LEVEL TESTS)

Placement tests are purely diagnostic, and as such they are administered in all foreign languages at the beginning of each semester, in order to determine the level at which students may enroll in a specific language course. Placement tests are also used to determine if students who have not taken SAIS language courses at level 4 or above are qualified to take the language proficiency exam.

Placement tests consist of both a written portion (listening, reading and writing) and an oral portion (speaking). The written portion is located on Canvas. Students will be granted access to the test once they have submitted their online [registration form](#) on [BCWeb](#). The oral portion consists of a synchronous oral interview to be arranged with the language lecturers. Please refer to the [academic calendar](#) for the exact dates (three times per year) during which the placement tests will be made available.

N.B.: Who does **not** need to take a Placement Test?

- Students who do not have any previous instruction in the language that they intend to take at SAIS, and wish to begin studying the language at the beginner level, do not need to take the placement test. It will suffice to enroll in the “Novice” level.
- Students who have attended the pre-term Italian courses and wish to continue studying Italian do not need to take the placement test: the final exam of the pre-term courses will determine their level.

PRE-TERM LANGUAGE COURSES

INTENSIVE ITALIAN

This beginner-level course (A1 + A2) is the best way to begin learning Italian and get the most out of your year(s) in Italy. The course consists of approximately 100 hours between classroom instruction and individual tutorials. Depending on prior language background and aptitude, students may be placed in an intermediate level course in the fall semester and may consequently qualify to take the Italian Proficiency exam at the end of the academic year. Because of the number of classroom hours per day (5), Intensive Italian cannot be taken alongside Statistics. Given the very intensive nature of this course, it is best suited for in-class learning.

SURVIVAL ITALIAN

This beginner-level course (A1) is designed to help students interact in Italian during everyday life in Bologna. It consists of approximately 50 hours of classroom sessions and individual tutorials. This course can be taken alongside Statistics.

INTENSIVE ENGLISH

Students who are non-native speakers of English will be required to take this course during Pre-term if their performance in the TOEFL or IELTS exams falls within certain scores. Students who are required to take this course will receive a letter from Admissions.

For more detailed information on admission scores and the pre-term English courses please refer to the [Entry and Exit Requirements for Non-native English Speakers](#).

LANGUAGE FACULTY and ACADEMIC ADVISING

Language	Faculty	Room
Program Director	Sara Gelmetti	Zanolini 15
Arabic	Amina Serghini (Coordinator)	Zanolini 15
English	Jennifer Varney (Coordinator) Rebecca Hopkins	Zanolini 15 Zanolini 15
French	Clara Cheilan (Coordinator) Celine Jolly	Zanolini 15
German	Friederike Jürgens (Coordinator)	Zanolini 15
Italian	Sara Gelmetti (Coordinator) Giorgia Marchiori Roberto Gamberini	Zanolini 15
Russian	Yana Godova (Coordinator)	Zanolini 15
Spanish	Maria Blanco Facal (Coordinator)	Zanolini 15

Language faculty members are available for language advising - either in person or via Zoom - during the two weeks prior to the Fall registration deadline (please refer to the academic calendar for the exact registration deadlines). Individual consultations must be arranged through prior appointment.

The Language Department is located in Via Zanolini 15. Access to the building will be granted only via appointment.