

THE INFORMATION AND APPLICATION PERIOD IS OPEN FROM APRIL 2 – 16, 2012.

A completed application must be submitted and accepted before a student can enroll in a Critical Language course. Please keep in mind the following procedures when applying:

1. Due to the independent nature of critical language study, you must demonstrate academic responsibility, motivation for language learning, and preparedness to tackle the selected language. You must be a second-year student or higher and have at least a 3.0 GPA. Please submit a copy of your transcript with your application.
2. You must also enlist a faculty member to support your petition for critical language study. This *sponsor* should be familiar with your academic record and the discipline relevant to the proposed critical language study. You should discuss your plans with your faculty sponsor, before asking him/her to fill out the Faculty Sponsor Recommendation form.
3. In some cases, a pre-test will be required to determine eligibility.
4. **The application deadline is Monday, April 16, 2012.**
5. You will be notified of your acceptance in time for pre-registration at the end of the month.
6. Be advised that a Critical Languages course can be scheduled only when at least two students are accepted for study, and provided a native tutor and outside examiner have been contracted.
7. Accepted students must confirm in writing their intention to study in the program.
8. Completed applications should be submitted to Jane Canova, Administrative Director and Critical Languages Coordinator, Center for Foreign Languages, Hollander Hall 230; jcanova@williams.edu

Critical Languages Program

Information and Application Period April 2 – 16

What languages are offered?

Hebrew, Hindi, Korean and Swahili for one year of elementary study.

What does “critical” mean?

Critical has always referred to the “less commonly taught languages.”

Why study a critical language?

Most often the language study is relevant to your major or other academic interests. You might have personal reasons that stem from family background or you may just relish the challenge of a new & difficult language.

How is this course different from other language courses?

The coursework involves intensive study in an independent format. Unlike a regular class where the instructor teaches five days a week, students are expected to cover the material on their own. The language groups then meet 2x/week for one-hour review sessions with a tutor.

How much studying will I be expected to devote to this course?

Lots. At least five hours study of the textbook, three hours with the multimedia materials, and two hours of review with a tutor. In short, the same amount of time you would spend in any regularly taught 101 – 102 language class.

Who are the tutors?

The tutors are generally native speakers who live in the community or in some cases, students at the college. Review sessions have also been conducted via Skype with a tutor at another institution. Tutors are “live” resources for oral practice and modeling of language use.

How am I graded?

An outside consultant recommends the textbook and provides the syllabus, and exams. Your participation and preparedness for the review sessions counts for 15% of your grade, the mid-term 40% and the final 45%.

Who are the outside consultants/examiners?

They are professors at universities that have full-fledged programs in the language and are recommended by the National Association of Self-Instructional Language Programs. They usually conduct the exams via Skype.

Can I take it as a fifth course?

No, the course should be taken as one of your four main courses.

Why does the hyphenated rule apply?

All language courses at the college are year-long, meaning “the work of two semesters constitutes an integral, indivisible course.”

What about the Winter Study period?

There is no winter study sustaining program in the Critical Languages.

What if I already have some basic skills in the language?

In this case, a pre-test will be required to determine eligibility.

Can I study at the languages offered at the intermediate level?

The College’s Committee on Educational Policy has only approved one-year of elementary language study. The year’s course will enhance the content of your major area of study and is a jumpstart to study abroad or to summer/ post-graduation experiences in a country where the language is spoken.

Can I study a different language?

Many requests are received every year for other languages such as Portuguese, Farsi, Thai, Vietnamese, Norwegian, and Indonesian, but the Critical Languages Program is currently unable to sponsor independent study. Assistance with textbook recommendations, audio materials, and sources for standardized exams can be provided, but you must have a Williams College faculty member sponsor independent study.

Application process

Who can apply?

You must be a second-year student or higher and have at least a 3.0 GPA.

Why must I apply?

A coherent proposal and your academic profile attest to your intentions and ability to sustain the independent format of Critical Languages study.

When can I apply?

The application and information period opens the Monday after spring break. Students are notified of their acceptance into the program before pre-registration at the end of April. Courses will be offered only if a minimum of two students enrolls.

Where can I pick up an application?

Applications can be picked up at the Coordinator’s office in 230 Hollander.

Application deadline is April 16, 2012.

Language you wish to study _____

Please print clearly

Name _____ Class yr. _____

SU _____ E-mail _____

I. Qualifications

1. Attach a copy of your academic transcript.
2. Explain any previous experience in independent study course, tutorials or senior seminars. Specify course title, year, grade and faculty sponsor.
3. Alternately, explain a major research project or paper that you completed for a college course. Indicate the course and the nature of the work you completed.
4. Describe here your experience in studying foreign languages at Williams or prior to college –languages studied, length of time, and competency.
5. Likewise, indicate if you have some knowledge of the critical language you wish to study and how you acquired it.

II. Statement of purpose

Outline your objectives in studying the proposed critical language and how they relate to your major and/or other academic interests. Include ways in which you plan to use the language knowledge you gain.

Signature _____

Date _____

April 2012

Critical Language Application for :

Student _____ / Language _____

Dear Faculty:

Students wishing to enroll in the Critical Languages Program at Williams are required to have a faculty member support their application. This program offers students one-year of elementary Hebrew, Hindi, Korean and Swahili in a self-instructional format with weekly review session conducted by native speakers from the area. A full-time language professor at another institution serves as the consultant for the course – provides the syllabus, monitors student progress, administers the exams and determines the grade.

Since students must be highly motivated to sustain study of these less commonly taught languages in an independent mode, your input on the applicant's ability to successfully complete the program would be greatly appreciated.

Ability to work independently:

Motivation for the study of this language:

Educational value of critical language study:

Relevance to the student's overall academic program:

Additional comments can be written here.

I have discussed the student's application with him/her and _____ recommend the course / _____ do not recommend the course.

Signature & date: _____

Faculty sponsor _____

Indicate name and department