



Language Levels and Prerequisites

Welcome to the 2026 Language Levels and Prerequisites guide. This document is designed to help applicants and advisors understand the language proficiency requirements for the 2026 CLS Program.

Language	Beginner (No Prior Study Required)	Advanced Beginner (One Year of Prior Study Required or the Equivalent)	Intermediate and Advanced (Two Years of Prior Study Required or the Equivalent)
Arabic		✓	✓
Chinese		✓	✓
Hindi	✓	✓	✓
Japanese			✓
Korean		✓	✓
Persian	✓	✓	✓
Portuguese	✓	✓	✓
Russian		✓	✓
Swahili	✓	✓	✓

Guidelines for Choosing Your CLS Program Study Level

When applying for the CLS Program, applicants must select the level at which they intend to study. If you are currently enrolled in college-level language courses, choose the level you will achieve by the summer. For example, if you are taking introductory Chinese in the fall and plan to take another course in the spring, you will have completed one year of Chinese by June 2026 and should select Advanced Beginning Chinese in your application.

Applicants who have previously participated in the CLS Program may count each summer of participation as equivalent to one year of language study.

Language Prerequisites for Institutes

Some institutes require prior study of the target language; however, applicants do not necessarily need to have completed one or two formal academic years. Instead, they must possess language ability *equivalent* to that amount of academic study. Students have met these requirements through various means, such as self-study, tutoring, or exposure in a home environment, beyond traditional college-level coursework.

Applicants with Family Backgrounds

Applicants with a family background in the target language are encouraged to apply for the CLS Program. If you have little or no experience speaking, reading, writing, or listening in the language, it is recommended that you apply for the beginning level. If you do have some experience, consider which level most accurately reflects your overall skills in reading, writing, speaking, and listening.

Reflecting on Your Proficiency

Applicants are encouraged to thoughtfully assess their language proficiency. Remember that a college-level course often covers more material in an academic year than a typical high school language program.