



# CRITICAL LANGUAGE SCHOLARSHIP



**The Critical Language Scholarship (CLS) Program is an immersive summer opportunity for American college and university students to learn languages essential to America’s engagement with the world.**

A program of the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, the CLS Program is part of a U.S. government effort to increase the number of Americans studying and mastering critical foreign languages and applying those skills in their professional careers.

Students spend eight to ten weeks over the summer studying one of fourteen critical languages (see right) in classes facilitated by native speakers at a host institution abroad.

### **STUDY ABROAD, OR STUDY AT HOME!**

Each summer, the CLS Program administers intensive study abroad institutes in fourteen critical languages around the world. In addition to traditional study abroad institutes, the CLS Program also provides virtual instruction to beginning-level Arabic, Chinese and Russian learners to build their language skills with the CLS Spark initiative.

### **BENEFITS OF CLS**



Intensive language instruction and structured cultural enrichment experiences



Academic credit and language gains certified on the ACTFL OPI test



Non-competitive eligibility for U.S. federal jobs



CLS Spark offers the opportunity to build language competence for beginners through virtual instruction

- Arabic
- Azerbaijani
- Bangla
- Chinese
- Hindi
- Indonesian
- Japanese
- Korean
- Persian
- Portuguese
- Russian
- Swahili
- Turkish
- Urdu

[www.clscholarship.org](http://www.clscholarship.org)

email: [cls@americancouncils.org](mailto:cls@americancouncils.org)

phone: 202.833.7522



# CLS PROGRAM DETAILS

## PROGRAM STRUCTURE

CLS Program institutes cover approximately one academic year of university-level language coursework during an eight- to ten-week program and meet the needs of students from a variety of language levels and backgrounds.

In addition to formal classroom language instruction, there are activities that supplement the curriculum, including regular one-on-one meetings with native speaker language partners for conversational practice, as well as cultural activities and excursions to expand students' understanding of the history, politics, culture and daily life of their host country.

## ELIGIBILITY

Applicants must be U.S. citizens or nationals in a U.S. degree-granting program at the undergraduate or graduate level at the time of their application. We encourage students pursuing professional or associates degrees and those attending community colleges and technical schools to apply. Only undergraduate students are eligible to apply to the CLS Spark virtual institutes.

Students in all disciplines, including business, engineering, the arts and humanities, and the sciences are encouraged to apply. All applicants should have a plan to continue studying the language, and explain how they will use the language in their future careers.

The CLS Program welcomes all eligible applications and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, geographic location, socio-economic status, disability, sexual orientation or gender identity. We accept applications each fall for programs beginning the following summer.

## CLS SPARK

CLS Spark is a new initiative of the CLS Program which provides virtual instruction in Arabic, Chinese and Russian at the beginning level. CLS Spark leverages best practices in online language learning, and provides American undergraduate students the opportunity to study critical languages virtually when they may not have access to language learning on their campuses or the ability to study abroad.



## WHAT IS A CRITICAL LANGUAGE?

Critical languages are languages that are essential to the United States' national security, economic prosperity, and engagement with the world, and that tend to be less commonly taught in the United States or have relatively few proficient speakers.

The CLS Program plays an important role in preparing American students for the 21st century's globalized workforce, increasing American competitiveness, and contributing to national security. CLS scholars serve as citizen ambassadors, representing the diversity of the United States abroad and building lasting relationships with people in their host countries.

## LANGUAGES AND LEVELS

Applicants may select one of the following language programs:

Study Abroad Institutes	
Open to students at all language levels, including beginners	Azerbaijani, Bangla, Hindi, Indonesian, Persian, Portuguese, Swahili, Turkish and Urdu
One year prior study required	Arabic, Korean and Russian
Two years prior study required	Chinese and Japanese
CLS Spark Virtual Institutes	
Only open to beginners with no previous language experience	Arabic, Chinese and Russian

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