

Dear Colleagues,

Language educators in Ohio now have multiple means to award credit by proficiency. To help you develop local policies around how much credit to award based on a proficiency rating, I have gathered data on a number of valid and reliable assessments. When possible, the National Council of State Supervisors for Languages recommends the use of one of these measures rather than a locally developed assessment.

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New Jersey wanted to find a way to measure the proficiency of their eighth graders who had participated in elementary and middle school programs. They used the STAMP test.

STAMP

Benchmark Level 1	Novice-Low
Benchmark Level 2	Novice-Mid
Benchmark Level 3	Novice-High
Benchmark Level 4	Intermediate-Low
Benchmark Level 5	Intermediate-Mid
NJ 8th graders (after 5 instructional units (540 hrs) 1 IU = 108 hours of 3 hours a week for 36 weeks)	22% meet reading NH 42% meet speaking NH

These results give you something to ponder if you have an elementary-middle school program.

The STAMP test is appropriate for high school learners as well.

In Fairfax Co, VA heritage speakers are given two writing prompts. Here are their results.

Fairfax Co., VA

- For Intermediate-Low rating on a writing proficiency test, Fairfax grants two Carnegie units and places heritage language students into the Level 3 program.
- 60 percent of learners, representing 16 heritage languages, reached I-L on the assessment in 2008

Course Credit Equivalencies and Proficiency Results (see chart next page and read this explanation)

The original American Council on Education credit recommendations (back in 2000) were informed by equivalency ratings that had been previously granted to U.S government agencies' (ILR) test ratings. The specific credit recommendations for ACTFL tests - both in 2000 and 2008 (by level and language category) - were arrived at by a panel of subject matter experts who were all university level FL professors. Their job was to assign an equitable number of credits for language proficiency as a student might have been expected to take in school to reach similar levels of proficiency. The ACE college credit recommendations formed the basis upon which we began the high school equivalency discussion.

In extending college credit equivalencies to high school units, we also considered the college semester = high school year tradition. These equivalency numbers were supported by the results of several small studies of oral language proficiency among students who had completed 4 years or more of study which indicated that the majority do reach the Intermediate Mid level following 4 or more years.

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ACTFL/ACE

Based on Category of Language Difficulty 1 (easy) to IV (difficult)

- American Council on Education (ACE) recommendations to award HS credit.
- Lower of two if different on OPI and WPT
- For 7-12 students

OPI & WPT	I	II	III	IV
N-H	1	1	2	2
I-L	2	2	3	3
I-M	4	4	6	6
I-H	6	6	8	8

See next page for which languages fall into which category of difficulty.

The State of Connecticut is using the ACE recommendations to award credit for private language learning through heritage community schools.

Granting High School Credit for Private World Language Courses in Connecticut Developed in collaboration with the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL)				
Official ACTFL OPI/WPT Rating	Category I, e.g., Dutch, French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Swahili	Category II, e.g., German, Hindi, Modern Greek, Urdu	Category III, e.g., Cambodian, Czech, Hebrew, Polish, Russian, Vietnamese	Category IV, e.g., Arabic, Cantonese, Japanese, Korean, Mandarin
Novice High	1	1	2	2
Intermediate Low	2	2	3	3
Intermediate Mid	4	4	4* (6)	4* (6)
Intermediate High	4* (6)	4* (6)	4* (8)	4* (8)
<p>In order to earn credits, students must take both the OPI and the WPT in the same language. If the ratings differ, the credits will be awarded based on the lower of the two ratings. Students can take the tests while in Grades 7-12.</p> <p>*Four credit maximum allowed under state law even though ACTFL credit equivalency, in parentheses, suggests awarding more credit for higher proficiencies in more difficult languages.</p>				

AP has begun to talk about how their assessments align to the ACTFL performance and proficiency guidelines. In much of the current literature on AP, intermediate mid is the target.

There is variability in the scores as students must demonstrate competence across listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Scores of 3, 4, and 5 also tie into this variability.

Notice from the arrow that some test takers score in the novice range while others reach pre-advanced.

AP: Targets 5th Semester College Course

- **Across all languages, students have studied the language for ___ years prior to entering the AP course**
 - fewer than 3 years 9%
 - 3 years 40%
 - 4 years 36%
 - 5 years 15%(mostly in suburban districts)

ACTFL Performance Guidelines for K-12 Learners



Here in Ohio, we have one long-running assessment managed by the Ohio State University Foreign Language Center. (614-292-4361). Successful students seem to reach Intermediate-Low.

CAAP Collaborative Articulation and Assessment Project

- Targets learners of French, Spanish, and German after three years of secondary language instruction.
- Listening, speaking, reading, and writing.
- Over the 16 years of the project, learners seem to reach Intermediate-Low