



Community Language School (CLS) Year-round programs

Audience

The Community Language School serves language learners ages 3-18 as well as pre- and in-service language teachers throughout Michigan. Most participants are from the Greater Lansing area. We also collaborate with Detroit Public Schools and Greater Lansing area schools. In 2012, over 950 children and their families participated in our programs (a 28.5% increase from the previous year) and more than 300 MSU students were involved in service-learning as part of our language offerings.

Funding

CLS is self-sustaining through participant fees. All programs offered at elementary schools are free of charge to the students. Long-term on-campus programs are fee based. The College of Arts and Letters and the Center for Language Teaching Advancement support programming by donating facilities, supplies, and volunteers in kind. In 2012, special programs were supported through MSU internal funds from the Office of the Provost.

Objectives

The CLS mission is to raise global citizens who are competitive on the job market through demonstrated foreign language proficiency and with an appreciation for diversity and different cultures.

Our goals are to:

- Create awareness among schools and parents about the importance of early language acquisition and appreciation of other cultures;
- Introduce children to language learning and encourage at least minimal language proficiency;
- Promote cross-cultural awareness and sensitivity;
- Offer alternative learning and teaching opportunities;
- Provide a training venue for pre- and in-service teachers and those who seek practical applications for their futures in foreign language teaching; and
- Offer alternative ways to use language for community volunteers.

Description

CLS provides community-based preK-12 language and culture programs and also offers service-learning opportunities for upper high school and undergraduate students. Learning opportunities include:

- Enrichment programs at area elementary schools;
- Culture events on and off campus;
- Weekly academic classes for preschoolers, elementary, middle, and high school students on campus;
- Language summer camps on campus; and
- Professional development workshops for teachers.

In 2012, the following languages were offered: Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Hausa, Hindi, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese, Russian, Shona, Spanish, Urdu, Uzbek, and Wolof. More languages will be added in the future.



Outcomes

Students, their parents, teachers, and volunteers are surveyed at the end of each program.

- 100% of summer camp participants agreed that learning about cultures and languages on MSU's campus made them want to study at MSU in the future.
- 99% of parents agreed that CLS provided a positive language/culture learning experience for their children.
- 97% of volunteers agreed that they gained important hands-on practice with the target language their regular MSU classes do not provide.
- 95% of pre- and in-service teachers agreed that the skill sets acquired in CLS workshops will transfer to future employment opportunities.

A study measuring proficiency gains is underway. Delayed post-tests are necessary in order to measure such gains. One of our former students, now a junior in high school, placed into college-level GRM 102 after taking German at CLS. Other middle school students placed in Level 2 classes at their high schools. An MSU volunteer was able to pass a language proficiency exam after participating in our programs.

Additional Significant Information

CLS received a Curricular Service-Learning and Civic Engagement Award through MSU's Center for Service-Learning and Civic Engagement. We were also featured in the 2010 President's Report. Our programs have been featured in the *Lansing State Journal* and *State News*. Scholarly articles have appeared in the *ETAS Journal*, *Frühes Deutsch* (Early German), and the *Central States Report*.

Contact Information

Dr. Angelika Kraemer
Director, Community Language School
619 Red Cedar Road, B135 Wells Hall
East Lansing, MI 48824
Phone: 517-355-7587
Email: cls@celta.msu.edu
Program website: <http://cls.celta.msu.edu>

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