

Frequently Asked Questions Spoken Language Interpretation Certificate Program

How many courses do I have to take to get the certificate?

You need to complete all five courses in program order to obtain the certificate.

Can I skip some of the courses or take courses out of sequence and still get the certificate?

No, all five courses must be taken in sequence to get the certificate. This is a program with specific requirements.

Am I a certified interpreter once I received my certificate?

No, you are considered a “qualified interpreter” meaning that you are a candidate to obtain certification as an interpreter. The Spoken Language Interpretation Certificate proves that you have received the training necessary to become an interpreter and take the exam for certification. In this program you will learn the Interpreter Code of Conduct, including interpretation ethics. You will also receive instruction in the necessary practices and tools to conduct an interpretation. Once your training is complete, many organizations, public and private, will consider you for work if they know you have received comprehensive interpreter training. When applying for work you may indicate you are a candidate for certification.

Can I take the exam to be a certified interpreter without taking these courses?

Yes, you can take the exam; however, without training or work experience as an interpreter, it may be difficult to pass the certification exam. This program helps you understand all the steps to become a good interpreter and in the process prepares you for the exam.

What are the advantages of taking five courses if I am not going to be a certified interpreter?

Interpreter codes are learned as well as the tools and guidelines to be an interpreter. These skills are needed if you want to make a career in the field of interpretation. Other benefits include networking opportunities with other students and sharing information about interpretation to expand glossaries.

Why do I have to take a language assessment test? I have lived in the United States for many years and I speak both languages fluently.

The language assessment test will measure your skill level and ensure that you have the language skills necessary for this rigorous program of study. If you do not score at the professional level you may continue with the program. You will be advised to practice individually or take additional language courses and build your language skills.

Prior to the start of your first course you will be contacted by LLE Speaking and Listening to schedule an appointment to take the oral language assessment test. The student fee for this test is \$150. Students will need to have their test results by the end of the first course. **Students must take this assessment test; there are no exceptions.**

What score is required to pass the language assessment test?

Every student passes the language assessment test, but in order to work as an interpreter you need to score a 3+ or above. If your score is lower than 3+, your teacher will advise you to take additional languages courses and to practice. If you need help in selecting a course, please contact Guiomar Anderson at 703-658-1292 or guiomar.anderson@fcps.edu.

Can I skip the Introduction to Interpretation course; I have worked doing translations at my office?

No, in fact Introduction to Interpretation is the foundation on which the program is based. You must take all five courses in sequence. Document translation is not the same as conducting interpretation. Working as an interpreter in an office, community, or with friends does not mean that you know the steps to conduct a professional interpretation.

Who teaches the courses?

We have a great team of strong teachers; they are interpreters with diverse field and classroom experience.

Will I learn simultaneous interpretation or document translation in these courses?

No, these courses focus on consecutive interpretation. However, much of what you learn in your courses, especially vocabulary and terminology, can be applied to document translation.

What kind of materials do we use in the course?

The book “*Community Interpreter*” is used in three of the courses. Teachers will provide other handouts as the subject demands. You will watch subject-related videos in class and role play interpretation situations.

How do I find an organization to conduct my practicum?

Your teacher will suggest names of organizations where you can go to complete your practicum. You can also find names of volunteer organizations looking for interpreters in your local newspaper, on web sites, and from Volunteer Fairfax. Schools, retirement homes, hospitals, minority organizations, hospices, and church offices are places where you can apply to complete your practicum.