



## CAREER *services* CENTER

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**XAVIER**  
UNIVERSITY

# CAREER OPPORTUNITIES FOR FOREIGN LANGUAGE MAJORS

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## SKILLS & ABILITIES OF THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE MAJOR

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### Cross-Cultural

- Understanding of cultural differences
- Knowledge of culturally specific behaviors, customs, and values
- Language competency for speaking, writing, reading, and listening
- Appreciation of diversity
- Sensitivity to cultural issues
- Awareness of differences in cultural perspectives
- Global experience
- Ability to adjust to new environments and interact with people from different backgrounds

### Analytical

- Critical thinking
- Analyzing and comparing cultures
- Creating/clarifying ideas
- Defining complex problems
- Weighing values and assessing needs
- Ability to conduct research
- Examining evidence

### Organizational

- Attention to detail/good observation skills
- Ability to instruct/motivate
- Generating innovative ideas and solutions
- Ability to work cooperatively and to coordinate work with others
- Flexibility in learning and thinking
- Ability to take risks
- Overcoming obstacles and barriers
- Independent thinking

### Communication

- Clear/concise writing
- Understanding of audience needs
- Ability to persuade/influence
- Effective use of language
- Listen and clarify well
- Summarizing
- Writing and presenting information clearly

*\*Partially taken from Vistaworld.com*

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## POTENTIAL CAREERS

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- Linguist
- Language Specialist
- Literary Translator
- Judicial Interpreter/Translator
- Teacher
- English as a Second Language (ESL) Teacher
- Import/Export Agent
- Hotel Manager
- Travel Agent
- Foreign Service Officer
- Passport Examiner
- Writer/Editor
- International Visitor Exchange Specialist
- News Assistant
- International Radio Broadcaster
- Border Patrol Agent
- Immigration Inspector
- Investigator
- Coordinator of International Students
- Director of Study Abroad Programs
- International Education Director
- Visiting Student Counselor
- Market Analyst
- Pharmaceutical Representative
- Tour Director
- Overseas English Language Media Staffer
- International Banking Loan Officer
- Training and Development Specialist

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## TYPES OF EMPLOYERS

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- Professional Language Schools
- Publishers
- Hospitals
- Federal Government Agencies
- State and Local Governments
- Translation Agencies
- Import/Export Firms
- Elementary/Secondary Schools
- Colleges/Universities
- State Department
- Central Intelligence Agency
- Bureau of International Information Programs
- Voice of America
- Citizenship and Immigration Services
- Department of Defense
- Peace Corps
- National Endowment for the Humanities
- Department of Justice
- Environmental Firms
- Sports Organizations
- Advertising Agencies
- Public Relations Firms
- Magazines/Newspapers/Radio Stations
- Manufacturing Firms
- Hotels

*\*Taken from Great Jobs for Foreign Language Majors ((DeGalan & Lambert) 2007*

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## TOP 10 OCCUPATIONS EMPLOYING PERSONS WITH A BACHELORS IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE

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Teachers, secondary school	14.8%
Top and mid-level managers, executives, and administrators	8.4%
Sales occupations, including retail	7.1%
Secretaries, receptionists, typists	6.7%
Other administrative (record clerks)	6.0%
Other management-related occupations	4.6%
Insurance, securities, real estate, business services	4.4%
Teachers, elementary school	3.9%
Other service occupations, except health	3.9%
Other marketing and sales occupations	3.5%

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## ACTIVITIES ON THE JOB

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- 43% of employed foreign languages graduates regularly perform management and administrative duties at work.
- Sales, purchasing, and marketing activities are regularly performed by 26% of all employed foreign language graduates.
- The majority of the workweek of 9% of foreign language grads is spent providing professional services such as financial services and another 9% consider computer applications, programming and system-development duties as a major part of their job.

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## POST GRADUATION ACTIVITES

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- 45% proceed to earn a post-graduate degree. 34% earn a master's degree; 6% graduate with a doctorate; 5% earn a professional degree
- Only 28% earn a master's degree in foreign languages. About 28% are earned in education and 13% in business administration and management.
- About 90% of all professional degrees are in the field of law.

*\*Taken from The College Majors Handbook (Fogg, Harrington, & Harrington) 2004*

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## RELATED BOOKS IN THE CAREER RESOURCE LIBRARY (GSC 310)

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- *Opportunities in Foreign Language Careers*
- *Great Jobs for Foreign Language Majors*