



# SAINT IGNATIUS

C O L L E G E P R E P

*A Jesuit school founded in 1869.*

**Department of Foreign Language**

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Dear Parents of the Class of 2014:

I congratulate you on your child's acceptance to Saint Ignatius College Prep.

One of the decisions you will be making for next year is the choice of foreign language that your child will be taking at our school.

Each student must take three consecutive years of the same language. Each language has offerings spanning four years and, since many prominent universities urge students to take four years of language, I encourage your son or daughter to take all four years of language at Saint Ignatius.

Chinese/Mandarin, French, Latin, and Spanish are offered. Students who do well in Latin I are invited to take Ancient Greek along with Latin in their second year. The descriptions of each language are attached to aid you in making your decisions.

You will be asked to make your decision when you come to Saint Ignatius for your Freshman Family Meeting.

We look forward to meeting you and your student soon. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 312-421-5900 x332 or email [paul.denning@ignatius.org](mailto:paul.denning@ignatius.org).

Very truly yours,

Paul V. Denning

Department Chairman, Foreign Language

## **Mandarin Chinese**

This course will introduce students to a variety of areas of Mandarin Chinese. Students will learn pronunciation, grammar, reading and writing Chinese characters. Practicing Chinese expressions, greetings, calendar, weather, time, places, family, food, activities, and school terms will allow students learn to express themselves using an ever increasing vocabulary. Culture will be sprinkled throughout the course in an attempt to help the learner focus on the Chinese speaking world and including culture, people, geographical locations, and histories.

The expectation is that this program will eventually expand into a four-year curriculum culminating in AP Mandarin Chinese.

## **French**

Nine levels of French are offered at Saint Ignatius. Students begin their language study in French I and II. In the third year, there are regular and honors sections. During the fourth year, students take either French IV or Advanced Placement French IV: Language, a course for which students may receive college credit if they score well on the national exam administered at the end of the year. Students may also elect to take Advanced Placement V: French Literature during their senior year.

The recent addition of our state-of-the-art Hurtado Language Center allows students to use pronunciation software to compare their voices with those of native speakers and for a variety of other listening and speaking activities to refine their fluency.

Saint Ignatius students have performed particularly well on the National French Exam, administered annually by the AATF, receiving regional and national awards and ranking the school among the highest in Illinois and the country in recent years.

The course outcomes at each level of French are based on standards established by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages K-12, the American Association of Teachers of French K-16, and the State of Illinois.

Saint Ignatius students who have earned an “A” average in French through their second year are invited to join in the school’s chapter of the French National Honor Society. Honor Society members organize tutoring services to students in lower levels and a Conversation Club for all students to practice their spoken French in an informal setting.

Saint Ignatius has a French Club that promotes participation in French-related activities in the Chicago area including outings to Francophone restaurants, plays, and movies.

Students have opportunities to gain first-hand experience in the language by traveling to Europe and French-speaking countries during trips sponsored and chaperoned by Foreign Language instructors.

## Latin

Jesuit education has always placed a great emphasis on the study of the humanities, especially the classics of ancient Greece and Rome. When Saint Ignatius, the founder of the Society of Jesus, set up his first schools to train the young members of the Order, he wanted his men to be able to match intellectually anyone they happened to encounter. The study of Latin, which demands from the student concentration and precision in thought and expression, was believed to be basic to training the young mind for the more advanced studies of philosophy and theology. The Jesuits were soon recognized as the most learned clergy in the Church. Lay people were so impressed that they soon were asking the Jesuits to open their schools to their sons who were not considering the priesthood as that they may be an intellectually accomplished as the Jesuits.

The tradition is being carried on at Saint Ignatius to this day. The study of Latin (and ancient Greek for those with interest and ability) is a cornerstone of a Saint Ignatius education. The Latin program strives, just as it did in Saint Ignatius' day to train young minds, to enable students to think and express themselves clearly, with precision and a sense of style.

The study of Latin leads to the study of Latin Literature, in which lies the ideals of law and government and politics which inspired our country's Founders. Latin Literature thus gives students the opportunity to come into contact with their cultural roots.

For these reasons, we at Saint Ignatius consider the study of Latin to be very sound for all students without regard to their language ability.

## Spanish

Hispanics comprise the largest growing segment of the US population; in the 2000 census they numbered 35.3 million, representing 12.5% of the US population. Spanish is spoken by 400 million people worldwide, making it the 4<sup>th</sup> most widely spoken language after Mandarin Chinese, English and Hindi. 21 countries worldwide list Spanish as their official language.

Spanish opens the door to understanding many foreign cultures. Learning Spanish enhances a student's knowledge and appreciation of one's own language. Many major companies routinely send employees abroad to live and work. Trade agreements (NAFTA) increase the demands for bilingual employees.

There have been many contributions of people whose native language is Spanish to architecture, art, music, literature, and religion. Saint Ignatius was Spanish. Chicago has 11 Spanish language radio stations, three Spanish television stations, and more than 15 Spanish language newspapers. There are several neighborhoods where Spanish is the primary language.

Five levels of Spanish are offered at Saint Ignatius. Freshmen are placed into Spanish I or II and several at accelerated levels based on performance on placement exams. Levels three and four are also offered on an honors level. AP Spanish language and AP Spanish Literature are also offered.

The Hurtado Language Center is used on a regular rotating basis by all Spanish classes. The Language Center provides additional interactive speaking, pronunciation and listening comprehension practice on an individualized basis.

Saint Ignatius Spanish students do well on the National Spanish Examination, administered by the AATSP. They have received regional and national awards and have ranked high among Illinois and National peers in Spanish. Students with an “A” average are invited into the National Spanish Honor Society.

## **Spanish as a Heritage Language I and II**

Spanish as a Heritage Language courses are offered to students who speak Spanish at home or who would be comfortable with a course entirely in Spanish.

The main goal of these courses is to provide the native speaker the opportunity to be aware of his/her own language as well as to widen and improve his/her knowledge of written and spoken Spanish. Students will also study different register levels (formal and informal) and regional variants (dialects) of the Spanish Language. Students in these courses will broaden their knowledge of the Spanish language and culture.

Students will read different texts from different genres through which the student not only will exercise his/her reading skills but also widen his/her grammatical knowledge, as well as practice and acquire new vocabulary in Spanish. Essays written in Spanish polish writing skills for clarity, precision and simplicity. It is expected that the student will show in these essays what he/she has learned in the classroom.

Communicative skills will be used on a daily basis as well as in the presentation of a final project. In this project, the student will display new vocabulary acquired as well as his/her proficiency in oral communication in formal/academic Spanish on themes of social interest.