

## PLACEMENT VERSUS ADVANCED STANDING IN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

### PLACEMENT:

**The Foreign Language Placement Test** (in French, German, Italian, Latin, or Spanish) is given on campus approximately eight times per year, is free of charge, and takes one hour. The schedule is updated periodically on our website and the link with all pertinent information can be found below. It is designed for students who have skills in a foreign language (be they native or heritage speakers or students with previous elementary–secondary school coursework), have never taken any college-level foreign language courses, and who want to take foreign language courses at UNO. It is a fill-in-the-scantron test that includes grammar, reading comprehension, and listening comprehension questions. High school students, UNO students, as well as anyone interested in taking a foreign language at UNO may take it. Test takers are asked to email [foreignlanguageslab@uno.edu](mailto:foreignlanguageslab@uno.edu) to reserve their spot for the exam, to notify us of which date they have chosen and what language they want to be tested on. They will receive a confirmation email with the date, time and location of the exam. Typically they receive their results within 24 hours and the results are good for one year. With the results, the student **MUST TAKE A CLASS AT UNO**, the class he/she places into. With a C or better in that course, the student can then ask for bypass credits (a maximum of 9 credit hours) for the courses below it. For example, if the student places into Spanish 2002, takes the course and receives a “B,” he/she can then request bypass credit for Spanish 1001, 1002, and 2001. The bypass credits are not given automatically. The student must email Dr. Starr at [jstarr1@uno.edu](mailto:jstarr1@uno.edu) in order to make the request. Dr. Starr will then request the credits which are typically posted on the student’s transcript within a week, appearing as a “P” for each class that the student passed. The student will be billed \$100 per bypass credit. If the student comes to UNO with foreign language credits transferred from another institution, the student **CANNOT** take the Placement Test. He/she should take the Advanced Standing Exam.

<http://www.uno.edu/cola/foreign-languages/placement-test.aspx>

### ADVANCED STANDING:

**The Foreign Language Advanced Standing Exam** schedule is the same as the Placement Test schedule. The email chain, languages tested, and the test itself are also the same as with the Placement Test. However, the Advanced Standing Exam is designed for students who have skills in a foreign language but do not want to do any foreign language coursework at UNO. With the Advanced Standing Exam, the student **GETS CREDIT WITHOUT TAKING A CLASS**. It is not free of charge. It costs \$20, paid in advance of the exam, for every course that the student wants to bypass, up to a maximum of 9 credits. The student needs to come to Dr. Starr’s office, Liberal Arts 291-A, within the month prior to taking the exam, in order to obtain and fill out the proper paperwork, get the signature of the Dean of his/her College, and pay the bursar. This must be done **before the student can take the exam**. Once the student takes the exam and receives the results, the registrar posts the credits on the student’s transcript for the courses that he/she passed. The student will be billed \$100 per bypass credit.

Here is the link that explains the Advanced Standing Exam, it's #5. Keep scrolling:

<http://www.uno.edu/cola/foreign-languages/documents/advisingfreshmen.pdf>

### **WHY ALL NATIVE AND HERITAGE SPEAKERS SHOULD TAKE THE PLACEMENT OR ADVANCED STANDING EXAM AND SHOULD NEVER TAKE 1001 OR 1002**

A poll of three sections of Spanish 1001 taken in January 2019 found that seventeen students in those sections were native or heritage speakers of Spanish. This means that they were spending valuable class time conjugating basic verbs and learning such elementary items as the days of the week, the months, the seasons, and numbers under 100. Not only were they “learning” basic things that they had already learned before kindergarten, but more importantly, they were taking the seats of true beginners who needed to learn the language, and were unable to register since all of the Spanish 1001 sections were full. In addition, they were very intimidating for the non-native students. Imagine trying to learn a new language and having native speakers dominate the class. Yet that is the situation every term at UNO. Most of the students polled were not aware that we administer a Placement Test and Advanced Standing Exam. Indeed, they were either told by our advisors to take basic Spanish, or were left on their own with no advising in the area of foreign languages. We hope to see the number of test takers increase dramatically so that we can place students who already have skills in higher level courses, move them on more efficiently to the completion of their degrees, and reserve our basic courses for true beginners. We believe that everyone benefits (both financially and academically) when students are placed wisely and accurately in the courses where they truly belong.