



Bridge Program

for Advanced Language Learning

Second Language Teaching and Research Center (L2TRC)

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The Bridge Program

Utah's Advanced Language Pathway for Post-AP Language Study

Utah's **Bridge Program** offers an advanced language pathway for high school students who have passed the AP Language and Culture exam. Students have the opportunity to complete one to three Bridge courses while in high school earning both high school and university credit. A student who completes three Bridge courses will graduate from high school with nine upper division college credits that count towards a major or minor in the language of study. Utah House Bill 152, sponsored by Senator Howard Stephenson and Representative Eric Hutchings and passed during the 2016 legislative session, facilitates infrastructure and provides ongoing funding for this critical continuation of Utah's ambitious Dual Language Immersion (DLI) Program.

Since 2008, Utah's K-9 DLI Program has grown to include five languages, Chinese, French, German, Portuguese and Spanish, in 161 schools reaching more than 32,000 students. In 2017, Utah DLI will add Russian and is projected to reach 39,000 students in 200 schools. DLI students aim to take the AP Language and Culture exam at the end of 9th grade; the **Bridge Program** is designed to 'bridge' the gap between completion of the exam and the start of higher education. It ensures uninterrupted language education and promotes an articulated vision for K-16 language study, establishing a clear K-16 pathway as well as a career pathway in two languages. In the **Bridge Program's** inaugural year, 2016-17, two universities are delivering a Spanish course at four high schools across two school districts. In 2017-18, the second Spanish course will be offered by three universities at six high schools across four school districts; in 2018-19, courses in Spanish, French and Chinese will be offered by four universities at 23 high schools across eleven districts, and by 2020-21 courses in all three languages will be offered by five universities at 48 high schools across fifteen districts.

The **Bridge Program** is a unique partnership between all Utah state institutions of higher education and school districts with DLI programs. Each Bridge course is developed by a statewide team of university and high school instructors and delivered during a full academic year by a pair of instructors, one from the university hosting the course and one from the high school site working in a co-teaching model. Through challenging and sophisticated approaches to cultural content, Bridge courses focus on developing critical thinking skills and advancing students' language proficiency towards state grade level targets. The courses further the state goal of graduating students from high school with language proficiency levels more typical of students completing a language major in college. Utah's institutions of higher education are actively preparing for this influx of linguistically advanced students.

The **Bridge Program** meets the need for a secondary pathway for DLI students, but its impact goes beyond this. Enrollment in Bridge courses is open to any student who passes the requisite AP Language and Culture exam, thus broadening its reach to heritage speakers and other students who pass the exam at any point prior to their final year of high school. The **Bridge Program** promotes equity and access to *bilingual and bicultural citizenship* in Utah by offering rigorous, upper division university language and culture courses to any qualified student in designated high schools as determined by each district.

Utah's **Bridge Program** is administered by the University of Utah's Second Language Teaching and Research Center (L2TRC): l2trc.utah.edu/bridge-program/

