



September 14, 2023

To Whom It May Concern:

The Center for Languages Literatures and Cultures would like to enthusiastically endorse this proposal for recognition of the Seal of Biliteracy (SoBL) obtained by high school students who choose to attend The Ohio State University. If approved, The Ohio State University will be the first large university in Ohio to recognize the SoBL.

If incoming students hold an Ohio Seal of Biliteracy they will be recognized as satisfying the elementary level courses in all languages taught currently. If students hold a Seal of Biliteracy from any other U.S. state, their approval will be subject to the rigorous requirements of the Ohio Seal of Biliteracy, since some states hold much less rigorous requirements for the award.

With this recognition, incoming students will be able to forego placement testing and move on to study upper-level language, literature, and culture courses immediately. This will encourage more students to major or minor in their languages, as the process will be more streamlined.

We urge you to accept the proposal as outlined and hope to initiate adoption as soon as possible. Incoming freshman possessing the SoBL have been requesting some type of recognition for their impressive achievement for over two years.

Thank you for your kind attention to the attached proposal.

Janice M. Aski  
Director of the CLLC



# THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

CENTER FOR LANGUAGES, LITERATURES AND CULTURES

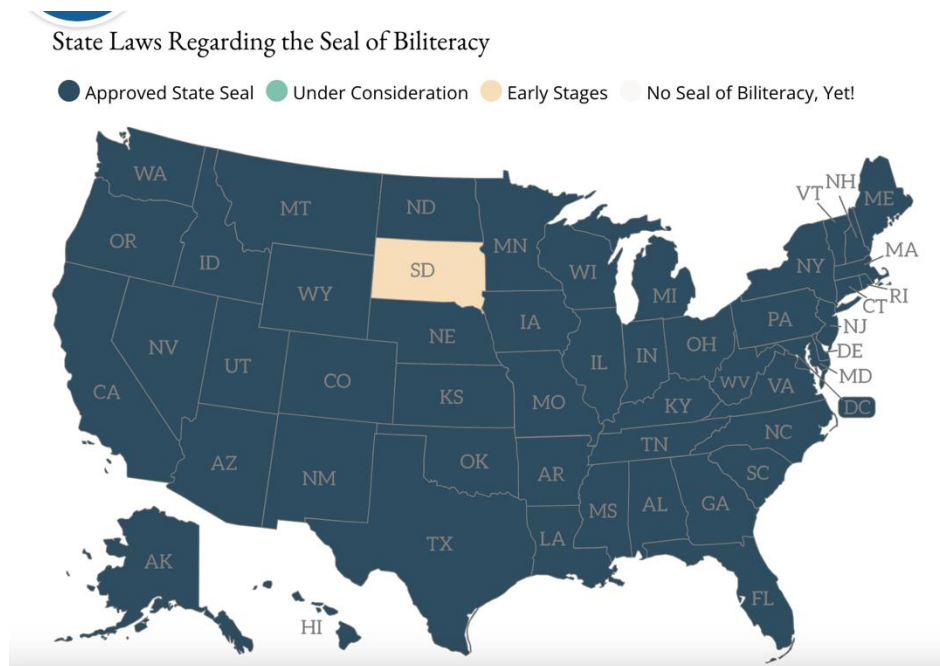
## Seal of Biliteracy (SoBL) Proposal:

December 4, 2023

Prepared by Rebecca Bias, bias.3@osu.edu, Center for Languages, Literatures and Cultures (CLLC)

### Background

The Seal of Biliteracy is an award given by a U.S. high school, district, or state in recognition of students who have studied and attained proficiency in two or more languages by high school graduation. This initiative began in California in 2011. It has now been adopted by 49 states with South Dakota in the early stages as of 2023: <https://sealofbiliteracy.org/>:



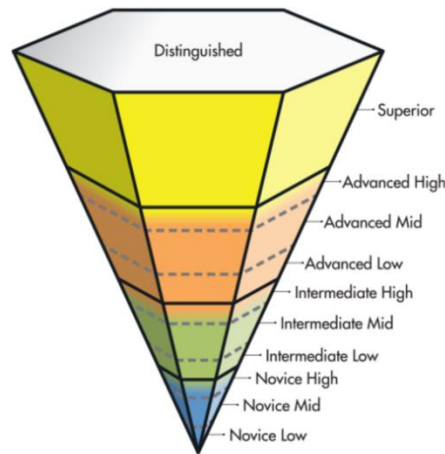
Biliteracy is defined as the ability to effectively communicate or understand written thoughts and ideas through the grammatical systems, vocabularies, and written symbols of two different languages.

Language proficiency is defined in levels, as is established by ACTFL 2012 (The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages): <https://www.languagetesting.com/actfl-proficiency-scale>:

One of these languages is often English, and many cases include Spanish as the second language proficiency achieved. Any high school student is eligible for the Seal. However, many cases may apply such as, but not limited to:

1. American students (native English speakers) who become highly proficient (ACTFL Intermediate High or above) in a foreign language in high school
2. Heritage speakers of another language: Students who have learned a language informally by being exposed to it at home as opposed to having learned it formally in a school setting.
3. Native speakers of another language than English that attend U.S. high schools

The ACTFL levels range from Novice Low to Superior:



Frequently asked questions regarding the Seal of Biliteracy can be found here:

<https://sealofbiliteracy.org/faq>

### **Ohio Seal of Biliteracy**

The Ohio Department of Education adopted the Seal of Biliteracy in 2017, after the passing of House Bill 487 which required the State Board of Education to establish the State Seal of Biliteracy:

<https://legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/131/hb487/documents>

and the rigorous criteria for receiving the Ohio State Seal of Biliteracy is found here:

<https://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Learning-in-Ohio/World-Languages-and-Cultures/Ohio-Seal-of-Biliteracy>

The [Ohio Seal of Biliteracy](#) requirements are also located on Page 6. Basically, these requirements include a placement of Intermediate High or higher in the foreign language, as well as English using ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines.

A 17-minute explanatory video regarding the Ohio Seal of Biliteracy is found here:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5a16\\_z-ROB4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5a16_z-ROB4)

We use the term “rigorous” above because the Ohio Department of Education languages division has established very specific criteria for an award to be granted by a high school in Ohio. Some of these criteria includes:

“Attained a score of Intermediate High or higher in comprehension, speaking, reading and writing the foreign language based on the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages Proficiency Guidelines found at [actfl.org/](http://actfl.org/), using assessments approved by the Ohio Department of Education.”

In our research regarding other U.S. states and their requirements for receiving the high school Seal of Biliteracy, we found that there were many variations in requirements. For example, some states only require what is called “seat time” while taking three years of language study in high school for the award. This simply means that a student was present in class and disregards any assessment measures or ACTFL guidelines testing. This type of variation is very problematic and not adequate for the purposes of this proposal.

The Center for Language, Literatures and Cultures (CLLC) would like to propose that the Ohio Seal of Biliteracy be recognized as a waiver of the elementary and intermediate levels of the world language requirement of coursework in all colleges (as it applies) at The Ohio State University. This relates to incoming freshmen already awarded the Ohio Seal of Biliteracy by their Ohio high school. This waiver would include 3 semesters (1101.01-1103.01 or equivalent) with an additional waiver for one more semester of Spanish (4 semesters 1101.01-2202.01). Students of Spanish would be eligible for 3 hour credit for the 2202.01 level. The students receiving waivers would not be required to take a traditional language placement test. As of August 22, 2023 OSU students no longer receive EM credit for any language levels below 1103. This proposal applies to students who have received the Seal of Biliteracy within two years of applying for the waiver. If a student chooses not to use their eligibility for the Seal waiver, they can, of course, take the language placement test to determine proficiency level and placement.

In addition, we would like to propose that any student coming to Ohio State with a Seal of Biliteracy from any state outside Ohio, must satisfy the criteria for the Ohio Seal of Biliteracy to waive the elementary series requirements above. A designated CLLC staff member will be responsible for reviewing any out-of-state student’s Seal documentation to compare it to the Ohio Seal of Biliteracy requirements to determine if they warrant a waiver of the foreign language requirement at Ohio State. All students would also be eligible, as any incoming student, if desired, for further testing by the appropriate department for higher level placement and potential credit. We hope to make further progress on the implementation for adoption by fall semester 2024, distinguishing us as the first large university in Ohio to offer SoBL waivers to incoming students. We welcome any questions or comments on this proposal. This proposal has been approved by the following CLLC Department Chairs (see documentation Page 7-11) :

Prof. Janice Aski, Director, Center for Language, Literatures and Cultures

Prof. Mark Bender, Chair, Department of East Asian Languages and Literatures

Prof. Angela Brintlinger, Chair, Department of Slavic and East European Languages and Cultures

Prof. Morgan Liu, Chair, Department of Near Eastern and South Asian Languages and Cultures

Prof. Sarah-Grace Heller, Chair, Department of French and Italian

Prof. Robert Holub, Chair, Department of Germanic Languages and Cultures (emeritus)

Prof. Carmen Taleghani-Nikazm, Chair, Department of Germanic Languages and Cultures

Prof. John Grinstead, Chair, Department of Spanish and Portuguese

Prof. Mark Fullerton, Chair, Department of Classics

Prof. Phillip Armstrong, Chair, Department Comparative Studies

## Supporting Documentation

In 2016, the Ohio State University Undergraduate Student Government proposed resolution # 49-R-27; A Resolution to Support the Inclusion of the Seal of Biliteracy on Collegiate Diplomas and Transcripts.

It was adopted November 20, 2016 by the then president, Gerard C. Bassalla, and the vice president, Danielle Di Scala. We have since learned that adding a Seal of Biliteracy to any Ohio State diploma is not possible, but we do hope that the notation can be made on any student's transcripts upon approval of this proposal.

### Ohio:

To date, three universities of higher education in Ohio have recently implemented recognition of the Seal of Biliteracy for their incoming students: Denison University, the University of Mount Union and Wright State University. As per the Ohio Department of Education, Cleveland State University is poised to become the fourth Ohio postsecondary institution to officially recognize the Ohio Seal of Biliteracy while other public and private universities in Ohio are actively discussing how best to recognize incoming students who have attained the Ohio Seal of Biliteracy.

### National Recognition:

The following three Big 10 universities provide some type of credit for students admitted with the SoBL:

#### University of Illinois at Chicago and The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign:

<https://registrar.illinois.edu/academic-records/credit-for-state-seal-of-biliteracy/>

They both award as follows:

"[Illinois Student Code](#) requires that public universities in the State of Illinois ... for admissions purposes, accept the State Seal of Biliteracy as equivalent to two years of foreign language coursework taken in high school and (2) establish criteria for awarding equivalent course credit. These requirements went into effect January 1, 2017."

#### University of Nebraska Lincoln:

This certificate (link) seals the partnership but does not provide details:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/11T2JUaJw\\_nHVhzhN1H34WrEIk0WCbVzj/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/11T2JUaJw_nHVhzhN1H34WrEIk0WCbVzj/view)

"NDE World Languages' Higher Ed Institute Recognition Certificate has been presented to Department of Modern Language and Literature at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln for supporting the Nebraska Seal of Biliteracy. Approved February 25th, 2022"

#### Ivy League Universities/Colleges:

Prof. Kristin Davin of UNC Charlotte recently remarked in her article, "The Seal of Biliteracy: College Credit and Placement" (The Language Educator, Spring 2021 – available by subscription), that Princeton and Yale are exploring the possibilities for recognizing the Seal of Biliteracy. Prof. Davin has been studying and researching Seal of Biliteracy progress across the United States for over a decade:

Kristin J. Davin, Ph.D. | Associate Professor  
Program Director, World Language Education  
Department of Middle, Secondary & K-12 Education  
UNC Charlotte | Cato College of Education  
[kdavin@uncc.edu](mailto:kdavin@uncc.edu)

Notable in this article:

“Some individuals at IHEs (Institutions of Higher Education) fear that offering credit to SoBL earners might hurt language course enrollment. However, initial evidence suggests that this is not the case, especially in IHEs with a retroactive credit policy. It is too soon for a quantitative analysis because most IHEs have only had this procedure in place for a couple of years, yet qualitative evidence is hopeful. For example, **Dr. Grant Moss, a Professor of Spanish at Pittsburg State University in Kansas, explained that offering credit to SoBL earners has actually increased enrollment in modern language courses.** Dr. Moss and colleagues developed a process through which students with a SoBL could enroll in fifth semester Spanish. Upon successful completion of this course, students earned 15 credits for the completed course and the previous four courses, more than half of the required 24 credits for a minor and almost half of the required 33 credits for a major. As a result, many students decided to continue on to earn a modern language minor or major.” (pp26)

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NOTE: The CLLC at The Ohio State University is not prepared to offer examinations to award any state Seal of Biliteracy to students.

## Ohio Seal of Biliteracy Requirements:

### Requirements for Earning an Ohio Seal of Biliteracy

To determine student eligibility to earn an Ohio Seal of Biliteracy, the answer must be an unqualified "Yes" to **all** the following questions:

**1. Is the student eligible to earn a high school diploma?**

*Qualifiers:*

- a. Is the student currently a senior or a junior in good standing within 15 months of graduating?
- b. Does the student attend a school that is officially participating in the state's Seal of Biliteracy program – or – is he or she an eligible home-schooled student?

**2. Has the student met one of the English language arts proficiency requirements for earning a Seal of Biliteracy?**

*Qualifiers:*

- a. Earned a proficient level or higher on Ohio's required state test(s) for high school English language arts; or
- b. Earned a remediation-free score on the English and reading sections of the ACT or SAT; or
- c. Earned a proficient level or higher on an Ohio Department of Education-approved alternative assessment (TerraNova or Iowa Test); or
- d. Earned a score of proficient or higher on the 9-12 Ohio English Language Proficiency Assessment (OELPA).

**3. Has the student satisfied one of the foreign language proficiency requirements for earning a Seal of Biliteracy?**

*Qualifiers:*

- a. Passed an Advanced Placement (AP) foreign language examination with a score of 4 or higher; or
- b. Passed an International Baccalaureate (IB) foreign language examination with a score of 5 or higher on the Higher Level exam or a score of 6 or higher on the Standard Level exam; or
- c. Attained a score of Intermediate High or higher in comprehension, speaking, reading and writing the foreign language based on the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages Proficiency Guidelines found at [actfl.org/](http://actfl.org/), using assessments approved by the Ohio Department of Education; or
- d. Qualified for proficiency-based credits through Ohio's credit flexibility program and attained a score of Intermediate High or higher in comprehension, speaking, reading and writing based on the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages Proficiency Guidelines using assessments approved by the Ohio Department of Education; or
- e. Attained a score equivalent to Intermediate High or higher on the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages Proficiency Guidelines in interpersonal signing, presentational signing and demonstrating understanding of American Sign Language on an American Sign Language assessment approved by the Ohio Department of Education; or
- f. Attained a score equivalent to Intermediate High or higher on the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages Proficiency Guidelines in interpretive reading and presentational writing on a classical language assessment approved by the Ohio Department of Education.

## Approval by CLLC Chairs:

Email sent to Language Chairs, March 6, 2023

**From:** Bias, Rebecca

**Sent:** Tuesday, March 6, 2023 11:15 AM

**To:** Grinstead, John <[grinstead.11@osu.edu](mailto:grinstead.11@osu.edu)>; Heller, Sarah-Grace <[heller.64@osu.edu](mailto:heller.64@osu.edu)>; Armstrong, Philip <[armstrong.202@osu.edu](mailto:armstrong.202@osu.edu)>; Fullerton, Mark <[fullerton.1@osu.edu](mailto:fullerton.1@osu.edu)>; Brintlinger, Angela <[brintlinger.3@osu.edu](mailto:brintlinger.3@osu.edu)>; Liu, Morgan <[liu.737@osu.edu](mailto:liu.737@osu.edu)>; Bender, Mark <[bender.4@osu.edu](mailto:bender.4@osu.edu)>; Holub, Robert C. <[holub.5@osu.edu](mailto:holub.5@osu.edu)>; Clopper, Cynthia <[clopper.1@osu.edu](mailto:clopper.1@osu.edu)>

**Cc:** Aski, Janice <[aski.1@osu.edu](mailto:aski.1@osu.edu)>

**Subject:** RE: Seal of Biliteracy Proposal for OSU

Hello everyone,

I am going to have a few minutes in today's meeting to address the Seal of Biliteracy (SoBL) Proposal for OSU. I will briefly go over it, but I have attached the most recent draft proposal. You do not have to read it all before the meeting. Just skip to the bolded paragraph on page 3 to get the idea if you have time. The excel file attached is just a list of universities that offer some type of credit for high school SoBL. As you are aware, we will no longer offer credit hours for any placement testing from 1101-1103, but just a waiver, beginning in fall 2023. I just wanted you all to have these, and if you have questions later, you can always email me. We do need permission from all chairs to proceed with the proposal.

Thank you all,

Rebecca

Rebecca H. Bias, Ph.D.

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Email sent to Chairs March 7, 2023

**From:** Bias, Rebecca

**Sent:** Tuesday, March 7, 2023 11:15 AM

**To:** Grinstead, John <[grinstead.11@osu.edu](mailto:grinstead.11@osu.edu)>; Heller, Sarah-Grace <[heller.64@osu.edu](mailto:heller.64@osu.edu)>; Armstrong, Philip <[armstrong.202@osu.edu](mailto:armstrong.202@osu.edu)>; Fullerton, Mark <[fullerton.1@osu.edu](mailto:fullerton.1@osu.edu)>; Brintlinger, Angela <[brintlinger.3@osu.edu](mailto:brintlinger.3@osu.edu)>; Liu, Morgan <[liu.737@osu.edu](mailto:liu.737@osu.edu)>; Bender, Mark <[bender.4@osu.edu](mailto:bender.4@osu.edu)>; Holub, Robert C. <[holub.5@osu.edu](mailto:holub.5@osu.edu)>; Clopper, Cynthia <[clopper.1@osu.edu](mailto:clopper.1@osu.edu)>

**Cc:** Aski, Janice <[aski.1@osu.edu](mailto:aski.1@osu.edu)>

**Subject:** RE: Seal of Biliteracy Proposal for OSU

Hello again everyone!

If you were not able to make the chair's meeting, I asked that everyone send me a note of approval for this SoBL proposal by March 30, 2023. I will address any questions or concerns that you may have via email. Thank you in advance for those that I have already received!

Rebecca



**Approval: Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures**

Hi Rebecca,

My chair had forwarded the Seal of Biliteracy proposal back in March. As I was going through the emails that I had pinned, I noticed that I had not responded to this email. I'm very sorry for that. I just read the proposal and it all makes sense to me and don't see why OSU should not follow what the majority of other institutions are doing. I approve CLLC's proposal, if it's not too late.

**Carmen Taleghani-Nikazm**

Professor

Director of Undergraduate German Language Instruction

Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures

438 Hagerty Hall, 1775 College Rd, Columbus, OH 43210

[taleghani-nikazm.1@osu.edu](mailto:taleghani-nikazm.1@osu.edu)

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**Approval: Comparative Studies**

Hi Rebecca,

Not sure if Comp Studies counts, but happy to offer my support for this.

Philip Armstrong, Chair Department of Comparative Studies

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**Approval: Near Eastern and South Asian Studies (NESA)**

**From:** Liu, Morgan <[liu.737@osu.edu](mailto:liu.737@osu.edu)>

**Date:** Monday, March 6, 2023 at 1:18 PM

**To:** Bias, Rebecca <[bias.3@osu.edu](mailto:bias.3@osu.edu)>

**Subject:** Re: Seal of Biliteracy Proposal for OSU

I grant permission from NESA for SoBL.

Morgan Liu, Chair, Department Of Near Eastern and South Asian Languages and Cultures

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**Approval: Department of Spanish and Portuguese**

I'm pretty sure that I have approved this, but I approve it again here, if that helps.

John Grinstead (he/him/his)

Professor & Chair

Department of Spanish & Portuguese

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**Approval: Department of French and Italian**

Rebecca,

On behalf of French and Italian I express support for the Seal of Biliteracy Proposal for OSU. It extends easier access to higher-level courses to students ready to build on a language foundation.

**Sarah-Grace Heller**

Chair, Department of French and Italian

Associate professor of French, affiliate faculty Medieval and Renaissance Studies

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**Approval: Department of East Asian Languages and Literatures:**

**From:** Bender, Mark <bender.4@osu.edu>

**Date:** Friday, July 28, 2023 at 9:55 AM

**To:** Bias, Rebecca <bias.3@osu.edu>

**Subject:** Re: SoBL Proposal OSU

Dear Rebecca, I concur with the SoBL initiative moving forward.

Mark Bender

Professor of Chinese Literature and Folklore

Chair, Department of East Asian Languages and Literatures

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**Approval: Department of Slavic and East European Languages and Cultures**

SEELC is all in on this proposal.

Angela Brintlinger

Chair SEELC

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**Approval: Department of Classics**

**From:** Fullerton, Mark <fullerton.1@osu.edu>

**Date:** Friday, July 28, 2023 at 10:46 AM

**To:** Bias, Rebecca <bias.3@osu.edu>

**Subject:** Re: CLLC SoBI (Seal of Biliteracy Proposal)

Dear Rebecca,

I can approve this proposal on behalf of the Department of Classics.

Mark D. Fullerton

Professor and Chair, Department of Classics