

CERTIFICATION IN  
FOREIGN LANGUAGES  
AT THE GRADUATE LEVEL  
GRADES 7-12

GRADUATE STUDENT  
HANDBOOK

AN OVERVIEW OF *SAILS* AND THE FOUR GATES

SOUTHERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY

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## PREFACE

This handbook has been created for *you*, the candidate for certification at the graduate level in Foreign Languages (French, German, Italian and Spanish) in grades 7-12. It contains information you will need to successfully complete your program. Please keep this handbook in a convenient place. It should be used as a reference to guide you through your program at SCSU. However, please remember to always consult with your advisor or the Foreign Languages Department Certification Coordinator if you have questions.

We wish you the best of success in your studies, and in your future teaching!

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## ***SAILS: AN OVERVIEW***

*SAILS* is an acronym which stands for **S**cholarship, **A**ttitudes and **D**ispositions, **I**ntegrity, **L**eadership, and **S**ervice. These five categories represent the conceptual framework developed by the School of Education at Southern Connecticut State University. Every certification program at SCSU is guided by *SAILS* and a four-gate program. Every gate addresses each of the five categories, and every candidate must meet certain competencies at each gate.

### ***SAILS* COMPETENCIES FOR FOREIGN LANGUAGE CERTIFICATION**

#### **Scholarship**

This competency can be met through your course work and GPA requirements, as well as the PRAXIS I and ACTFL OPI and WPT exams. More information on these items can be found in the description of each gate later in this Handbook.

#### **Attitudes and Dispositions**

This competency can be met through your admission essay, department interview, letters of recommendation, portfolio, field experiences, and student teaching. More information on these items can be found in the description of each gate later in this Handbook.

#### **Integrity**

This competency can be met through your department interview, letters of recommendation, portfolio, field experiences, and student teaching. More information on these items can be found in the description of each gate later in this Handbook.

#### **Leadership**

This competency can be met in many ways, for example, through tutoring privately or on campus, membership in a professional organization like the American Council on Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), joining student government, and participating in Professional Development Day while student teaching. A letter from a responsible person (parent of someone you tutor, Faculty Advisor for student government, etc.) will provide evidence you have met this competency.

#### **Service**

This competency can be met in many ways, for example, by joining the SCSU Foreign Language Clubs in each of your respective languages or other campus organization, participating in a community organization, doing volunteer work for the community, helping with the International Days at New Haven high schools and involving yourself in a school activity once you are student teaching. A letter from a responsible person (community leader, Faculty Advisor for a club, etc.) will provide evidence you have met this competency.

### **THE FOUR GATES: AN OVERVIEW**

Each certification candidate, regardless of subject area, must pass through a set of four gates to complete his/her certification program. Every department has developed its own set of gates for its certifications candidates.

In Foreign Languages, the four gates consist of:

1. Entry into the certification program
2. Midpoint evaluation in the program
3. Pre-student teaching in the program
4. Completion of the program

At each gate, every certification candidate will be assessed according to the five *SAILS* categories. Students will not be allowed to proceed to the next gate unless they demonstrate competency in these *SAILS* categories.

In this Handbook, we will explain each of the four gates in detail.

*Reminder: always consult with your advisor or the Foreign Languages Department Certification Coordinator if you have questions.*

## **GATE 1: ENTRY INTO THE PROGRAM**

In Gate I, candidates apply to the School of Education and Graduate School. This application is required for any candidate wishing to become certified in any subject.

The following competencies must be met before a candidate can apply to the School of Education and complete this gate (a checklist for Gate 1 is in Appendix E):

### **Major Requirements**

Each candidate must complete 30 credit hours of the target Foreign Language courses.

### **GPA Requirements**

Each candidate must have a minimum of 3.0 GPA (grade point average) at the time of application to the School of Education and Graduate School. This GPA includes course work taken at all other universities. If a candidate studied abroad and earned a degree at a University in another country, the candidate must submit an official transcript from that country. The transcript must be translated and evaluated by the following agency :

World Education Services, Inc.  
P.O. Box 5087  
Bowling Green Station  
New York, NY 10274-5087  
Phone: (212) 966-6311  
Fax: (212) 739-6100  
email: [info@wes.org](mailto:info@wes.org)  
<http://www.wes.org>

### **PRAXIS I Exam**

PRAXIS I is a state-required examination for candidates wishing to pursue certification in any subject area. All candidates must pass, or have waived, PRAXIS I.

Information on PRAXIS I, including when it is offered and how to register, can be found at <http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2613&q=321260>

Information on eligibility for a waiver of PRAXIS I can be found at [http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/PDF/Cert/certform/ed\\_192.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/PDF/Cert/certform/ed_192.pdf)

Note that it takes approximately four weeks, sometimes longer, to receive your test results for PRAXIS I. If applying for a waiver, it may take four to six weeks to receive a confirmation letter from the State of Connecticut. Therefore, it is imperative that this requirement be taken care of as soon as possible.

## **Letters of Recommendation**

Each candidate must submit two letters of recommendation indicating the candidate's potential as a foreign language major and as a teacher. At least one of these letters must come from a foreign languages professor (or foreign languages high school teacher). Letters from friends and/or family members are not acceptable. Once completed, these letters must be submitted directly to the Foreign Languages Department Certification Coordinator and to School of Education. Recommendation forms are available in the School of Education in Davis Hall and on line.

## **The Admission Essay**

Each candidate must submit an essay on his/her philosophy of teaching world languages. The essay must be between 250 and 500 words, typed, using a font no larger than 12-point, double-spaced, and signed. You must use correct grammar and spelling. This essay must be submitted directly to the Foreign Languages Department Certification Coordinator and a copy should be sent to the School of Education.

Your essay must address the following points, in no particular order:

- What people or events influenced your decision to teach Foreign Languages? (You do not need to use anyone's name in your essay if you do not wish to.)
- When, or under what circumstances, did you first develop an interest in Foreign Languages?
- What qualities do you possess that would make you a good Foreign Language teacher?
- In what ways can you contribute to our program?
- Examine the five categories of SAILS, and briefly discuss how you satisfy (or will satisfy) each of the categories. Cite specific examples if possible.
- Include any other items if your essay which you feel we should know, such as hobbies/interests, awards received, etc.

Save a copy of your essay. Be prepared to discuss any of these items during your department interview.

## **The Department Interview – Part 1.**

Each candidate must pass an interview with the Foreign Languages Department Certification Coordinator. The interview will only be scheduled once we have your letters of recommendation, essay, and PRAXIS I results. The interview will usually not last more than 30 minutes. This is our first chance to get to know you better. Here are some tips to help you with the interview:

- Review your essay before the interview, since you may be asked to respond to various parts of it.
- Be familiar with the five categories of SAILS.
- Dress appropriately for your interview. Casual clothing is acceptable, but remember you want to create a good impression.
- Arrive on time for your interview. If you need to cancel the interview for any reason, let us know as soon as possible.

Feel free to ask questions during the interview, and stay relaxed. We are here to help you.

Upon completion of the interview, each candidate will be either be advised to continue with the program, advised to continue with conditions, or advised to withdraw from the program.

### **The Department Interview – Part 2.**

At this stage you will interview with three member of the FL Department Evaluation Committee. These interviews will take place in your Target Language. The members of the committee will assess your oral and possibly written proficiency in the target language. If your proficiency is below Advanced Low on ACTFL Proficiency Scales, you will be required to take additional courses in the target language.

### **Applying to the School of Education and School of Graduate Studies**

If you are advised to continue with the program or continue with conditions, you will now apply to the School of Education and School of Graduate Studies. This will complete Gate 1. Application forms are available in the Student Teaching Office in Davis Hall and on line.

Upon completion of this gate, your file will remain in the Department of Foreign Languages, and a copy of your file will be sent to the School of Education. You will be notified shortly afterwards of your acceptance into the School of Education.

## **GATE 2: MIDPOINT EVALUATION IN THE PROGRAM**

In Gate 2, candidates' progress in the program is assessed. The following competencies must be met before a candidate can complete this gate (a checklist for Gate 2 is in Appendix F):

### **Course Requirements**

Each candidate must complete FLA 403, *Second Language Acquisition* with a grade of C or higher. Each student must complete (pass) a course in Educational Foundations EDF 520-526 (select one), SED 482, *Teaching Exceptional Students at Secondary Level*, US History HIS 110 or HIS 112, *School Health* SHE 203, *Adolescent Psychology* PSY 215

### **GPA Requirements**

Each candidate must have a minimum of 3.0 GPA, using the same conditions as in Gate 1..

### **The Portfolio**

Each candidate will present a portfolio containing work and reflections indicating successful completion of the core courses. Other items in the portfolio may include tests taken, projects, letters of recommendation, field experiences, journals, etc. More details on the contents of the portfolio will be available once a candidate has completed Gate 1.

## **GATE 3: PRE-STUDENT TEACHING IN THE PROGRAM**

In Gate 3, candidates apply for Student Teaching.

The following competencies must be met before a candidate can apply for Student Teaching and complete this gate (a checklist for Gate 3 is in Appendix G):

### **Course Requirements**

Each candidate must complete the remaining Foreign Language courses as indicated in the Planned Program. Each candidate must complete (pass) 470, *Literacy and Content*, and IDS 471, *English Language Learners in the Classroom*. Each candidate must complete (pass) EDU 491, *Foreign Languages (Secondary School)*. **Please note that EDU 491 is a 4 credit course and involves heavy field experience component. It can only be taken during a semester directly preceding student teaching. If a candidate enrolls in EDU 491 and does not apply for student teaching for the consecutive semester, he/she will be assigned an Incomplete for EDU 491 and will need to repeat the course.**

### **GPA Requirements**

Each candidate must have a minimum of 3.0 GPA, using the same conditions as in Gate 1.

### **PRAXIS II - ACTFL**

Each candidate must pass **ACTFL OPI (Oral Proficiency Interview) and WPT (Written Production Test)**, which is a state required content examination for certification. This exam cannot be waived. A candidate who does not pass ACTFL prior to Student Teaching will not be allowed to student teach until the exam is passed.

The required level of proficiency for ACTFL is Advanced Low for both OPI and WPT.

Information on registering for this exam can be found at

<http://www.languageTesting.com/> or by calling (800) 486 - 8444 or (914) 963 - 7110

### **The Portfolio**

Each candidate will present a portfolio containing work and reflections indicating successful completion of the courses from Gate 3. Other items in the portfolio may include tests taken, projects, letters of recommendation, lesson plans, field experiences, journals, etc. More details on the contents of the portfolio will be available once a candidate has completed Gate 2.

### **Applying for Student Teaching**

Once all of the above conditions have been satisfied, a candidate will apply for Student Teaching. The candidate will complete the Student Teaching Application form, along with three copies of the accompanying Personal Data Sheet. These forms can be downloaded at <http://www.southernct.edu/education/studentteaching>. These items must be submitted directly to the Foreign Language Department Certification Coordinator, who will then forward the forms to the Director of Student Teaching. This will complete Gate 3. Each candidate will then be notified once a placement has been made. Please note, the deadline for applying for student teaching is **March 1** for the Fall semester and **October 1** for the Spring semester.

## **GATE 4: COMPLETION OF THE PROGRAM**

In Gate 4, candidates complete Student Teaching and are ready to apply for certification.

The following competencies must be met before a candidate can apply for certification and complete this gate (a checklist for Gate 4 is in Appendix H):

### **Course Requirements**

Each candidate must pass EDU 452, *Student Teaching*, and EDU 453, *Student Teaching Seminar*. In addition, all other required courses for graduation must be completed.

### **GPA Requirements**

Each candidate must have a minimum of 3.0 GPA, using the same conditions as in Gate 1.

### **Student Teaching**

Each candidate must complete EDU 452, *Student Teaching*.

### **The Portfolio**

Each candidate will present a portfolio containing work and reflections indicating successful completion of the courses from Gate 4. Other items in the portfolio may include tests taken, projects, letters of recommendation, lesson plans, field experiences, journals, etc. More details on the contents of the portfolio will be available once a candidate has completed Gate 3.

### **Completing the Program**

Upon completion of all the requirements for Gate 4, the candidate has completed the program, and is now eligible to graduate and apply for certification.

### **Getting Certified**

Candidates must apply for certification. An Application for Certification form can be obtained in the Student Teaching Office in Davis Hall. This completed form must be given to the Director of Student Teaching.

## Appendix A

### GATE 1 Checklist for Foreign Language Certification Candidates at the Graduate Level.

- Pass or waive PRAXIS I.
- Have an overall Q.P.R.  $\geq$  3.0 in all courses, including courses taken at other universities.
- Submit a 250-500 word typed, signed essay on your teaching philosophy.
- Submit two letters of recommendation indicating the candidate's potential as a Foreign Language major and as a teacher. At least one letter must be from a Foreign Language professor.
- Pass an interview with the Foreign Language Department Certification Program Coordinator .
- Pass three interviews with the members of the FL Department Evaluation committee.
- Complete the School of Education Application.
- Complete an application to the School of Graduate Studies.

## Appendix B

### GATE 2 Checklist for Foreign Language Certification Candidates at the Graduate Level.

- Complete SED 482.
- Complete FLA 403.
- Complete PSY 215
- Complete SHE 203
- Maintain an overall Q.P.R.  $\geq 3.0$  in all courses, including courses taken at other universities.
- Present a portfolio containing work and reflections indicating successful completion of the core courses, as well as a lesson plan performance assessment.

## Appendix C

### GATE 3 Checklist for Foreign Language Certification Candidates at the Graduate Level.

- Complete at least all required FL courses in the major program and maintain an overall Q.P.R.  $\geq 3.0$  in FL courses in the major that count toward graduation.
- Complete EDU 491 a semester prior to student teaching.
- Complete IDS 470, and IDS 471
- Pass ACTFL OPI and WPT at Advanced Low Level
- Maintain an overall Q.P.R.  $\geq 3.0$  in all courses, including courses taken at other universities.
- Present a portfolio containing work and reflections indicating successful completion of the above courses.
- Complete the Application for Student Teaching and the accompanying personal data sheet.

## Appendix D

### GATE 4 Checklist for Foreign Language Certification Candidates at the Graduate Level.

- Pass EDU 452 and EDU 453, student teaching and the related student teaching seminar.
- Maintain an overall Q.P.R.  $\geq 3.0$  in all courses, including courses taken at other universities, and an overall Q.P.R.  $\geq 3.0$  in FL courses in the major that count toward graduation.
- Present a portfolio containing work and reflections indicating successful completion of student teaching and the program in general.
- Apply to the State of Connecticut for an Initial Educator's Certificate.