

FAQs
for the World Language Student regarding
the Utica Community Schools Seal of Global Language
& The Michigan Seal of Biliteracy

How do I know if I meet the criteria to be a candidate for the Seal of Global Language?

The first time you hear about the UCS Seal of Global Language should be early in your world language studies. Students completing through level 4 (L4) of their chosen language curriculum are considered “candidates” and will meet a few other criteria to become “recipients”. Your world language teacher will be the first person to make you aware of your candidacy.

What is the difference between a “candidate” for the Seal of Global Language, and being a “recipient” of the Seal of Global Language?

A “candidate” is a student that is currently taking a level 4 world language class, and working on meeting the final 2 criteria to achieve the honor: 1) receiving a 480 “proficient” or better on the Reading and Writing portion of the MME and passing the AAPPL or OPI & WPT examination to demonstrate proficiency in the studied language. A “recipient” is a student that has accomplished all criteria successfully.

What is the AAPPL examination?

The AAPPL examination (The ACTFL Assessment of Performance toward Proficiency in Languages) is a proficiency exam for a variety of world languages, not only French, German, and Spanish, and is administered by the American Council of Teachers of Foreign Languages. The AAPPL exam seeks to measure a test taker’s level of ability in a world language in all 4 modes of communication: Reading, Writing, Listening, and Speaking. Your experience in UCS world language classes L1 – L4 will prepare you for success in each category, and your L4 language teacher will introduce practice examinations for your review. The first time a student is eligible to take the AAPPL is their junior year while enrolled in a L4 language class. Seniors having taken L4 or enrolled in an AP world language course may elect to test again for a passing score, or to improve upon their first score and potentially earn the Michigan Seal of Biliteracy. In February, UCS students will receive directions on how to register for the AAPPL from their L4 world language teacher. See more information regarding the AAPPL exam at [AAPPL Language Tests | Language Testing International](#).

What is the OPI & WPT examination?

The OPI examination (The ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview) and the WPT (ACTFL Writing Proficiency Test) are the proficiency exams for a variety of world languages such as, Albanian, Polish, Thai, Ukrainian, Urdu and other languages. The OPI exam is a one-on-one interview between a certified ACTFL tester and examinee. This a live interactive interview adapting to each test-taker and their speaking and listening abilities. The WPT exam consists of a series of writing tasks taken online. The first time a student is eligible to take the OPI & WPT exams is their junior year. Seniors may elect to test again for a passing score, or to improve upon their first score and potentially earn the Michigan Seal of Biliteracy. In February, UCS students will receive directions on how to register for the OPI & WPT exams from their counselor. See more information regarding the OPI & WPT exams at [OPI & WPT Seal of Biliteracy | LTI \(languagetesting.com\)](#)

How much does the AAPPL exam cost?

Currently, \$20

How much does the OPI and WPT exams cost?

Currently, \$55

Do I have to take the AP level of my chosen world language to receive the UCS Seal of Global Language or the Michigan Seal of Biliteracy?

No. Many students can earn a passing score on the AAPPL after their L4 language course. For students wishing to also earn the Michigan Seal of Biliteracy, the AP level course is highly recommended as the criteria for “proficient” for this honor is more challenging. After the experience of an AP language course, both honors are more easily achieved.

What is the difference between the UCS Seal of Global Language and the Michigan Seal of Biliteracy?

The criteria to receive each is different in 2 ways. First, to earn the UCS Seal of Global Language, students must complete 8 semesters (through L4) of a same world language class (Spanish, French, German or Japanese) or complete 8 semesters of English credit when testing in a language other than Spanish, French, German or Japanese. The Michigan Seal of Biliteracy criteria is to complete 4 credits in English. Second, both require a proficient score on the AAPPL or OPI & WPT examination, yet how they measure “proficient” is quite different. For the UCS Seal of Global Language, students are deemed proficient when they earn an average score of a 4 overall. The Michigan Seal of Biliteracy requires a 5 or better on EACH of the 4 sections (Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking tests). A student’s performance on the Reading and Writing section of the SAT is not a factor in the awarding of the Michigan Seal of Biliteracy. The UCS Seal of Global Language is awarded by UCS, and, once becoming a recipient of the Seal, students will be conferred honor cords for graduation, have their name listed in the graduation program as a “Recipient of the Seal of Global Language”, as well as be given a seal on their diploma. The Michigan Seal of Biliteracy also confers a seal for the recipient’s diploma, and the recipient receives a letter from the state awarding the honor.

How am I awarded honor cords for graduation?

Honor cords are conferred on students that have successfully met all requirements for the UCS Seal of Global Language, including proving proficiency on the AAPPL or OPI & WPT exam with an average score of a 4 overall for all four parts: Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking, demonstrating proficiency on the WIDA or Reading and Writing portion of the SAT and completing the 8 semesters (through L4) of their studied world language. The Michigan Seal of Biliteracy does not confer honor cords.

How can I benefit during both my “candidacy” for the Seal of Global Language as well as when I become a “recipient”?

Once you are a Level 4+ world language student in UCS, as you begin to complete applications for universities and scholarships, you should absolutely include that you are a “Candidate for the Seal of Global Language/Michigan Seal of Biliteracy”. Stating this in your applications highlights your commitment to your world language study and academic electives over your high school career. When paired with language club membership and world language honor societies, you have completed both academic and social extra-curricular pursuits as well, making you an excellent candidate for and representative of their student body or scholarship.

Once accepted to your university, a recipient’s AAPPL scores may be requested by the university for the purposes of placement in their university world language class as well as for the purpose of awarding free college credit or advancement in a student’s studies for their major or minor, based on the level of language proficiency reached in high school and demonstrated on the AAPPL exam.

In terms of post-secondary military service, demonstration of proficiency on the AAPPL examination has resulted in sign-on bonuses and higher salaried jobs. Also, when listed in the “Service Selection” portion of the application form, the demonstration of language proficiency in high school has led to a greater chance of the military applicant meeting the requirement and selection process for an Intelligence Officer position in their community