

Deutsch? Español?

Foreign Languages at the Mount Academy

One of the many decisions you and your student will have to make as you prepare for their time at the Mount Academy is whether to take German or Spanish as a foreign language. Here are some things to keep in mind.

1. **Student Enthusiasm.** Is your student really excited about one of the two languages? If so, that's probably the language they should take. Enthusiasm will propel students forward when the grammar gets tough.
2. **Academic Challenge.** German and Spanish present different dilemmas for high school students, but for native speakers of English, German is harder overall. If you feel strongly that your student needs an extra challenge, consider German! Students who struggle with language may want to consider Spanish. This does NOT mean that Spanish has a lighter workload or that German has extra-hard quizzes. Both languages will require investment of time and effort.
3. **Future Plans.** Is your student interested in a particular career path where one language will be more useful than the other? Students interested in medicine might want to take Spanish, whereas students interested in science and engineering might want to think about German.
4. **Travel.** Are they hoping to study abroad in a particular place? For Bruderhof students: are you looking to spend a year at one of the Bruderhof communities in Germany or Austria? Does your family frequently travel to particular countries where German or Spanish is spoken? The chance to use a language in context can help motivate your student.
5. **Heritage.** Does your family have roots in a German or Spanish-speaking country? Your student might enjoy connecting with their heritage through language. This should not be the sole deciding factor here, of course. Our German teacher is actually more Hispanic than she is German!
6. **Functional fluency.** If your student is already functionally fluent in one language, they might want to take the other one so that they are not bored. Our language teachers will help to assess your student to see where they might fit into our language sequences.
7. **Class size.** We try to keep our class sizes similar across languages. However, due to higher demand for Spanish, those classes are often larger than their German counterparts. Some students prefer increased individual attention, others feel more comfortable in larger classes. You know your student best.

8.

Balance. Please weigh all of the above factors as you and your student make this decision. No single factor should be the sole motivation behind your language choice. We want your student to be excited to learn!

If you have any additional questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to Matina Horning, chair of the World Languages Department: matinahorning@mountacademy.org

