



The Utah Language Bridge Program and Concurrent Enrollment Course Work Utah's Advanced Language Pathway for Post-AP Language Study

WHAT IS THE BRIDGE PROGRAM?

- The Bridge Program is a *unique partnership* between Utah's state institutions of higher education and school districts with DLI programs offering an advanced language course pathway for high school students who have passed the AP Language and Culture or Portuguese NEWL exam in grade 9, 10, or 11.
- The Bridge Program 'bridges' the gap between the end of the DLI Program in grade 9 and the start of higher education by offering upper division university language course work in the high school setting. This ensures uninterrupted language education and articulated K-16 language study as well as a career pathway in two languages.
- High School students complete one, two or three Bridge courses earning both high school and *upper-level* university credit.
- Students who complete all three Bridge courses graduate from high school with nine upper division college credits that count towards a major or minor in the language of study.
- Credit for these courses is accepted toward degree pathways at all of Utah's six public universities.

COURSE DELIVERY MODEL

- Each upper division (3000 level) Bridge course is developed by a statewide team of university faculty and district language specialists. The course is delivered over 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.
- Course content delivers cultural content and themes, develops critical thinking and analytical skills, and advances students' language proficiency.
- Bridge courses support research-based, college-going academic behaviors that correlate to college readiness and help students to be prepared to succeed in postsecondary study.
- 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.
- Each of Utah's institutions of higher education have designed a seamless degree continuation pathway for incoming university students who have completed 1 or more Bridge Program courses.

PROGRESSION OF THE BRIDGE PROGRAM

- The 2016 legislative session passed Utah SB-152, sponsored by Senator Howard Stephenson and Representative Eric Hutchings, to facilitate the infrastructure and provide initial ongoing fixed funding for the critical continuation of Utah's ambitious Dual Language Immersion (DLI) Program beyond the 9th grade year.





Bridge Program

for Advanced Language Learning



- In 2016-17, the Bridge Program's inaugural year, two universities delivered the first Spanish Bridge course, Spanish 3116, at 4 high schools across 2 school districts, serving 100 students.
- Six years later in 2021-22, the program offers courses for students in Chinese, French, Portuguese and Spanish across 70 high school program sites and 21 districts serving 2,729 students.
- All six of Utah's public 4-year universities now deliver courses, making this a statewide program initiative.

IMPACT OF THE BRIDGE PROGRAM

- The Bridge Program meets the need for a secondary course 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 or Portuguese NEWL 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 *multilingual and multicultural citizenship* in Utah by offering an early college experience through upper division university language and culture courses to any qualified student in designated high schools as determined by each district.
- The program increases the abilities of *all* students to benefit in terms of college credit, college course content, and exposes them to college readiness academic behaviors which predict college success.

CRITICAL NEEDS OF THE BRIDGE PROGRAM

- The program has experienced a percentage increase of 282% between 2016 and 2021.
- Incremental funding increases approved by the 2018 and 2019 legislative sessions have allowed the Bridge Program to narrowly meet enrollment demands through 2022-23, as currently projected.
- Current funding levels will allow the program to maintain enrollment at around 4,000 students but not meet the projected demand of 5,500 DLI graduates and beyond starting in 2023-24.
- The program seeks an increase in annual appropriation during the 2022 legislative session to securely plan to meet the projected demand of the DLI and AP pipeline of students.

Utah's **Bridge Program** is administered by the University of Utah's Second Language Teaching and Research Center (L2TRC): <https://l2trec.utah.edu/bridge-program/>

