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## WHAT CAN I DO WITH A MAJOR IN... **FOREIGN LANGUAGES & LIT.**

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### **OCCUPATIONAL OVERVIEW:**

As the world grows smaller and smaller, communication among human beings has become an important subject. "Language is the most efficient tool in solving communication barriers, and the foreign language specialist engages in translating, interpreting, or teaching in one or more foreign languages. The specialist ordinarily possesses and uses knowledge of the literature, culture, and historical development of the country in which the language is used. In addition to pursuing a job in which the primary focus is the use of another language, many opportunities exist for the use of additional language skills in other career areas such as medicine, law", business, education, and many others (*from the UNM Foreign Languages and Literature website*). UNM offers eight different areas within Foreign Languages and Literature: Chinese, Classical Studies (Latin and Ancient Greek), Comparative Literature and Cultural Studies, French, German, Italian, Japanese, and Russian.

### **EMPLOYMENT REQUIREMENTS:**

A bachelor's degree is the minimum formal education required. Some areas may require a graduate degree, or may assist employment in highly competitive areas. It is critical that students gain related experience and skills through internships, part-time work, or volunteering in their field of interest as undergraduates.

### **EMPLOYERS/INDUSTRIES & SUGGESTED STRATEGY:**

*Please ask your Career Advisor (CDF) for identifying employers or additional resources for your occupation of choice.*

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**Government:** Translation/interpretation – Journalism – Linguistics – Diplomacy – Civil Service – Foreign Service – Immigration/Naturalization – US Customs – Intelligence/Law Enforcement (e.g., FBI, CIA, DEA)

**Suggested Strategy:** The government is one of the largest employers of people with foreign language skills! Go to [www.usajobs.gov](http://www.usajobs.gov), the government's official job site. Consider attending a specialized language school that teaches foreign languages (e.g., Monterrey Institute). Learn government hiring procedures and visit Martin Brennan, UNM's Diplomat in Residence, through UNM Career Services.

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**Arts, Media, Entertainment:** Advertising – Translation/Interpretation – Journalism/Broadcasting – Publishing/Editing - PR  
**Suggested Strategy:** Spend time working or studying abroad. Read international newspapers to keep abreast of world affairs.

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**Industry & Commerce:** Translation/Interpretation – Banking/Finance – Sales – Customer Services – Manufacturing – Engineering/Technical – Research – Operations Manager – Consulting – Import/Export – Administrative Services

**Suggested Strategy:** Supplement coursework with business minor. Gain experience through international internship or study abroad. Find out which companies do business with the countries in which your language of study is spoken. Be prepared to start in a position in the US working for a firm with an overseas presence. Very few entry level positions are available in intr'n'l business.

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**Travel & Tourism:** Translation/Interpretation – Airlines – Management – Booking/Reservations – Travel Services/Guidance

**Suggested Strategy:** Get a part-time job with hotel, restaurant, or visitors' bureau to gain experience. Plan to attend a travel school. Develop strong administrative skills. Read international newspapers to keep abreast of world affairs.

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**Interpretation/Translation:** Interpretation (simultaneous, consecutive, conference, escort/guide, judiciary) – Translation (literary, localization, medical) – Freelance – Education – Business services – Government agencies – Healthcare – Courts - Publishers

**Suggested Strategy:** Develop a near-perfect knowledge of second language. Gain experience through internship or volunteering. Learn a third language for greater opportunities. Most people work freelance in this field, and gain expertise in a particular area (e.g., law or medicine). Seek certification or accreditation from an interpretation/translation organization.

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**Service & Education:** Translation/Interpretation – Teaching – Educational Administration – Linguistics – Civic Service – Social Work – Mission Work – Library Science – Health Services

**Suggested Strategy:** Obtain state licensure for K-12 teaching. Consider teaching English in another country. Consider coursework in English grammar or linguistics. Gain experience tutoring or teaching ESL. Volunteer with Peace Corps, Teach for America, Americorps, or VISTA to gain experience. Obtain a graduate degree for university-level teaching jobs.

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### **INFORMATIONAL WEBSITES:**

 <http://online.onetcenter.org>



<http://www.bls.gov/oco/>