Portland Adventist Academy Modern Language Department

Testing for Credit

**Philosophy**

Testing for credit should be used to advance our students’ language proficiency and to recognize proficiency gained outside class, but never as a shortcut to avoid continuing to improve language skills.

**Uses of Testing for Credit**

Testing for credit is appropriate in the following situations:

1. A student who is above the proficiency level of courses offered at PAA should have the opportunity to demonstrate proficiency and opt out of PAA’s modern language program.
2. A student with prior second language experience who has not received credit from another school may test to receive credit for prior learning, in order to enter the PAA modern language program at a higher level.
3. A student who has shown an unusual gift for language who wants to pursue a higher level of language study at PAA (such as a Senior wanting to take Spanish IV) may test to advance one level, upon the instructor´s recommendation.

Testing for credit is not used for high-scoring language students to opt out of the basic two-year modern language course. Students in a blended 2/3 course may not test out of level two, to be considered “level three,” if there is no language advancement benefit to the designation. These students should be given greater challenges and encouraged to aim for a higher level of proficiency.

**Testing protocol**

The test for granting language credit must measure listening, reading, speaking and writing proficiency, but not isolated cultural trivia. An example of an appropriate test is the New York Regent´s Comprehensive Examination in Spanish (2002-2011 exams available online; test is no longer administered in New York). Students will not be allowed to keep the completed exam.

Credit by testing is only available for levels one and two. A benchmark score will be determined as passing for each level. This score should be sufficiently high, so that students who pass are clearly well above the level of the course they are challenging. Credit will be given on a pass/fail basis; no letter grades will be assigned for challenge tests.

Because administering a comprehensive test requires a significant time commitment from the instructor, the Modern Language Department may make tests available only once each school year.

The Modern Language Department will submit a Change of Grade slip indicating the credit to be given for students achieving the benchmark score on the test and will send a letter to notify the parents of students who receive credit through testing. The department will maintain a record of scores of students who take the exam each year. An administrative fee will be charged for credit received through the testing program.