

Current Perceptions and Beliefs Among Incoming College Students Towards Foreign Language Study and Language Requirements

Joseph Price

University of Nebraska at Omaha

Carolyn Gascoigne

University of Nebraska at Omaha

Abstract: *Opinions of foreign language study, as well as attitudes toward specific cultures and languages, influence student motivation and success. The purpose of the present study is to catalogue and report the perceptions and attitudes of recent incoming college students (freshman and transfer students) concerning foreign or second language (L2) study and foreign language requirements in a post-9/11 context. The results offer insights into students' evolving beliefs and concerns, which can be used to inform and subsequently improve the teaching-learning process through the development of timely, meaningful, and responsive language learning environments.*

Key words: *beliefs, culture, motivation, perceptions, requirements*

Language: *Relevant to all languages*

Introduction

Growing popular support for foreign language study and international education has been recently documented among both students and the general public. For example, a 2001 Art and Science Group publication *StudentPoll* targeted 500 college-bound high school seniors and reported that students enter college with a strong interest in international education and that the majority of seniors want to continue foreign language study at the postsecondary level. It also found that virtually every college-bound student had studied a foreign language in high school

Joseph Price (PhD candidate, University of Nebraska-Lincoln) is Coordinator of Administration in the Department of English at the University of Nebraska at Omaha, Nebraska.

Carolyn Gascoigne (PhD, Florida State University) is Associate Professor of French and Department Chair at the University of Nebraska at Omaha, Nebraska.