Dear Foreign Language Teachers and IUHPFL Promoters,

During recent visits to high schools around Indiana and through emails and phone calls, some of you have reached out to us and explained that you are not able to administer a language test to IUHPFL applicants due to your already full workloads. **As it is certainly not our wish or intention to inconvenience our valued teachers, we have agreed to rescind the requirement that students of French, German, Japanese and Spanish take the National Exams and that students of Chinese take the IUHPFL Chinese Test.** We want you to know that we are listening and we welcome your input and ideas.

In light of the fact that IUHPFL applicants will no longer take a pre-departure language test, you might wonder how we will determine students’ language proficiency levels and readiness for an IUHPFL immersion experience. We invite you to visit our website for an overview of the tools we will use and will continue to develop for this purpose. [http://www.indiana.edu/~iuhpfl/apply/language-testing.shtml](http://www.indiana.edu/~iuhpfl/apply/language-testing.shtml)

**Note:** Onsite testing will still occur at the beginning and the end of the programs in order to assess students’ progress in the language, and these scores will continue to be reported on students' Final Evaluations.

**Teacher Appraisals**
As you might imagine, students’ application materials, which include an appraisal from the most recent language teacher, will be weighed more heavily than before. We appreciate your willingness to complete these appraisals for our applicants and wish to stress how important it is for you to provide thoughtful details regarding their performance in your classes, their character, and their overall readiness for an immersion experience. We do not expect applicants to already be able to carry on lengthy conversations in their target languages or to be among the top performing scholars in their schools. However, we do need your assurance that they are strong in their foreign language classes and above-average students overall. Our instructors understand that students will have varying levels of language proficiency and are prepared to work with a wide range of levels, from heritage speakers to AP students to emerging language speakers. Greater predictors of success in our programs than initial language proficiency include character, self-discipline, attitude, and adaptability. Your insights along these lines are also extremely valuable to us, and the online appraisal form allows you to comment on all of these criteria and more.
Writing Sample in the Target Language
We are also still asking that teachers supervise the Writing Sample in the Target Language, which likewise constitutes an important part of the student application dossier. It is a 35-minute exercise for students that can be administered either outside of class to individuals or small groups or, as a few teachers have suggested for the sake of convenience, as an in-class exercise for all of your students at the appropriate language levels. We appreciate your assistance with this important component of the application. Please let us know if you have any questions or concerns or if you prefer not to administer the Writing Sample.

All IUHPFL Application Materials are due on December 4th, and the Registration deadline is November 15th.

Background and Rationale
For the past year, I have been discussing with IU higher administration the idea of discontinuing the IUHPFL fall language test in lieu of a more qualitative application and preparation process. The limited information gained from this test did not merit the cost or the resources required to administer it. Another approach was needed that would provide broader information about students’ proficiency levels closer to departure, and the National Exams seemed to offer a workable solution that was generally well received by the advisory committee of teachers I consulted over the summer. Now that we know that this approach would not in fact be workable for many of our teachers, we have put in place alternative strategies, which we will continue to enhance as needed to ensure success for our participants. We encourage you to click on the link above to learn more and to contact us with any questions you might have.

This time of year, when I’m visiting high schools and giving presentations around the state, is one of my favorite stages in our program cycle, because I have the opportunity to meet many wonderful teachers and to hear our program alums share their IUHPFL experiences with other students. If it were humanly possible to visit every high school in the state and to meet all of you, we would certainly try to do so. Again, THANK YOU for your continued dedication to IUHPFL. It is truly a pleasure and a privilege to work with you.

Kind regards,

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