REPORT:

“NATIONAL PROFESSIONAL AND ACADEMIC CERTIFICATION OPTIONS FOR TRANSLATORS AND INTERPRETERS”
DISCLAIMER

The District of Columbia Office of Human Rights is providing information by way of this report as a public service and for informational purposes only. Every effort is made to provide accurate and complete information. Although every effort is made to insure that information provided is timely and correct, users should keep in mind that this information is provided only as a public convenience. Please note that readers are responsible for checking the accuracy, completeness, currency and/or suitability of all information themselves. Any and all sources named in this report are provided as references. The inclusion of these sources does not constitute an endorsement by the District of Columbia Office of Human Rights.

The District of Columbia Office of Human Rights makes no claims, representations, guarantees or warranties as to the quality, content, accuracy, completeness, currency or suitability of the information provided by way of this report. Such materials have been compiled from a variety of sources, and are subject to change without notice from the District of Columbia Office of Human Rights as a result of updates and corrections. The District of Columbia Office of Human Rights specifically disclaims any and all liability for any claims or damages that may result from providing this report or the information it contains. Specifically, the District of Columbia Office of Human Rights assumes no legal liability for the accuracy, completeness, or usefulness of any information, product, or process disclosed herein and does not represent that use of such information, product, or process would not infringe on privately owned rights.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

BACKGROUND ........................................................................................................... Page 3

PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION OPTIONS............................................ Page 4
American Translators Association (ATA)..................................................... Page 4
National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators (NAJIT)..... Page 5
The Translators and Interpreters Guild (TTIG)........................................ Page 6

ACADEMIC CERTIFICATION OPTIONS.................................................. Page 8
American University.................................................................................. Page 8
Catholic University of America............................................................... Page 8
Howard University.................................................................................... Page 8
Trinity University....................................................................................... Page 9
Other Local Universities (Metropolitan Area)......................................... Page 10
Translation and Interpretation Certificate/Degree Programs in the U.S..... Page 11

SOURCES ........................................................................................................... Page 15
BACKGROUND

In the United States there are over 1600 translation and/or interpretation credentialing programs for individuals and over 200 accreditation programs for schools, institutions, businesses and service providers.

The following terms represent the basic credentialing methods used:

Accreditation: a process by which an entity grants public recognition to an organization such as a school, institute, college, program, facility, or company that has met predetermined standards.

Certification: a voluntary process by which an organization grants recognition to an individual who has met certain predetermined qualification standards.

Certification can be divided into the following subcategories:
- Full-scale professional certification
- Knowledge-based certification
- Curriculum-based certification
- Certification of attendance or participation

Credentialing possibilities for translators and interpreters include: certification granted by the government, certification by professional and/or commercial organizations, and certification by an academic institution.
PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION OPTIONS

AMERICAN TRANSLATORS ASSOCIATION (ATA)

The American Translators Association (ATA) was founded in 1959. To date it is the largest professional association of translators (and interpreters) in the U.S. with over 9,000 members in over 60 countries. ATA's primary goals include fostering and supporting the professional development of translators and interpreters and promoting translation and interpreting professions.

The ATA offers a professional certification in translation only. Credentialing is currently available in the following language combinations using English as the source language: Chinese, Croatian, Dutch, Finnish, French, German, Hungarian, Italian, Japanese, Polish, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish. Individuals interested in becoming certified through the ATA must take the ATA certification examination.

To be eligible for the ATA certification exam candidates must:

- Demonstrate past experience as a translator and /or post secondary education.
- Sign a statement that they have read and understand the ATA code of professional conduct and business practices and pledge to abide by it.
- Fulfill the following continuing education requirements:
  1. Complete an ethics workshop or course within the first three-year period after certification, and
  2. Complete at least 20 hours of continuing education credits through coursework, seminars, and conferences during the aforementioned three-year period.

The certification exam is a three-hour, open-book, proctored exam in a specific language pair (one specific source language to one specific target language). The exam presents three passages of approximately 225-275 words. One of the required passages is general in nature. The candidate must also choose between one passage from the domain of science/technology/medicine and one from the domain of law/business/finance. All passages must meet ATA certification standards for a grade of “Pass.”

The ATA does not presently offer certification for interpreters, however there is a division of the ATA which is dedicated to interpreters. This division seeks to share resources and tips among its members and produces a directory of working (member) interpreters, nationwide.
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF JUDICIARY INTERPRETERS AND TRANSLATORS (NAJIT)

The National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators (NAJIT) is a professional organization which seeks to be a leader in promoting quality interpretation and translation services in the judicial system.

The functions of NAJIT are:

- To promote professional standards of performance and integrity.
- To achieve wider recognition for the profession of judiciary interpretation and translation.
- To advocate training and certification of interpreters through competent and reliable methodologies.
- To advance the highest quality services.
- To encourage greater interchange among active judiciary interpreters and translators.
- To make the public and the judicial community aware of the unique role and function of interpreters and translators in the legal system.

NAJIT awards a certification, the Nationally Certified Judiciary Interpreter and Translator (NCJIT) credential. Achieving the NCJIT credential exhibits an individual’s commitment to upholding the highest standards in the profession. The NCJIT credential is awarded to those individuals who pass a rigorous examination of overall language skills and the common body of knowledge relevant to the judiciary and related areas, and who have shown an understanding of and willingness to comply with a professional Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibilities.

The NCJIT exam is the only nationwide certification exam developed exclusively by judiciary interpreters and translators. Its purpose is to create a uniform standard for interpreters and translators working in a wide variety of legal settings, both civil and penal, throughout the United States. It is the first exam that tests both interpreting and translation skills in a legal context. It is the only examination that confers a credential offered by the profession, which belongs to the individual regardless of employment status or geographic location. The examination is presently available in Spanish only.

The NCJIT examination consists of a written component and an oral component. The written portion includes sections which test the following areas:
Candidates must pass the written examination before they are eligible to take the oral exam. Upon notification of a passing score on the written examination, candidates are eligible to register for the oral component.

The oral component includes the following areas of testing:

- Sight Translation (English-Spanish):
- Sight Translation (Spanish-English)
  (Sight Translation Sources: legal documents, insurance forms, letters, confessions, transcriptions, arrest forms)

- Consecutive Interpretation (Questions: English/ Answers: Spanish):
  (Consecutive Interpretation Sources: civil, financial, medical, criminal)

- Simultaneous Interpretation (English-Spanish)
- Simultaneous Interpretation (Spanish-English)
  (Simultaneous Interpretation Sources: medical, legal, financial)

Upon successfully completing both the written and oral examinations, a candidate has earned the NCJIT. In order to maintain the certification, individuals are required to accumulate 30 Continuing Education Credits every three years.

THE TRANSLATORS AND INTERPRETERS GUILD (TTIG)

The Translators and Interpreters Guild (TTIG) is an organization comprised of independent translators and interpreters. Membership is open to freelance and in-house translators and interpreters. As TTIG is a union, annual dues are required to support benefits and advocacy efforts. TTIG’s mission is to raise the standard of living for translators and interpreters by focusing on a few basic issues:

- Assistance in locating work,
- Lobbying for favorable legislation,
- Mentoring beginners in the field,
- Improving pay,
• Improving benefits, and
• Improving working conditions.

The Translators and Interpreters Guild offers a certification to its members who join the TRS (Translators Referral Service) and/or RSI (Referral Service for Interpreters). To obtain certification, an individual must first join the TTIG and pay all required dues. Separate applications are necessary if an individual wishes to join the TRS or RSI. Memberships to one or both of these services allow the translator/interpreter to receive work referrals from the TTIG. Each application includes peer and client references in each language identified, proof of college degree or equivalent, and a history of work and education in the field. Sample translations must be submitted (and approved for accuracy) for participation in the TRS and work experience verification is required for participation in the RSI.
ACADEMIC CERTIFICATION OPTIONS

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY

American University’s Department of Language & Foreign Studies offers both Graduate and Undergraduate Level Certificate Programs in Translation for Spanish, French and Russian. Both programs consist of 15 credit hours (5 courses, 3 credits per course), which are typically spanned out over the course of one academic year.

The Certificate in Translation is open to all qualified American University students, full-time or part time, both undergraduate and graduate. Non-degree students may also earn certificates. As a prerequisite to the program, students are required to have completed, at minimum, three years of collegiate level language courses, or equivalent. The cost of enrollment is presently $989.00 per credit hour.

CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA

Catholic University of America (CUA) offers foreign language acquisition, composition, theory, and literature courses for the following languages: Spanish, French, German and Italian.

Additionally, CUA offers two undergraduate level courses in translation, for the Spanish language only. The first course, Translation I, provides an overview of traditional and innovative strategies for written and sight translation of various texts, and basic concepts of translation theory. The course focuses on texts for translation, which deal with contemporary economic, political, social, environmental, and cultural considerations. Prerequisites to this course include lower level Spanish language acquisition and composition courses. The second course, Translation II, introduces more difficult and complex translation projects, which may involve trade or technical language with emphasis on translation needs in the professional sector. Translation I is a prerequisite for this course.

Both Translation I and Translation II are offered in conjunction with CUA’s Spanish major/degree program. Neither course is offered as a separate certificate program.

HOWARD UNIVERSITY

Howard University offers a Simultaneous Interpretation (SI) Certificate Program. The SI Certificate Program is a joint mission of Howard University’s Continuing Education Office of International Programs (OIP) and the Simultaneous Interpretation Unit of the Howard University Department of Modern Languages and Literatures. The program is the first Certificate Program to be offered at an academic institution in the United States.
Prior to acceptance into the course, students are required to pass an informal assessment of their language capabilities in the foreign language. All assessments are administered by Howard University (Department of Modern Languages and Literatures) faculty. Students who do not pass the assessment are not allowed to register for this course, and it is suggested that they take additional language acquisition courses prior to attempting re-enrollment.

**Simultaneous Interpretation Certificate Program:**

The 12-week program consists of three modules: *Escort Interpretation, Consecutive Interpretation*, and *Simultaneous Interpretation*.

Weeks one and two cover Escort Interpretation wherein students learn how language is used in accompanying foreign individuals around the United States.

Weeks three and four cover Consecutive Interpretation wherein students learn how to take notes during a speech and then provide interpretations based on these notes at intervals throughout the speech.

Weeks five through twelve focus on Simultaneous Interpretation wherein students learn to provide interpretations of what is being said by a speaker at the same time that the speaker is speaking.

Course materials cover a variety of related topics, such as international affairs, business, and various technical fields. Field trips to the United Nations and the World Bank are also arranged.

Participation in the 12 week course costs each student $4,350.00, plus an additional $50.00 for course materials. At the end of the course, each student is awarded a certificate of completion.

**TRINITY UNIVERSITY**

Trinity University does not offer a degree/certificate program in translation or interpretation. General language acquisition courses are available in Spanish only, within the Department of Language and Cultural Studies. Upon completion of a degree or major program within the Department of Language and Cultural Studies a student may elect to take the Certificate of Proficiency Examination (this certificate is a test of one’s language proficiency level and does not specifically screen the students’ ability to translate or interpret). The Certificate of Proficiency is often useful for students who are planning careers that require adequate knowledge of Spanish. The certificate is awarded after the student has successfully completed the required courses and passed a written and oral examination.

Additionally, Trinity University offers the continuing education course “Applied Spanish in Medicine.” This Spanish course is designed for medical professionals who would like to learn and/or practice medical terminology. The curriculum of this course includes a focus on
vocabulary related to health problems and the anatomy of the human body, cultural contexts of hospitals and clinics, and urban vs. rural medical care. “Applied Spanish in Medicine” consists of 14 sessions which are typically offered in the evenings. The cost of enrollment is $250.00 per student.

OTHER LOCAL UNIVERSITIES:

Other local universities, such as George Washington, Georgetown University, University of Maryland, Gallaudet University, University of the District of Columbia, and the University of Maryland, do not offer certification courses in translation or interpretation for spoken languages. However, all listed local universities offer courses in foreign language acquisition.
TRANSLATION AND INTERPRETATION CERTIFICATION/DEGREE PROGRAMS IN THE UNITED STATES

In the United States the following colleges/universities offer programs which specialize in Translation and/or Interpretation:

*Arizona State University*
Certificate in Translation
Department of Languages and Literatures
Tempe, Arizona
Arizona State University
PO Box 870202
Tempe, AZ 85287-0202
languages@asu.edu

*Bellevue Community College*
Translation and Interpretation Certificate Programs
3000 Landerholm Circle, S.E.
Bellevue, WA  98007-6484
ajayasun@bcc.ctc.edu

*University of Binghamton*
Translation Research and Instruction Program (TRIP)
Certificate of Translation (Graduate Program)
Library Tower 1302
P.O. Box 6000
Binghamton, NY  13902
Phone: 607 777-6765
trip@binghamton.edu
Four masters programs have formal translation tracks: the MA in Comparative Literature; the MA in Romance Languages, the MA in Social Sciences, and the MAT in Education. The graduate certificate program may be combined with any doctoral or master’s degree program or taken as a separate track.

*Brigham Young University*
BA in Spanish Translation
Department of Spanish and Portuguese
4048 JKHB
PO Box 26119
Provo, UT  84602-6119
Phone: (801) 422-2837

*Florida International University*
Department of Modern Languages
Certificate in Legal Translation & Court Interpreting
Practica in Medical Interpreting
Certificate in Translation Studies
University Park Campus
Miami, FL 33199
Phone: (305) 348-2851
FAX: (305) 348-1085

Georgia State University
Translation Certification Program
Department of Modern and Classical Languages
Georgia State University
University Plaza
Atlanta, GA 30303-3083
nearly@mindspring.com

University of Hawaii
Center for Interpretation and Translation Studies (CITS)
University of Hawaii, at Manoa
1890 East-West Road
Moore Hall
Honolulu, HI 96822
cits@hawaii.edu

Indiana University
Translation Studies
Department of Comparative Literature
Ballantine Hall 914
1020 E. Kirkwood Avenue
Bloomington, IN 47405-7103
Phone: (812) 855-7070
Fax: (812) 855-2688

Kent State University
Institute for Applied Linguistics (IAL)
Bachelor of Science in Translation, Master of Arts in Translation
Kent State University
109 Satterfield Hall
Kent, OH 44242-0001

The University of Minnesota
Program in Translation and Interpreting
196 Klaeber Court
320 16th Avenue, S.E.
Minneapolis, MN 55455
Professional and Academic Certification Options for Translators and Interpreters
District of Columbia Office of Human Rights
Language Access Program
June 2005

Phone: (612) 624-4055
Fax: (612) 624-4579
pti@tc.umn.edu

University of North Carolina Charlotte
Masters Degree in Spanish Translation
9201 University City Blvd
Charlotte, NC 28223-0001
Phone: (704) 687-2000

Monterey Institute of International Studies
Graduate School of Translation and Interpretation
425 Van Buren Street
Monterey, CA 93940
gsti@miis.edu

University of Nebraska Kearney
BA in French Translation and Interpretation
BA in Spanish Translation and Interpretation
BA in German Translation and Interpretation
905 West 25th Street
Kearney, NE 68849
Phone: (308) 865-8441
admissionsug@unk.edu

Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology
Certificate in Technical Translation in German
5500 Wabash Avenue
Terre Haute, IN 47803
Phone: (812) 877-1511

San Diego State University
Certificate in Spanish-English Translation Studies (non-degree)
Department of Spanish and Portuguese
San Diego, CA 92182-7003
Phone: (619)594-6588
swaisman@mail.sdsu.edu

The University of Texas at Dallas
Center for Translation Studies
Box 830688 Mail Station MC35
Richardson, Texas 75083-0688
Phone: (972) 883-2092
Fax: (972) 883-6303
schulte@utdallas.edu

_University of California Los Angeles_
Programs in Translation and Interpretation
(Spanish/English, Korean/English, Chinese/English)
College of Letters and Science
5310 Rolfe Hall, Box 951532
Los Angeles, CA 90095-1551
Phone: (310) 825-9082
interpretation@uclaextension.edu

_University of Texas El Paso_
Certification in Translation
The University of Texas at El Paso
Department of Languages and Linguistics
Liberal Arts, Room 137
500 W. University Avenue
El Paso, Texas 79968-0531
Phone: (915) 747-5767
Fax: (915) 747-5292
lgsling@utep.edu

_University of Wisconsin Milwaukee_
Graduate Certificate in Translation
Curtin Hall
PO Box 413
Milwaukee, WI 53201
velguth@uwm.edu
<http://www.atanet.org>

Berry, Ms. Peggy A., Office of Continuing Education. Phone interview. 24, March 2005

“Continuing Education.” National Virtual Translation Center.  
<http://www.nvtc.gov/contEducation.html>

”Department of Language and Cultural Studies.” Trinity College, Washington DC.  
<http://www.trinitydc.edu/academics/catalog/programs/language.html#description>

“Graduate and Undergraduate Certificate in Translation.” American University.  
<http://www.american.edu/academic.depts/cas/lfs/index2.html>

King, Dr. Rosalyn, Program Manager, Office of Continuing Education, International Programs. Phone interview. 24, March 2005.


“Office of Continuing Education.” Howard University.  
<http://www.coned.howard.edu/Office%20of%20International%20Programs/default.asp>
