The primary goal of the Modern Languages and Cultures Department is to facilitate students' learning of French, German, Japanese and Spanish, while also expanding their knowledge and understanding of cultural and linguistic diversity. As a Department, we:

1. Bring the world to the classroom and our students:

A. By emphasizing the relevance and importance of authentic learning materials. Students learn authentic language skills, cultural competence as well as the historical and geographical backgrounds of cultural realities.

B. Through our sequence of language instruction courses that expands and enhances language skills, as well as students' understanding of, and knowledge about other cultures.

C. By engaging students with other cultures through regular cultural activities (lunch tables, cultural programs, cultural events each semester)

D. By having different native speaker teaching assistants join us every semester from the countries whose languages we teach.

E. By having students live in a designated International House, which brings those interested in a particular language together so that they may practice their language skills with each other as well as a Native Speaker Teaching Assistant.

2. Bring our students to the world:

A. Via short term travel-programs connected to specific courses led by departmental faculty. (Departmental faculty have taken students to France, Germany, Argentina, Cameroon, Spain and California).

B. By sending students to off-campus study programs that focus either on academic course work or international internships in different fields, or a mixture of both.

C. Through a successful program where Modern Language students are paired with Albion Elementary school classes to teach a foreign language once a week to Elementary school children.

D. By off-campus fieldwork, which is an important component of some of our off-campus programs.

E. By helping graduating seniors receive Fulbright scholarships. The Department has been the primary recipient at the College of these awards since 2003. These scholarships allow Albion grads the opportunity to apply and expand upon their recently acquired cultural and linguistic knowledge by funding a year of study and teaching in a country other than their own.

3. Prepare our students to be global citizens:

A. By allowing students to choose between different tracks for their studies:

i. a Cultural Area Studies track or

ii. Languages and Cultures for the Professions, which was specifically designed for those students who want to prepare themselves for professions with an international component or in an international setting. Both tracks emphasize language acquisition as well as cultural understanding. Students on the cultural areas track usually focus on academic studies during their time spent off-campus, while language and professions students focus primarily on an international internship in an area of their interest.

B. By providing further opportunities for our students to engage in a meaningful way with the world through a number of initiatives:

i. The Albion Sister-City relationship with Noisy-le-Roi, France. Nearly 200 Albion students have traveled to Noisy for internships or as part of their off-campus study.

ii. Entrepreneurial Exchange with ESCIA (French Business School in Cergy-Pontoise). Albion students travel for one-week France to work on creating a new business idea with a group of French students. The students continue to work on the project through advanced communication technology. The French students travel to Albion the same semester to finalize the project.

iii. The Nwagni Project, the goal of which is to enhance the educational opportunities of children in Batchingou, Cameroon. This program arose out of a student's experience in Cameroon, during a FYE trip.