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## STEVENSON CENTER MEMORANDUM

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**TO:** CURRENT STUDENTS  
**FROM:** BEVERLY BEYER, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR  
**SUBJECT:** M.S. VERSUS M.A.  
**CC:** DR. HASSAN MOHAMMADI, DR. JULIE WEBBER, DR. MARION WILLETTS  
**DATE:** SEPTEMBER 16, 2008

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The only difference between the Master of Science (M.S.) and the Master of Arts (M.A.) degree is that the M.A. includes meeting a foreign language requirement at the college level. Page 33 of the current Graduate Catalog describes the requirement and the different ways it can be met: <http://www.ilstu.edu/home/catalog/pdf/grad.pdf>. If you are interested in the M.A., *please read that information.*

One of the ways to meet the requirement is to successfully complete four semesters (or its equivalent) in one foreign language at the undergraduate or graduate level. If you did this at your undergraduate institution(s) and that is reflected on the transcript(s) that you already sent to Illinois State with your application (or you could submit documentation to that effect), you could pursue the M.A.

The Director of Graduate Studies, Dr. Kimberly Nance, has recently communicated to me that, because Peace Corps language training emphasizes listening and speaking, and because an M.A. indicates reading ability, a Peace Corps Description of Service or similar documentation is NOT sufficient documentation for the M.A.

Clearly, if you want the M.A. and can meet the language requirement through undergraduate classes that you have already taken, that would be the easiest option. The Graduate School will also accept satisfactory results of reading tests in French, German, or Spanish administered here on campus. Dr. Nance says that the current cost is \$15, and the hour-long test may be taken at any time. Given the compressed nature of the ACED/ACD Sequence, taking language classes here is generally not an option.

If your native language is not English, you could request that your English proficiency be used to meet the requirement.

Most of our alumni to date have received the M.S. My understanding is that an M.A. may matter more for those who plan to pursue a Ph.D.

To pursue the M.A., in addition to supplying any documentation described above, you would need to select that option when you submit your Plan of Study and application for degree completion. Please see the Graduate School's website for these two documents and deadlines for their submission: <http://www.grad.ilstu.edu/>. If you are approaching graduation and have already submitted these two documents, you could contact the Graduate School about revising them. Once you have graduated, obviously, you can not change your mind. Please let your Graduate Advisor or me know if you have any questions or concerns.