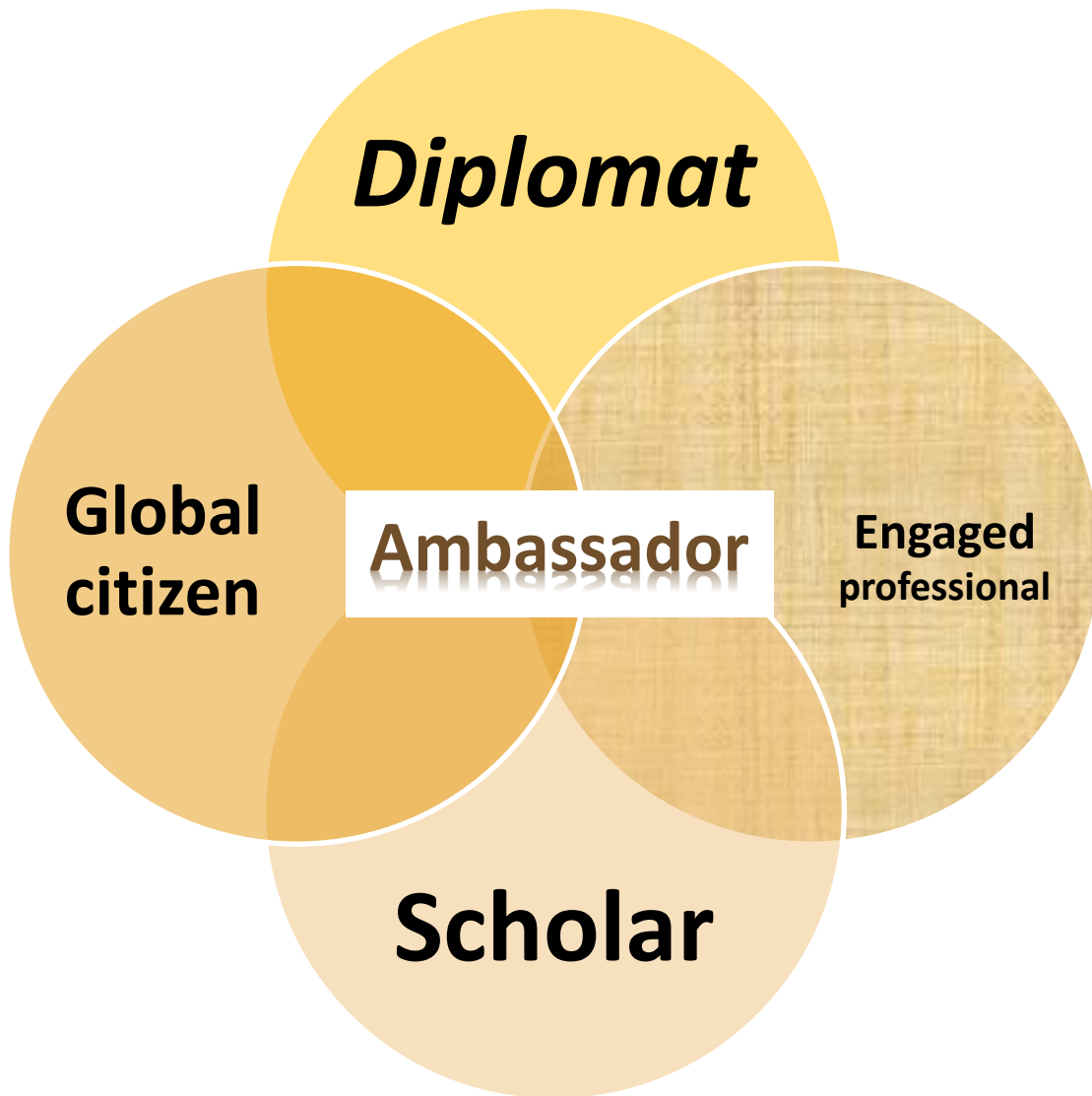


# Modern and Classical Languages Ambassador Award



**The MCL Ambassador Award is given annually to an alumnus and/or area teacher who has partnered with our department in language teacher education**

## **There are three criteria for the award:**

- **Demonstrated leadership in modelling and promoting progressive language pedagogies.**
- **Advocacy for world languages education.**
- **Demonstrated commitment to the four ambassadorial dimensions: diplomacy, global citizenship, engaged professionalism and scholarship, as described in the supporting statement for the MCL Ambassador Model (following).**

## **How to apply:**

**Interested applicants should submit...**

- ✓ **A current resume**
- ✓ **A 500-word essay that supports the applicant's candidacy for the award.**
- ✓ **At least two support letters mailed separately to:**

**Mark K. Warford, Chair  
Modern and Classical Languages  
Buffalo State College  
1300 Elmwood Ave.  
Buffalo, NY 14222**

- ✓ **Support documentation such as: work samples, videotaped teaching samples (applicant must furnish proof of permission to videotape and share)**

**Deadline for applying: Mon. April 9, 2018**

## Supporting statement for the MCL Ambassador Model

In fall 2015 we asked incoming MCL majors how they saw their future selves after having completed a course of study in our department. They responded with words like *exciting*, *distinguished*, and *marketable*. Among the professions they aspired to, students mentioned: teaching, interpreting, translating, and work along the lines of international relations.

A common impetus for these vocational paths centered on what students perceived as *a lack of interest in second language study among Americans*. While faculty had already arrived at the metaphor of *Ambassador* as the desired exit profile of an MCL major or minor, it is interesting to see how well the Ambassador model fit students' comments.

At the core of the Modern and Classical Languages Department is a common commitment to preparing students for ambassadorial stewardship in an age of increasing economic and cultural globalization. The empathy and appreciation we show one another, in light of our plurality of identities and perspectives, serves as a model that we endeavor to instill in our students.

We embrace our distinctive role in supporting the college's mission to promote diversity, community connections and global engagement. Consequently, we welcome the challenge of fostering the progress of students so that they complete our programs as committed and capable ambassadors. We expect that they will exit MCL globally engaged, with an expanded sense of cultural identity attained through their study of modern and classical languages and literatures.

As noted in the diagram, there are essentially four interrelated learning outcomes that logically flow from the notion of an MCL Major as an Ambassador.

Think for a moment about the resume. First and foremost you want an ambassador to have a mastery of all aspects of the country to which he or she will be assigned. Consequently, undergirding the model is **Scholarship** in the target language, its diversity of cultures, histories, arts and letters.

In linguistics, there is growing recognition of a blended, higher-order global competency that arises from cross-cultural and cross-linguistic explorations. The world is growing closer and more connected; we can ill-afford to see things from the questionable 'us vs. them' polarity.

In engaging with citizens of the country of assignment, a good ambassador must always weigh his or her values and decisions from a global perspective. That means the 'greater good' is something more than the sum of his or her home country and that of the country to which he or she is assigned. **Global citizenship** connotes an exploration that is life-long and never ends. The capable ambassador must always seek out opportunities to expand and connect, to form alliances, and to forge the kind of solutions that may only arise from conscious examination of two or more cultural perspectives.

This self-identification as a global citizen must always be held in tension with a sense of professional identity. Who doesn't want a secure, financially lucrative career? We're surrounded with messages about the importance of competency in another language for staying competitive in the global economy. From a practical standpoint, there is an obvious edge in the capacity to take the perspective of your competitor, client, or for that matter, student. Only sustained study of another language and its cultures will address such a challenge. And yet, a critical examination of one's professionalism, from a

cross-cultural standpoint, has its ethical dimensions, particularly with regard to confronting bias and prejudice. What good is an ambassador who can only see ‘the good’ from an English-speaking American perspective? This is what we mean by **Engaged Professionalism**.

Last, but not least, what is an Ambassador, if not a consummate **Diplomat**? As the world grows closer, so does the potential for miscommunication and conflict. Diplomacy relies on all of the aforementioned skills, but first and foremost, it involves great care in all written and verbal communication. Certainly communication in the target language should be linguistically accurate, but as we move into the targeted exit proficiency level of [ACTFL Level of Advanced-Mid](#), there is greater emphasis on the socio-pragmatic aspects of the language. How will one expression be received as opposed to another in such-and-such context? Is it still rooted in my native language and culture? Even the most capable diplomats challenge themselves in such respects. Such questions promote deeper levels of proficiency and empathy with speakers of the target language.

The journey toward ambassadorship demands commitment and self-determination. Sustained engagement in your coursework is critical to your success- with the instructor, with your peers, as well as with the course content. Of even greater importance, from an ambassadorial perspective, you need to stretch your exploration well past the classroom. The new program model factors in opportunities for you to choose assignments that fit linguistic and cultural exploration with your own interests, including extracurricular enrichment opportunities like The French and Spanish Clubs and other cultural assets in the community and on the web. Let’s stretch that even further: what about study abroad? There are excellent opportunities for study in a country where the target language predominates, including our esteemed Summer in Salamanca partnership with UB.

Following is a translated entry in Hannah Kroll’s SPA301 Autonomous Language Learning Journal from which we can all learn something about the essence of being a major in MCL: ambassadorial engagement, in its highest form...

*In other news, I’d like to share something interesting. The other day I went to “Tim Horton’s” in Buffalo, close to the bus stop, and there was a woman there who didn’t know English. She had a problem asking for something. I decided to help her and I asked her what it was she wanted to eat and drink. Then I translated. She told me “muchas gracias” and she had tears in her eyes. Seems like she was frustrated and in pain. I know I don’t speak Spanish perfectly, but I feel very happy and proud that I have the capacity to help and translate.*

On that note, we honor your decision to major in MCL. We have no doubt you will attain that ambassador class just described, and we remain committed to helping you attain your goals.