Discover a new career filled with opportunities

The US Department of Labor foresees a 42% employment growth rate for translators and interpreters between 2010 and 2020 (vs. a 14% average rate for other professions). Job opportunities are plentiful for Spanish translators and interpreters specializing in the legal and health care fields and who are located in large urban areas, such as New York City.

Why should you get a Certificate in Legal Translation and/or Interpretation from John Jay College?

- Translators and Interpreters in the state of New York earn an average of $60,000 (according to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics)
- Our Certificate Programs have been approved by the State of New York
- John Jay College is one of the top Criminal Justice schools in the country
- John Jay College is the largest Hispanic-serving institution in the northeastern United States
- Our Certificate Programs are dedicated exclusively to translation and interpretation in the legal field
- Our programs will prepare you to take the American Translators Association certification exam and the state and federal court interpreter certification exams

A Career in Legal Translation and Interpretation

Legal translators and interpreters work in a wide array of settings. Job opportunities in the public sector include courts, law-enforcement agencies, correctional facilities and immigration agencies, among others. The private sector also employs countless legal translators and interpreters: law firms and consulting companies, international corporations and businesses in different industries are common employers and clients.

If you are considering or have a career in a specific area of Criminal Justice, a Certificate in Legal Translation or Interpretation will enhance your job prospects. It will allow you to qualify for new or different positions or to justify promotions.

To apply

Students need to have ENG 101 and SPA 202 or 212, or to pass a placement exam.

Non-John Jay students also need to comply with the admission rules for Non-John Jay Degree Students. Please visit http://www.jjay.cuny.edu/276.php for more information.

Questions? Please contact us!

Department of Modern Languages and Literatures

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Certificate Programs

The Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures is offering three Certificate Programs:

Certificate in Legal Translation
(18 credit hours)

SPA 230 Translating I
SPA 231 Interpreting I
SPA 250 Spanish for Criminal Investigation
SPA 330 Translating II
SPA 333 Interpreting II
SPA 435 Legal Translating

Certificate in Legal Interpretation
(18 credit hours)

SPA 230 Translating I
SPA 231 Interpreting I
SPA 250 Spanish for Criminal Investigation
SPA 333 Interpreting II
SPA 440 Legal Interpreting I
SPA 440 Legal Interpreting II

Certificate in Legal Translation and Legal Interpretation
(24 credit hours)

SPA 230 Translating I
SPA 231 Interpreting I
SPA 250 Spanish for Criminal Investigation
SPA 330 Translating II
SPA 333 Interpreting II
SPA 340 Legal Interpreting I
SPA 440 Legal Interpreting II
SPA 435 Legal Translating

Course Descriptions

SPA 230 Translating I
A basic course on the process of translation and the strategies that translators use to transform a text from one language into another. Extensive practice with a variety of representative passages from general, technical and literary language.

SPA 231 Interpreting I
Interpretation is the process by which oral communication is rendered from one language to another. The original is spoken, and the rendition is delivered in another spoken language. This introductory course in interpretation is oriented toward a variety of settings —legal, medical, business, and immigration— with an emphasis on court interpreting. This course covers different aspects of interpreting as a profession and introduces students to all modes of interpretation: sight translation, consecutive interpretation and simultaneous interpretation. Particular attention will be paid to interpreting techniques and to incremental exercises for developing memory, accuracy, and speed. This course also provides a solid basis for training in interpreting, as well as translation.

SPA 250 Spanish for Criminal Investigation
An intermediate Spanish course for bilingual students who wish to incorporate the content and vocabulary of criminal justice and police science courses in order to develop their language skills in Spanish. They will accomplish this by reading the text and other materials provided, as well as translating them. There will be extensive practice in the interview process through role-play from English to Spanish.

SPA 330 Translating II
Translating II reviews and reinforces translation techniques and problem-solving strategies acquired in previous courses, which will be applied to specialized texts in the legal, medical, business and technical fields. Different types or genres of specialized texts will be covered, and special emphasis will be made on their linguistic, textual and discursive conventions. The main resources for translators in each specific field will also be reviewed and assessed.

SPA 333 Interpreting II
This is an intermediate course designed to develop interpreting proficiency for education, medical, and legal settings. Topics covered include consecutive interpreting and sight translation skills, glossary building, code of ethics, analysis and assessment of interpreting performance. This course has a lecture component but the majority of the time is used in developing accurate interpreting skills through practice and analysis.

SPA 340 Legal Interpreting I
Interpreting is recognized as a complex cognitive task that requires bilingual and bicultural competence. Interpreting in legal settings further requires the acquisition of highly specialized knowledge relating to the law, legal language and discourse. This course will introduce students to the contextual knowledge needed to operate in diverse legal settings (courtroom, police), covering different court proceedings such as arraignments, preliminary hearings and pretrial motions. It also provides practice in simultaneous and consecutive interpretation as well as sight translation based on diverse simulated courtroom situations. Students will attend appropriate civil, criminal, and/or family court proceedings.

SPA 440 Legal Interpreting II
Legal Interpreting II is a course designed to further improve interpretation skills, accuracy and speed in all modes of interpretation. Modules of terminology related to Court Proceedings and Criminology will be reviewed and expanded and new advanced terminology related to Computer Forensics will be introduced. The pace of interpreting will be faster and the exercises and assignments in this course contain more complex legal terminology. The training is hands-on with actual court documents, transcripts and sample recordings for practice.

SPA 435 Legal Translating
Legal Translation: The aim of this course is to provide its students with the knowledge and skills they need to translate legal texts. Students are introduced to the terminology, syntax, and stylistics of legal texts. This course provides also an introduction to the principles of comparative law. Particular attention is given to translations in business law (contracts), family law (marriage certificates, divorce decrees), inheritance law (wills).