



## **Arabic at West Point Since 2000**

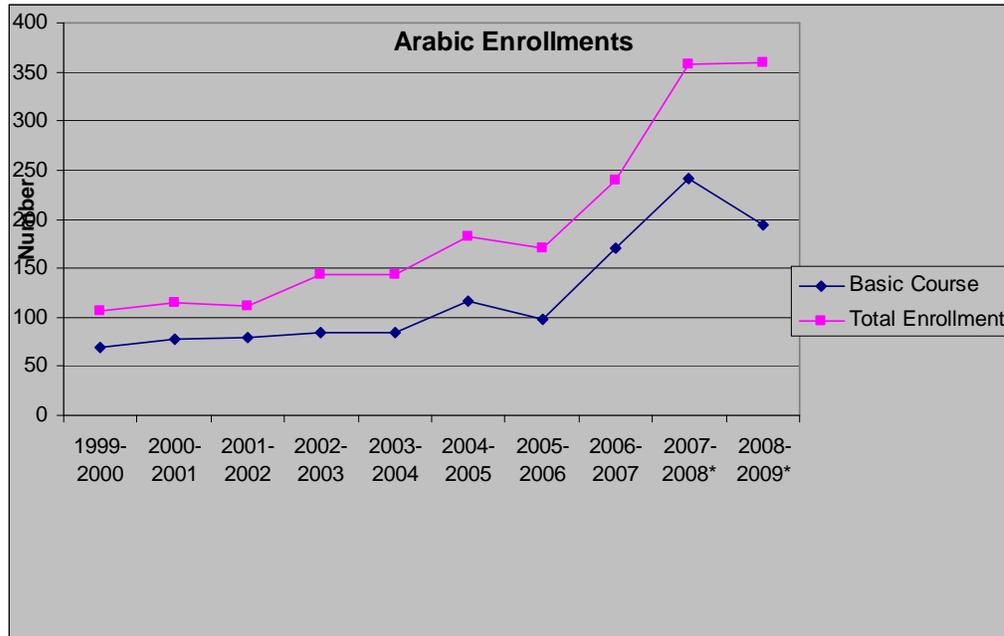
10 August 2008

**Purpose:** This paper gives an overview of changes in enrollment in Arabic courses since 2000, changes in cadet demand for Arabic instruction and the Academy's ability to meet that demand, overseas immersion in Arabic and Arabic language proficiency.

**Enrollment Summary:** Cadet interest in Arabic language instruction increased significantly after September 2001. Numbers have remained relatively constant since then, with no significant increase following the beginning of OIF in 2003. Because cadets normally select their language in July of their first year, but do not start instruction until their second year, there is a time lag until we actually see increased classroom enrollments. As shifting faculty allocations takes considerably longer, West Point experienced a three year period (2003-2005) when a large number of cadets requesting Arabic could not be accommodated. By 2006, that gap was closed. There will always be, and always has been, a natural gap in the number cadets requesting Arabic and those enrolled, due to cadet scheduling issues, low MLAT scores, or cadet performance in other classes.

Enrollments in upper level courses in all languages, including Arabic, increased in 2007 with the additional requirement for two years of language for most Humanities and Social Sciences majors. Additionally, although enrollment numbers do not reflect this, the change of language basic courses to five-day-a-week from every other day means the actual contact hours in class for the Arabic basic course, like other languages, has been double since 2007 than what it was previously.

**CHART A: Arabic Enrollments**



**CHART B: Arabic Enrollments by Year**

ARABIC ENROLLMENTS BY YEAR

<u>Academic Year</u>	<u>1st Year</u>	<u>2nd Year</u>	<u>3rd/4th Year</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
1999-2000	69	17	21	107
2000-2001	78	19	17	114
2001-2002	80	21	11	112
2002-2003	84	27	33	144
2003-2004	85	31	27	143
2004-2005	117	26	39	182
2005-2006	98	42	30	170
2006-2007	170	31	39	240
2007-2008*	241	85	31	357
2008-2009*	194	117	48	359

\* = Reflects increased requirement for 2nd year language for Humanities and Social Sciences Majors.

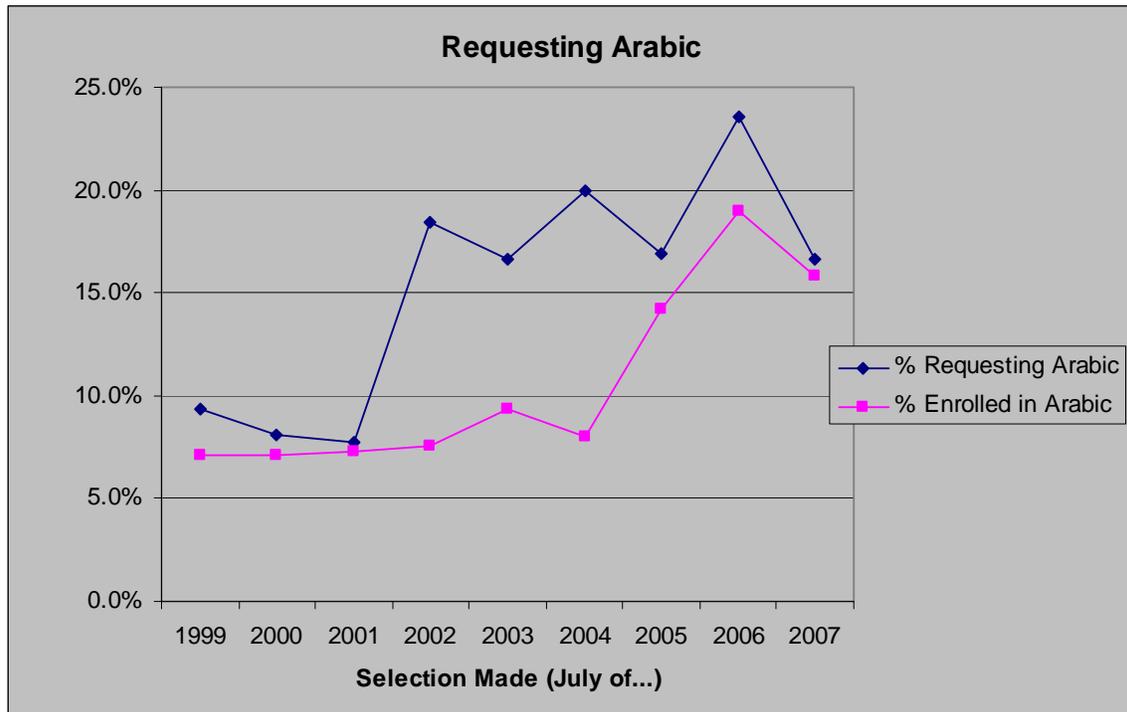
Demand vs. Enrollments: The charts below illustrate the cadet interest in Arabic instruction (those choosing Arabic as their first choice language) compared to those finally enrolled. Chart C shows this comparison as a percentage of the total cadet class, while Chart D uses raw numbers. Chart D also includes the theoretical capacity to accommodate cadets in the Arabic basic course, given ideal scheduling conditions. These charts reflect a large increase in demand in July 2002 (the first selection period following September 11, 2001) and another increase in 2006 (not tied to a specific event, but

occurring about the same time as the increased immersion opportunities due to LTI took effect).

During the first three years of this initial increase, West Point experienced a large gap in its capacity to accommodate such a large number of Arabic students. This meant that more than half of those requesting Arabic were diverted to their second choice languages. Given the time lag between when cadets choose their language and when they actually begin instruction, and the much longer the lag in shifting faculty allocations, this gap appears in the Academic years 2003-2005, but actually reflects the post September 11, 2001 increase.

There is always a small gap between those requesting and taking Arabic due to a number of factors: low scores on the MLAT or difficulty in other courses which make it inadvisable for the cadet to take a CAT IV language; changes in cadet plans, and scheduling issues. The theoretical capacity shown here assumes every section of every hour could be filled to maximum capacity. In reality, cadet academic schedules make this unfeasible.

**CHART C: Cadet Demand for Arabic**



**CHART D: Cadet Demand for Arabic vs. Enrollment**

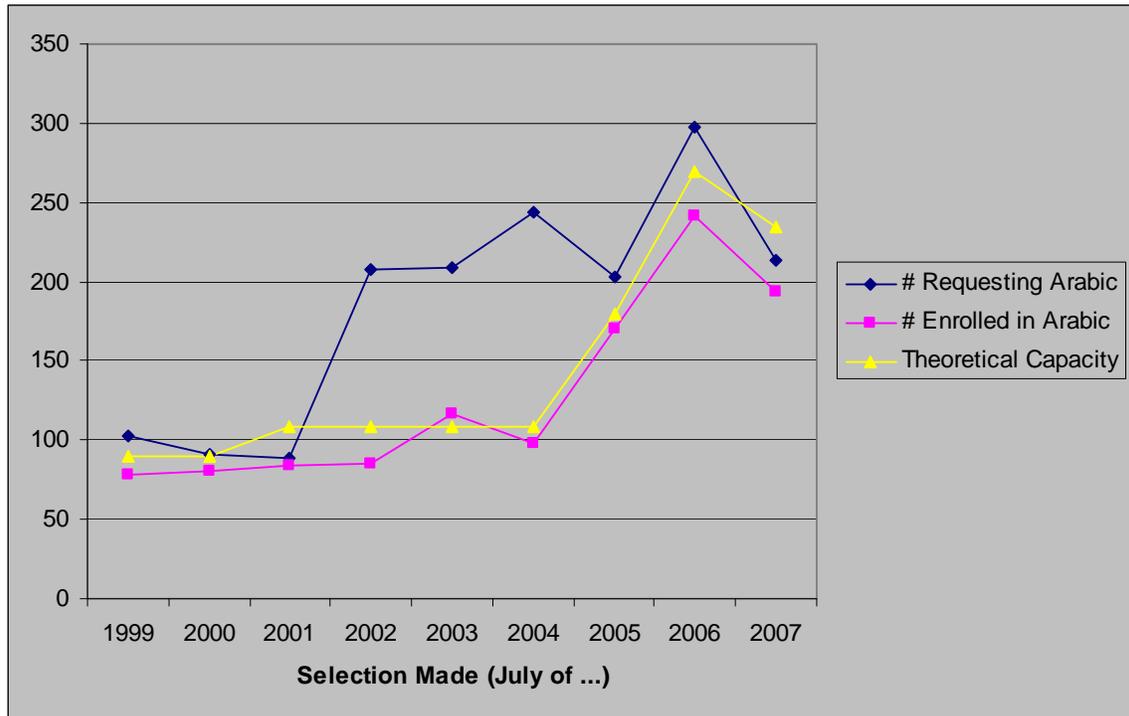


CHART E: Cadet Placement in Arabic by Year

ARABIC PLACEMENT BY YEAR,  
1999 – 2006

<b>GRADUATING CLASS:</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>
<b>YEAR LANG. SELECTION MADE:</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>
<b>STARTED BASIC ARABIC</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>
<b>CLASS SIZE:</b>	<b>1101</b>	<b>1130</b>	<b>1155</b>	<b>1126</b>

<b>Number Requesting Arabic</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>208</b>
<b>PERCENTAGE OF CLASS:</b>	<b>9.4%</b>	<b>8.1%</b>	<b>7.7%</b>	<b>18.5%</b>
<b>Number Taking Arabic</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>85</b>
<b>PERCENTAGE OF CLASS:</b>	<b>7.1%</b>	<b>7.1%</b>	<b>7.3%</b>	<b>7.5%</b>

COMPARISON OF ARABIC PLACEMENT WITH CAPACITY:

<b>AVAILABLE BASIC INSTRUCTORS</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>CAPACITY IN BASIC COURSE</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>108</b>

ARABIC PLACEMENT BY YEAR,  
2003-2007

<b>GRADUATING CLASS:</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>
<b>YEAR LANG. SELECTION MADE:</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>
<b>STARTED BASIC ARABIC</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007*</b>	<b>2008*</b>
<b>CLASS SIZE:</b>	<b>1256</b>	<b>1224</b>	<b>1200</b>	<b>1272</b>	<b>1229</b>

<b>Number Requesting Arabic</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>244</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>213</b>
<b>PERCENTAGE OF CLASS:</b>	<b>16.6%</b>	<b>19.9%</b>	<b>16.9%</b>	<b>23.6%</b>	<b>16.6%</b>
<b>Number Taking Arabic</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>241</b>	<b>194</b>
<b>PERCENTAGE OF CLASS:</b>	<b>9.3%</b>	<b>8.0%</b>	<b>14.2%</b>	<b>18.9%</b>	<b>15.8%</b>

COMPARISON OF ARABIC PLACEMENT WITH  
CAPACITY:

<b>AVAILABLE BASIC INSTRUCTORS</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>CAPACITY IN BASIC COURSE</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>234</b>

\*Start of daily language instruction

Arabic as Percentage of Total: From 2000-2007, cadets had a choice of seven languages. In 2008, this increased with the inclusion of Persian. Chart F shows cadet interest in Arabic as a percentage of the total class. If all seven languages were chosen equally, the result would be a 14% share for each. As the chart shows, beginning in July 2002, Arabic demand has been above the statistical average:

CHART F: Arabic Demand as a Percentage of Total

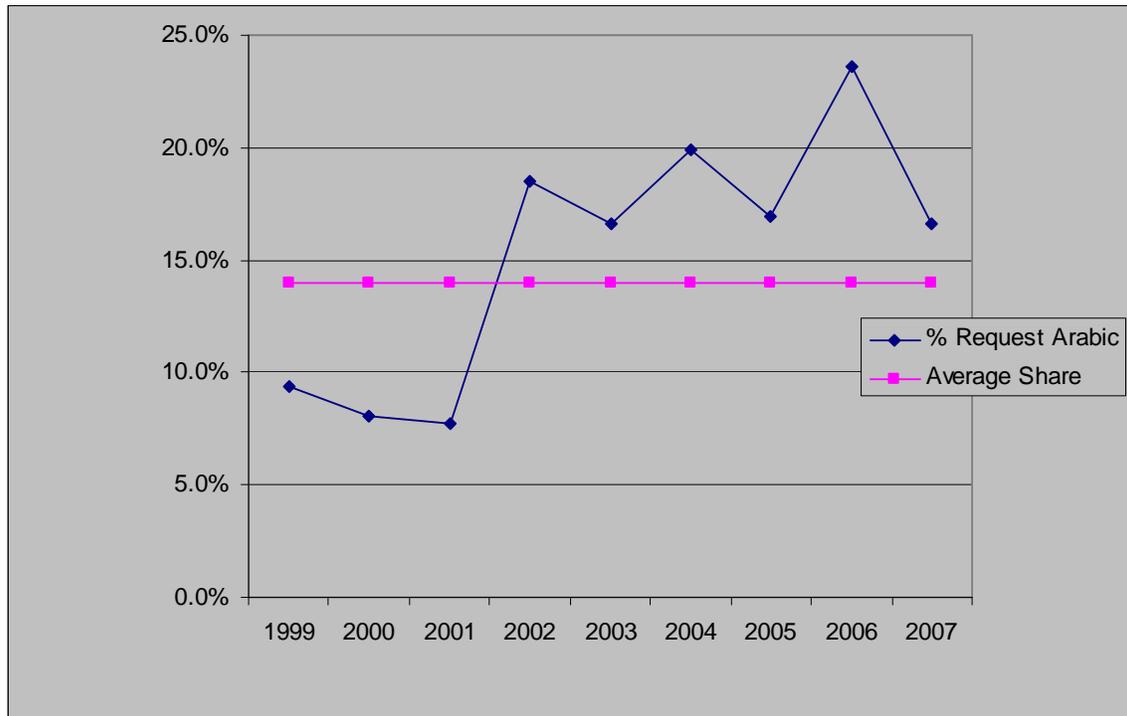


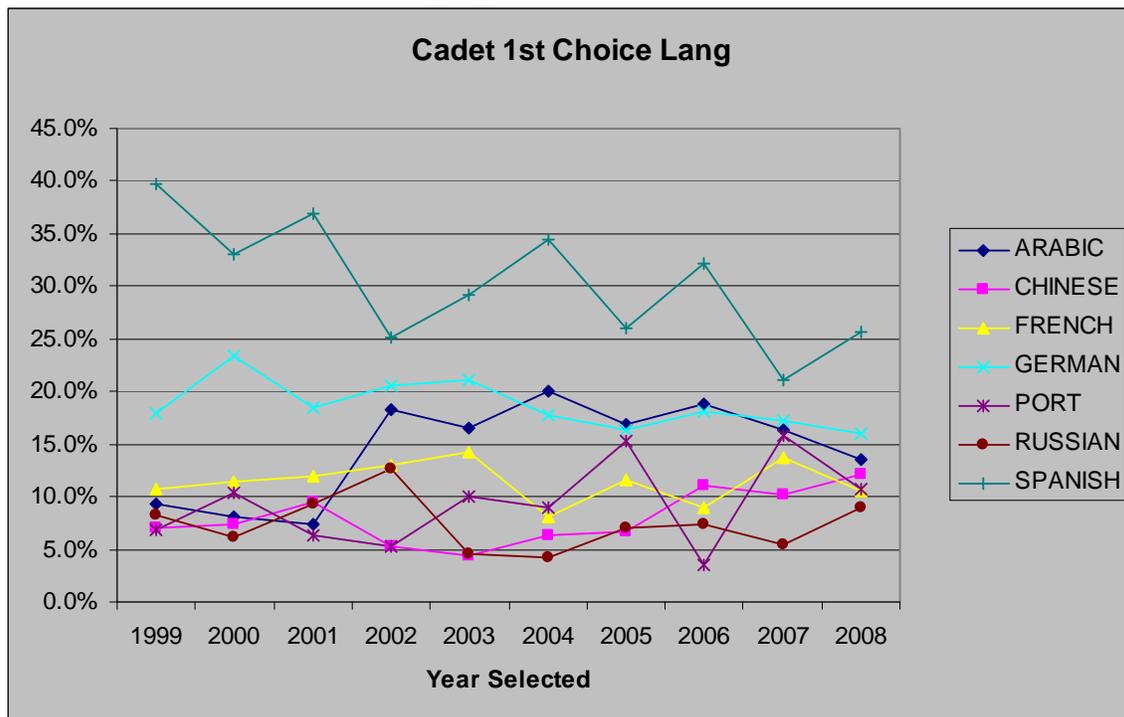
Chart G below shows the actual 1<sup>st</sup> choice selections by cadets by year:

**CHART G:** Cadet 1<sup>st</sup> Choice Languages by Percentage

	Jul-99	Jul-00	Jul-01	Jul-02	Jul-03
<b>ARABIC:</b>	9.3%	8.1%	7.4%	18.3%	16.6%
<b>CHINESE:</b>	7%	7.4%	9.5%	5.3%	4.4%
<b>FRENCH:</b>	10.7%	11.5%	12%	13%	14.2%
<b>GERMAN:</b>	18%	23.3%	18.4%	20.6%	21.1%
<b>PORTUGUESE:</b>	6.9%	10.4%	6.4%	5.2%	10.1%
<b>RUSSIAN:</b>	8.3%	6.2%	9.3%	12.6%	4.5%
<b>SPANISH:</b>	39.8%	33.1%	37%	25.1%	29.1%

	Jul-04	Jul-05	Jul-06	Jul-07	Jul-08
<b>ARABIC:</b>	20%	16.9%	18.8%	16.4%	13.5%
<b>CHINESE:</b>	6.4%	6.7%	11.1%	10.2%	12.1%
<b>FRENCH:</b>	8%	11.6%	8.9%	13.7%	10.6%
<b>GERMAN:</b>	17.7%	16.3%	18.1%	17.3%	16.0%
<b>PORTUGUESE:</b>	9%	15.3%	3.5%	15.8%	10.8%
<b>RUSSIAN:</b>	4.3%	7.0%	7.4%	5.5%	9.0%
<b>SPANISH:</b>	34.5%	26.1%	32.1%	21.0%	25.6%
					2.4%

**CHART H:** Cadet 1<sup>st</sup> Choice Language Comparison



Although the graph above is somewhat busy, it reflects clear trends for cadet language choices. Spanish is consistently the most popular choice. Since 2002, Arabic has risen to be consistently on a par with German as the second choice. Among the remaining languages, there is tremendous year-to-year variation, as exemplified by the sudden rises and drops in Portuguese and Russian enrollments.

An important footnote to the chart above is the fact that Spanish enrollments are typically much smaller than the number of cadets selecting it as their first choice. This is largely because many cadets have previous Spanish experience in High School. The Department of Foreign languages tests these cadets individually, and in most cases, will not place them back in a beginning Spanish class if they have had several years of experience. Given the choice between taking an advanced Spanish class or starting a new language, a significant portion opt to take a new language.

**Immersion Summary:** The Arabic program has benefitted greatly from the Language Transformation Initiative (LTI). In the years 2000-2004, West Point sent an average of four cadets per year on a single Summer language immersion program for a duration of three weeks (in Tunisia or Oman). There were no semester-long immersion programs. This capacity fell far short of providing an immersion experience for all language majors.

Beginning in 2006, Arabic has increased to an operational capacity of 30 cadets on semester-long immersion programs and 25 on Summer immersion programs. Currently, semester programs run in three countries: Egypt, Jordan and Morocco. Summer immersions run in: Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, and Bahrain. Additionally, these immersion programs are available throughout the entire Summer, rather than during a single, three-week period.

Immersion programs are part of a Crawl-Walk-Run system, in which cadets ideally begin with a week long Spring Immersion, led by an instructor, to familiarize them with the region. This is followed by a three-week Summer program, in which cadets take intensive language instruction and are given greater freedom in traveling the region. The program culminates in a semester-long immersion program overseas.

#### **Semester-long Immersion:**

Chart I below shows the growth of the Semester Abroad Program by Academic Years. The first cadets went abroad to Morocco in Fall 2006 (1<sup>st</sup> Semester, Academic Year 2006-2007). Currently, the program has the capacity to send 30 Arabic cadets per year. The final column shows each language as a percentage of the total in the Academic Year, 2007-8. Arabic currently has the largest share of Semester Abroad opportunities. These opportunities are not restricted to Arabic majors, but to any cadet with the requisite language skills to study abroad.

In Chart J, Arabic study abroad locations are highlighted in red.

**CHART I: Semester Long Immersion Study**

ACAD. YEAR	2004-5	2005-6	2006-7	2007-8	2008%
<b>ARABIC</b>			16	24	18
<b>CHINESE</b>		6	14	20	15
<b>FRENCH</b>	8	7	14	22	17
<b>GERMAN</b>			6	9	7
<b>PORTUGUESE</b>		2	11	18	12
<b>RUSSIAN</b>		2	12	19	14
<b>SPANISH</b>	3	5	13	21	16
<b>TOTAL</b>	11	22	86	133	

**CHART J: Semester Abroad Study by Location**

	2005	2006	2007	2008
<b>AUSTRIA</b>				3
<b>BRAZIL</b>		2	11	14
<b>CANADA</b>	2			
<b>CHILE</b>		2	5	2
<b>CHINA</b>		4	14	20
<b>EGYPT</b>			7	6
<b>FRANCE</b>	6	7	14	22
<b>GERMANY</b>			6	6
<b>JORDAN</b>				11
<b>MEXICO</b>			3	10
<b>MOROCCO</b>			9	7
<b>PORTUGAL</b>				4
<b>RUSSIA</b>		2	12	19
<b>SPAIN</b>	3	3	5	9
<b>TAIWAN</b>		2		
<b>TOTAL</b>	11	22	86	133

Results from Immersion Training: We do not yet have sufficient data to measure the effects of immersion training over a long period of time. Results from the DLPT, however, show an increase of .50 on reading and .70 on listening on average for cadets who participated in Arabic Semester long immersion in 2007 and 2008.

Summer Immersion: Cadet Summer immersion programs generally run for 3-4 weeks, and have at least 40 hours of classroom instruction in addition to regional travel, constituting a full 3.0 credit course. Arabic Summer programs increased significantly beginning in 2005 and have benefitted from the LTI funding. Chart K shows attendance on Arabic Summer programs since 2000.

Chart K: Arabic Summer Immersion Programs by Year

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Bahrain							2	2	
Egypt						4	4	12	18
Jordan								5	3
Kuwait						8	8		
Morocco					2			4	4
Oman				3					
Syria						4	4		
Tunisia	3	4	4						
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>25</b>

Spring Immersion: In 2007, West Point began its first Spring immersion trips. In 2007, eight cadets traveled to Jordan and eight to Egypt. In 2008, 22 cadets traveled to Egypt for ten days.

Conclusion: Interest in Arabic at West Point experienced a large increase after September 2001, and appear to have stabilized. From previously ranking 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> among seven language choices, Arabic is now consistently second, behind Spanish and roughly equal to German. During a three year period following this increased demand, West Point could not accommodate all cadets desiring Arabic, and had to divert many to other language choices. Since then, however, we have been able to meet demand. Some cadets are still diverted from Arabic due to academic issues, not to teaching capacity.

Arabic immersion opportunities have increased greatly due to the LTI funding. With the addition of semester long immersion programs in 2006, cadet DLPT scores have increased by roughly one step on both reading and listening. Additionally, the number of countries to which West Point is able to send cadets has greatly increased.