

US history text goes from English to French

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Isaac McClure, right, a junior from Westfield, Mass., explains his group's translation project to Jean-Claude Brunet, the Consul General of France in New Orleans. (Photo by Erin Roussel)

The fifth-graders at the [International School of Louisiana](#) in New Orleans have all their courses in French, but teachers at the immersion school in uptown New Orleans lack the French instructional materials needed.

Tulane University students in the advanced French translation class stepped in to help. Working in teams, under the supervision of graduate students, they translated 200 pages of the 350-page Pearson fifth-grade textbook on U.S. history.

Native French speaker Annette Sojic, a senior professor of practice who teaches the Tulane class, is in charge of the final edition of all the translations. She said that Pearson, a large book publisher, has agreed to publish the new French edition alongside the publisher's Spanish edition of the text that is currently available.

“The curriculum translation project has tremendous potential on a much larger scale,” Sojic said. “The long-term objective of the collaborative translation project between ISL and Tulane is to produce a publishable version, which would be available to French teachers in international schools all across the United States.”

At an end-of-the-semester celebration of the project, Jean-Claude Brunet, the [Consul General of France in New Orleans](#), came to Tulane to congratulate the students.

Brunet said that the French government is very proud to cooperate with the development of bilingual education, with about 5,000 children in immersion schools in the United States.

“Louisiana, of course, is no. 1,” Brunet said, “And New York is following the example of Louisiana.”

Some of the students fulfilled the second tier of their [service-learning](#) requirement, including junior Isaac McClure.

“We met the children ? they're awesome people ? and that motivated me a lot more,” McClure said. “We got to know what the [immersion] school is all about, and since there was an actual meaningful purpose, that made the project easier.

“This was a priority for me,” added McClure, who took 18 credit hours this semester.