

Contact: Diana Gonzalez

REQUEST FOR A PROGRAM NAME CHANGE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA
MASTER OF ARTS AND Ph.D. PROGRAMS IN FRENCH TO
MASTER OF ARTS AND Ph.D. PROGRAMS IN FRENCH AND
FRANCOPHONE WORLD STUDIES

Action Requested: Consider approval of the request by the University of Iowa to change the name of the Master of Arts and Ph.D. Programs in French to the Master of Arts and Ph.D. Programs in French and Francophone World Studies.

Executive Summary: The proposed name reflects shifts in emphasis and areas of research that have developed in French Studies nationally and internationally. The proposed change is an important initiative indicating that the University of Iowa programs are on the cutting edge of research and teaching. This request has been reviewed by the Board Office and the Council of Provosts and is recommended for approval. This request addresses the Board of Regents Strategic Plan objective (1.1) to “offer high-quality programs through ongoing program improvement for undergraduate, graduate, professional, and non-degree students and special school students.”

Background:

- ◇ Description of program. The graduate programs in French prepare students in language, literature, history, and philosophy.
- ◇ Proposed name. The proposed name describes the strengths and offerings of the department, including a large number of offerings and specialties in Francophone studies.
 - “Francophone refers to people whose cultural background is primarily associated with French language, regardless of ethnic and geographical differences. Mainly or partially francophone countries include France, Belgium, Canada, Switzerland, Haiti, Lebanon, French West Indies, several countries in Africa that are former French or Belgian colonies, and Tahiti. These countries are members of the Francophonie organization.”¹
 - The inclusion of “World” in the proposed name reflects new fields of literature and cultures in French that emerged with the decolonization of Africa in the 1950s and gave rise to new national literatures in French in the 1960s. These developments during the postcolonial era are reflected in French Studies departments in North America and Europe.
 - The proposed name will help in recruiting high-quality graduate students. The department does not foresee that new resources will be necessary to support them.
- ◇ Comparable name at other institutions. The proposed name has been adopted by graduate programs at Northwestern University, Duke University, and the University of California at Los Angeles.

¹ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Francophone>.

- ◇ Other units not affected. The proposed name will not affect the name of the department, or the offerings of the undergraduate programs in French and Italian.
- ◇ New funds not needed. No new funds for course development or teaching support will be necessary because the proposed name reflects the current state of the department.