

Contact: Diana Gonzalez

**REQUEST TO TERMINATE THE Ph.D. PROGRAM IN GERMAN  
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA**

**Action Requested:** Consider approval of the request by the University of Iowa to terminate the Ph.D. Program in German in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

**Executive Summary:** The request to terminate the Program resulted from an assessment of the need for the program undertaken by the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and a recommendation from the Task Force on Graduate Education that there are insufficient faculty resources in the Department of German to sustain the doctoral program. This request was reviewed by the Board Office and the Council of Provosts and is recommended for approval. This request addresses the Board of Regents Strategic Plan priority to pursue “educational excellence and impact.”

**Background:**

- ◇ **Description of program.** The Ph.D. Program in German requires a minimum of 75 semester hours of graduate credit, including at least 27 semester hours in post-Master of Arts courses and a dissertation. Doctoral students concentrate in one of three areas – German literature, Germanic linguistics, or combined literature and linguistics. In addition to the course requirements in their area of concentration, students develop an independent research program combining core and specialty areas within their concentration. These specialty areas form the basis for the student’s qualifying exam, comprehensive exam, and dissertation.
- ◇ **Reason for proposed termination.** In September 2009, the Board of Regents approved the suspension of admissions to both the Master of Arts and Ph.D. Programs in German due to low enrollments and loss of faculty. The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences requested that the department focus on curricular restructuring to allow the teaching and mentoring needs to be met with the current faculty. In February 2010, the Task Force on Graduate Education identified the graduate programs in German as requiring additional evaluation due to their limited enrollment and the fact that no doctoral students had graduated from the program in more than five years.

The Task Force determined that German students at the master’s level could interact with the other MAT/language programs and the Second Language Acquisition program within a possible division of languages. The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences worked with the German Department and other language departments toward their reorganization into the Division of World Languages, Literatures, and Cultures (Agenda Item 4g, September 2010). This reorganization will be advantageous to the German programs at the undergraduate and master’s levels but the viability of the Ph.D. program is questionable because the current faculty level is not enough to sustain the program.

- ◇ **Impact on resources.** The reduction in faculty has already occurred due to retirement, resignation, and the death of the long-time chair. No further reduction in faculty is anticipated. The merger of the German Department into the Division of World Languages, Literatures, and Cultures will allow the current faculty to collaborate more easily with other language and cultural studies faculty and foster more interdisciplinary interactions that will be attractive to undergraduate and master’s students.

- ◇ Impact on workforce. The proposed program termination is not expected to affect the workforce needs of the state.
- ◇ Alternative programming. Students interested in graduate level programming will have the opportunity to enroll in the Ph.D. Program in Linguistics or Second Language Acquisition at the University of Iowa.
- ◇ Student data. During the past seven years, the total enrollment in the Ph.D. Program in German has been 19 students. However, there have been no graduates from the program since May 2003.
- ◇ Effect on current students. No students have been admitted into the Ph.D. program since admissions were suspended in September 2009. Currently, there are five Ph.D. students enrolled in the program. Three have passed their comprehensive examinations. All five students will continue to be mentored until they complete their dissertations and graduate; all necessary coursework will continue to be offered to these students. The two most recently admitted Ph.D. students may choose to continue in the Ph.D. Program in German or may transfer to another Ph.D. program, such as Second Language Acquisition. It is anticipated that all students will have graduated or transferred to another program within the next five years.
- ◇ Effective date of termination. If the proposed program termination is approved by the Board, suspension of new admissions to the program will continue in effect. Termination of the program will become effective upon completion of the program by the currently enrolled five students.