

Contact: Diana Gonzalez

REQUEST FOR A NEW PROGRAM AT IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
BACHELOR OF ARTS PROGRAM IN WORLD LANGUAGES AND CULTURES

Action Requested: Consider approval of the request by Iowa State University to establish a new Bachelor of Arts Program in World Languages and Cultures which will be administered by the Department of World Languages and Cultures in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

Executive Summary: The proposed program is a reconfiguration of the current structure of separate primary and secondary majors in Spanish, French, German, and Russian Studies into a single major in World Languages and Cultures. There will be no change in the requirements for each major concentration compared to the existing stand-alone majors in each language area. No new resources are required to implement the proposed program. This proposal was reviewed by the Board Office and the Council of Provosts and is recommended for approval. The proposed program addresses the Board of Regents Strategic Plan priority (1.0) to "ensure high-quality educational opportunities for students."

Background:

- ◇ **Description of program.** The proposed program will have two groups of concentrations.
 - Group I, *Languages and Cultures*, will include the department's primary major students who can choose concentrations in French, German, Russian Studies, or Spanish. These concentrations will retain their focus on the humanistic study of literary and cultural texts, documents, and artifacts, and will continue to require extensive experience with the target languages involved. The curricula of these concentrations will require no immediate modification from the department's current curricula. Departmental faculty across language areas will increasingly share responsibility for teaching methods and approaches in cultural studies, linguistics, literature, historical and archaeological inquiry, and pedagogy.
 - Group II, *Languages and Cultures for Professions* (LCP), will contain the concentrations that are offered as secondary majors in a world language to students with primary majors or curricula in the Colleges of Business and Engineering. These concentrations also require extensive target-language training and experience, but within a curriculum more closely targeted to professional, technical, and business contexts and skills. The curricula of these concentrations will require no immediate modification from the current concentration in a world language which is designated as the LCP option.
- ◇ **Program changes.** Upon approval of the proposed program by the Board, the existing stand-alone programs in French, German, Russian Studies, and Spanish will be discontinued and admissions to the stand-alone programs will be suspended. However, students currently enrolled as majors in those programs will be able to complete them.

- ◇ Rationale for the proposed program.
 - Reflects more accurately the ongoing curricular changes that have occurred in the department during the past five years, including changing the department name to World Languages and Cultures.
 - Eliminates existing stand-alone majors to increase students' options within a single, unified major.
 - Provides formal recognition for students pursuing coursework, study abroad, and internships in Languages and Cultures for Professions.
 - Creates further impetus for the realignment and articulation of World Languages and Cultures courses across the curriculum.
 - Establishes a framework for developing cross-disciplinary curricula which will enhance new emphases in Languages and Cultures for Professions and for the Latin American Studies Certificate.
 - Formalizes the role of study abroad collaborations with the Colleges of Business and Engineering.

- ◇ Relationship to existing programs at ISU. The proposed program will integrate with a number of programs at ISU, including the new certificate program in Latin American Studies for students acquiring a concentration in Spanish; Western European Studies Program for students of French, German, and Spanish; Russian, East European and Eurasian Studies Program for students of Slavic languages; Asian Studies for students of Chinese; Classical Studies Program; Teaching English as a Second Language/Applied Linguistics Program; and International Studies second major.

- ◇ Duplication. The proposed program is unique in the state of Iowa and the Midwest. There is no other program in the state that integrates the acquisition of language and cultural skills into the vision of a global network of professional communication and intercultural exchange. The majority of colleges and universities in Iowa offer a traditional model of separate major curricula for different languages. The University of Iowa and the University of Northern Iowa offer degrees in area studies, but without a focus on intercultural communication. Drake University recently eliminated majors in foreign languages and now offers languages through a media-based Drake University Language Acquisition Program.

- ◇ Student demand. The proposed program motivates students to look beyond their interest in a single language, to gain experience with multiple languages and cultures, to experience the study of literature, cultural documents, and texts from a wide range of traditions of both the past and the present, and to develop an understanding of the increasing fluidity of national boundaries, institutions, and economies around the world. The Languages and Cultures for Professions Program, now in its 3rd year, has grown to 85 majors. Incentives are growing for students to seek a language and culture concentration as a supplemental credential to a major in another field while incentives for students to pursue language studies as a stand-alone credential are decreasing.

- ◇ Unique features. The department has already begun implementing steps to streamline its curricular structure, course offerings, and assessment criteria across language areas.

- ◇ Resources. No additional faculty, facilities, or equipment will be required. Current faculty are qualified to teach a broad range of courses in a cross-disciplinary manner. Grant funds from the U.S. Department of Education enabled faculty to develop curricula targeted to their language, as well as in contemporary society and culture.
- ◇ Cost. The University projects that no additional financial resources will be required because the proposed program is a reconfiguration of the current individual languages.
- ◇ Need/Demand. The challenges of the 21st century demand more foreign language proficiency, cultural awareness, and intercultural skills because globalization has brought intense competition to the U. S. economy; clashes among cultures, religious beliefs, political systems and movements are affecting national security; diversities of workplaces, schools, and communities are changing the face of society. The Committee for Economic Development stated that “knowledge of foreign languages and cultures is an economic necessity.” Robert Rosen, author of *Global Literacies*, stated “All business is global, yet all markets are local. This globalized multicultural world needs leaders with a keen understanding of national cultures. By learning from other countries, these leaders develop the best thinking and best practices from around the world enabling them to leverage culture as a tool for competitive advantage.”
- ◇ Projected enrollment. The projected enrollment is 210 students in Year 1, increasing to 270 students in year 7. The department also anticipates non-majors enrolling in specific courses of the proposed program. ISU’s individual language programs currently enroll approximately 220 student majors. The department anticipates increased growth from students in the International Studies major who also select primary majors in WLC. The new interdisciplinary major in Criminal Justice will potentially create new demand in select languages. Additionally, the Colleges of Business and Engineering will continue to assist in recruiting students for the LCP Program which will likely result in growth.
- ◇ Articulation agreements. Des Moines Area Community College offers an associate of science degree in Interpretation and Translation (ITR) which targets bilingual students seeking professional certification as interpreters or translators. It is anticipated that the Department of World Languages and Cultures at ISU and DMACC will develop a 2+2 articulation agreement for transfer students.
- ◇ Link to institutional strategic plan. The proposed program addresses ISU’s vision: “Students will become broadly educated, global citizens who are culturally informed, technologically adept, and ready to lead. Faculty and staff will share a passion for creating, sharing, and applying knowledge to improve lives world-wide.”