

Contact: Diana Gonzalez

**REQUEST TO SUSPEND ADMISSIONS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA  
IN THE GRADUATE PROGRAMS IN GERMAN**

**Action Requested:** Consider approval of the request by the University of Iowa to suspend admissions in the Master of Arts and Ph.D. Programs in German for a 24-month period (2009-2011). According to Board policy (§6.06D), suspension of admissions must be approved by the Board. However, the University has already taken action which effectively suspended admissions for the 2009-10 academic year. The Department of German received four applications for Fall 2009 for the graduate programs, but it communicated with the applicants and indicated on its web page that applications were not being considered for the current year.

**Executive Summary:** The request to suspend admissions in the graduate programs in German is based on limited applications and enrollment in the programs during the past five years and a request from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences for the Department of German to undertake a curricular restructuring. Current students will not be affected by the proposed suspension of admissions. 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 strategy (4.1.1) to “pursue opportunities to realize greater efficiency in operations, consistent with best practices in the delivery of education and other services.”

**Background:**

- ◇ **Description of programs.** The department offers a Master of Arts Program in German with a literature or linguistics concentration and a Ph.D. Program in German with a literature, linguistics, or combined literature and linguistics concentration. Advanced undergraduates also have an opportunity to undertake a combined Bachelor of Arts/Master of Arts Program.
- ◇ **Reason for proposed suspension.** The department currently has 4.5 full-time equivalent faculty members which is a decrease of 3.5 full-time equivalent faculty members during the past 10 years as a result of death and retirements. The College has not refilled these positions because there are comparatively few undergraduate and graduate majors<sup>1</sup> and because the College has had more urgent needs. The College has asked the department to focus on curricular restructuring during the next two years to allow teaching needs to be met at the current faculty size and to mentor currently enrolled graduate students to the completion of their degrees.
- ◇ **Size of program.** During the past five years, there have been 20 applicants to the graduate programs with a total enrollment of 31. In Fall 2008, there were five MA students and four Ph.D. students; two of the MA students graduated in December 2008. Ten students completed the MA program between 2003 and 2008. No students completed the Ph.D. program during that time period.

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<sup>1</sup> In Fall 2008, there were 17 undergraduate majors and nine graduate majors.

- ◇ Impact on instructional staff. The department will reorganize its curriculum to eliminate 1.04 HTE teaching assistant positions while offering the same number of course enrollments in 2009-10 as in 2008-09. The College has a shared-staff arrangement with other departments in the same building. No further reductions in staff and no changes in facilities are planned.
- ◇ Impact of proposed suspension. Suspension of the graduate programs may affect the exchange with Germany's University of Dortmund, which brings an MA student to SUI's Department of American Studies every two years. In exchange, the University of Iowa annually sends a graduate student to the University of Dortmund. The proposed suspension will also result in the suspension of the combined BA/MA program. Currently, there are no students enrolled in the combined program.
- ◇ Availability of graduate programs elsewhere. The University of Northern Iowa offers a Master of Arts Program in German. There are no other colleges or universities in the state that offer a graduate program in German.
- ◇ Alternate opportunities available to students. Students interested in German language acquisition and German language pedagogy may be drawn to the Ph.D. Program in Second Language Acquisition (SLA), a multidisciplinary field whose goal is to understand the processes that underlie learning a non-native language. SLA draws from a variety of academic disciplines, including linguistics, psychology, psycholinguistics, sociology, sociolinguistics, discourse analysis, conversation analysis, and education.

Students may also be interested in the Master of Arts in Teaching Program in German. The M.A.T. program in foreign and second languages education is designed for superior liberal arts graduates who have had few or no professional education courses. Successful completion of the program leads to elementary and/or secondary teacher licensure. The M.A.T. is available in Chinese, French, German, Japanese, Latin, Spanish, and Russian.

- ◇ Date of suspension. The Board-approved suspension will be in effect for a 24-month period.