

Contact: Diana Gonzalez

**REQUEST TO CREATE A NEW DIVISION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA:
DIVISION OF WORLD LANGUAGES, LITERATURES, AND CULTURES**

Action Requested: Consider approval of the request by the University of Iowa to create a new division known as the Division of World Languages, Literatures, and Cultures in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

Executive Summary: The proposed division will incorporate existing language departments and provide leadership, vision, and cross-departmental curricular coordination for these departments. 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 priority to provide “educational excellence and impact.”

Background:

- ◇ Description of current department. Currently, there are six independent small departments each of which is overseen by a department executive officer (DEO)/coordinator. All of the units are currently housed in Phillips Hall. Attachment A describes the current organization of units in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.
- ◇ Description of proposed change. The proposed division will provide an umbrella administrative structure for the departments of Asian and Slavic Languages and Literatures; French and Italian; German; Spanish and Portuguese; and the American Sign Language Program. The proposed division will also administer the Language Media Center, which is a resource unit for students and faculty in all of the affected units. Attachment B describes the organization in the proposed division.
- ◇ Purpose of proposed change. The proposed division will provide leadership, vision, and cross-departmental curricular coordination for the units with closely allied missions and consolidate administrative costs and functions. A larger community of related interests will help faculty to thrive and provide the strong connections across departments that promote innovative approaches to teaching and scholarship. The proposed division will meet the following objectives:
 - Promote synergies and collaboration among faculty and build bridges across departments engaged in language and cultural studies;
 - Foster more interdisciplinary interactions that will attract students preparing for today’s global society and international marketplace;
 - Facilitate interdisciplinary scholarship around the commonalities of language, literature and culture and provide crucial support to smaller language programs;
 - Help students take full advantage of the wealth of opportunities for international and language studies at the University of Iowa;
 - Enhance the College’s ability to support a diversity of language instruction for undergraduate and graduate students;
 - Leverage resources and opportunities to support scholarly and curricular innovation, such as cross-cultural course development and collaboration to make programs more competitive for grants.

- ◇ Proposed administrative organization. The proposed division will have a director and two associate directors. The associate directors currently serve as department chairs. During 2010-11, an interim director will be selected from the College's currently serving DEO cadre while a search for a permanent director is conducted. The interim director will serve as chair of Asian and Slavic Languages and Literatures and coordinator of the American Sign Language Program. One associate director will chair French and Italian and German. The other associate director will chair Spanish and Portuguese. The specific administrative responsibilities of the director and associate directors will be modified as new needs arise.

In consolidating budgets across the College, staff members that have served individual departments will be moved into a single main office; staff size will be reduced by three positions. The remaining staff will support all units in the proposed division. The chief administrative staff member will report to the director and will supervise the remaining four staff members. The head of the Language Media Center who currently reports to the Dean will now report to the division director.

The existing departments will continue to be responsible for faculty reviews, including promotion and tenure reviews, and for their curricular and degree offerings. The departments will collaborate with the division director on proposals for new faculty lines that will strengthen the mission of the proposed division and meet the curricular needs within departments.

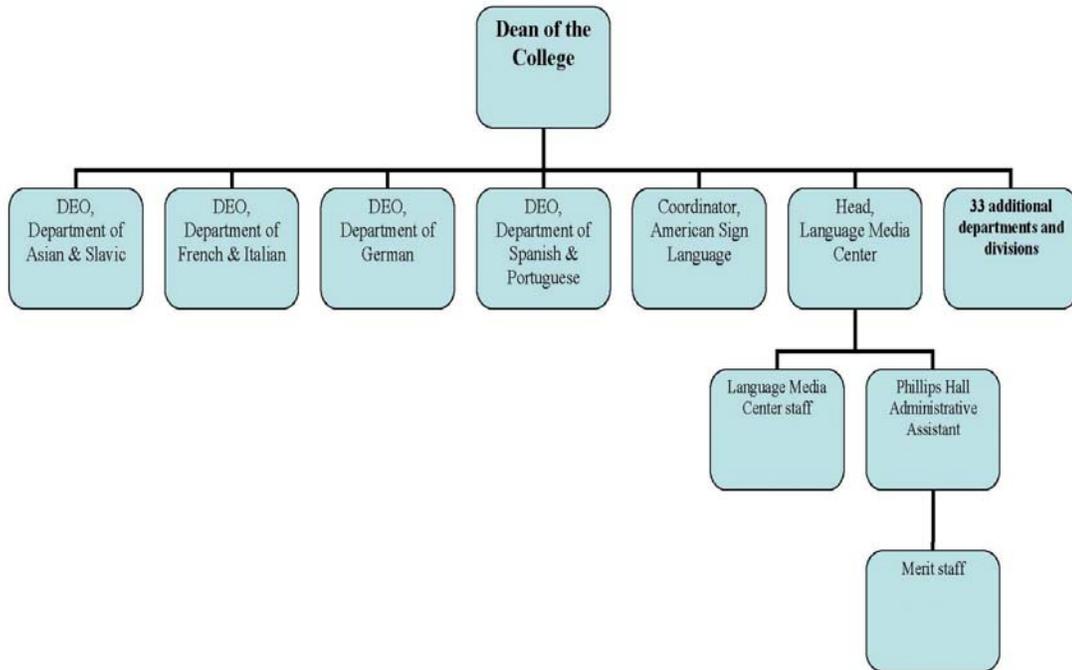
- ◇ Comparable name at other institutions. The University of Wisconsin-Superior, University of Central Arkansas, and the University of Arkansas are a few of the institutions that use the proposed title for the division at their institution which consolidates their foreign language departments. SUNY-Albany, Stanford University, and the University of New Hampshire have similarly titled divisions.
- ◇ Anticipated cost savings. Administrative efficiencies will result from having fewer department chairs. Currently, there are four department chairs. The proposed division will have a director and two associate directors. This change will reduce faculty time spent on administration and increase teaching productivity. Organizational efficiencies will also result from having teaching and scholarly interactions coordinated across departments in the proposed division.

The savings associated with the proposed staff reorganization are approximately \$150,000 per year; the savings associated with the reorganization of faculty administrative duties are approximately \$100,000 per year.

- ◇ Effect on students. Students are expected to experience no negative impact. Faculty will have a stable administrative structure that promotes and supports their teaching, scholarship, and collaborative efforts. Students will continue to take advantage of the programs currently offered and will experience innovation in course offerings.

- ◇ Effect on resources. The new organizational structure will not require additional resources. Some currently-vacant faculty lines will be filled after the permanent director is hired. For future faculty line vacancies, the College will authorize searches that strengthen the mission of the proposed division and provide new opportunities for studies of world literatures and cultures, as well as serve curricular needs in the department of appointment.
- ◇ Anticipated impact on other units. The proposed division will coordinate interactions with other units, including International Programs, College departments with allied missions, such as Cinema and Comparative Literature and Linguistics, and the interdisciplinary Second Language Acquisition Ph.D. Program.
- ◇ Date of implementation. The proposed division reorganization will become effective upon approval by the Board of Regents and will be implemented in Fall 2010.

Current Organization of Units to be Included in Proposed Division



ORGANIZATIONAL CHART, PROPOSED DIVISION OF WORLD LANGUAGES, LITERATURES, AND CULTURES
(Note: Division Director reports to the Dean of Liberal Arts & Sciences)

