

1-1-2013

DOC 2012-12 Proposal to Rename the Department of Languages

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PROPOSAL TO THE ACADEMIC SENATE

TITLE: Proposal to Rename the Department of Languages

SUBMITTED BY: Office of the Dean, College of Arts and Sciences

DATE: Submitted August 27, 2012

ACTION: Legislative authority

REFERENCE: Senate Constitution II.B.1.a. Also see Senate Document 12-08 “Department Proposal Process”

1. Background:

Following discussions with the Dean and the Provost, the Department of Languages submitted to the College’s Academic Affairs Committee (AAC) in the 2011-12 academic year a formal proposal to rename the Department as the “Department of Global Languages and Cultures” (AAC Document 11-70). The proposed name change accords with the mission of the Department, reflects the College’s and University’s growing strategic commitments to global learning, and also aligns with national trends in university-level study of languages and cultures. Following appropriate consultation, the AAC reviewed and approved the proposal on April 27, 2012.

On the same day, the Academic Senate approved Senate Document 12-08, which sets forth a new process for reviewing and approving a departmental name change. The following proposal presents a rationale for the proposed name change and cites the consultations that have been conducted, along with other supporting material.

At the present time, the proposal to change the name of the Department of Languages does not require changes in the Department’s curriculum or its resources.

2. Rationale:

The Department’s present name, “Department of Languages,” does not convey well the global scope of the Department’s mission and curriculum. Therefore, the Department proposes changing its name to “Department of Global Languages and Cultures.” Its courses and programs prepare students to learn, lead, and serve worldwide. Through study in the Department, students develop language and intercultural skills so that they are able to interact effectively with native speakers of other languages in real-life situations and authentic cultural contexts in the U.S. and abroad.

The Department presently offers courses in the following languages: Arabic, Mandarin Chinese, French, German, Italian, Latin, Russian, and Spanish (see Addendum #1). Courses are conducted in the target language (except in Latin and in LNG 468, a linguistics course for French, German, and Spanish

majors combined). Language and intercultural skills develop progressively in the Department's 100- and 200-level courses and advance more intensively at the 300/400-levels through courses in linguistics, literature, culture, and film that are conducted in the target language (French, German, Italian, Spanish). The Department's courses respond to the Modern Language Association's *Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century*: Communication → communicate in languages other than English; cultures → gain knowledge and understanding of other cultures; connections → connect with other disciplines and acquire information; comparisons → develop insight into the nature of language and culture; and communities → participate in multilingual communities at home and around the world.

As culture and language are inherently interconnected, the development of language and intercultural skills brings awareness and appreciation of similarities and differences in multiple others at home and in diverse regions of the world. Language ability and intercultural competence make domestic and international experiential learning, service learning, and study abroad programs more authentic and relevant in a pluralistic society that is globally intertwined in the 21st century. Therefore, students develop skills and knowledge that, in conjunction with knowledge acquired in other areas studied in the English language, such as philosophy, religion, history, anthropology, literature, the visual and performing arts, etc., will prepare them effectively to function in and to compete for professional careers at home and in a global environment (see addendum #2).

Core University documents, including *A Vision of Excellence*, *The University of Dayton Strategic Plan 2006*, and *Habits of Inquiry and Reflection*, call for the advancement of international and intercultural citizenship and for understanding of the cultures, histories, times, and places of multiple others. Genuine engagement, involvement, and participation in vital issues at home and abroad are enhanced by possessing language and intercultural skills. Since global interrelations in languages and cultures coalesce, students in the Department's courses and programs (including service learning and education abroad programs) consequently are actively involved in global learning and in international and intercultural citizenship and engagement. Provost Joseph Saliba recognized this in his address to the University faculty on September 23, 2011:

Related to Global Learning, I would add the suggestion that we rethink the nature and role of language education at UD. I am well aware that our excellent language courses and programs go well beyond the vital, foundational concerns of teaching vocabulary and grammar. I would like to consider the possibility of expanding our Language Department to include Global Languages and Cultures and to become a major contributor to the Global Learning initiative I have touched on here today and, therefore, to the CAP I have been describing.

3. National context for departmental naming:

In the field of languages there is an ongoing debate about the names properly used by university departments. Some departmental names are associated with languages in general and not to specific areas of language study, such as Romance Languages, Germanic and Slavic Languages, etc. Such general names include: (Department of) Languages; Languages and Literatures; Languages and International Studies; Modern Languages; Modern Foreign Languages and Literatures; Foreign Languages and Literatures; Languages, Literatures and Cultures; Languages, Literatures and Linguistics; Languages and Cultures; Languages, Linguistics and Philosophy; Languages and ESL; Languages, Philosophy and Communication Studies; World Languages, Literatures and Linguistics; English, World

Languages and Cultures; Romance Languages and Literature; International Languages, Literatures and Cultures; Global Languages and Cultures.

The issue of renaming language departments is being actively pursued at some institutions of higher education, at middle and high schools, as well as in school districts, language academies, and translation and interpretation companies. The name “Global Languages and Cultures” is becoming more common. For example, Bellarmine University, Immaculata University, and Southeast Missouri State University already have adopted the name “Department of Global Languages and Cultures.” At St. John’s University, the “new window” for the Department of Languages and Literatures is the “Global Language and Culture Center.”

In other contexts, similar terminological movement is occurring. For example, the University of Wisconsin-Madison hosts the Global Languages, Literatures and Cultures Forum; the Annual Meeting of the American Comparative Literature Association at Harvard University (March 26-29, 2009) was entitled, “Global Languages, Local Cultures” and included a plenary session on “Writing Locally in Global Languages”; at Eastern Washington University, the International Affairs (IA) Program, housed in the Government Department, “is designed for students interested in international politics and global languages and cultures”; and the Center for the Advancement and Study of International Education (CASIE) hosted the Global Language Convention in Atlanta, Georgia on April 13-15, 2012.

In addition, the aforementioned five *Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st century*—Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons and Communities—are currently being collapsed into two standards for K-12 by the Ohio Department of Education: the “Communication Standard” → *Communicate in languages other than English in person and via technology*, and the “Cultures Standard” → *Gain and use knowledge and understanding of other cultures*.

4. Consultations:

The Department of Languages has consulted all departments in the humanities division of the College (i.e., Communication, English, History, Philosophy, and Religious Studies), the International Studies Program, and the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Social Work. All of these departments offer courses that involve some study of global languages or cultures.

The chairs and directors of these departments and programs all gave written support for the proposed name change, after consulting with their faculty members. Among other things, it was noted that the name change would describe better what the Department currently. At the same time, a number of faculty observed that many of the humanities and social sciences departments in the College study issues of global language and culture and, therefore, some ambiguity in the drawing of departmental boundaries for these areas of study is inescapable. For instance, an Anthropology course is offered in “Language and Culture” (ANT 315). However, none of the departments or programs concluded that the proposed name change for the Department of Languages is inappropriate or unjustified.

Addendum #1

Top Thirty Languages by Number of Native Speakers (Excerpts)
Data source: *Ethnologue: Languages of the World*, 15th ed. (2005)

Language	approximate # of speakers	Where is it spoken as an official language?
1. Mandarin Chinese	NATIVE: 873 million 2nd: 178 million TOTAL: 1.051 billion	OFFICIAL: People's Republic of China, Republic of China, Singapore
3. Spanish	NATIVE: 350 million 2nd: 70 million TOTAL: 420 million	OFFICIAL: Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Spain, United States (New Mexico, Puerto Rico, Uruguay, Venezuela)
5. Arabic	NATIVE: 206 million 2nd: 24 million TOTAL: 230 million [World Almanac est. total 255 million]	OFFICIAL: Modern Standard Arabic: Algeria, Bahrain, Chad, Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Niger, Oman, Palestinian Territories, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, Western Sahara, Yemen. Hasaniya Arabic: Mauritania, Senegal NATIONAL: Mali [Note: These figures combine all the varieties of Arabic. Some data sources, e.g. CIA World Fact Book, World Almanac, Ethnologue, treat these varieties as separate languages.]
8. Russian	NATIVE: 145 million 2nd: 110 million TOTAL: 255 million	OFFICIAL: Abkhazia (part of Georgia), Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Transnistria (part of Moldova).
10. German	NATIVE: 101 million 2nd: 128 million TOTAL: 229 million	OFFICIAL: Austria, Belgium, Germany, Italy (South Tyrol), Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Poland, Switzerland
18. French	NATIVE: 67 million 2nd: 63 million TOTAL: 130 million	OFFICIAL or NATIONAL: Belgium, Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Canada, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Congo-Brazzaville, Congo-Kinshasa, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, France, French Polynesia, Gabon, Guernsey, Guinea, Haiti, India (Karikal, Pondicherry), Italy, Jersey, Lebanon, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Mali, Martinique, Mauritius, Mayotte, Monaco, New Caledonia, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, Seychelles, Switzerland, Togo, United States (Louisiana), Vanuatu.
20. Italian	61 million	OFFICIAL: Croatia (Istria Country), Italy, San Marino, Slovenia, Switzerland.

Addendum #2

Using the target language for effective communication in writing or in person, being able to gain access to films, music, and the arts in other languages, giving or receiving directions, or talking about everyday life in a language other than English, will expand students' language ability extensively and will make study abroad, intercultural and service learning experiences more pertinent and genuine. Facility with greetings and social formulas will go very far in fostering good will and also in making speakers of other languages feel that students are interested in meeting them on their own ground.

In addition, studying languages in the context of history, politics, art, geography, sociology, music, philosophy, religious studies, literature, theatre, and other cultural manifestations helps students develop a well-rounded perspective and insight about local and global events and makes them, as a result, informed and responsible citizens of the U.S. and the world.

Being able to connect and to interact with people of other cultures and nationalities with sensitivity and knowledge of similarities and differences may contribute to the establishment and maintenance of personal and professional contacts. As the Internet has become a tool for the exchange of information, it has diluted distances and has generated extensive options for mutual benefit. Increasingly, employers look for proficiency in languages other than English and intercultural skills. Those possessing such capabilities have a competitive edge in a global environment where diverse cultures interact and opportunities for exchange and cooperation are being created.

LANGUAGES AND ENHANCED CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

BUSINESS: Business Executives, Sales Personnel, Personnel Managers, Public Relations Experts, U.S. Representatives for International Companies, International Banking, Investment Firms, Import/Export Companies, Chambers of Commerce, International Lawyers and Patent Attorneys, Receptionists, Secretaries, Fashion Buyers.

COMMUNICATIONS: International News Correspondents; International News Photographers; Translators of Books, Articles, and Articles; Advertising for Ethnic or International Markets; Film Production; Entertainment Media; Interpreters; Voice of America Writers and Editors; International Teletype Operators; International Telephone Operators.

EDUCATION: Elementary Teachers for Bilingual Programs, High School and Special Teachers for Bilingual Education, Foreign Language Teacher Education, University Comparative Literature Departments, University Language Departments, University Linguistics Departments, University Schools of Education, University Teaching English as a Second Language, Overseas Teaching for Private Corporations, Textbook Editors, Textbook Authors.

GOVERNMENT: Federal Trade Commission, Consumer Affairs Office, Vista, Foreign Service Department, Federal Communications Commission, Peace Corps, Commerce Department, National Archives, Agency of International Development, Education Department, Civil Service Commission, Immigration and Naturalization Services, Customs, Library of Congress, Court Interpretation, UN Translators and Interpreters, CIA, CID, FBI, Armed Forces, International Cooperation Administration, U.S. Information Agency, Diplomats, Consuls, Commercial Attaches.

LIBRARIANSHIP: Translators of International Publications in Private and Public Libraries, Classifiers of International Documents, Employees with USIS Overseas, Research Assistants.

SCIENTIFIC FIELDS: Archaeology, Museum Employees, Medical Professions in International Communities in the U.S. and/or abroad, Hospital Management, Scientific Research and Translating, Technical Liaison for U.S. Business Operating Internationally.

SOCIAL SERVICES: Nursing in International Communities, Law Enforcement Officers, Welfare Interviewers, Health Services, Income Tax Consultants, Missionary Work, Red Cross, Social Worker,

TRAVEL SERVICES: Travel Agents, Airline Hostesses and Stewards, Airport Personnel, International Travel Advisors, Tourist Guides, U.S. Conference Welcoming Groups, Hotel Employees, Restaurant Employees.

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