

# MEMORANDUM

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**To:** Council on Academic Affairs  
Dr. Christie Roszkowski, Chair  
**Cc:** Dr. Mary Anne Hanner  
Dean, College of Sciences  
**From:** Dr. John Paul Stimac  
Chair, Department of Geology/Geography  
**Subject:** Foreign Language Requirement dated 3 March 2008  
**Date:** 29 March 2008

I have several concerns over the proposed change to the University-wide foreign language requirement, as proposed by Dr. Stephen Canfield, that will shortly be going before CAA for consideration.

There are two primary areas for concern:

1. Estimated cost and other resource allocation, and
2. Impact on programs that already have a very intense curriculum of study.

## Estimated costs

Using the number provided in the document, it states "if the proposed 3 semester requirement were applied to the same population, 67% of incoming freshman and 30% of transfer students would meet the requirement without additional course work at EIU" (last written paragraph; page 8). That would indicate that 1/3 of true freshmen and 70% of transfers will need a third semester of foreign language.

If we assume approximately 1000 transfer students and 1500 true freshmen each year, then approximately 1200 would need a 3rd semester of a foreign language ( $1000 \times 0.7 = 700$ ) + ( $1500 \times 1/3 = 500$ ) = 1200.

Assuming that each section has a maximum enrollment of 25 (based on a quick survey of this semester's FLx 2201 courses), then we would need 48 additional sections per year. IF, and I am very unsure of this IF, but IF ACFs could be hired, since they can immediately teach at the maximum of 24 CUs per year, then an additional 8 ACFs would be required solely to teach the FLx 2201 sections ( $48 \text{ sections} \times 4 \text{ CU/section} \div 24 \text{ CU/ year for Unit B faculty}$ ).

If ACFs can be hired for \$36,000 per year (\$4,000 per month on a 9-month contract), then this proposal would cost an estimated \$288,000 per year with costs rising each year based on seniority and PBIs.

This would be a minimum cost since I am sure that the UPI would be concerned with the hiring only ACFs and no Unit A faculty. Also, please keep in mind that these numbers are lower estimates of expected enrollments, and are therefore lower estimates of anticipated needs. If no additional faculty are needed to be hired, then there are implications to current faculty workloads.

With resources for new faculty lines, equipment, and new technology becoming increasingly scarce, a proposal by a single department, which would utilize those university resources, should be considered much more fully than this has been.

### **Other resource allocation concerns**

If 8 additional ACFs could be hired, then the question as to where they will be housed will be an issue. I am not aware of 1) the availability of adequate classroom space in Coleman Hall and 2) and the availability of adequate office space to house the Unit B faculty. While some Coleman Hall class space is expected to become available once Doudna comes on line, we would still be pushing space utilization to a maximum and there is no consideration given to faculty offices.

### **Programmatic Impact**

It has already been pointed out by others, e.g., Dean Hanner, Dr. Richard, and Dr. Foster, that this proposal will have a negative impact on programs that already have a large number of credits prescribed for the major. Certain majors would probably be required to either extend their time-to-completion expectations for students, which would have a further negative impact on the EIU-4 Program and graduation rates, or they would be required to modify curricula in order to accommodate the new requirement. While the Department of Geology/Geography encourages its students to become better global citizens by taking advantage of double majoring in other disciplines, minors with other departments, and numerous study abroad opportunities, doing so at the expense of taking courses in the major is not an option.

It is interesting to note that the proposal states “the 3 year high school exemption is in line with the majority of Illinois public institutions...” A cursory review of the University Core Curriculum Requirements at SIU-Carbondale indicates that SIU-C does not require any foreign language. In fact, it is the College of Liberal Arts that has a language requirement of “A minimum of one year (two courses) or higher of one foreign language, satisfaction by coursework or exam” (SIU-C 2008-2009 Catalog, p. 94).

In conclusion, while the proposal is a laudable goal, such a change in curriculum should be instituted at the departmental, or even college level, first. Only after the demand by students is identified and outcomes defined, should such a proposal be considered for adoption at the university level. However, if it is to be considered at the University level, additional discussions should be held in the various constituencies and the caveats brought forth should be addressed and included in the proposal to CAA.

I thank you for your time and encourage the CAA not to approve the foreign language proposal as it stands.