

## PROPOSAL TO MODIFY EIU FOREIGN LANGUAGE GRADUATION REQUIREMENT

The Department of Foreign Languages proposes that Eastern Illinois University modify the foreign language graduation requirement to the following:

To achieve a baccalaureate degree, the student must: . . .

7. Successfully complete three semesters of a single foreign language with an average grade of C or better.

As a corollary to this change, it is also requested that the footnote associated with Graduation Requirement 7 be changed to read as follows:

<sup>3</sup>In lieu of university coursework, this requirement may be satisfied by any of the following:

- Completion of at least three years of high school study of a single foreign language with an average grade of C or better (for students entering as freshmen in Fall 2010 and thereafter);
- A score of 3 or higher on the College Entrance Examination Board Advanced Placement (AP) exam in any foreign language;
- A score of 60 or better on the College Level Examination Program in French, German, or Spanish; or
- An approved score on a proficiency exam approved and administered by the EIU Department of Foreign Languages (contact Department of Foreign Languages for information on approved tests);
- Documentation of proficiency in a language other than English at or above the level expected in FLF/FLS/FLG/FLL/FLX 2201G (contact Department of Foreign Languages for additional information).

## CURRENT CATALOG COPY

Official course requirements for baccalaureate degrees are given in Section VIII. To achieve a baccalaureate degree, the student must:

1. Successfully complete the General Education Requirements detailed in Section IV, including the senior seminar.<sup>1</sup>
2. Successfully complete one of the degree programs listed in detail in Section VIII, "Academic Program Requirements," and attain a minimum GPA of 2.00 in his/her major area. A GPA of at least 2.65 both cumulative and in the major is required for graduation from a teacher education program. Other curricula may also require a cumulative GPA higher than 2.0 for acceptance to the major and/or graduation. Consult the catalog description for specific information.
3. Successfully complete a minimum of 12 semester hours in residence in courses applicable to the GPA in his/her major discipline.
4. Successfully complete at least 40 semester hours in upper-division courses (3000-4000 numbered courses).<sup>2</sup>
5. Earn a minimum of 42 semester hours in residence with a minimum of 32 in the junior and senior years, 12 of which must be in residence during the senior year. Cooperative degree candidates must complete 38 semester hours in residence.
6. Successfully complete at least 120 hours with a CGPA of 2.0 in all courses attempted.

7. Successfully complete two courses in a single foreign language.<sup>3</sup>
8. Earn a "C" or better in English 1001G, English 1002G, and Communication Studies 1310G or in accepted substitutions.
9. Successfully complete the Electronic Writing Portfolio<sup>4</sup>.
10. A transfer student must successfully complete a minimum of 56 semester hours applicable to a baccalaureate degree in senior institutions, with at least 42 semester hours earned at EIU.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Because the terminal year is taken off-campus in cooperative programs, students completing cooperative degree programs, i.e., Engineering, Physics with Engineering Physics Option, and Clinical Laboratory Science, will not be required to take a Senior Seminar or to submit the 4th writing sample for the Electronic Writing Portfolio.

<sup>2</sup> Courses from a community college or other two-year institution will not count in the 40 semester hours of upper-division credit.

<sup>3</sup> Students entering as freshmen in Fall 1993 and thereafter must have completed two years in a single foreign language in high school with an average grade of "C" or better for the two years' work in order to have previously satisfied this requirement.

<sup>4</sup> The **first** essay/document will come from ENG 1001G, ENG 1002G, ENG 1091G, or ENG 1092G (generally completed before the student has earned 30 hours); the **second** essay/document will come from a writing-centered or writing-intensive course at the 1000, 2000 or 3000 level (generally completed when the student has earned between 30 and 59 hours); the **third** essay/document will come from an upper-division, writing-centered or writing-intensive course at the 3000 or 4000 level (generally completed when the student has earned between 60 and 89 hours); the **fourth** essay/document will come from the Senior Seminar (generally completed after the student has earned 90 hours). Further information about the Electronic Writing Portfolio is available at [www.eiu.edu/~assess](http://www.eiu.edu/~assess).

<sup>5</sup> All military service credit based on the recommendations in the American Council on Education's Guide to the Evaluation of Educational Experience in the Armed Services, and accepted by EIU, is senior institution credit.

## PROPOSED CATALOG COPY (changes highlighted in blue font)

Official course requirements for baccalaureate degrees are given in Section VIII. To achieve a baccalaureate degree, the student must:

1. Successfully complete the General Education Requirements detailed in Section IV, including the senior seminar.<sup>1</sup>
2. Successfully complete one of the degree programs listed in detail in Section VIII, "Academic Program Requirements," and attain a minimum GPA of 2.00 in his/her major area. A GPA of at least 2.65 both cumulative and in the major is required for graduation from a teacher education program. Other curricula may also require a cumulative GPA higher than 2.0 for acceptance to the major and/or graduation. Consult the catalog description for specific information.
3. Successfully complete a minimum of 12 semester hours in residence in courses applicable to the GPA in his/her major discipline.
4. Successfully complete at least 40 semester hours in upper-division courses (3000-4000 numbered courses).<sup>2</sup>
5. Earn a minimum of 42 semester hours in residence with a minimum of 32 in the junior and senior years, 12 of which must be in residence during the senior year. Cooperative degree candidates must complete 38 semester hours in residence.
6. Successfully complete at least 120 hours with a CGPA of 2.0 in all courses attempted.
7. Successfully complete three semesters of a single foreign language with an average grade of C or better.<sup>3</sup>

8. Earn a "C" or better in English 1001G, English 1002G, and Communication Studies 1310G or in accepted substitutions.
9. Successfully complete the Electronic Writing Portfolio<sup>4</sup>.
10. A transfer student must successfully complete a minimum of 56 semester hours applicable to a baccalaureate degree in senior institutions, with at least 42 semester hours earned at EIU.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Because the terminal year is taken off-campus in cooperative programs, students completing cooperative degree programs, i.e., Engineering, Physics with Engineering Physics Option, and Clinical Laboratory Science, will not be required to take a Senior Seminar or to submit the 4th writing sample for the Electronic Writing Portfolio.

<sup>2</sup> Courses from a community college or other two-year institution will not count in the 40 semester hours of upper-division credit.

<sup>3</sup>In lieu of university coursework, this requirement may be satisfied by any of the following:

- Completion of at least three years of high school study of a single foreign language with an average grade of C or better (for students entering as freshmen in Fall 2010 and thereafter);
- A score of 3 or higher on the College Entrance Examination Board Advanced Placement (AP) exam in any foreign language;
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<sup>4</sup> The **first** essay/document will come from ENG 1001G, ENG 1002G, ENG 1091G, or ENG 1092G (generally completed before the student has earned 30 hours); the **second** essay/document will come from a writing-centered or writing-intensive course at the 1000, 2000 or 3000 level (generally completed when the student has earned between 30 and 59 hours); the **third** essay/document will come from an upper-division, writing-centered or writing-intensive course at the 3000 or 4000 level (generally completed when the student has earned between 60 and 89 hours); the **fourth** essay/document will come from the Senior Seminar (generally completed after the student has earned 90 hours). Further information about the Electronic Writing Portfolio is available at [www.eiu.edu/~assess](http://www.eiu.edu/~assess).

<sup>5</sup> All military service credit based on the recommendations in the American Council on Education's Guide to the Evaluation of Educational Experience in the Armed Services, and accepted by EIU, is senior institution credit.

**Rationale:** The proposed increase in the Foreign Language Graduation requirement will provide the following advantages:

1) Support and strengthen the crucial conclusion of the Mission Statement of the University defining our desire to graduate young men and women able "to reason and to communicate clearly so as to become responsible citizens of a diverse world."

In order to accomplish this goal our graduates need to be familiar with and gain direct knowledge of cultures other than their own. They also need to master communicative skills associated with and necessary to the study of such cultures. To study another culture without significant regard to the linguistic elements of that culture dangerously

reduces the scope and value of such study. The two-semester foreign language requirement in place since the inception of the old Integrated Core and retained as a Graduation Requirement under the current formulation of General Education has always functioned as a solid but minimal beginning of movement toward the goal of forming “responsible citizens of a diverse world.” However, it has resulted in a situation where most students complete this requirement before entering EIU. Many express a desire early on to continue their study of languages and cultures and a significant number do so. Nevertheless, many others for various reasons drift away from language study only to experience a desire to return later in their academic careers when their skills have deteriorated and their time is restricted by other demands. This situation is particularly true of those students who meet the requirement through the minimal two years of high school work we currently allow. Those who have completed three and four years in high school are both more likely to continue at the university and to have retained the skills and knowledge base to return to such study later in their academic careers.

## 2) Support and strengthen participation in study abroad programs.

Since the reorganization of Study Abroad just four years ago and the tenure of the current director, study abroad activities have and will undoubtedly continue to grow. Still there is a strong tendency among our students to prefer programs in English-speaking regions or to enroll in courses of study in non-English-speaking areas but that offer curricula the bulk of which is delivered in English. In many cases these programs are chosen because they best compliment the individual student’s major or personal interests. This is, of course, as it should be. However, in other cases, these programs are chosen precisely because they require no foreign language proficiency and students have not had the impetus to develop an adequate language proficiency that would expand their potential choices for studying abroad. Giving our students the tools they need to make the best choices for studying abroad includes directing them into language study. Such experiences are crucial and of intrinsic value for both the individual and the university because of the opportunities that they open for our students in terms of moving them toward advanced study in their chosen field, job opportunities

and future training, expanded research possibilities and quite simply the humanistic broadening of perspective that comes from learning another language and immersing oneself in the culture. The critical importance of fostering increased language learning and its link to study abroad have also become painfully evident on a national level as well. In September 2004, former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger testified at the Full Committee Hearing on The 9-11 Commission's Intelligence Recommendations. He concluded his testimony with these words: "Finally, the critical shortage of human expertise must be addressed. We not only need more National Security Education Program funding, but we need more Americans studying abroad, becoming fluent in foreign languages and gaining improved understanding of foreign cultures through such an experience." The late Senator Paul Simon echoed these concerns when he spoke before NAFSA shortly before his death in 2003. The December 13, 2003 Chicago Tribune paraphrases Senator Simon as having "envisioned a vastly expanded effort to send American students overseas as an antidote to the nation's notorious indifference to foreign languages and cultures." Increasing our Foreign Language Graduation Requirement is a modest step in this direction.

### 3. Support and strengthen the campus-wide push to internationalize the curriculum.

Currently eleven programs on campus (Art History, Economics, Elementary Education, English, Foreign Languages, History, Management, Political Science, Special Education, Latin American Studies Minor, and Geography) include options within majors and/or minors that incorporate either as an elective or a requirement "intermediate proficiency in a foreign language." Given the current push towards internationalization, it is likely that such programs will continue to appear in the foreseeable future. Guiding students toward developing at least an intermediate level of language proficiency is crucial to encouraging enrollment in these options and guaranteeing success for the programs and the students in them.

### 4. Increased enrollment in upper division foreign language courses.

The Department of Foreign Languages has always recognized the importance of intermediate instruction in our discipline. Slightly more than half of all students who complete FLF, FLG or FLS 2201 continue into 2202 and the majority of those continue and take at least one upper division course. Over time we have instituted a number of incentives to encourage students to continue language study begun in high school. Primary among these efforts is our Advanced Competency Credit policy and the integration of FLF, FLG, FLL and FLS 2201 and 2202 as options to fulfill the Humanities General Education Requirement. This current request represents a refinement and strengthening of this policy. It should be noted that this effort is not a push on the part of the Department of Foreign Languages to increase the number of our majors or minors, though such an increase may very well be an added benefit to this change. Instead we see this as a means of encouraging students to experience for themselves the inherent benefits of language study as well as the opportunities such study affords. If our numbers increase, it will most likely be in the number of minors. According to the EIU online data books, currently our largest population of minors comes out of the College of Business with the College of Arts and Humanities and the College of Sciences running close seconds. The vast majority of these students opt to do a minor in our department not because it meets a specific requirement within their college, but because through having pursued language study beyond the current two-semester requirement, they have of their own accord recognized the personal, academic and professional value of continuing.

5. A three-semester Foreign Language Graduation requirement brings EIU into line with other state universities including Northern Illinois and the University of Illinois. It will distinguish us as leaders in relationship with the others as far as language study at the university is concerned. The 3 year high school study exemption is in line with the majority of Illinois public institutions including those still requiring only two semesters at the university level (see below Language Requirements of Other Institutions). A similar statement can be made concerning our Peer Institutions.

**Projected Impact:**

Based on figures collected by Records for incoming students for academic year 2006-07, about 82% of incoming freshmen meet the Foreign Language Graduation Requirement prior to beginning at EIU. Similarly, 76% of transfer students arrive exempt from the current requirement.

If the proposed 3 semester requirement were applied to this same population, 67% of incoming freshmen and 30% of transfer students would meet the requirement without additional course work at EIU.

### **Language Requirements of Other Institutions:**

#### Illinois Institutions:

Illinois State	2 semesters
Northern Illinois	4 semesters (2 semesters in lesser taught languages)
SIU Carbondale	3 semesters
North Eastern Illinois	3-6 semester hours folded into Humanities Gen Ed
Western Illinois	no requirement – currently under strong review
U of I	2, 3 or 4 semesters depending on degree and area

#### Peer Institutions:

Truman State	2 or 4 depending on degree and area
UW-La Crosse	2 semesters
UW-Eau Claire	2-3 semesters in concert with “Foreign Culture” courses depending on degree and area
UW-Whitewater	4 semesters
UW-Oshkosh	2-4 semesters (Varies by program but all have a requirement)
UW-Stevens Point	2 semesters

Washburn Univ.	2 semesters
Univ. Michigan-Dearborn	2 semesters
Cal State-Fresno	4 semesters
Northern Iowa	2 semesters
Southern Louisiana	3 semesters folded into other options
Mankato State	2 semesters
St. Cloud State	2-4 semesters
Central Missouri	3 semesters
West Chester	4 semesters
Radford Univ.	3-4 semesters
Southwest Texas	4 semesters
James Madison	4 semesters
Georgia Southern	2-4 semesters
U of Louisiana-Monroe	2 semesters