

EP.08.55

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OFFICE OF THE SENATE

PROPOSAL TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY

TITLE OF THE PROPOSAL:

Revision of the Undergraduate Major in the Sciences and Letters Curriculum in German:
BALAS: German: Modern Ger
BALAS: German: Commercial St
BALAS: German: Lang & Lit
BALAS: German: Language St
Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures, School of Literatures, Cultures and Linguistics, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

SPONSOR:

Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures
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BRIEF DESCRIPTION:

The Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures would like to revise the current concentrations in the major to reflect the increased diversity of German society, the increased importance of Europe for Germany, and the importance of globalization for understanding contemporary German culture. To this end, we have proposed two new courses and revised several existing courses.

JUSTIFICATION:

There are pragmatic reasons to revise the undergraduate major at this point. Some of our prospective German majors have trouble fulfilling all requirements for the major within 4 years (this is currently a reason why we lose some majors at the last moment). To make this less likely to happen, we propose to drop one of the required 400-level courses (GER 402 — an advanced language- and composition course), and replace it with a new entry level / 200-level course in the two most popular concentrations within our major ('Commercial Studies' and 'Modern German Studies'). Advanced language acquisition courses (conversation and composition courses) will remain an important component of our program (GER 211, 212, 401, indirectly also GER 320, 321 and 403). In German

programs at comparable universities there is less emphasis on such courses. We believe dropping GER 402 will not hinder our students' linguistic skills in German.

The Department wishes to expand its 200-level courses to allow students in GER 103 and 104 the option to take classes on aspects of German Culture, Literature and Society. The new courses (GER 201 'German Popular Culture' and GER 205 'Germany and Europe') would serve as broad introductions into the field of German Studies. The courses will be taught in English and will give students their first broad overview of important developments in German society and culture. One of the goals of these courses is to facilitate the transition from language acquisition to the study of culture and society (currently that transition takes place later in the major). These courses could potentially be taken by students not intending to pursue a German major, but are interested in German culture and society for other reasons (for instance because their major is History or Economics). We are in the process of applying for General Education credit for both classes as well.

Other changes:

GER 331 'Introduction to German Literature I' will be renamed GER 331 'Introduction to German Literature' since in the new curriculum it will be no longer followed by 'Introduction to German Literature II.' Course content will essentially remain the same. GER 332 will be redesigned as a course in 'German Literary and Cultural Studies' (new name); the course will focus on varying topics in the area of literary and cultural studies. GER 401 will be redesigned and have the new name 'Global Issues in German'; it is designed as an open seminar for advanced BA students focusing on the impact of globalization on German culture and society through the study of contemporary media and cultural artifacts.

In addition, the department would like to drop the specific Western Civilization requirements for the German major (the requirement to select 6-8 hours from: HIST 141—Western Civ to 1660* and HIST 142—Western Civ Since 1660* or CWL 241—Masterpieces West Culture I*, and CWL 242—Masterpieces West Culture II*). This requirement is a relic from the days when German was in the School of Humanities. Students receive adequate Western Cultures background through campus and college General Education requirements.

BUDGETARY AND STAFF IMPLICATIONS:

* a. Additional staff and dollars needed: none

* b. Internal reallocations (e.g., change in class size, teaching loads, student-faculty ratio, etc.) We are replacing a class with relatively low enrollments (GER 402) with two classes of which we hope will have high enrollments; while this will increase the average class-size, we think the department can do this without increasing teaching loads. In addition to dropping GER 402, the department is also willing to drop GER 474 Poetics, also a course with low enrollments when it was offered. The current proposal will not

increase the total number of classes offered by the department, and it should be possible to offer these classes with the projected number of faculty

* c. Effect on course enrollment in other departments and explanations of discussions with representatives of those departments n/a

* d. Impact on library, computer use, laboratory use, equipment, etc. none

GUIDELINES FOR UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION:

1. Critical awareness / intellectual curiosity: In our courses there a significant amount of attention is being paid to developing reading, listening, writing, and speaking skills. In general our classes are characterized by cooperative and communicative learning strategies. In both language- and culture-related courses students learn to debate ideas critically; they are trained to expect that varying perspectives are possible on a specific problem or issue. Faculty teach students to have respect for each others' ideas, to engage with each other in a respectful and yet also critical way. Classes seek to cater to students' intellectual curiosity by introducing them to ways of thinking and materials hitherto unknown to them.

2. Cultural heterogeneity: Both our proposals for new courses and in the redesigned classes reflect an increased awareness of the diversity in German / Austrian society today and in German / Austrian cultural history in general. Our courses discuss the increased globalization of German / Austrian society, the impact of transatlantic relations, the increased ethnic diversity of German / Austrian society. Within our curricular offerings there is also an increased interest in German-Jewish cultural history. In our teaching, our faculty attempts to create awareness among students of the fact that their way of looking at the world and its inhabitants is, to some extent, the product of our culture and our history.

3. Professional preparation: The different undergraduate concentrations in the German seek to accommodate students with varying interests. The language and literature concentrations (concentrations 1, 3, and 4) seek to accommodate students who seek a major with a traditional liberal arts orientation; the main emphasis is the students' development of their linguistic, literary, and cultural literacy. The 'German Commercial Studies' concentration functions as a pre-professional track for students who want to work in business, for the government, or for international organizations in jobs for which they need German language skills and / or the cultural literacy that allows them to interact successfully with Germans (and other Europeans). The BAT track prepares students for a career in high school teaching; recent experience has shown that in the state of Illinois there is currently a great demand for teachers of German.

CLEARANCES:

Maude R. Wade Department / Unit

[Signature] School

[Signature] College

_____ Provost

PROPOSED EFFECTIVE DATE: Fall 2008. The department plans to introduce the new system in the fall of 2008. During AY 2008 / 09 we will teach the old and new courses; after that the new curriculum will be in place.

STATEMENT FOR PROGRAMS OF STUDY CATALOG:

German

Germanic Languages and Literatures

Head of Department: Mara Wade

Department Office: 2090 Foreign Languages Building, 707 South Mathews,
Urbana, (217) 333-1288

German

www.germanic.uiuc.edu

Administered by the Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures, a major in German serves to develop fluency in one of the leading languages of science, industry, and intellectual culture; familiarity with principles governing the insight into the use of language in literary expression and portrayal, and knowledge of the culture that finds expression through this language and its literature. The departmental concentration in Scandinavian provides substantially the same advantages. The department also sponsors study abroad programs.

Major in Sciences and Letters Curriculum

E-mail: german@uiuc.edu

Degree title: Bachelor of Arts in Liberal Arts and Sciences

Minimum required major and supporting course work normally equates to 51 hours with at least 31 hours in the Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures as shown in the concentrations except for the concentration in Scandinavian Studies which requires a minimum major and supporting course work of 50-52 hours with at least 30 credit hours of Scandinavian courses.

General education: The LAS General Education requirements are set up so students automatically complete the Campus General Education requirements.

Minimum hours required for graduation: 120 hours

Departmental distinction: Students majoring in the Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures are urged to consult the departmental honors adviser by the second semester of the junior year for information pertaining to senior honors work and honors awards in the department.

Students must select one concentration in consultation with an adviser.