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Proposal to the Senate Committee on Educational Policy

Title of the Proposal:

The merger of the Division of English as an International Language and the Department of Linguistics into a newly configured Department of Linguistics.

Sponsors:

Professor Douglas Kibbee (Director, Division of English as an International Language)
Professor Elabbas Benmamoun (Head, Department of Linguistics)

College Sponsor:

Associate Dean Ann Mester, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, 294 Lincoln Hall, 3-1350; mester@uiuc.edu

Brief Description:

For a number of years the College of LAS, the Department of Linguistics, and the Division of English as an International Language (DEIL) have had informal discussions about the feasibility of merging the two units. In Summer 2005, with the blessing of Dean Sarah Mangelsdorf, Numa Markee (then Director of DEIL) and Elabbas Benmamoun (Head of Linguistics) set up a Merger Committee, which then met on a bi-weekly basis during Fall semester 2005 and Spring semester 2006 to discuss whether, and if so, how such a merger might be implemented. Two town hall meetings were held on November 28 and 30, 2006 in order to address students' questions and concerns. All discussions, which were marked by a high degree of collegiality throughout the process, were completed in Fall 2006. The merger proposal received unanimous support from faculty in DEIL (5-0) and Linguistics (16-0) in votes taken on 1/19/07 and 1/25/07, respectively.

Justification:

The common intellectual ground between the two units recommends this merger. All DEIL faculty work in the field of applied linguistics, so there are many areas of research congruence. More specifically, we anticipate that this merger will have a positive intellectual impact on the range of programs offered in the newly configured Department of Linguistics, in that course offerings in the more applied areas of linguistics will be strengthened at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Furthermore, existing opportunities for doctoral level work in second language studies will be expanded. Note that the merger will not affect existing MA degree programs offered in either unit.

Budgetary and Staff Implications:

Additional dollars and staff needed

The anticipated level of budgetary and staff support for the newly configured department is not more than the level of support currently available for the two units combined.

Internal faculty reallocations (e.g. changes in class size, teaching loads, student-faculty ratio)

No changes in undergraduate majors or minors currently offered by DEIL or the Department of Linguistics are envisioned. Undergraduate degrees will be administered by the newly configured Department of Linguistics. The current Master's level programs in DEIL and the Department of Linguistics remain unchanged in the newly configured Department of Linguistics. The ESL service programs (the ESL writing courses, the general ESL oral course, the ESL ITA oral courses, and the ESL Placement Test [EPT]) will continue in their present form after the merger. No impact on class size, teaching loads or faculty-student ratios is anticipated as a result of the merger.

Effects on course enrollments in other departments and implications of discussions with representatives of those departments

Both DEIL and the current Department of Linguistics collaborate actively with various units across campus, and these collaborations will continue after the merger is implemented.

All the units in the Foreign Languages Building were consulted about the merger, as were the Departments of Educational Psychology and Curriculum and Instruction in the College of Education. No adverse feedback was received from any of these units.

Impact on library, computer use, laboratory use, equipment, etc.

It is anticipated that there will be no significant impact on library, computer use, laboratory use, or other equipment.

Summary of preliminary discussions between departments:

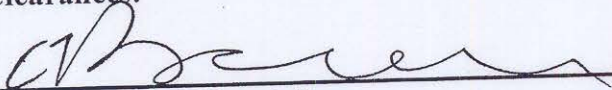
A Merger Committee composed of eight faculty members from DEIL and the Department of Linguistics¹ was set up at the beginning of Fall Semester 2005. Discussions continued through Fall semester 2006. The merger proposal received unanimous support from faculty in DEIL (5-0) and Linguistics (16-0) in votes taken on 1/19/07 and 1/25/07, respectively.

¹ Numa Markee, DEIL, co-chair; Fred Davidson, DEIL; Irene Koshik, DEIL; Randall Sadler, DEIL; Chin Woo Kim, Linguistics, co-chair (05-06); James Yoon, Linguistics, current co-chair; Rakesh Bhatt, Linguistics/SLATE; Jennifer Cole, Linguistics; Silvina Montrul, Linguistics and SIP.

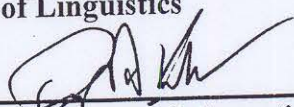
Governance and Organizational Matters

1. The name of the newly configured department will be the Department of Linguistics and the two formerly distinct units will be fully integrated with each other.
2. The newly configured Department of Linguistics will adopt the by-laws of the current Department of Linguistics.
3. An internal transitional committee will be established in the newly configured Department of Linguistics after the merger has been formally approved by all the relevant levels of the UTUC administration to help the Head of the department resolve any issues that emerge during the implementation of the merger agreement. The committee will be constituted for a period of three years and will produce a final evaluation of the merger at the end of its term.
4. DEIL faculty will transfer their academic lines to the newly configured Department of Linguistics and will have the same rights, obligations, and duties as faculty in the current Department of Linguistics. These rights and obligations include the right of all tenure line faculty to express their views as appropriate on issues such as promotion and tenure, hires for new faculty positions, admission of new students, curricular matters, and supervision of doctoral and master's level students.
5. Following current practice and custom in the Department of Linguistics, the head of the newly configured Department of Linguistics will appoint a Promotion and Tenure sub-committee. This committee will be charged with making recommendations to the tenured faculty of appropriate rank in the department as a whole, which will take a binding vote on the recommendations of the committee.
6. All curricular programs will be transferred in their current forms to the newly configured Department of Linguistics.

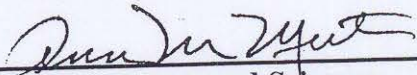
Clearances:



Department of Linguistics DATE



Division of English as an International Language DATE



College of Liberal Arts and Sciences DATE 4/17/07

Office of the Provost DATE

Minutes from the Public Hearing
Merger of the Division of English as an International Language and the Department of
Linguistics into a newly configured Department of Linguistics

October 23, 2007

12:00pm

217 Noyes Lab

Professor Abbas Aminmansour, Chair of the Educational Policy Committee, welcomed everyone and asked that if anyone had comments to send them via email to aamin@uiuc.edu. The first speaker was Associate Dean Ann Mester, who spoke on behalf of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. The College wholeheartedly supports the merger. The current curriculum will remain the same and there may be some shared programs in the future. A letter of endorsement from the Department of English, where DEIL used to be housed, is included in the packet of information.

The second speaker was Professor Douglas Kibbee, the interim head of the Division of English as an International Language and the Director of the School of Literatures, Cultures, and Linguistics. The merger is a win-win situation, providing additional intellectual opportunities, providing a PhD option for DEIL students who currently finish with a MATESL and bringing Applied and Theoretical Linguistics together for students and faculty. Research collaboration is very fruitful- a joint hire was pursued before the merger with the hiring of Tanya Yoon, showing promise for the future. In regards to administration, the merger will bring a simplification of the administrative structure.

The third speaker was Professor James Yoon, Acting Head, Department of Linguistics. The merger process was very amicable and mutual. The merger is a unique development, bringing together applied and theoretical linguistics when other institutions are separating the two areas. The merger is a positive development and will strengthen the Department of Linguistics in teaching and research. The students in the department are anticipating great things from the merger.

The fourth speaker was Professor Numa Markee, Professor, Division of English as an International Language. During the summer of 2005, the Head of DEIL approached the Dean about a merger. The history of the merger predates Professor Markee's arrival in 1988. A previous attempt at a merger was unsuccessful, but now the merger has unanimous support. The process has been very collegial. The merger will bring intellectual benefits to the newly configured Department of Linguistics. Students will be able to specialize in second language studies at the PhD level and there is interest in developing professional masters programs, which DEIL has a lot of experience through the MATESL program. The strengths of the two units are being leveraged to create something new that is much stronger than separate units.

Professor Aminmansour asked if there were any questions or comments from the floor. No one offered any comments, so the meeting was adjourned.