

Vision Statement
Department of Foreign Languages
May 2006

In keeping with our mission to serve the students, university and community of the University of Southern Indiana, we propose to take the following steps in the areas of curriculum and program expansion, curriculum improvement, study abroad options, full-time faculty, ties with area high schools, and community outreach.

Curriculum: improvements

- To lower the student enrollment caps in language classes to a figure closer to the ADFL recommended maximum of 20 students for optimum language learning. To implement lowering the current cap of 30 students to 25 as a first step.
- To create a Senior Assessment Test that includes an oral proficiency ranking. This would provide students with a clear goal and prepare them for other national and state tests.
- To obtain funding for faculty to attend training workshops in administering the Oral Proficiency Interview. To have two trained faculty members in each of the three major disciplines.
- To have all classes held in “smart” classrooms with state of the art media considered essential for effective modern language learning.
- To strengthen the interdisciplinary Classical Studies program by offering Greek language courses.

Curriculum: expansion.

- To develop additional strategies for increasing numbers of majors and minors.
- To devise new strategies to convince faculty advisors and program coordinators at USI to stress the advantages for professional success and personal enrichment of taking two years of a language and getting a B.A. degree.
- To respond to the need for instruction in Strategic Languages by offering a one or two-year sequence in languages such as Chinese and Arabic.
- To respond to the changing needs of other Colleges or programs by offering courses in language for specific purposes: Social Work, Business, and Nursing. Courses to include Spanish for Health Practitioners and Spanish for Counselors and Social Workers.
- To offer courses that train students for careers in specific areas like professional translation and interpreting.
- To develop and offer a course in English in Second Language Teaching Methodology for all teacher certification candidates.
- To offer a variety of literature courses in translation (in English) which highlight specific groups, eras or genres.
- To explore, with other departments, creative interdisciplinary programs in Francophone, Germanic, Hispanic, and Japanese studies.
- To offer at least a one-year sequence of courses in Italian language studies.

Program Enrichment outside the classroom:

- To develop new events to supplement traditional ones such as the Holiday Sing and Academic Bowl. Goals are variety, increased visibility in the community, and recruiting and retaining students
- To found a chapter of Alpha Mu Gamma foreign language honor society. In this inclusive honor society, students interact with majors in other languages in varied activities.

Faculty

- To change the ratio of full-time to part-time instruction by adding new three-year contract lines and a tenure-track line. To add faculty in additional languages such as Chinese, Arabic, Greek and Italian as courses in these languages are made available.

Study Abroad

- To seek more funding and new scholarship sources for students who need financial assistance to study abroad.
- To seek more internship opportunities abroad for language majors.

Community: Schools

- To sponsor day-long immersion workshops in French, German or Spanish for high school language teachers. This is important in an area where it is hard to find activities in other languages.
- Placement tests. (1) To develop placement tests that follow the National Standards for Foreign Language Instruction, in order to facilitate articulation between high school and college courses. (2) To seek funding to enable the department to use available on-line placement tests which include an oral component.
- To explore developing a Masters degree in Spanish Teaching. This would be of particular interest to people already teaching Spanish in the area.

Community: Volunteer services

To increase the variety and volume of services language faculty members provide to emerging communities in the area, such as the growing Hispanic population. Services include translation of documents for businesses and hospitals, interpreting in medical emergencies, translation of personal documents such as drivers' licenses and birth certificates. To become more involved in one-to-one volunteer tutoring in disadvantaged schools.