

Tulsa, April 30th 2019

Dear President Clancy,
Dear Provost Levit and Dean Misra,

We the students in the French and German programs wish to dispute the following recommendations from the PPRC on the grounds that this is impractical, based on faulty data, and contrary to the True Commitment's purported intent.

Recommendation from PPRC regarding the French Program:

"The upper-level literature courses in French and German have low enrollment. The department should no longer offer these courses. Students wanting a major in French or German would be required to study abroad to complete the hours needed. TU will offer only the language proficiency courses."

We first wish to address the numbers used to categorize the upper level French classes as having low enrollment. The tables below illustrate the discrepancy between the enrollment numbers used by the PPRC to justify the removal of upper level language courses (1a) and the actual enrollment numbers as recorded on datatel (1b) and verified by the department's secretary, which incidentally do not include students participating in independent studies.

Table 1a: Institutional Count

ENROLLMENT (Institutional Count: Upper-division French courses only)						
Semester	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Fall	12	8	15	7	10	
Spring		9	8	8	10	12
Total	--	17	23	15	20	--

Table 1b: Corrections of enrollment numbers based on datatel's records

ENROLLMENT (Census numbers: Upper-division French courses only)						
Semester	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Fall	21	16	17	19	24	26
Spring		21	20	19	18	28
Total	--	37	37	38	42	54

As is evident, there is a serious and unexplained disparity between institutional and departmental counts, rendering the allegedly data-driven basis of the recommendation unsound. The departmental numbers double the institutional count in almost every instance and demonstrate that enrollment in upper level French classes has grown by 45% since 2013.

If classes at the 3000 and 4000 level are no longer offered at the university, students will be forced to obtain 30 credits abroad, amounting to a full year spent abroad, in the best of circumstances. If a student fails any class--which is more than likely given skeletal preparation of only two years--they will have to either stay for a summer term, return for a third term, or forfeit their degree.

In accordance with the Common European Framework Guided Learning Hours (from beginner level), a student must have studied the language for at least 360 hours of classroom study to attain a B1 proficiency, or the bare minimum to be accepted into a study abroad program and survive in another country. After two years of studying, this only leaves the student at 210 hours of language study and at an unacceptable level to succeed in foreign universities.

In addition, the skills to succeed abroad are taught in the 3000 level here at TU. While basic language acquisition is taught at the 1000 and 2000 levels, students are only at the level to approach essay writing at the 3000 level. We must stress that all exams in France and Germany are in the essay form with only moderate consideration toward the student's second language status. In order to pass classes abroad, students need to have the foundation of the 3000 level, and preferably several content oriented classes from the 4000 level. These upper level courses allow students to adjust to the pace of academia in a second language in an understanding and supportive environment, in addition to gaining exposure to and understanding of the cultures attached to the language.

Also, for 3000/4000 courses to allow development in speaking skills, they require a class environment; and their quality would decrease if they were to be taught as independent studies.

The insistence on a full year of study abroad will keep many students from receiving a minor or major in language, especially the "first generation college students from ethnically and financially diverse backgrounds" that the university hopes to include in its student body. Those students who work to support themselves will be excluded from either a major or a minor, as it is extremely difficult and sometimes illegal to find employment while abroad, making the cost prohibitive, to say nothing of the added expenses of rent in a foreign country as well as airfare and the other associated fees. Non-traditional students and those with dependents will additionally be barred from the ability to complete even a minor in French or German.

With the idea of "jobs as central to life," and with the eye toward making our language degree as competitive as possible, the concentration of credits over the period of only a year leaves at least another year for the language skills acquired abroad to degrade with disuse. Without the

upper level classes that continue to hone the student's language skills, they will forget a great deal before their graduation and lose the competitive edge their language skill might have given them.

In total, the PPRC's recommendation would make it exceedingly difficult - if not actually impossible - to obtain a degree in French or German, making students significantly less competitive in an increasingly globalized world, where in most countries, bilingualism is the expectation. In its realistic predictions for job sectors, TU strategic plan emphasizes the importance of languages. If we wish to be "relevan[t] for tomorrow's economy," we must be culturally well versed, with more than the cursory knowledge that introductory courses give. Knowing another language gives an important edge in the competition for jobs in business, engineering, law, politics, and medicine, as well as in English and the arts.

As most of our students are at least double majors, the School of Language and Literature can already be said to embrace the proposed "interdisciplinary structure" of the reinvisioned University of Tulsa. Beyond this, our upper level courses, meant to improve our language proficiency to the highest level, also cover a wide variety of topics beyond the somewhat reductive title of literature class, exploring psychology, philosophy, history, international politics, and current events. The topics of these courses are chosen by the students of the department and are therefore by nature relevant to our interests and pursuits.

As the data on which this decision was based was found to be faulty, and the changes made to the program with the removal of the 3000 and 4000 level courses to be impractical and to lessen our competitiveness in the job market, we the students of the German and French Programs strongly advise a reconsideration of the PPRC's recommendations which, if carried out, would stunt the departments and impede students' ability to compete in a global marketplace.

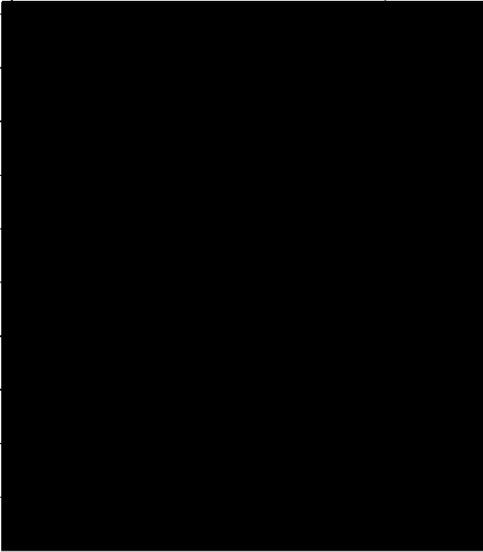
We await your reply.

In the name of TU students in support of the French & German Programs

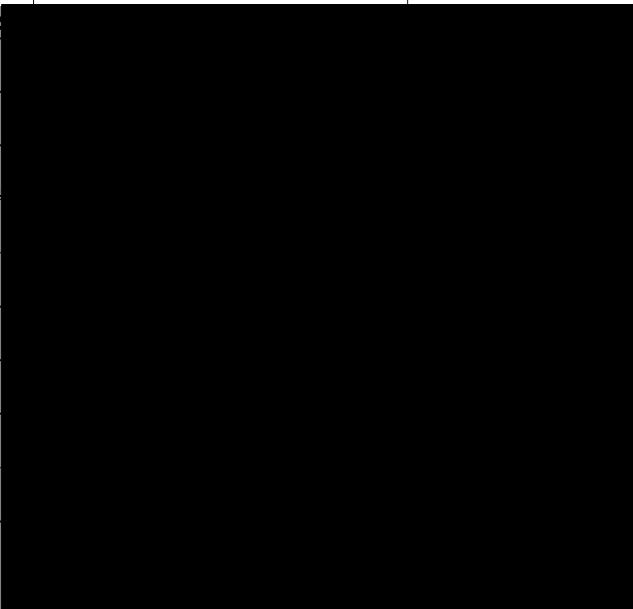
Alexandra Kaste
Presidential Scholar
Senior French and Creative Writing Major
[REDACTED]

Michael Orcutt
Junior German and Political Science Major
[REDACTED]

Layla Mortadha
Sophomore French and Political Science Major
[REDACTED]

Signature	Status (major, minor, IBL, IEL, basic 1000-2000 courses)	E-mail
Amanda S. Lopez	Fr-2013	
Tiffany McGowan	Fr-2013	
Karen J. ...	FR-2013	
Alex ...	FR-2013	
M. Valverde Y. Fuente	IBL & major	
Emilly ...	FR-2013	
Clare Basso	FR-2013	
Matthew ...	FR-2013	
Robyn Messer	FR-2013	

[Faint handwritten notes and signatures are visible below the table, including names like 'Amanda S. Lopez' and 'Tiffany McGowan' written in a lighter hand.]

Signature	Status (major, minor, IBL, IEL, basic 1000-2000 courses)	E-mail
<i>Elizabeth Maw</i>	basic courses	
<i>[Signature]</i>	art major	
<i>Declan Balson</i>	basic courses (maybe min)	
<i>Elisabeth Le</i>	French minor	
<i>[Signature]</i>	French minor	
<i>Evelyn Peir</i>	basic courses	
<i>McDonnell</i>	French Minor	
<i>Chydia Jerry</i>	basic courses	
<i>Mariah [Signature]</i>	basic courses	
Nathan Blue	basic courses	

Petition

FR 1004

Please Sign up

Jacob Thorne
Pengyu Duan

Michael Gates

Hunter Splain

Brendan Engles

Ying Ruan

Anna Johns

Alan

Abby Rush

Qiqi Lu

Emily Yin

Case Sign up

FR 1014 - 01

Jayla Meeks

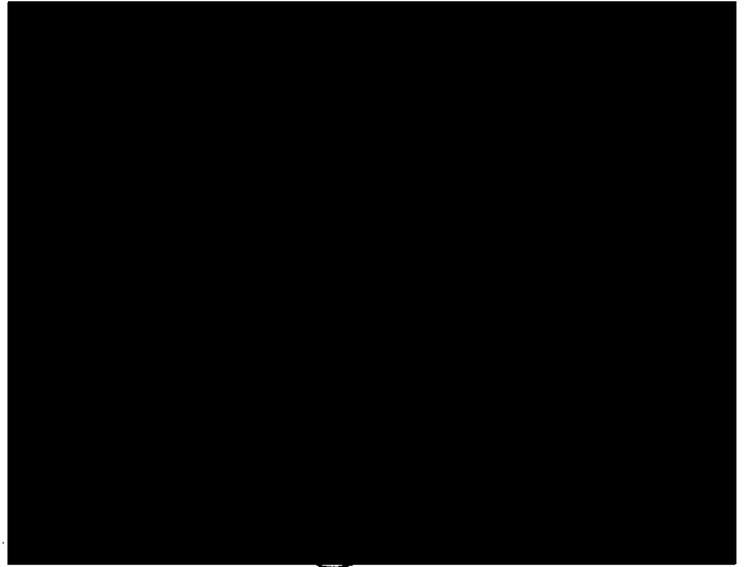
Hana Saad

Amariah Berry

MARIA ALVAREZ

Julia alamm

Josh Owens



Please sign up

FR 1014-02

Paradise Points

[REDACTED]@GMAIL.COM

Tina McCully

Alejandro Chavez

Logan Coleman

David Mei

Anna Pope

Dylan Ch'icoat

Kody Hicks

Robert Lovitt

Bruce Veal

Zaleb Ricketts

Olivia Hurd

Hobby McClure

