I. Background Information

A. Title of Program: French Proficiency

B. Department(s): Foreign Languages

C. Division: X Undergraduate Only  (Requires approval by APC*)  □ Undergraduate/Graduate  (Requires approval by APC & GC*)  □ Graduate Only  (Requires approval by GC*)

D. Effective Year and Term for Implementation of Action: Fall 2012

II. Unit Approvals  

A. Department Chair(s)  

B. Dean of College  

C. Chair, Academic Policies Committee  

D. Chair, Graduate Council (if required)  

* APC = Academic Policies Committee  
* GC = Graduate Council
III. A. Statement of Benefits to the Department(s), College, and University.

The certificate program in French proficiency addresses the needs of students in any major or minor other than French who would like to add proficiency in French to their skill set. The program would benefit students by providing practical written and oral language skills in French to complement majors in all other disciplines across the university. Completion of the certificate also could strengthen the prospects of students who intend to pursue careers or graduate study in the many areas in which proficiency in French is useful. The program would benefit the Department of Foreign Languages by attracting more students to its classes. By being exposed to more French, these students may eventually decide to pursue a French minor or major, in which case the certificate would be dropped in favor of the minor or major. The College of Arts and Sciences would also benefit from this program in that it provides a measurable demonstration of our students’ preparedness as global citizens. Finally, the University would benefit from adding a French certificate to the current options available in Foreign Languages (Spanish and German), thus widening the array of choices offered to students.

B. Identification of target audience(s) and evidence of long-term need.

Any student other than students enrolled in French minor and major programs could add a certificate in French proficiency. In particular, this program would address the needs of incoming students who place at the 200 level after taking French in high school. Those students are not required to take a foreign language, and do not necessarily want to pursue a major or minor. A certificate would give them the opportunity to continue their studies in French and reach a level of functional proficiency in French, which would appear on their transcript and would be an asset in their post-graduate careers. A certificate program in French proficiency would be an ideal option, encouraging learners who did well on placement tests to take one or two extra foreign language courses so they may stand out in the job market. In the long term, this could significantly benefit job placement for our graduates.

C. Description of the academic component including:

1. Goals.

The goal of the program is to provide students with practical written and oral language skills in French to complement majors or minors in all other disciplines across the university. The certificate can strengthen the prospects of students who intend to pursue careers or graduate study in the many areas in which
proficiency in French is useful, such as international and global studies, history, political science, business, music, and art.

ii. Admission requirements.

The admission requirements are identical to those for any foreign language course: a placement test estimating at what course level the student should begin. The certificate program truly starts with FREN 202, but students could begin at the 101 level, progressively reach the 202 level, and then complete the certificate program from there.

iii. Number and array of courses including specification of any required courses. If electives are allowed within the certificate program, an explanation of the proposed electives in light of the need for program cohesion should be included.

To complete the certificate, 13 credits beyond FREN 201 are required, including FREN 202 (Intermediate French, four credits), 315 (Advanced Grammar in Context, three credits), 325 (Phonetics and Pronunciation, three credits), and a choice between FREN 335 (Written and Oral Expression, three credits) or 340 (French for Professional Communication, three credits). A choice is given between FREN 335 and 340 so that students can tailor the certificate to their individual needs and interests, but also because those two classes are offered alternately once a year. The option to choose also guarantees that the certificate can be completed in a timely manner.

iv. A statement identifying program prerequisites.

The prerequisite for the certificate program in French proficiency is the completion of FREN 201 or its equivalent, as demonstrated by the results of a placement test.

v. Specification of GPA requirements for course and certificate completion. (NOTE: Passage of every course in an undergraduate certificate program must be at the C+ level of higher; total GPA for the program must be at least 2.5. Passage of every course in a graduate certificate program must be at a 3.0 grade point average or higher; total GPA for the program must be at least 3.0.) Normal GPA requirements as described above apply.

- For complete information, see Policy Statement on Credit-Bearing Certificate Programs.
- Submit the original and 13 copies of the proposal to the College of Arts & Sciences Curriculum Committee (CASCC) for approval. The CASCC will route the approved proposal to APC or GC.
- After CASCC, APC, and GC (if necessary) approvals, complete the UWEC Certificate Master Form for the Registrar’s Office.
- After a student has successfully completed the certificate program, complete the UW-Eau Claire Certificate Completion Form for the Registrar’s Office.
vi. A statement outlining the certificate program’s relationship to and articulation with existing degree programs and the select mission of UW-Eau Claire.

The certificate program in French Proficiency requires students to pass courses that are considered to be “core courses” for the French minor and major programs. They are therefore compulsory to every student enrolled in French studies. These courses help students meet UW-Eau Claire academic goals:

1. Knowledge of Human Culture and the Natural World (e.g., learning about the cultures of the French-speaking world and comparing them to their own)
2. Creative and Critical Thinking, (e.g., writing compositions on subjects that encourage students to think creatively and critically)
3. Effective Communication (e.g., comparing native and target languages as well as cultures helps students understand what effective communication means)
4. Individual and Social Responsibility (e.g., learning about foreign cultures and policies and different ways of life enlightens students’ personal choices in life)
5. Respect for Diversity among People (e.g., understanding differences in languages, cultures, and history leads to greater respect for those differences)

In addition, the creation of the French Proficiency Certificate Program aids in achieving Goal #3 of the Centennial Plan, which is to accelerate global learning. Students who choose this program will have the opportunity to create global connections between their major studies and the language and culture offered by the certificate.

D. Description of the administration, staffing, and budgeting for the program, including:

i. Evidence that the faculty/staff in the department(s) are willing to teach the courses in the certificate program at the times/locations necessary for completion of the certificate.

Because the required courses for the certificate program in French Proficiency are the French “core courses” required for minors and majors, they have been and will continue to be offered

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yearly.

ii. Proposed frequency of course offerings for courses included in the certificate program.

FREN 202, 315, and 325 are generally taught every semester.
FREN 335 alternates with 340 every year.

iii. Proposed arrangements for ongoing advising for students in the certificate program.

Students interested in the certificate program in French Proficiency should contact the Department of Foreign Languages and will be assigned an advisor from the French section faculty. Enrolled students will be advised to take the above courses sequentially when possible. In addition, while not required, they will be encouraged to study abroad in a French-speaking country to complete their training and enhance their skills and knowledge of the French language and culture. Advisers will also recommend that students enrolled take an official Oral Proficiency Interview at the end of the program so that they receive a rating based on national standards, which may help students stand out on the job market.

iv. Anticipated need for other student support services for students enrolled in the certificate program.

Because the certificate program in French Proficiency utilizes resources already in place, no additional needs are currently anticipated.

v. For certificate programs involving more than one academic department, identification of an administrative unit for the program.

N/A

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