To: APC  
From: The members of the Curriculum Rapid Action Task Force (RATF):  
   Mitch Freymiller, Biology  
   Jeff Janot, Kinesiology  
   Amy Jewell, Student  
   David Jones, English  
   Heather Kretz, Admissions  
   Marc McEllistrem, Materials Science  
   Louisa Rice, History  
   Jeff Vahlbusch, University Honors Program  
   Tim Vaughan, Business  
   Benita Wagner, Service Learning/Career Services  
   Shevaun Watson, English  
   Jake Wrasse, Student  

Re: Removal of the foreign language admission requirement  

The Curriculum RATF proposes a change in the admissions policy requirement of 2 years study of a foreign language for admissions to the university. The relevant language in the current policy and requested change to the policy and catalogue (p. 9) are below:

ADMISSION OF FRESHMEN ...

II. Applicants should complete a rigorous college preparatory curriculum. Applicants who take courses beyond the minimum will be considered strong candidates for admission. Applicants must complete a minimum of 17 high school units (one unit equals one year of study, One unit equals one year of high school study or the equivalent.)** distributed as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Units</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>English (at least three composition and literature)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mathematics (algebra, geometry, advanced college preparatory math*)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Natural Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social Science (one must be world or American history)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Foreign Language (in a single foreign language)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Additional coursework in any of the above areas, and coursework in foreign languages, art, music, speech, computer science, or other academic areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

*In almost all high school curricula, algebra II or higher/advanced algebra is the third college preparatory mathematics course required.

**Students who begin taking high school coursework prior to high school (e.g. mathematics, foreign language) must still present a total of 15 academic credits (English, mathematics, natural science, social science, and foreign language) in grades 9-12.
III. In addition to a rigorous high school curriculum, academic factors include high school class rank, high school grade point average, trends in grades, and test scores. Secondary non-academic factors may include, but are not necessarily limited to, leadership; community service; achievement in the arts, athletics, or other areas; and diversity in personal background and experience.

Official test scores from The American College Testing Program (ACT) or Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) must be on file for all new freshmen under the age of 22. Failure to have official test scores on file prevents a student from receiving scholarship and orientation/registration materials. ACT is the preferred test. Students will not be disadvantaged in the admission process by taking one test rather than the other. ...

[Editorial Note: the “Failure to….. materials.” sentence above appears in a 2006 Admissions policy but is not in the current catalog. Therefore, the striking of it here represents policy change with no corresponding changes to the Undergraduate Catalog text.]

The following provides history of the requirement and rationale for this proposal:

History

- The current admissions foreign language requirement indicates that every student offered admission must have two years of foreign language in a single language prior to high school graduation. Please note: this has nothing to do with the UW-Eau Claire language course graduation requirement for certain majors.

- When the foreign language requirement was added into policy, admissions decisions were formula-based (using only ACT and class rank or GPA). The admissions language requirement was an additional factor to assist admission with selection of candidates. In 2006 admission review practice was federally mandated to be more holistic; this required a more comprehensive review of additional factors such as rigor of coursework, GPA, grade trends, extracurricular involvement or commitments outside of the home, essays, recommendation letters, specific student situations, etc. In this holistic review, quality and diversity of coursework are reviewed, together with many other factors.

Rationale

- The attachment lists students who were otherwise admissible to UW-Eau Claire and denied based on the foreign language admissions requirement. This is for the Fall 2014 class, and data collection only began in the end of November, so it does not include a full-year review. The students’ academic profile is listed.

- UW-Madison and UW-Eau Claire are the only two UW campuses to require foreign language. The other campuses in our region that require it offer many exceptions to the requirement, and several do not require it. See the attached data for detail.
• In the college search process, many students do not begin paying attention to level of detail of high school required courses until their junior year – which is too late to add two years of a foreign language. We cannot measure the students who do not apply due to this requirement; however, Admissions reports that families who come to a campus visit get up and leave a presentation or not go on the campus tour when they find out about the language requirement; they call and inquire about the requirement; they attend a college fair and leave the table disappointed.

• This requirement presents a specific challenge to highly talented music students whose high school elective course offerings often force them to choose between music and foreign language.

• As UW-Eau Claire considers expanding its catchment area and going into new recruiting territories, communicating detailed requirement information to new schools/counselors will provide a challenge. Exhaustive communication goes out to MN and WI school counselors; however, as our data shows, we still have students and counselors who are unaware of the requirement.

• The student data shows that, of the students denied based on this requirement, 14% are students of color. Heritage Spanish speakers, a population anticipated to grow in our region, are particularly disadvantaged due to this requirement. They do not typically meet the foreign language exception policy for ESL students, because the Spanish 101 exam does not assess heritage Spanish well.

Consultations
The following individuals were consulted and are in support of this proposal:
- Carter Smith, Chair of the Department of Languages
- Paul Kaldjian, Chair of Council on Internationalization and Global Engagement, Chair of Anthropology and Geography