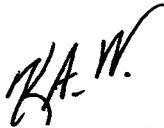


February 3, 2011

MEMORANDUM

TO: MSU Board of Trustees

FROM: Kim A. Wilcox, Provost 

RE: Recommended Merger of the Departments of French, Classics and Italian with Spanish and Portuguese

Recommendation:

BE IT RESOLVED that the Trustee Policy Committee recommends to the Board of Trustees that the Department of French, Classics and Italian and the Department of Spanish and Portuguese, be merged to form a combined department, to be named the Department of Romance and Classical Studies, effective July 1, 2011.



**OFFICE OF THE
PROVOST**

Background

As you know, all Colleges have been exploring ways to promote synergy, effectiveness, and efficiency through program alignments and structural changes. Such changes should also provide the opportunity for enhancing academic reputation and distinction.

The College of Arts and Letters has proposed merging two language departments. Combining the departments is expected to strengthen the position of language scholarship and teaching within the College of Arts and Letters. Together, the programs will more effectively integrate with activities of MSU's Title VI Language Resource Center and the Second Language Studies Program. The merger opens new opportunities to collaborate on enhanced training of TAs and instructors, the development of innovative materials, and the further integration of technology into language instruction. The merged department is scheduled to move to newly constructed space in the B-wing of Wells Hall. The opportunity to be co-located as part of the reorganization, is expected to contribute to a departmental culture of innovation, creativity, and collaboration. The transition from two small departments to a single unit will also allow service and administrative efficiencies.

The merger will not adversely affect currently enrolled students: students seeking undergraduate majors in French and Spanish, minors in Italian and

Michigan State University
430 Administration Building
East Lansing, MI 48824-1046

517-355-6550
Fax: 517-355-9601
provost.msu.edu

Recommended Merger of Departments
Provost Kim A. Wilcox
February 3, 2011
Page 2

Portuguese, or graduate students pursuing the doctorate in French or Spanish. Opportunities will remain for students taking language courses for the fulfillment of language requirements within other programs.

The merger will not change the tenure status or current rank of any of the faculty. By-laws have been appropriately revised, and are awaiting approval of the merger to be implemented.

Consultation about the merger has included faculty and students within the effected departments, as well as standing committees of Academic Governance, including the University Committee on Academic Policy, the University Graduate Council, and the University Committee on Faculty Affairs. There were no concerns relative to the merger.

I support the recommendation and President Simon and she concurs with the request for approval of the merger of the Departments of French, Classics and Italian with Spanish and Portuguese, to constitute a new department, the Department of Romance and Classical Studies. The effective date of the change would be July 1, 2011. The effective date for the academic program/curriculum, Fall, 2011.