

UNIVERSITY COUNCIL
PLANNING AND PRIORITIES COMMITTEE
REQUEST FOR DECISION

PRESENTED BY: Bob Tyler, Chair, Planning and Priorities Committee

DATE OF MEETING: April 18, 2013

SUBJECT: **Name Change for Department of Languages and Linguistics**

DECISION REQUESTED:

It is recommended:

That the Department of Languages and Linguistics be renamed the Department of Languages, Literatures, and Cultural Studies, effective July 1, 2013.

PURPOSE:

The new name of Department of Languages, Literatures, and Cultural Studies will more closely reflect the teaching and research activities of faculty within the Department of Languages and Linguistics.

CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND:

The transfer of Linguistics to the Department of Religion and Culture resulted in the Department re-examining the scope of its activities with the intent to reflect these in a new name for the department.

CONSULTATION:

The name change was undertaken in consultation with all departments in the Division of Humanities and Fine Arts. On March 20, 2013, the Planning and Priorities Committee approved a motion to recommend the name change to Council. Prior to this, the name change was approved by the Humanities and Fine Arts Faculty Council on October 24, 2012, and by the College of Arts and Science Faculty Council on February 7, 2013.

SUMMARY:

The Planning and Priorities Committee supports the change of name to Department of Languages, Literatures, and Cultural Studies as this will be more reflective of the identity of the department, as outlined in the name change request.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Request for Change of Name for the Department of Languages and Linguistics

Office of the University Secretary

Request for Change of Name

This Request form and attachments will be the basis for decision-making about this change.

Submitted by: Helena da Silva, Head, Languages & Linguistics Date: February 12, 2013

College: Arts and Science

College approval date: February 7, 2013

Excerpt from the minutes of the College of Arts and Science Faculty Council meeting, February 7, 2013:

Moved/Seconded (Helena da Silva/ Marie-Diane Clarke): That the name of the current "Department of Languages and Linguistics" be changed to the "Department of Languages, Literatures, and Cultural Studies".

APPROVED

Proposed effective date of the change: July 1st, 2013

1. Proposed change of name

	From:	To:
College	No change	
Department	Department of Languages and Linguistics	Department of Languages, Literatures, and Cultural Studies
Program name	No change	
Degree name	No change	
Name of Field of Study (major, minor, concentration, etc)	No change	
Course label (alphabetic)	No change	
Building	No change	
Street	No change	
Other	No change	

2. Documentation

The current **Department of Languages and Linguistics** is seeking approval for a department name change to the **Department of Languages, Literatures, and Cultural Studies** and has brought motions to this effect before the faculty councils of both the Humanities and Fine Arts division as well as of the College of Arts and Science.

Background information:

On October 24th, 2012 the Humanities and Fine Arts Faculty Council approved the above motion after notice and discussion of the motion on September 26 and October 24th 2012. respectively.

On February 7th, 2013 the above motion was approved by Faculty Council of the College of Arts and Science.

Rationale for the motion was circulated to all departments of the HUMFA division prior to the motion of October 24th 2012 as well as to all faculty members of the College of Arts and Science prior to its approval by the latter body on February 7th, 2013. This rationale is as follows:

- 1) Linguistics has been transferred to the Department of Religion and Culture so the discipline needs to be removed from our department name.
- 2) The department wishes to adopt a name which will more accurately reflect the full scope of its teaching and research activities.
- 3) The department will continue to teach second languages.
- 4) In addition to teaching second languages, most of our faculty specialize in the literatures of those languages taught. They have always taught literature courses of both a national (French) and international scope in the second languages which we teach as well as English translations of such works on occasion.
- 5) Our faculty also teach courses on the cultures of those languages and have always done so. Departments at other universities (Brock, McGill, Queen's, Windsor) which offer courses in languages, literatures and foreign/national cultures include these diverse albeit complementary fields of knowledge in their name.
- 6) Approaches to our non-language courses are varied but encompass courses which approach all cultural / literary content within the theoretical, postmodern and post-colonialist framework associated with Cultural Studies as a contemporary discipline. We do so, however, through focus on national (French) and international cultures. In addition, the members of our department incorporate into these studies their focus on research on cultures as defined beyond purely national boundaries and of an interdisciplinary nature (Women and Gender Studies, Queer Studies, Popular Culture, Film and Image Studies, Translation Studies, Comparative Literature). We feel that the name allows us to highlight this fact and to build further on these past initiatives throughout our current Curriculum Renewal exercise via the study of both written and visual narratives and forms - the latter being an area we have begun to explore and wish to develop due to high student demand. The study of the deconstruction of narratives, discourses and images from an international corpus of creative works in both written and visual

mediums as well as the ideologies which underpin the latter and the theoretical methodologies which can best inform their study all come under the rubric of Cultural Studies.

Summary: Through the ongoing curriculum review process and given the teaching and research interests of the current faculty membership of the department, the name change being proposed best represents the three-pronged scope of our activities.

Impact of the change

- a) This change will have a positive impact on students at two levels:
 - 1) It will better clarify for students the full scope of the disciplines we teach.
 - 2) It will attract students who are increasingly interested in the area of cultural studies at a multinational level involving study of visual and written medium.
- b) This change will have no impact on faculty, staff or alumni other than the positive outcome of describing more accurately the scope of what we do.
- c) This change will have no impact on other programs, departments, colleges, centers, university-wide systems, library resources or physical facilities. We will have to work together with university-wide web systems to make all changes linked to the name change in an efficient and timely manner in order to ensure a smooth transition in all university-wide search engine systems.
- d) Since this name change will better showcase the full range of disciplines which we have long offered and will continue to offer, it should have a positive external impact in the area of recruitment, and visibility at various community levels.

Costs

Costs involved in this change will be minimal. No further funds will be required since changes will only impact minor items of written identification form on paper or web-based literature (brochures, web site, letterhead etc.)

Consultation

There has been both written and oral consultation with all departments of the Division of the Humanities and Fine Arts which, as previously stated, approved the name change in October 2012.