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DEC - 8 2009

Request for Curriculum Council Action

TO: Zahia Drici, Associate Dean of Curriculum

DATE SUBMITTED: 11/20/2009

(Please submit 1 double-sided copy of your proposal)

FROM: (Name) Christina Isabelli (Department) Hispanic Studies

1. Proposed Action (Please check all that apply):

31

	Title	Number	Units
<input type="checkbox"/> New Course (No Gen Ed)	_____	/	/
<input type="checkbox"/> New Course (Gen Ed)	_____	/	/
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gen Ed for Existing Course:	Introduction to Spanish Linguistics	Spn 373	1
<input type="checkbox"/> Deletion	_____	/	/
<input type="checkbox"/> Change title from _____ to _____	_____	/	/
<input type="checkbox"/> Change number from _____ to _____	_____	/	/
<input type="checkbox"/> May Term Course	_____	/	/
<input type="checkbox"/> New Major/Minor	_____		
<input type="checkbox"/> Revised Major/Minor	_____		
<input type="checkbox"/> Other	_____	/	/

2a. Please check the category, if any, for which you are requesting General Education unit credit:

- Analysis of Values
- The Arts
- Contemporary Social Institutions
- Cultural and Historical Change
- Formal Reasoning
- Gateway Colloquium
- Intellectual Traditions
- Literature
- Second Language
- Life Science Issues
- Life Science Lab
- Physical Science Issues
- Physical Science Lab
- Physical Education
- Fitness

2b. Please check the flag(s), if any, you are seeking:

- Writing Intensive
- Global Diversity
- U.S. Diversity

2c. In what way will you assess how this course has met the goals of the Gen Ed category and/or flag(s) for which you are applying?

I will give 2 exams, 7 assignments, 1 oral presentation critically interpreting an academic article, and 1 research paper allowing students to incorporate their newly acquired formal reasoning skills to tackle a metatheoretical linguistic question. In addition, I will include four questions with the standard student evaluations for the course that will be based on the Formal Reasoning goals. The students will comment, based on their personal experience, whether these goals have been met.

3. Please insert here the proposed catalog course description. Course descriptions should be limited to no more than 50 words, not counting (a) title; (b) prerequisites; (c) General Education category; and (d) when offered.

Introduction to Spanish Linguistics (FR) Examines Spanish language as a functional system of communication. Emphasis is on general principles of linguistic analysis: sound, form, and order and on linguistic changes related to temporal, regional and social pressures. Prerequisite: 308. Offered in alternate years, fall semester.

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4. Please list any prerequisites: Spn 308

5. When will this course first be offered? Fall 2011

6. Please indicate how often course is offered. Check only the single item that best describes this course. Because these are the only intervals used in the University Catalog, please do not edit or alter the list to fit a particular course. For example, if your course is offered every third year—an interval that does not appear in the Catalog—you might choose "Offered as needed" or "Offered occasionally" instead.

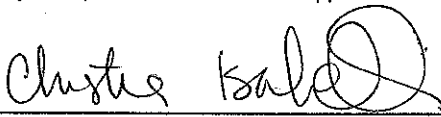
- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Offered each semester                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Offered in alternate years, Spring   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Offered each Fall Term                           | <input type="checkbox"/> Offered in alternate years, May Term |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Offered each spring                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Offered annually                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Offered each May Term                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Offered every third semester         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Offered each semester and May Term               | <input type="checkbox"/> Offered as needed                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Offered occasionally                             | <input type="checkbox"/> Offered on request                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Offered in alternate years                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Offered by arrangement               |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Offered in alternate years, Fall Term |   |

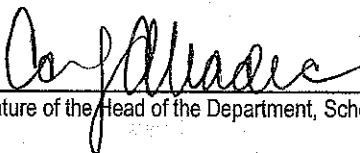
7. Is/are any other department(s) affected in any way by this request (e.g., course is cross-listed, team-taught, etc.)?  
 No.       Yes. In what way?

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Head(s) of the Affected Department(s), School(s) or Program(s)

8. **WRITTEN RATIONALES:** If this proposal presents a new course (whether for General Education credit or not), an existing course for which General Education credit is now being sought, a May Term course, or a new major, minor or concentration, please attach a written rationale, following the guidelines found in the *Curriculum Development Handbook*. Please note that CC cannot evaluate incomplete proposals, so to expedite consideration of your submission, you are encouraged to read and follow the guidelines carefully.

9. The Curriculum Council assumes that the faculty members of your department have seen and approved of this request. Please sign below if this assumption is correct:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Faculty Member Primarily Responsible for This Proposal

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Head of the Department, School or Program

**Request for Curriculum Council Action**  
General Education Credit (Formal Reasoning) for  
*Spanish 373: Introduction to Spanish Linguistics*  
*Christina Isabelli*

Spn 373 was approved by CC as a new course in the 2000-2001 academic year. I have been teaching this course in alternate years since its approval. I am now proposing that a Formal Reasoning credit be added.

**Course Description**

Introduction to Spanish Linguistics (FR) examines Spanish language as a functional system of communication. Emphasis is on general principles of linguistic analysis: sound, form, and order and on linguistic changes related to temporal, regional and social pressures. Prerequisite: 308. Offered in alternate years, fall semester.

**Request for Formal Reasoning Credit: Course Criteria**

1. Linguistics is the scientific study of language, which is one of the most characteristic human attributes. In contrast to other language-related disciplines, linguistics is concerned with describing the rule-governed structures of languages, determining the extent to which these structures are universal or language-particular, positing constraints on possible linguistic structures, and explaining why there is only a fairly narrow range of possible human languages.

This course provides an introduction to Spanish linguistics and establishes the basis for the application of linguistic principles. The content included is an overview of linguistic rules with a focus on Spanish. The course begins with an introduction to the description and organization of data dealing with phonology (how sounds pattern to form words). Building on this, the discussion continues with topics in morphology (word formation and verbal inflection) and the description and organization of data dealing with syntax (how words combine to form phrases and sentences). Finally the course ends with analyzing the regional variations of Spanish (dialectology) where the students apply the first three concepts (phonology, morphology and syntax) to contrast and compare the regional categories of Spanish use world-wide including the following six modalities: Peninsular (Northern/Southern Spain), Atlantic (Canary Islands/Latin America), USA, Equatorial Guinea, Judeo-Spanish and Creoles.

This course emphasizes formal reasoning and critical thinking skills in which we examine and define different linguistic skill sets including: how to parse sound, word, and sentence structures of Spanish; language change; the social factors that affect language; and the rules that govern the apparently vast number of different languages.

2. The goal of this course is to provide students with a level of knowledge that enables them to make connections between the structure of Spanish and relevant issues in contemporary Hispanic linguistics, such as generative grammar, language variation, bilingualism, and Spanish in the United States. Thus, course readings and activities will include discussions of research in language acquisition, sociolinguistics and historical linguistics in order to apply the theoretical constructs (formal reasoning systems) studied.

This approach will enable the students to think critically, implement linguistic rules, and formulate them in various theoretical forms. A specific theory we use is the X-bar theory, a component of linguistic Government and Binding theory that attempts to identify syntactic

features common to all languages. It claims that among their phrasal categories, all languages share certain structural similarities, including one known as the "X-bar" proposed by Noam Chomsky. The letter X is used to signify an arbitrary lexical category; when analyzing a specific utterance, specific categories are assigned. Thus, the X may become N for noun, V for verb, Adj for adjective, or Prep for preposition. Within this concept, students work with two other concepts: Transformation rules and Tracing. Transformation takes a phrase typically called the Deep Structure and changes it in a restricted way to result in a Surface Structure. Tracing attempts to identify items that are an "empty" (phonologically null) category that occupies a position in the syntactic structure, there are several of these in Spanish that differ significantly from English. Students are inductively taught these principles and are frequently asked to apply them to new and more complicated structures, putting to use both formal reasoning and critical thinking skills.

3. The course includes exercises in which the students will: (i) identify and phonetically describe Spanish sounds using both a generative grammar approach and the International Phonetic Association classification system; (ii) analyze the syntactic structure of Spanish sentences by generating trees (diagrams), i.e. use a tree to determine whether the Spanish grammar system does or does not generate it, and identify which rules were involved in its derivation; (iii) solve problems with clear solutions such as determining whether a given sentence can generate an appropriate tree; (iv) solve problems with clear solutions that deal with understanding simple instances of sentences with ambiguous structures, understanding how a grammar can produce both structures, and what intuitive meaning is associated with each tree; (v) identify and analyze differences in the Spanish-speaking world through contrasting regional variations putting to use the acquired linguistic rules; and (vi) write a research paper that tackles a debate that exists in linguistics today (see below).

4. This course aims to lead students to think analytically about natural language (Spanish) phonology, morphology, and syntax in order to see the underlying systematic structure. That which is introduced will be treated fairly rigorously, and students will be made aware that they are seeing the basic parts of a mathematically well-analyzed, elegant and symmetric system. This course also gives the students the opportunity to evaluate language from a pragmatic and aesthetic point of view through the analysis of linguistic rules and historical development. The pragmatic aspect of language guides the students to apply linguistic rules to Spanish with the goal of having them realize that language reflects the ideology of a nation (e.g. Mexico vs. Spain) and many times of a population (e.g. low class vs. high class). In other words, students will develop a discriminating ear for dialects and accents of the more distinct Spanish language variations spoken around the world.

#### **Credit at the 300-level**

This course will have two exams, problems sets, an oral presentation of an academic journal article on linguistics, and a final research paper. The exams will include essays and problem sets, which deal with the issues raised by the criteria addressed above, specifically about formal rules of sound, structure, change in the language and causation. The oral presentation will include an analysis of the historical/present-day development of a phonological, morphological, syntactic, or regional variation in Spanish.

The final research paper will be an analysis based on the journal articles read in class with the aim of discussing the two macro paradigms in linguistic metatheory, in essence a debate in linguistics: the inductivist and the deductivist approaches exemplified by Bloomfieldian and Chomskyan linguistics. Bloomfieldian linguistics states that language study must always be centered in the spoken language, instead of documents; that the definitions used in grammar should be based on the forms of the language, not on the meanings of the forms; and that a given language at a given time is a complete system of sounds and forms that exist independently of the past—so that the history of a form does not explain its actual meaning. On the other hand, Chomskyan linguistics states that language emphasizes an innate set of linguistic principles shared by all humans known as Universal Grammar—the initial state of the language learner—and discovering an account for linguistic variation via the most general possible mechanisms. My hope is that the students conclude that neither approach can justifiably exclude the other.

### **Assessment**

I will give two exams, seven assignments, one oral presentation critically interpreting an academic article, and a research paper allowing students to incorporate their newly acquired formal reasoning skills to tackle a metatheoretical linguistic question. I will review the students' work and determine if the assignments succeed in making the students meet the goals presented for Formal Reason. In addition, I will include four questions with the standard student evaluations for the course that will be based on the Formal Reasoning goals. The students will comment, based on their personal experience, whether these goals have been met. I will review the students' comments to determine how well they have succeeded in meeting these goals. If the goals are partially met or not at all, I will incorporate changes to resolve this problem.

January 12, 2010

Revisions to Proposals #26, 27, and 31

Hispanic Studies

Submitted by Carolyn Nadeau

JAN 12 2010

*Received  
via email*

I. Addition to #26:

How does the change affect staffing?

These proposed changes do not have an effect on our staffing. Minors are still required to take six courses and the regular tenure line faculty will continue to teach all of these classes. However, we do foresee two concrete shifts in enrollments.

1. More students will take 210 (future 280 course). We will switch from offering each semester two sections of 203 and one section of 210 (280) to offering two sections of 280 and only one section of 203. **The number of annual course units for 203/280 will be equal to the current number of course units for 203/210.**
2. Because we will no longer require a 400-level class for our minors, we will decrease the number of 400-level classes offered annually and increase the number of 300-level classes by two.

II. Addition to #27:

We are requesting for the Hispanic Studies Minor for Nursing Majors the following changes to the six Hispanic Studies courses beyond the basic language sequence including:

1. Span 280
2. Span 303
3. Span 308
4. Span 230
5. **Two electives**

Please note that HS is not changing the number of classes for the minor requirement.

III. Addition to #31 (catalogue course description)

Introduction to Spanish Linguistics (FR). Examines Spanish language as a functional system of communication. Emphasis is on general principles of linguistic analysis; sound, form, and order and on linguistic changes related to temporal, regional and social pressure. **Course is taught in Spanish. Prerequisite: 308. Offered in alternate years, fall semester.**

We also appreciate CD's discussion over distinguishing courses between the 300 and 400 levels and the inquiry of how we determine the level of our courses. The change in number from 410 to 470 does not reflect a change from one level to another. I assume that the decision to have the course at the 400 level was addressed in the CC proposal for the new course when it was submitted years ago.