

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

Paper S-3

MEMORANDUM

SM 1/5/67

Senate	From Office of the Dean of Arts <i>Leenas</i>
Subject Degrees within departments, upper division and lower division requirements	Date April 17, 1967

SE3005-6

The Faculty of Arts recommends that Senate ask Joint Faculty to strike a committee to study the problem of language and literature in the university for Senate action. The Faculty offers the combined services of its Curriculum Committee and its Academic Planning Committee to Joint Faculty and Senate in their deliberations.*

* This recommendation arose from an enquiry by the Faculty of Arts Curriculum Committee into:

- a. degrees within departments (mainly DEC and DML)
- b. upper division requirements
- c. lower division requirements.

In general, the Curriculum Committee report recommended that present programs within the Faculty of Arts requiring a maximum of 18 units in the lower division, a standard 30 units for the major, and 50 units for honors in the upper division should be continued.

It also endorsed the present programs of DEC and DML and suggested guidelines for their future development. In the case of DML, however, the report suggested that this department might be subject to demands which could tax its structure.

The section of the report which introduced the recommendation stated above follows:

"These demands can be discussed in the two main categories of language and literature.

i. Language

No one claims that French, German, Russian and Spanish are the only modern languages. Indeed, DML has recently incorporated an experimental program in Hindi. But even with this addition, a good

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part of the world's languages are excluded, a part in which the University could well become interested. While as yet indefinite, this appears to be happening. One indication of future events is a proposal before the President's Long Range Planning Committee that the University develop a multi-disciplinary study of the "Pacific Rim" countries and their relations. Another is that the PSA Department is actively pursuing an interest in South and South-East Asia. These interests, and others which can be imagined, are perfectly legitimate; and they call up the question of languages which DML does not now teach, for example, Japanese and Chinese.

DML now wishes to give degrees in its present four languages, and expresses an intention to give one in linguistics, making five. Each additional language would, presumably, involve a new degree program, and require extensive staff additions to an already large departmental establishment. Over a period of time, and considering University growth, it would appear that DML could become an impossibly unwieldy department--a circumstance that could not help having severe curricular and internal structural consequences.

The problem of additional languages has another aspect as well. Current Departmental practice is to involve students of language in a relatively lengthy, concentrated, and sophisticated program of language study, including also linguistics and literature. It could well be the case that the requirements of other departments for language teaching would run counter to the DML disciplinary philosophy in that other departments would regard any given language as a tool for communication and field research, perhaps best taught by way of the "crash" method. It is not clear that DML could, would want to, or should have to, service such a demand, reasonable though it might be.

These observations should serve to illustrate the situation; they involve possible demands that are neither remote nor undesirable. But they do involve definite problems when focused upon DML.

ii. Literature

The only literature not written in English systematically taught by this University is taught by DML; but is very largely taught in the language of the original, which means it is taught to DML majors almost exclusively. The lack of careful treatment of literature in translation is hard to justify intellectually and, perhaps therefore, vexing to many members of faculty. This lack also operates to deprive students of many departments, and the departments themselves, of a valuable resource. One manifestation of this is a proposal before this committee that the particular lack of any Classics courses be considered.

It if is granted, if only for argument, that the University has work to do in the field of literature in translation, we must ask: shall DML undertake to do it? Perhaps, but also perhaps not when the

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relation of literature and its aims are compared to DML and its aims. It does not, in short, appear that the linguistic-technical approach of DML has anything substantially in common with the aesthetic and historical concerns appropriate to a study of literature. Finally, to have DML do this teaching would involve it in yet another expansion of faculty and curriculum, perhaps also an expansion of degrees.

It is obvious to us that the problems indicated above are perfectly real and emergent. And the point is that whatever their solution might be will in fact affect the Department of Modern Languages in some way, quite probably in a significant way. We regard the possibility of dealing with these problems as they develop--one language at a time-- as odious; to do so would be to perpetuate a series of bad examples in our history, and to contradict the vision this University is supposed to have."