

**Strategic Plan for 2015-2020**  
**Department of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures**

**Mission Statement**

The Department of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures dedicates itself to the intellectual and experiential development of its students, by offering courses of the highest caliber in culture, language pedagogy, linguistics, and global literature. We are proud to foster a global citizenry as expressed in *Educating Illinois* and the University's *International Strategic Plan, 2014-2018*. Furthering that goal, we continue to enhance our offerings and place our unique learning and expertise at the service of Illinois State University, the people of Illinois, and the academic community.

**Core Values**

*Consistent with the University-wide strategic plan, Educating Illinois, and the College of Arts and Sciences strategic plan, we in the Department of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures value:*

*Scholarship* – We value the active pursuit of learning and scholarship through research and its dissemination through publication and teaching. We are seriously committed to the scholar/teacher model in keeping with the longstanding goals of the College and the University. We believe the two roles are indissolubly intertwined. Just as teaching benefits from research conducted outside the classroom, research benefits from ideas first generated as part of course preparation.

*Teaching* – We value the development of student skills necessary for lifelong learning, critical thinking, and engaged citizenship within a global society. We encourage the development of marketable and transferable skills among students, as well as strictly discipline-based skills, in order that our students may take their place as informed citizens in the wider society. We value student-centered instruction, as per the CAS strategic plan, which includes strong academic support services and advisement, excellent instruction and learning that together provide a sense of academic community and identification with the college. We value the development of undergraduate and graduate programs of the highest standards.

*Citizenship* – We value participation at all levels of administrative organization of the University and the College as part of our role as members of a thriving academic community. We value engagement with students and faculty of other disciplines, as part of our contribution to the overall quality of scholarship, learning, and teaching at Illinois State University. As a department of languages, literatures, and cultures, we must perform and indeed seek to expand our role in developing and supporting the global dimension of higher education both inside the University and within our local, state, national, and international communities.

*Shared Governance* – We value the diversity of ideas, academic freedom, cooperation and collegiality among faculty members and the enfranchisement of all members of the Department in setting and managing Departmental goals and priorities, as well as participation in setting goals and recommending policies of the College and the University. We value tolerance of divergent views.

## Strategic Goals and Actions

The Department of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures (LAN) will ensure long-term success in meeting and exceeding our goals by strategically investing in faculty recruitment and development, improving student recruitment and mentoring, and improving our facilities and intellectual environment. As the University moves forward with its initiative to “internationalize” the institution at all levels (see *International Strategic Plan, 2014-2018*), we are committed to being an integral part of all such endeavors. Given that our core mission has always centered on international and global issues, we are poised to make a unique contribution to the curriculum and to the intellectual life of ISU by enhancing our strengths in this area.

**Goal 1: Ensure that LAN remains at the center of campus-wide discussions and initiatives involving “internationalization” and “globalization,” particularly with regard to those initiatives outlined in the University’s *International Strategic Plan, 2014-2018*.**

Actions:

- Promote the serious study of languages, literatures, and cultures as both central and indispensable to any university-wide discussion of internationalization and globalization.
- Seek opportunities to regularly organize campus events related to cultural and linguistic diversity.
- Increase enrollment in existing study abroad programs. Propose new and/or more diverse study abroad opportunities (with possible service learning components), particularly in Morocco and Latin America.
- Endeavor to increase participation in language courses by current students from all Colleges, through recruitment of additional first and second majors and minors, and leadership in area studies programs.
- Foster relationships both across campus and within the State of Illinois with such groups as the Center for East Asian and Pacific Studies (CEAP) and the European Union Center at the University of Illinois, the Instituto Cervantes of Chicago, etc.
- Revise elective offerings in order to provide opportunities for our students to explore other fields that overlap with ours such as history, philosophy, sociology and anthropology, Latin American and Latino/a Studies, Women’s and Gender Studies, art history, international business, nursing, etc.

**Goal 2: Continue to make innovative revisions to our academic programs and courses in order to meet the employment needs of our 21st-century students while still emphasizing the importance of a liberal arts education for a well-informed citizenry.**

Actions:

- Finalize the creation of an interdisciplinary European Studies major.
- Explore the creation of a multi-language major or minor geared toward students who are interested in studying the intersection of multiple languages and cultures.
- Revise and/or propose new French curricula to ensure diversity of course offerings and approaches to French and Francophone Studies, relevant to the cultures of Africa, the Middle East, the Caribbean, and Southeast Asia.

- Explore the creation of professionalized tracks and enhance current course offerings to better prepare students for careers related to languages, literatures and cultures (e.g., translation and interpretation certificates, certification in business French, Spanish for Education, Healthcare, or Social Work, etc.).
- Within the parameters of enrollment and budget constraints, explore opportunities to enhance and diversify our language offerings (e.g., Portuguese, Arabic, etc.).
- Review and revise the current curriculum so that it aligns with reduced budgets/staffing, evolving educator preparation requirements, and best practices relative to the disciplines and current trends in each.
- Implement the recent revisions to the graduate program including increased requirements for 400-level courses, streamlined advisement tracks, and the addition of a thesis option as an alternative to comprehensive exams.
- Continue to enhance and improve students' language proficiency by means of student self-assessments and proficiency awareness-raising, as well as faculty and instructor professional development specific to language pedagogy.

**Goal 3: Prepare our teacher candidates to meet licensure requirements and become future leaders in language and culture teaching circles.**

Actions:

- Increase teacher candidate success on the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI), so that more students achieve at least Advanced-Low proficiency with fewer attempts.
- Prepare teacher candidates to succeed on measurements of educator preparation required for graduation and licensure such as the edTPA portfolio, content tests, etc.
- Achieve national recognition of LAN teacher education program by the Council on the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP).

**Goal 4: Recruit, retain, and mentor an increasingly diverse and well-prepared cohort of students across all LAN programs.**

Actions:

- Distribute graduate course information to area teachers in an attempt to increase enrollment in our 300- and 400-level courses.
- Enhance recruitment of students from heritage populations (such as Latino/a and Congolese communities) both locally and in the Chicago area.
- Encourage students for whom Spanish is a heritage language to earn academic credit and transcript recognition through Spanish 120, Academic Spanish for Spanish Speakers, and LAN's Credit for Acquired Proficiency program.
- Continue to provide mentoring and personalized attention as we help students further their own professional development and career goals.
- Personalize outreach initiatives to high school students.
- Enhance regular contact with area high school teachers.
- Cultivate language advocacy networks with other concerned faculty/educators at Illinois Wesleyan University, Heartland Community College, Bradley University, and area high schools (e.g., share resources, promotional materials, volunteer as guest speakers,

promote and participate in organized events, open ISU-led study abroad programs and vice versa).

- Actively seek opportunities to highlight LAN's intellectual mission through such activities as leading CTLT workshops, participating in the International Colloquium each December, creating a visible presence at study abroad fairs, inviting more interdisciplinary-based speakers related to our research on campus, actively promoting our scholarship and good works to CAS for its newsletter, promoting new interdisciplinary initiatives across campus (e.g., European Studies, African Studies, East Asian Studies, Latin America and Latino/a Studies, Women's and Gender Studies, Middle East and Southeast Asian Studies, Peace and Conflict Resolution Studies, etc.).

**Goal 5: Recruit, retain, and mentor exceptional faculty who are committed to excellence in research and creative activity, teaching, and service.**

Actions:

- Review courses in conjunction with the Graduate Committee and Undergraduate Committee to ensure that our curriculum reflects our commitment and responsibility to attract, recruit, and support traditionally underrepresented groups.
- Encourage formal and informal opportunities for intellectual exchange both inside and outside the department.
- Encourage engagement with the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in order to better align, where possible, our research interests and classroom instruction.
- Improve teaching by encouraging colleague-to-colleague mentoring, and by supporting these efforts where possible both with university resources and departmental recognition.
- In pursuit of college and university goals of globalization, expand on past international faculty and scholarly exchanges by inviting colleagues from abroad to visit, speak, and, where feasible, teach on the ISU campus. In like manner, encourage LAN faculty to seek opportunities to teach abroad.
- Address the affinity interests of ISU students from countries and cultures not represented in the ISU curriculum by inviting available speakers (e.g., the Polish Consul General of Chicago, etc.).
- Pursue further internationalization of our intellectual community by increasing contact with international bodies and organizations such as the Organization of American States, the University of Illinois European Union Center, etc.

**Goal 6: Increase outreach initiatives within the University and Bloomington-Normal communities.**

Actions:

- Strengthen relationships with local organizations (e.g., the Unity Community Center, One Heart for Congo, and Habitat for Humanity) in order to offer a wider and richer variety of co-curricular and service learning activities to our students.
- Improve contact with colleagues at Illinois Wesleyan University, Heartland Community College, and area high schools to promote our activities and recruit students.

**Goal 7: Forge stronger connections to our alumni base and our department's Alumni Advisory Board.**

Actions:

- Engage our Alumni Advisory Board in recruiting students, particularly from the Chicago area.
- Encourage outstanding high school teachers, particularly LAN alumni, to direct students to our program.
- Encourage LAN Teacher Education alumni to serve as cooperating teachers.
- Work with the University's Office of Advancement to encourage alumni giving and major gifts in the area of study abroad scholarships.
- Work with alumni to increase professional and networking opportunities for students.
- Increase opportunities for students to interact with successful LAN alumni on campus.
- Make better use of social media to remain connected to LAN alumni.

*Approved by faculty vote on 10/28/2015*