WORLD LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY WORKGROUP
REPORT TO THE COLONNADE GENERAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE
14 February 2018

On December 7, 2017, the University Senate voted to approve a resolution by the Colonnade General Education Committee (CGEC) regarding the World Language Proficiency requirement at WKU; their recommendation for approval was signed by the Provost on December 8, 2017, effective immediately.

The CGEC's resolution was developed in response to data indicating (1) a backlog of approximately 7,000 currently-enrolled students who have not met the novice high world language proficiency requirement at WKU, and (2) insufficient capacity (through current course offerings and existing opportunities for students to demonstrate proficiency via the STAMP test) to eliminate this backlog in a timely manner or meet the demand of future students. The following statements summarize the three recommendations contained in the CGEC resolution:

1. All degree-seeking students who have a catalog year through 2017-18 and with two credits (or equivalent) of high school world language be considered to have fulfilled the world language proficiency requirement at WKU.
2. Representatives from the Office of Academic Affairs and relevant colleges and departments present by February 15, 2018 a plan to the CGEC that articulates how future students can fulfill the world language proficiency requirement, with existing university resources and staffing.
3. The CGEC consider the viability of the world language proficiency requirement at its February and/or March 2018 meeting(s) given the details of the plan submitted under item #2.

The report that follows fulfills the charge given in item #2 above.

Establishment and Composition of the World Language Proficiency Workgroup

Given the short timeframe set forth in the CGEC resolution, and the need to be proactive in fulfilling the charge were the University Senate to approve the CGEC resolution, on November 10, 2017 the Provost established the World Language Proficiency Workgroup to respond to item #2 above. The Workgroup is composed of the following individuals:

Doug McElroy, Associate Vice President, Office of Academic Affairs
Laura McGee, Professor and Head, Department of Modern Languages
 Ke Peng, Associate Professor, Department of Modern Languages - Alternate
Stasie Harrington, Assistant Professor, Department of Modern Languages
Ashley Chance Fox, Assistant Professor, Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders
Marko Dumancic, Assistant Professor, Department of History, and Past Chair, CGEC
Jennifer Markin, Associate Director, Academic Advising and Retention Center
 Chris Jensen, Director, Academic Advising and Retention Center - Alternate

The Workgroup met first on November 15, 2017, and has been meeting regularly since that time.

Framing Context

The Workgroup sees its role as responding to the charge given from strictly a resourcing perspective. That is, the Workgroup's report and the alternative solutions contained within should not be seen as making any judgements regarding the intrinsic value of the world language proficiency requirement; we recognize that this is an academic question, and as such the purview of the CGEC, University Senate, and the faculty as a whole.

Having said that, we also recognize that academic decisions cannot be divorced from the question of whether or how they can be operationalized in an effective and efficient manner that supports both the curricular intent as well as students' progress towards their degrees. This dilemma is in fact at the root of the existing problem; due to a range of factors, students have been unable to fulfill the world language proficiency requirement in a timely manner as was envisioned when the requirement was adopted.

Given this need to balance pedagogical desires with practical limitations, the Workgroup has outlined a series of alternative solutions to meet its charge of "artculat[ing] how future students can fulfill the world language proficiency requirement, with existing university resources and staffing." Most of these alternatives are predicated on the assumption that, without the availability of additional resources, any sustainable solution must reduce the number of incoming students per year who are required to enroll in 101- and/or 102-level language courses in order to demonstrate world language proficiency. While there may be some limited capacity to increase the number of seats available in these courses, it is likely not enough to fully meet the demand (based on current student demographics and behavior).

Potentially difficult pedagogical or curricular decisions underlie each of the alternatives, and we reiterate that the Workgroup is not advocating any particular position in this regard. Instead, we present the rationale for and implications of the various alternatives, with respect to resourcing and the feasibility of meeting student demand. We further discuss the operational aspects and requirements associated with implementing each alternative.

Finally, the Workgroup acknowledges that our estimates of demand under the various alternatives are built upon a range of (sometimes multiplicative) assumptions or simplifications. Nevertheless, we believe the assumptions are reasonable, and have taken a conservative approach in making and applying them. Moreover, the estimated demands for the various alternatives differ to such an extent that accepting even a significant margin of error does not alter the fundamental patterns among them. We believe it is appropriate to bring forward the best available data in order to most fully evaluate the alternatives as well as ensure that, whatever decision is ultimately made, WKU students will be able to progress in a timely manner.

Data and Analysis

The CGEC recommendation cites data that suggest approximately 7,000 currently-enrolled WKU students have yet to fulfill their world language proficiency requirement; while various estimates have been put forward, reflecting different sets of defining parameters, all suggest that a significant backlog of students has arisen and persisted because student demand for 101- and 102-level language coursework – particularly in French, German, Spanish, and American Sign Language (ASL) – exceeds the available capacity. While the basis for item #1 in the GCEC recommendation, this inequity between demand and capacity also informs the issue of how to meet the needs of students entering WKU in Fall 2018 and beyond.

Size of the Incoming Student Cohort

The table below summarizes the size and relevant make-up of the first-time, first-year entering student cohort over the past five academic years. All are census enrollment values; census data for Spring 2018 are not yet available. The data indicate that the total size of the incoming student class is consistently around 3,300 per academic year; roughly 93% of students enter in the Fall. Of the total class, approximately 5% are international students, most of whom likely are exempt from fulfilling the world language proficiency requirement; this percentage has declined in recent years. As such, a reasonable working estimate for the number of first-time, first-year students each year subject to the world language proficiency requirement is 3,150.

	Domestic Students			International Students			All
Academic Year	Fall	Spring	AY	Fall	Spring	AY	Total
2013-14	2932	136	3068	185	104	289	3357
2014-15	2985	125	3110	131	67	198	3508
2015-16	3042	114	3156	79	38	117	3273
2016-17	3130	91	3221	62	32	94	3315
2017-18	3090			25			
Average	3036.9	117.3	3138.9	96.4	60.3	174.5	3363.3

High School Language Credits

Approximately 11% of first-time, first-year, domestic students enter WKU having earned fewer than two high school credits in world language; of the 3,087 such students who entered WKU in Fall 2017, 340 students fell into this category. Of these, 173 had earned zero to 0.5 language credits in high school, while 167 had earned either one or 1.5 such credits. Assuming a similar distribution of students entering WKU in Spring 2018, this suggests a reasonable estimate of 360 for the number of incoming WKU students who would not be covered under the CGEC's approved recommendation and would therefore still require world language coursework at WKU. Further assuming that these students begin their language study at the 101-level, and that 91% choose to study French, German, Spanish, or ASL, <u>approximately 655 seats per academic year are required in 101/102-level courses in these languages to meet the needs of incoming students who do not have two credits of high school world language</u>.

STAMP Testing

Currently, students may elect to take the STAMP test to demonstrate world language proficiency in lieu of coursework through the 102-level; however, this alternative is not widely used by students. Since fall 2014, when the current world language proficiency requirement was implemented, a total of only 568 students have taken the STAMP test, an average of 142 per year. Of these, 380 (66.9%) were first-year WKU students, while 141 (24.8%) were dual credit students. It is worth noting that the yield rate of dual credit students who ultimately enroll at WKU is 30-40%. On the positive side, the average pass rate of first-year WKU and dual credit students over the period was 79.5% (414 of 521). The STAMP test is available in seven different languages (French, German, Spanish, Italian, Arabic, Chinese, and Japanese); for simplicity, it may be reasonable to assume that most WKU students who take the STAMP test do so in one of the more commonly-taught languages (French, German, Spanish).

Taken together, these data suggest that, currently, <u>only about 85 (2.7%) of the incoming student cohort (142 x 0.669 X 0.795 FTFY + 142 x 0.248 X 0.795 x 0.35 DC = 85 / 3150) might be expected to meet their world language proficiency requirement via the STAMP test</u>. Assuming these students would have otherwise placed into 102-level courses given previous language study while in high school, this number corresponds to approximately 3-4 sections of French, German, Spanish, and/or ASL at the current average seat size of 24.

Estimated Demand

The tables below summarize the number of sections, seats, final enrollments, and Enrollment Ratio (enrollment/seats) in 101- and 102-level world language courses offered by the Department of Modern Languages and the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders over the most recent two semesters (Spring 2017, Fall 2017). Regional campus and online sections are included, but dual credit and on-demand sections are excluded. These data indicate that, while overall Enrollment Ratios would suggest there exists reasonable access to world language classes by students (ERs 0f 76.2% and 80.3% in Spring 2017 and Fall 2017, respectively), the distribution of available seats is decidedly non-random. Enrollment Ratios in French, German, Spanish, and ASL are over 91%, while those in other languages are around 50%. In addition, the majority of enrollments are generated in French, German, Spanish, and ASL classes. Thus, <u>any solution to enable students to fulfill the world language proficiency must be focused primarily on aligning availability and demand in French, German, Spanish, and ASL</u>.

Term	Language	Level	Sections	Seats	Enrollment	Enrollment Ratio
Spring 2017	Arabic	101	2	46	26	56.5%
		102	4	81	37	45.7%
	Chinese	101	2	50	11	22.0%
		102	4	100	24	24.0%
	Japanese	101	1	25	19	76.0%
		102	3	66	40	60.6%
	Korean	101	0	0	0	-
		102	2	50	19	38.0%
	Russian	101	1	25	17	68.0%
		102	3	75	30	40.0%
	French	101	4	110	104	94.5%
		102	4	83	103	124.1%
	German	101	0	0	0	-
		102	4	112	85	75.9%
	Spanish	101	6	167	154	92.2%
		102	19	524	464	88.5%
	ASL	101	0	0	0	-
		102	10	160	156	97.5%
	Total	**101+102**	**69**	**1692**	**1289**	**76.2%**
	A,C,J,K,R	**101**	**6**	**146**	**73**	**50.0%**
		102	**16**	**372**	**150**	**40.3%**
	F,G,S,ASL	**101**	**10**	**277**	**258**	**93.1%**
		102	**37**	**897**	**808**	**90.1%**

Term	Language	Level	Sections	Seats	Enrollment	Enrollment Ratio
Fall 2017	Arabic	101	5	100	52	52.0%
		102	1	20	15	75.0%
	Chinese	101	4	100	34	34.0%
		102	2	50	13	26.0%
	Japanese	101	3	75	45	60.0%
		102	1	15	16	106.7%
	Korean	101	1	25	14	56.0%
		102	0	0	0	-
	Russian	101	2	50	31	62.0%
		102	0	0	0	-
	French	101	4	112	102	91.1%
		102	5	120	121	100.8%
	German	101	2	56	51	91.1%
		102	1	28	22	78.8%
	Spanish	101	6	164	146	89.0%
		102	16	445	397	89.2%
	ASL	101	10	180	178	98.9%
		102	0	0	0	-
	Total	**101+102**	**63**	**1540**	**1237**	**80.3%**
	A,C,J,K,R	**101**	**15**	**350**	**176**	**50.3%**
		102	**4**	**85**	**44**	**51.8%**
	F,G,S,ASL	**101**	**22**	**512**	**477**	**93.2%**
		102	**22**	**593**	**540**	**91.1%**

Combining data from all of the tables above, it is possible to estimate the number of seats needed in French, German, Spanish, and ASL each year to serve a typical incoming first-time, first-year cohort. To do so, we must assume that the distribution of offerings and enrollments among languages and between levels reflects true demand; given the departments' long history of offering world language proficiency courses, this is appropriate (subject to constraints as articulated below).

The data above show that, across the previous two semesters, 443 students enrolled in Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, or Russian courses, and that the distribution between 101- and 102-level classes was nearly 50:50. These data suggest that roughly 7% of the incoming cohort in any given year (222/3150) will elect to study one of these languages, and most will begin at the 101 level. Given that a large number of seats in these language classes are unfilled each semester, it appears that enrollment is not limited by capacity, and thus that this 7% figure is an accurate measure of demand within a typical cohort.

That being the case, the data further suggest that 93% of the typical cohort, or approximately 2,930 students, constitutes the baseline student demand for courses in French, German, Spanish, and ASL. STAMP test data indicate that an average of 85 students per year could be expected to fulfill the world language requirement by taking and passing the optional STAMP test in French, German, or Spanish. This would reduce the student demand to 2,845 students per cohort.

Within these languages, approximately 35% of the enrollments occur in 101-level classes. This might initially suggest that this percentage of students will need to enroll in both 101- and 102-level courses to complete their world language proficiency requirement at WKU. However, as WKU does not currently require students to take a placement test prior to enrolling in world language courses, a significant number of students may enroll in 101-level courses when they could in fact be successful in a 102-level course. Moreover, the current distribution of offerings in 101- vs. 102-level courses is somewhat a function of staffing limitations. Nevertheless, the current situation suggests that a conservative (i.e., high-end) estimate of the number of seats needed in 101/102-level French, German, Spanish, and ASL is 1.35 times the student demand, or 3,880 per academic year.

If a placement test were required as a prerequisite to enrolling in French, German, and Spanish, we would expect some number of students to place directly into 102-level coursework, reducing the percentage of enrollments in 101-level classes; for ASL, it is very rare that students come with prior background in that language, so we can assume all ASL students will begin at the 101 level. While it is difficult to know the percentage of students who would place out of 101-level coursework in French, German, and Spanish, we do know that approximately 11% of students enter WKU with fewer than two credits of high school language, and thus would likely need to begin in a 101-level course. This a low-end estimate of the number of seats needed in 101/102-level French, German, Spanish, and ASL is 1.10 times the student demand, or 3,130 per academic year. The number of seats actually offered over the previous two semesters was 2,279, a deficit of between 851 and 1,601 seats (27.2-41.3%).

Data indicate that 9.5% of students in these classes earn an 'F' or 'W' grade. Given that this is effectively equivalent to the percentage of unfilled seats each semester, it will not separately accounted. Instead, an Enrollment Ratio of 100% will be assumed throughout the remainder of this report.

Program-Specific World Language Requirements

Among the cohort of students enrolling in world language courses, some number of doing so because of program-specific course requirements. The table below shows all undergraduate major and minor programs that include a language requirement of French, German, Spanish, or ASL and, for each, the number of first-time, first-year students and total students enrolled over the last five academic years. For each program, the notations 'M' and 'm' indicate that a language requirement exists for the major and/or minor, respectively. These data indicate that the equivalent of approximately 140 incoming students per year, and 750 students overall, major or minor in programs that require French, German, Spanish, or ASL (typically through the intermediate level). Depending on whether these students begin at the 101- or 102-level, this suggests that 140-280 seats per year in 101/102-level French, German, Spanish, and ASL are needed to meet the demands of incoming students with these declared majors and minors. The total number of seats needed may be somewhat higher, as students may not declare these majors and minors upon initial entry to WKU; in fact, the observation that the total average total number of declared students is greater than four times the average number of first-time, first-year students is suggestive of this being the case. Nevertheless, this estimate range seems reasonable.

Program	Fall 2013		Fall 2014		Fall 2015		Fall 2016		Fall 2017		Average	
	FTFY	All	FYTY	All	FTFY	All	FTFY	All	FTFY	All	FTFY	All
French (M, m)	9	54	6	41	4	21	3	28	7	31	**5.8**	**35.0**
German (M, m)	1	17	0	14	7	22	2	24	0	20	**2.0**	**19.4**
Spanish (M, m)	32	194	30	192	31	203	29	181	26	167	**29.6**	**187.4**
ASL (m)	6	60	8	77	12	91	12	119	14	119	**10.4**	**93.2**
Intl. Affairs (M)	12	63	13	64	20	80	17	90	18	89	**16.0**	**77.2**
Music (M)	52	187	46	182	55	202	62	196	45	183	**52.0**	**190.0**
TESL (m)	4	32	0	33	4	52	4	50	1	34	**2.6**	**201.0**
Intl. Business (M, m)	19	110	18	111	28	113	14	99	28	97	**21.4**	**106.0**
Total	**135**	**717**	**121**	**714**	**161**	**784**	**143**	**787**	**139**	**740**	**139.8**	**748.4**

Enrollment Melt and Potential for Overbooking

The deficit between annual student demand for seats in 101/102-level French, German, Spanish, and ASL and the number of seats offered illustrates the need to either (1) increase capacity or (2) reduce demand. The table below summarizes the Day 1, Day 15, and Census enrollments in 101- and 102-level world language courses in French, German, Spanish, and ASL over the most recent two semesters (Spring 2017, Fall 2017). Unlike many courses across the university, these courses in do not typically experience enrollment melts over the first two weeks of the semester. In fact, in a number of courses over the previous two semesters, Day 15 and Census enrollments were actually higher than Day 1 enrollments, suggesting that (1) there was substantially more demand than could be accommodated by the typical movement of students during the drop-add period, and (2) faculty were trying to respond to individual student requests by increasing course enrollments above capacities set on Day 1. These patterns suggest that there is no real opportunity to address pent-up demand by increasing Day 1 capacity and allowing the enrollment to melt down to an equilibrium number that is pedagogically-preferable.

Term	Language	Level	Day 1 Enrollment	Day 15 Enrollment[1]	Census Enrollment[1]	Day 1 to Day 15 Melt
Spring 2017	French	101	110	108	108	1.2%
		102	85	109	104	- 28.2%
	German	101	-	-	-	-
		102	94	88	88	6.4%
	Spanish	101	179	183	187	-2.2%
		102	527	522	527	0.9%
	ASL	101	-	-	-	-
		102	163	158	158	3.1%
	Total	**101+102**	**1158**	**1168**	**1172**	**-0.9%**
Fall 2017	French	101	112	110	109	1.2%
		102	105	132	129	-25.7%
	German	101	56	57	57	-1.8%
		102	24	23	23	4.4%
	Spanish	101	179	188	187	-5.0%
		102	445	444	450	0.0%
	ASL	101	180	180	180	0.0%
		102	-	-	-	-
	Total	**101+102**	**1101**	**1134**	**1135**	**-3.1%**
[1] Enrollment includes students who withdrew and earned a grade of 'W'						

Benchmark and Peer Institutions

The table below summarizes world language course and/or proficiency requirements for each of WKU's benchmark institutions, as well as the public, four-year institutions in Kentucky. Among this group of 26 institutions, WKU is one of only three in having a university-wide world language proficiency requirement for all undergraduate, degree-seeking students. At most institutions, requirements are college-, degree type-, or program-specific; in general, a world language requirement is common for B.A. degree-seekers, and/or students pursuing degrees in colleges of Arts and Letters or Arts and Sciences. Most institutions have some form of online placement exam, with the opportunity for students to earn validated credit for courses of which they place out. At least three institutions allow sufficiently-high placement scores to satisfy language proficiency requirements.

The University of Kentucky and Northern Kentucky University have an expectation that students come to the university with a background in language study during high school (i.e., are Pre-College Curriculum [PCC] certified), and require one (NKU) or two (UK) semesters of baccalaureate language courses if they do not. As such, both institutions allow high school credits earned to exempt students from college-level language coursework; at least three other institutions also accept high school language credits as sufficient to wholly or partially fulfill the world language requirement.

University (Carnegie Basic Classification)	University Requirement[1]	Variable Requirement[2]	Online Placement (Test-Out Option)[3]	High School Credits Fulfill Requirement[4]
Appalachian State (M1)	No	All BA	Yes (Credit only)	
Ball State (R2)	No	All BA and some BS	Yes (Credit only)	
Bowling Green State (R2)	No	By college	Yes ( )	
Central Michigan (R2)	No			
East Carolina (R2)	No	All BA and one BS	Yes (Credit only)	No
East Tennessee State (R3)	No	All BA	Yes (No)	
Florida Atlantic (R2)	No	All BA and most BS	Option (No)	No
Illinois State (R2)	No	By college	Option (Varies)	3 years fulfills req.
Indiana State (R3)	101/102 or two 101	N/A	Yes (Credit only)	2 years fulfills req.
James Madison (M1)	No	All BA and one BS	Yes (No)	
Middle Tennessee State (R3)	No	All BA	Yes (Credit only)	
Northern Illinois (R2)	No	All BA	Yes (Yes)	
Ohio (R2)	No	All BA and BS	Yes (Yes)	
Towson (M1)	No	By program	Yes ( )	
North Carolina Charlotte (R2)	No	By program	Option (Yes)	3 years beg. level
North Carolina Greensboro (R2)	No	By college/program	Yes (Yes)	
South Alabama (R2)	No	By college	Yes (Yes)	
Southern Mississippi (R2)	No	By program	No	Partial - Placement
Eastern Kentucky (M1)	No	By program	Option (Credit only)	
Kentucky State (B:D)	Two courses	N/A	No	No
Morehead State (M1)	No		Option (Credit only)	
Murray State (M1)	No	All BA	Yes (Credit only)	
Northern Kentucky (M1)	No (unless non-PCC)	No	Yes (Credit only)	Yes (PCC)
Kentucky (R1)	No (unless non-PCC)	By college	Yes (No)	Yes (PCC)
Louisville (R1)	No	By program	Yes (Credit only)	
WKU (M1)	**Novice High / 102**	**N/A**	**Option (Credit only)**	**Provisionally**
[1] Refers to a specific world language requirement for all students; a number of institutions allow world languages courses to fulfill Humanities- or Diversity-related categorical requirements in General Education. [2] Does not include degree programs in world language disciplines [3] Refers to a required or optional placement test, and whether placement scores can be used to earned validated credit or to fulfill requirements in lieu of any coursework [4] Refers to fulfillment of a university or college/degree type/program requirement; does not include AP, dual-credit, or CLEP-based fulfillment of requirements				

Alternatives

Based on the estimated student demand and logistical considerations described above, the Workgroup has developed four alternative approaches to enable future students to fulfill the world language proficiency requirement, with existing university resources and staffing. Below we summarize these alternatives, and discuss the implications of each. The ordering of these alternatives does not imply preference, but rather the degree to which current demand would be reduced if adopted.

1. Eliminate world language proficiency as a university requirement, and allow colleges, departments, and programs to establish their own requirements for world language proficiency.

Estimated demand in 101/102-level French, German, Spanish, and ASL: 140-280 seats per year
Implementation timeframe: Fall 2018

This alternative would eliminate the current world language proficiency requirement as a graduation requirement for all baccalaureate degree-seeking students, and instead allow individual colleges and/or programs to determine an appropriate level of requisite language study for their majors. Adopting this alternative would align WKU with the majority of our benchmark and peer institutions.

The estimated demand of 140-180 seats per year in 101/102-level French, German, Spanish, and ASL is the Fall 2017 number of declared majors and minors in programs that require world language study in one of these disciplines. This alternative could be readily accommodated going forward with current staffing and space levels, while offering the contributing departments the opportunity to explore other types of course offerings or pedagogical best practices (e.g., decreased class sizes) to enhance the demand for or quality of language instruction. However, it would also likely result in reduced student credit hour production, and the concomitant need for fewer section offerings, until such time that new initiatives were implemented and fully mature.

Adopting this alternative would likely lead to a shift in the approach by which contributing departments recruited students into their courses and programs. The elimination of a student pipeline into language courses would require or encourage the departments to adopt a more proactive, outward-facing approach, and specifically to forge partnerships with other academic departments to identify additional programs for which a world language requirement would be relevant and beneficial to students' professional preparation. Integration of such requirements need not require programs to add to or replace credits required for the major, but could involve development of major+minor combinations; development of world language certificates might be another option. Review of the variable requirements at WKU's benchmark and peer institutions indicates that, when world language is a requirement, the extent of language study is typically through the intermediate level (i.e., greater than WKU's current university requirement). In addition to mitigating SCH loss, a similar result at WKU would shift the distribution of credit hours taught within the contributing departments towards higher-level courses. In addition, a proactive approach would enable departments offering world language courses to be directly involved in curricular decision-making that would affect their SCH demand and ability to meet that demand.

All policies and systems necessary to operationalize this alternative are in place. Major and minor program requirements (including world language) are reflected in iCAP. Advisors (as well as the student) can readily ascertain the student's status with respect to fulfilling program requirements by running an iCAP report.

Given the favorable balance of capacity vs. demand, students could readily be expected to complete 101/102-level coursework within a reasonable timeframe (optimally within their first two semesters), which would serve to expose students to language study early in their careers (potentially serving to recruit language majors or minors) and provide sufficient time for students for students to complete any intermediate-level requirements that may be adopted by colleges or programs.

While there are no current CPE or SACSCOC limitations to adopting this alternative, it should be noted that there is currently a revised set of Administrative Recommendations regarding admission to Kentucky public universities under consideration. If adopted, these could require students with fewer than two credits of high school language or Novice-High proficiency to undertake college-level language instruction. In this case, Alternative 1 would be superseded by Alternative 2 (below).

2. Extend to degree-seeking students with catalog years of 2018-19 and beyond the GCEC's approved recommendation that students with two credits (or equivalent) of high school world language be considered to have fulfilled the world language proficiency requirement at WKU.

Estimated demand in 101/102-level French, German, Spanish, and ASL: 795 seats per year
Implementation timeframe: Fall 2018

This alternative would continue the practice set forth in Recommendation 1 of the approved December 2017 CGEC resolution. Adopting this alternative going forward would align WKU's policy with that of the University of Kentucky and Northern Kentucky University, while maintaining WKU's relative distinctiveness in having a world language proficiency requirement for all baccalaureate degree-seeking students. Like the University of Kentucky, under this alternative world language proficiency would be considered a prerequisite expectation for students entering the university; college-level coursework would only be required for students who did not earn that preparation in high school.

Data provided by Institutional Research indicate that 340 domestic freshmen (< 30 earned hours) enrolled at WKU who had less than two years of high school world language; extrapolating this distribution to Spring 2018 results in an estimate of 360 incoming first-time, first-year students per academic year. These individuals constitute the subset of incoming students who would need to fulfill the world language proficiency requirement through coursework taken at WKU. Assuming such students begin language study at WKU at the 101-level yields an estimated demand for 670 seats per year in 101/102 French, German, Spanish, and ASL courses (360 x 2 x 0.93).

Factoring in the estimated number of students who will declare majors or minors that require world language coursework increases this demand estimate somewhat. If we assume that, of the estimated 140 such students per year, 11% (n = 15) enter WKU having earned fewer than two high school language credits (and thus fall into the group described in the previous paragraph), approximately 125 students (89%) will likely enroll in one semester of introductory world language coursework in French, German, Spanish, or ASL. Therefore, the estimated demand in 101/102-level courses in these four languages under this alternative is 795 seats per year.

This alternative could be accommodated going forward with current staffing and space levels, while likely offering the contributing departments the opportunity to explore other types of course offerings or pedagogical best practices (e.g., decreased class sizes) to enhance the demand for or quality of language instruction. In addition, it could create opportunities for development of partnerships with other academic departments to identify additional programs for which a world language requirement would be relevant and beneficial to students' professional preparation, as described for Alternative 1 above. However, it would also likely result in reduced student credit hour production, and the concomitant need for fewer section offerings, until such time that new initiatives were implemented and fully mature.

All policies and systems necessary to operationalize this alternative have been established, as a result of implementation of the approved December 2017 CGEC resolution. Once a student is admitted and provides an official high school transcripts, his/her number of high school language credits earned is coded in Banner; this automatically updates the 'Language Proficient' field, as well as the iCAP record. Advisors can readily ascertain a student's status via the General Student Information screen in TopNet or by running an iCAP report. An admitted student without an official transcript on file is automatically emailed and asked to submit an official transcript; a student whose transcript shows less than two credits of high school world language is also contacted and prompted to update their transcript on file if and when additional language credits are earned. Students who have been determined to have met the requirement are also informed via email. A report is generated nightly regarding students fulfilling the requirement based on the high school transcript review.

Given the favorable balance of capacity vs. demand, students needing 101/102-level coursework could readily be expected to fulfill their world language proficiency requirement within a reasonable timeframe (e.g., optimally within their first two semesters), and enrollment in such courses could be prioritized similarly to the manner in which developmental/supplemental coursework in English, math and reading is addressed.

3. Implement an online placement test as a means of ensuring students are enrolled in appropriate course level, as well as allow significantly more students to demonstrate world language proficiency without the need for 101- and/or 102-level language coursework.

Estimated demand in 101/102-level French, German, Spanish, and ASL: 2,013-2,264 seats per year
Implementation timeframe: Fall 2019

This alternative is based on the implementation of a required, online placement exam for incoming first-time, first-year students interested in fulfilling their world language proficiency requirement through 101/102-level coursework in French, German, or Spanish (ASL is specifically not included here – rationale follows below). The placement test would be used both to ensure that students were enrolled in the appropriate course level, and also offer a test-out provision for students scoring at or above a pre-determined threshold; such students would be considered to have fulfilled their world language proficiency requirement without the need to enroll in college-level coursework. Students interested in undertaking placement (or even test-out) in other languages could to reach out to the offering department(s) on a case-by-case basis, as is currently done. The majority of WKU's benchmark and peer institutions utilize either a required or optional placement test for one or more of these purposes.

<u>Test Instrument and Proposed Administration</u>

Initially, either the AVANT Place test – including Unscored Writing, Reading Comprehension, and Reading Grammar sections – or a similarly-structured, faculty-developed test are envisioned as the test instrument. Either test would be able to be completed by students online without the need for microphone or speakers, and would require approximately 30 minutes to complete. Currently, and expanded version of AVANT Place, including additional sections, is available to but seldom used by WKU students; the test results are coded in Banner for use in placement.

The possibility exists for WKU to contract with AVANT to purchase individual login access codes in bulk, which would reduce the cost to students to approximately $8 each; a locally-developed instrument could be offered at no cost to students. Incoming students could be required to take the placement test as part of their registration for a TOP session, as currently is the case for the Math Placement Test; in this case, any cost could be incorporated into the TOP fee. Students would be prompted to take the placement test based on the following series of questions (numbers in brackets indicate the estimated number of students falling into a given category each year):

1. Are you an international student for whom the world language proficiency requirement is waived?
    - If yes, no placement test required [n = 150]
2. Have you already fulfilled the world language proficiency requirement through the STAMP test, AP credit, International baccalaureate, or other documented means?
    - If yes, no placement test required [n= 85]
3. Do you want to start learning a new language that you have not studied previously (including ASL)?
    - If yes, no placement test required [n = 591+180 = 771]
4. Did you earn fewer than two credits of world language in high school?
    - If yes, no placement test required [n = 283, excluding those covered under 3 above]
5. Did you earn two or more credits of world language in high school and want to continue studying that language?
    - If yes, placement test required [n = 2011]

Placement test results would be immediately available to students and WKU. Assuming the placement test were completed at or near the time a student registers for a TOP session, there would be sufficient time for the student to be pre-registered prior to coming to TOP. Test results would be valid for one calendar year.

Placement Levels and Estimated Demand

The data above suggest that approximately 2,011 students out of the total first-time, first-year cohort of 3,300 would be required to take the placement test each year. Of these, some number would place into 101-level coursework, while others would place into 102-level sections. Those with the highest scores would be considered to have demonstrated the requisite proficiency and thus have fulfilled the world language proficiency requirement.

Of the approximately 2,279 seats in 101/102-level French, German, Spanish, and ASL offered each academic year, 566 (283 X 2) are estimated to be needed to serve students who enter WKU with fewer than two credits of high school language. In addition, an additional 340 (seats 180 Fall + 160 Spring) are needed for students interested in pursuing ASL. This leaves approximately 1,373 seats to meet the needs of the 2,011 students expected to take the placement test in French, German, or Spanish each year.

Assuming the number of seats needed per student to be between 1.10 and 1.35, this suggests that there exists the capacity to serve 1,017-1,248 of these students in 101/102-level coursework. As such, the percentage of students who score high enough on the placement to test-out of the world language proficiency requirement would have to be 38-49%.

The scoring and placement criteria currently utilized by the Department of Modern Languages for the optional AVANT Place test are as follows:

Score	Proficiency	WKU Equivalent	Placement
2	Novice-Mid	101	102
3	Novice-High	102	201
4	Intermediate-Low	201	202
5	Intermediate-Mid/High	202	300-level
6	Advanced	400-level	See advisor

Data available from AVANT indicate that the national median score for students who have completed two years of high school language is 3, corresponding to the Novice-High level of proficiency. Moreover, results derived from WKU students who chose to take the STAMP test (an expanded version of the AVANT Place test) indicate that over 79% of students score high enough to test-out of the world language proficiency requirement. It is important to note that this pass rate is likely inflated somewhat due to the self-selection bias of students choosing to take the STAMP test; the average ACT score of STAMP test takers at WKU is 26, which is higher than the average ACT of 23 which is typical of the incoming first-time, first-year class. Taken together, the available data suggest that it is reasonable to assume that 50% or more of the estimated 2,011 placement test-takers could be expected to test-out of the world language proficiency requirement. Nevertheless, it will be necessary to conduct a pilot assessment during Summer 2018 in order to establish empirical data on the performance of incoming WKU students and thus fully establish the feasibility of this alternative.

Assuming a 50% test-out rate, and accounting for the seats needed to accommodate students entering WKU with fewer than two credits of high school language and those interested in studying ASL, the estimated demand in 101/102-level courses in French, German, Spanish, and ASL under this alternative is 2,013-2,264 seats per year; the range in the estimate is based on the assumption of 1.10-1.35 seats per student among those who take the placement test and do not test-out.

Practical Considerations

While this alternative may prove workable given the scoring assumptions made as well as current staffing levels, it becomes less so if staffing resources decrease. There is some indication that the Department of Modern Languages may lose one Instructor position in Spanish beginning Fall 2018; such individuals typically carry a 5:5 workload, which would decrease seats available in 101/102-level Spanish by 140 per semester, or 280 per academic year. In addition, two additional positions (one each in Spanish and ASL) have not been confirmed for 2018-19.

The Department of Modern Languages has examined their staffing allocation model, and projected an ability to offer 1,792 seats in 101/102-level French, German, and Spanish for 2018-19 and beyond; coupled with 340 seats available in ESL, this provides 2,132 seats in these four languages, a slight decrease over current levels. Existing capacity in the less-commonly taught languages of Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Russian provides some opportunity to proactively encourage students to study these languages and thus reduce demand in French, German, Spanish, and ASL.

In addition to the pilot assessment, implementation of this alternative would require some changes to existing systems and processes. While data from the currently-available STAMP test are automatically populated in Banner, some coding would be required to adapt this process for a more structured placement test expectation. In addition, processes to incorporate language placement testing into TOP, including handling of any testing fee and associated student logins, would require additional discussion with the Office of Admissions and others. Fall 2018 incoming students have already begun to register for TOP dates; at this point, students have already committed to at least the first four sessions (i.e., through April 28).

As such, a realistic implementation date for this alternative would be for the Fall 2019 entering class. This would necessitate discussion and a decision regarding how students in the 2018-19 entering class could fulfill the world language proficiency requirement; i.e., whether or not to continue the practice of allowing two credits of high school language to fulfill the requirement. While strong arguments can be made in either case, from a practical standpoint, if the ability to use high school credits to fulfill the requirement were not maintained through the transition year, a backlog of 2018-19 incoming students unable to register for language courses would likely re-arise and need to be accounted for once full implementation of this alternative begins in Fall 2019.

Another key element in the feasibility of this alternative is to prioritize the expectation that students will complete their world language proficiency requirement within their first three semesters, and to establish regular tracking and accountability associated with that expectation. If students choose to delay or are unable to enroll in world language study, it is possible that a backlog of students will re-arise over time. To avoid reaching the same type of pinch-point that led to the CGEC's December 2017 resolution, it will be important to regularly monitor the progress of students in fulfilling the requirement. The CGEC would seem to be an appropriate group to receive such status reports.

Proposed Implementation Process and Timeline

Timeframe	Task and Deliverables	Completion/Report-out Targets
February-March 2018	1. Establish Project Management Teams 2. Develop or identify test instrument 3. Work with IT and others to create online access point with student questionnaire and automated reporting	1. February 23, 2018 2. March 16, 2018 3. March 30, 2018 Progress report to CGEC at its April meeting
March-May 2018	1. Conduct pilot assessment in two area high schools (n = 50+) 2. Analyze data to establish initial cuts scores/percentiles	1. April 20, 2018 2. May 18, 2018
May-June 2018	1. Revise test instrument as necessary 2. Work with Admissions to conduct pilot assessment during one or more TOP sessions (n = 200+)	1. June 1, 2018 2. June 14 and/or June 28, 2018
July-August 2018	1. Analyze data to finalize test instrument and establish cut scores/percentiles 2. Present findings to language faculty and develop final proposal related to use of placement test	1. July 20, 2018 2. August 17, 2018 Progress report to CGEC at its September meeting
September-December 2018	1. Work with Admissions, IT, AARC and others to integrate placement test into TOP 2. Work with Admissions to make recruits and high schools aware of the placement test requirement	1. December 14, 2018 2. December 14, 2018 Progress updates to CGEC at each monthly meeting
March-July 2018	1. Implement placement test through TOP and use results to pre-register Fall 2019 incoming students	1. August 16, 2019

4. Substantially increase the number of seats available in 101- and/or 102-level language courses.

Estimated demand in 101/102-level French, German, Spanish, and ASL: 3,130-3,880 seats per year
Implementation timeframe: Unknown

This alternative would continue the current world language proficiency requirement, but rescind the opportunity for students to use two credits of a single high school language as a means of fulfilling the requirement. As such, the estimated student demand in French, German, Spanish, and ASL would be a direct function of the size of the first-time, first-year student class. Based on the data presented above, taking into account all opportunities for students to fulfill the requirement (excluding use of high school credits), this demand would exceed current offerings by approximately 1,100-1,840 seats (35-47%) annually.

This deficit is substantial, and likely the root of the backlog recently addressed by the adopted CGEC resolution. In order to fully serve the incoming student cohort, based on the adjusted estimated demand of 3,130-3,880 seats per year:
  a. The number of course sections of French, German, Spanish, and ASL, maintaining the current average number of seats of 24 per section, would need to be increased from 91 to 130-162, a 43-78% increase.
  b. The average seats per section in French, German, Spanish, and ASL, maintaining the current total number of sections at 91, would need to be increased from 24 to 35-43, a 46-79% increase.
  c. A total of 92-114 sections of French, German, Spanish, and ASL would be required, if average seats per section were increased from 24 to 34 (halfway between the current 24 and the 43 proposed in b above).

Current staffing would seem to preclude Option a; given an average 4:4 workload, adding sufficient additional sections would require five to nine additional full-time equivalent positions. Alternatively, workload of current faculty would be increased substantially. Space utilization data (not shown) suggest that finding classroom space to offer these additional sections would be challenging, and would require instructors to teach in buildings other than those currently used.

Similarly, Option b is problematic from the perspective of pedagogical best practice, as well as space availability. A class size of 44 students per section would seem to dramatically reduce the opportunity for engaged, participatory learning that is essential for success in language learning; for this same reason, shifting sections from face-to-face to online delivery mode would not yield additional capacity. Moreover, increasing class size by this magnitude would require the majority of 101/102-level courses in French, German, Spanish, and ASL to be relocated from the classrooms in which they are currently taught. This would create significant disruption of class scheduling not only for the departments directly involved, but also for other departments whose typically-assigned classrooms would need to be utilized instead for language classes.

Option c presents similar challenges to both Option a and Option b. Added full-time equivalent faculty would be required to staff the additional sections required, class size would be increased by 41%, and classroom reshuffling would still be required.

An expanded emphasis on dual credit instruction in the high schools could reduce demand among incoming first-year students. This would be valuable from the standpoint of promoting the value of language instruction across the state, as well as the professional development of high school teachers; however, it is not clear that such an initiative would (at least in the near term) be of sufficient scale to meaningfully impact the annual capacity deficit. During Spring 2017 and Fall 2017, 19 sections of 101/102-level French, German, and Spanish served 349 high school students across 9 different schools in Kentucky. Given that typically only 30-40% of dual-credit students ultimately enroll at WKU as first-time, first-year students, any initiative to reduce demand through expanded dual-credit offerings would have to be a significant strategic priority for the university, and one that emphasized significantly increasing the number of schools offering dual-credit language instruction on a regular basis; cultivating these relationships would incur additional resource costs for the institution, and may be dependent upon staffing and other dynamics within the schools and school districts that are outside of WKU's control. In addition, trends in dual credit enrollments are somewhat dependent upon statewide priorities as established through the legislative process, which introduces another external dynamic that may be hard to anticipate going forward.

The Workgroup's charge was to explore alternatives that did not depend on additional university resources, including full-time and part-time teaching personnel. But even if this constraint were not to exist, there exists a limited pool of qualified and

appropriately-credentialed individuals from which to draw part-time instructors. For individuals without a doctoral degree in the discipline, or master's degree that includes at least 18 graduate hours in the discipline, SACSCOC requires documentation of both competency in the content areas as well as pedagogical training; being a native or fluent speaker/signer is not considered sufficient by itself to credential an instructor. As such, it is unlikely that the estimated demand could be fully accommodated through the scheduling of additional sections, even if space and budgetary resources were not limiting. Moreover, if staffing levels were to decrease in the near term, this alternative becomes even less feasible.

Inclusion of a placement test with a test-out option (as described in Alternative 3 above) would reduce the demand somewhat. However, even under the most optimistic combination of assumptions, it is likely that demand would still exceed capacity.

Given all of the uncertainties regarding this alternative, it is impossible to establish a clear implementation timeframe for this alternative.

Endnote

This concludes the report of the World Language Proficiency Workgroup. The document is respectfully submitted to the Colonnade General Education Committee as charged in its December 2017 resolution.