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December 2, 2005

To: Ralph Putnam, Chairperson  
University Committee on Academic Policy (UCAP)

From: Michael G. Schechter, Chairperson  
University Committee on Curriculum (UCC)

Ref: Tier II Writing Requirement in Modern Languages

Because the UCC keeps getting course and curricular requests relating to Tier II writing courses in modern languages, we are requesting that you follow up on your discussion from September 30, 2004.

At that meeting, UCAP "decided that significant discussion on the issue [i.e., the intent of the Tier II writing requirement] would be delayed until UCAP reviews the Writing Task Force recommendations. The committee agreed to acknowledge and allow the teaching of Tier II writing in the Modern Languages in languages other than English, and consider other interpretations of the Tier II policy as appropriate after the Writing Task Force recommendations are made."

Those Writing Task Force made its recommendations last spring and, to the best of my knowledge, did not address Tier II writing in the Modern Languages in languages other than English. It also appears that the recently concluded writing subcommittee of the Working Group to Improve Undergraduate Education has not addressed this issue either.

There seem two issues here. The first is the interpretation of the Tier II Writing Requirement. The second is that the modern language departments are not adhering to the College of Arts and Letters' "College Specific Tier II Writing Criteria", which state: "5. Students must produce edited English that communicates effectively in their field before they receive a passing grade for the [Tier II] course."

Given the UCAP decision of last fall, the UCC has been allowing the modern language courses to continue to pass Tier II classes through the system as that appeared to comply with the spirit of UCAP's decision.

I look forward to hearing from you further on this matter.

c: Members of Subcommittee D, University Committee on Curriculum  
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