

“On October 2nd, 2019 the Faculty members of the Department of Modern Languages at Central Connecticut State University held a vote to change the name of said Department to:

“Department of World Languages, Literatures, and Cultures”

Such a name best describes what our department does (i.e., the study of languages, literatures, and cultures other than English); follows the trend of other universities around the country, and fits the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages' (ACTFL) definition of World Languages:

“...a form of communication, essential to the culture of a community, with a system of sounds, letters, symbols, and/or signs recognized and utilized by humans. A world language fulfills **all** the following criteria, distinguishing it from other forms of communication:

A world language is...

- a form of human communication used to interact and negotiate meaning with other people, to understand and analyze oral, written, or signed texts, and to create culturally-appropriate oral, written, or signed products and presentations for a specific audience and task.
- a form of human communication that allows the user to investigate, explain, and reflect on the relationship between the products, practices, and perspectives of a particular culture through the language. When using a world language, people employ intercultural skills, insight, and perspectives to decide how and when to express what to whom.
- a form of human communication that allows people to exchange information about past, present, and future shared experiences, make arguments, empathize with other people, and creatively express themselves orally, visually, or in writing on a variety of topics.
- a means of human communication through which people can share stories relevant to the culture and community, whether ancient or modern.
- a vehicle of human communication through which people may be immersed in a specific language community, whether ancient or modern.”

(<https://www.actfl.org/news/position-statements/what-world-language>)

Our Department currently teaches ten languages (Arabic, ASL, Chinese, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Latin, Polish, and Spanish), and emphasizes written, oral, and signed communication as a way to both exchange information with speakers of these languages, and to understand their ways of life through the study of their cultural products, practices, and perspectives, especially, literature.

The proposal was discussed over several weeks and was passed unanimously at the last departmental meeting. For these reasons, we respectfully request that the Curriculum Committee approves the name “Department of World Languages, Literatures, and Cultures”