

Appeal Document for World Languages, Literatures, and Linguistics

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1. Relevance of world languages, cultures, and linguistics at WVU as a land-grant university

Proposal for WLLL's transformation

WLLL is not advocating to maintain the unit as is. [The department acknowledges the need to contribute to university RIFs in order to fulfill the university's goals.](#) Radically different plans to do so are outlined in the last part of the document, with substantial cost-savings to the university. Note that we are not requesting to retain the current MA programs as they are, which would result in additional substantial savings (current GTA expenditures for our WLLL GTAs is around \$650,000/FY, including fringe). Details of three options of how to move forward are presented at the end of the document. The summary of these options are as follows:

- Option 1: Retaining WLLL with a new innovative major and some minors
- Option 2: Combining with another unit, keeping minors
- Option 3: Academic support unit – combine world languages and cultures with ELLI

World Languages, cultures, and linguistics as imperative for WVU's mission

- “As a land-grant institution, the faculty, staff and students at West Virginia University commit to creating a [diverse and inclusive culture](#) that advances education, healthcare and prosperity for all by providing [access and opportunity](#); by advancing high-impact research; and by leading transformation in West Virginia and the world through local, state and [global engagement](#).”
- Our unit contributes to a diverse and inclusive culture, the promotion of access and opportunity, and global engagement by:
 - Exposing students to cultural diversity and the ability to communicate within those cultures;
 - Improving employability through a unique skill set as well as an improvement in “soft skills” including presenting, writing, and communicating;
 - Providing students with the ability to engage both culturally and linguistically in the global workplace;
 - Increasing the competitiveness for prestigious scholarships: languages make applicants for all scholarships more competitive, but are especially important for Fulbright, Boren, and Critical Language Fellowship (www.aspire.wvu.edu, also see support letter);
 - Maintaining WVU's eligibility for Phi Beta Kappa: WVU is the only chapter in WV and would be in danger of losing the chapter if we don't offer languages. The national PBK leaders have confirmed that no chapter has ever eliminated all language instruction at the institution, as indicated in their letter of support: “We are aware, as you keenly are, that universities face extraordinary challenges in remaining fiscally responsible while providing robust educational opportunity. In recent years, other Phi Beta Kappa institutions have made difficult cuts to programs in the arts and sciences for this exact reason. However, elimination of a world language department in its entirety would be unprecedented at a Phi Beta Kappa chapter institution.”

World languages, cultures, and linguistics as imperative for WVU's ability to maintain R1 status

- There is only one R1 university in the United States that does not offer courses in world languages (data received from the MLA for Fall 2021);
 - New Jersey Institute of Technology <https://www.njit.edu/>
 - Total enrollment is about 12,000 with about 9,000 undergraduates
 - MLA language map data (unpublished so far) - Fall 2021
- R1s have language and culture classes because they are crucial to maintaining the R1 status:
 - We have letters of support from different WVU units attesting to this:

- Excerpt from Physics chair support letter, signed by STEM faculty: “Eliminating WLLL will weaken many programs and WVU’s status as a leading land-grant institution, and irreversibly damage our reputation and standing in the international scientific community.”
 - Excerpt from History and Political Science support letter: with regards to graduate programs, “It will limit our ability to recruit graduate students whose research requires language study, since we would be the only graduate programs in the country that did not offer such training.” With regards to undergraduate recruitment: “Eradicating the teaching of world languages at WVU will put our institution at a structural disadvantage with respect to other regional universities with whom we are competing to attract students.”
 - Excerpt from Honor’s college letter: “We are concerned that the wholesale elimination of any live, in-person instruction of foreign languages on our campus would undercut the Honors College’s ability to recruit certain high-achieving students.”
- There is also national recognition of the role of languages, cultures, and linguistics in R1 institutions: Excerpt from MLA letter: “Because we monitor the status of language and literature departments across the nation and conduct a regular census of language enrollments, I can tell you that no other state flagship university has forsaken language education for its students or made the kinds of cuts to the humanities that WVU is undertaking. Such cuts dramatically narrow educational opportunities not just for humanities students but for STEM and business students as well. All students’ job prospects and lives are enriched by language study, writing instruction, and the research and analytical skills taught in beginning and advanced literature and culture courses” (Modern Language Associate letter of support).

Economic benefits of language learning

There is ample evidence of the economic benefits of language learning and the intercultural competence that comes with it. Below are a few examples taken from the letters of support included in the supporting documents in this appeal.

- “Noted leaders in American business, national security, and the military have all supported recent national efforts to strengthen language education to grow economic competitiveness, confront global challenges, and build military and diplomatic effectiveness. The Department of Defense spent \$107 million on foreign language bonus pay in FY2018 for more than 35,000 joint personnel, keeping 120 foreign languages and dialects on retainer across a broad spectrum of missions around the world. Additionally, a survey conducted by Ipsos Public Affairs found that nine out of ten U.S. employers report a reliance on U.S.-based employees with language skills other than English, with one-third (32 percent) reporting a high dependency. Learning language first-hand, in an interactive classroom setting, is critical to the furtherance of these goals” (Phi Beta Kappa Honor’s Society national office).
- “In the August 11 edition of WVUToday, you state that you “must have the programs and majors that are most relevant to [our students’ and our state’s] needs and the future needs of industry.” Although industry is an important part of our society, the main goal of corporations is to build profit for shareholders, and not to do what is in the best interests of the state and its citizenry. While a university education is not intended to be a vocational training program, it is nonetheless important to prepare students to be productive members of society, both as employees and entrepreneurs, and the needs of industry will be inadequately met if the state’s flagship university can no longer produce graduates who can communicate in other languages” (California State University world languages council, representing 23 California State campuses).
- “To put it bluntly, cutting language education will make WVU graduates less able to compete in the global job market. Recent findings by ACTFL and New American Economy indicate that language skills place multilingual job candidates at a distinct competitive advantage over their monolingual peers—

whether these individuals plan to enter the workforce immediately upon graduation or to seek an advanced degree. In fact, when surveyed, most U.S. employers across multiple sectors anticipate their demand for multilingual employees to increase in the next five years” (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, ACTFL).

Also of note: As indicated by the [U.S. Census Bureau](#), by 2060, 28% of the population of the United States will be Spanish speakers, with a [variety of other languages](#) spoken nationwide.

2. Overview of WLLL: Who we serve and what we do

Financial and enrollment profile

- WLLL consistently operates at a profit (\$871,384, 3-year average net expenses)
- SCH decrease was one of the lowest of all Eberly units reviewed and lower than many other units not reviewed. The only other department slated for complete elimination, Public Administration, had the greatest decline in SCH (see table);

Department	SCH								
	2020	2021	2022	SCH change 22-20		%dec/incr		3-yr av net expenses	Review?
Eberly									
Social work	6,731	7,378	7,446	715	1.10622	-0.1062249	10.6% increase	-301,153	No
WGSTs	5,448	5,515	5,938	490	1.08994	-0.0899413	9.0% increase	1,129,297	Yes
Forensics & IS	6,903	7,308	7,138	235	1.03404	-0.0340432	3.4% increase	85,472	No
Int'l studies	199	116	194	-5	0.97487	0.0251256	2.5% decrease	44,053	No
Psychology	24,953	22,058	23,719	-1,234	0.95055	0.049453	4.9% decrease	1,683,599	No
Socio and anthro	22,410	22,854	20,650	-1,760	0.92146	0.0785364	7.9% decrease	4,286,679	No
Poli Sci	11,549	10,459	10,505	-1,044	0.9096	0.0903974	9.0% decrease	500,202	No
WLLL	20,954	19,523	18,891	-2,063	0.90155	0.0984538	9.8% decrease	871,384	Yes
Biology	29,555	28,428	26,493	-3,062	0.8964	0.1036035	10.4% decrease	1,120,981	No
Philosophy	11,218	10,115	9,965	-1,253	0.8883	0.1116955	11.2% decrease	1,647,314	Yes
English	29,728	28,521	26,245	-3,483	0.88284	0.1171623	11.7% decrease	2,437,963	Yes
History	14,720	13,676	12,986	-1,734	0.8822	0.1177989	11.8% decrease	1,032,349	No
G&G	15,820	15,560	13,733	-2,087	0.86808	0.1319216	13.2% decrease	228,170	No
Physics & Astron	15,548	15,598	13,212	-2,336	0.84976	0.1502444	15.0% decrease	-2,376,377	No
Chemistry	28,227	27,736	23,387	-4,840	0.82853	0.171467	17.2% decrease	300,466	Yes
Math & DS	58,681	51,067	48,570	-10,111	0.8277	0.1723045	17.2% decrease	7,940,341	Yes
Comm studies	25,360	23,792	20,909	-4,451	0.82449	0.1755126	17.6% decrease	6,782,093	Yes
Public admin	1,857	2,060	1,492	-365	0.80345	0.1965536	19.7% decrease	-613,907	Yes

- \$1.3 million decrease in expenses from FY23 to FY24;
- WLLL has received a total of \$1,136,395 in external grants in AY 2022-23, an amount unprecedented in the humanities;
- 13 faculty positions already eliminated or soon to be eliminated;
- Reduction in GTA positions;
- Projected savings to university for 2024, including all savings measures (details in self-study): **\$2,713,688.74;**

- Enrollment trends:
 - Enrollment in WLLL classes for Fall 2023 is almost identical to Fall 2022, despite a decrease in overall student enrollment at WVU;
 - Increase of 23 majors from Fall 2022 to Fall 2023;
 - Number of minors in WLLL: 268 as of Fall 2023
 - Additional students have asked to declare majors and minors recently but have been blocked from doing so;
 - Enrollments of 2,832 students in our Fall 2023 classes (this number includes undergraduate students at all levels and graduate students);
 - Enrollments of 2,640 students in all of our undergraduate classes;
 - Enrollments of 2,052 students in our 101-204 language classes.

3. Evidence of student demand for WLLL courses, even without the language requirement

One of the main premises of eliminating all WLLL courses is the assumption that students are only taking the classes because of the Eberly BA requirement. As such, we pulled numbers from Argos to obtain the profiles of all students enrolled in all of our classes to gauge student demand, regardless of the requirement. We also collected additional Qualtrics data from approximately 1755 of the students currently enrolled in our undergraduate classes to obtain further details about student demand for language and culture classes at WVU.

Universities without university-wide foreign language requirements, as cited by WVU

From our other institutions, focusing on the ones that have been publicly indicated by WVU university relations announcements, we know that eliminating the overarching language requirement does not mean eliminating program-specific requirements, language programs themselves, and certainly not all language and culture classes taught. A statement from George Washington University sent to Gee, Reed, and the BOG illustrates this point: “It bears underlining that the justifications advanced by WVU’s leadership to promote this closure are based on demonstrably false pretenses. The George Washington University HAS NOT fully eliminated the language requirement: to achieve our mission to educate the international leaders of tomorrow, students in our Elliott School of International Affairs are required to achieve competency equivalent to 6 semesters of language study. And in keeping with the skills and approaches required to conduct work in their disciplines with integrity and intellectual rigor, certain majors in GW’s Columbian College of Arts and Sciences, such as anthropology and archaeology, require 4 semesters of language study, while other majors, such as history, strongly recommend language study. More broadly, students in our Columbian College are also required to take classes with a global or cross-cultural perspective as part of their general education requirements. Indeed, one of the reasons GW has managed to maintain its R1 status is precisely through the high achievement of our students participating in a wide range of research, including in languages and linguistics. Eliminating the program at WVU will put these students at a distinct disadvantage in the job market, as they will be applying against students who benefitted from intensive, effective language and cultural instruction in a classroom environment with professional instructors.” Enrollment data from the MLA language maps database for Fall 2021 are included below.

- George Washington University
 - George Washington University has three separate departments that focus on language and cultural studies:
 - the Department of Romance, German, and Slavic Languages and Literatures
 - the Department of East Asian Literatures
 - the Department of Classical and Near Eastern Languages
 - Note that many other interdisciplinary units involve languages and cultures.
 - There are multiple language majors and minors in these units.
 - Total enrollment in language classes in Fall 2021 was 2,722.

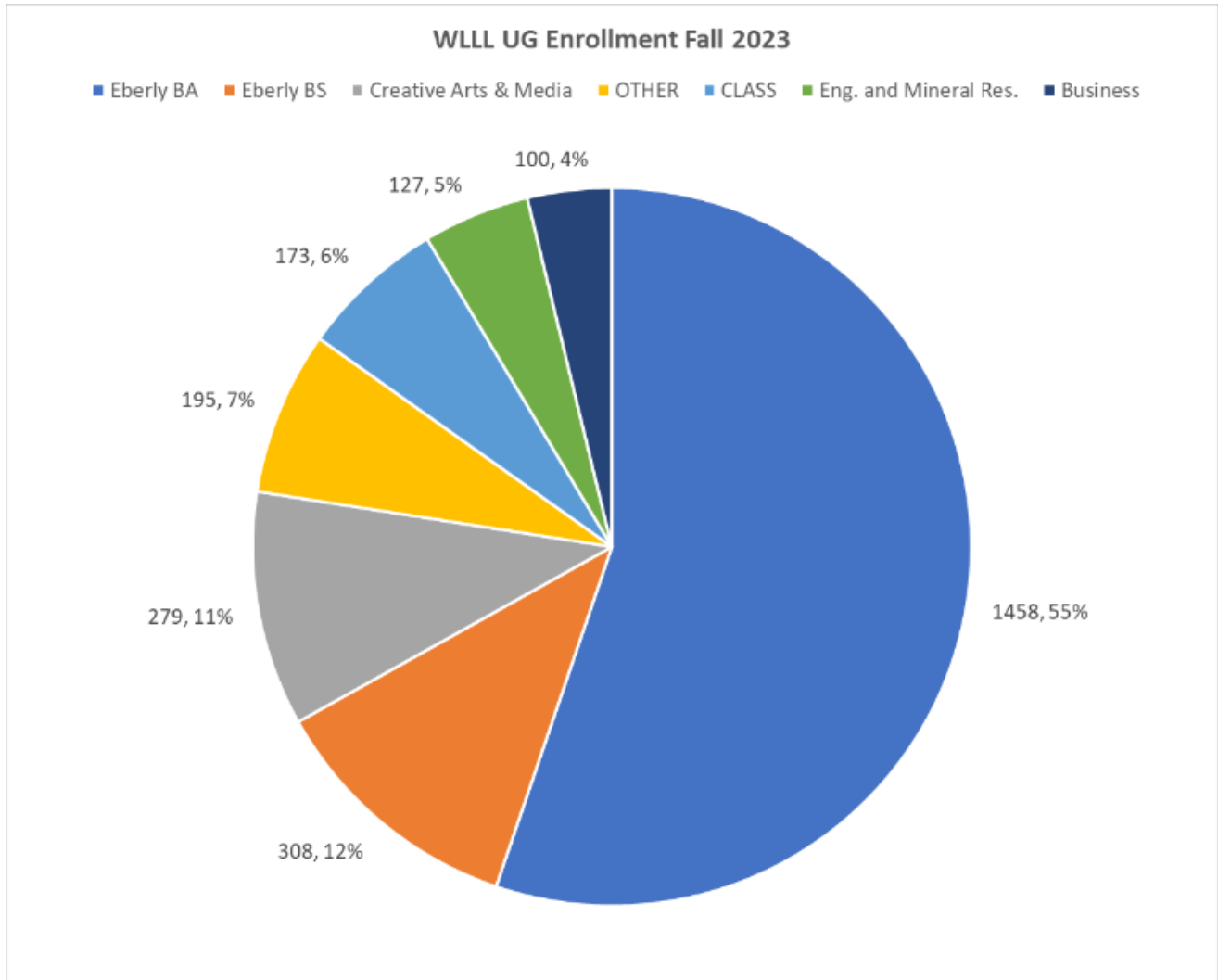
- Johns Hopkins
 - Johns Hopkins has three separate departments that focus on language and cultural studies:
 - Modern Languages and Literatures
 - Classics
 - Department of Near Eastern Studies
 - Note that many other interdisciplinary units involve languages and cultures.
 - There are multiple language majors and minors in these units.
 - Total enrollment in language classes in Fall 2021 was 2,180.
- University of Alabama
 - University of Alabama has one department that focus on language and cultural studies:
 - Department of Modern Languages and Classics
 - Note that many other interdisciplinary units involve languages and cultures.
 - There are multiple language majors and minors.
 - Total enrollment in language classes in Fall 2021 was 2,650.

Student enrollments in WLLL classes by college

According to Argos data, students from all colleges rely on our classes to enhance their degrees, indicating the integrated nature of classes that WLLL offers in all colleges at WVU and the importance of the courses to many different disciplines.

WVU College	WLLL UG Enrollment Fall 2023
Eberly BA	1458
Eberly BS/BIS/RBA/BMDS	308
Business	100
CLASS	173
Creative Arts & Media	279
Engineering and Mineral Resources	127
Other (Davis, School of Medicine, Education and Human Services, School of Nursing, Intercollegiate Programs, School of Public Health, School of Dentistry, School of Pharmacy)	195
	Total
	2640

For the numbers next to the pie slices in the figure below, the first number represents the total number of students enrolled in WLLL classes from each unit (or group of units) indicated. The second number represents the percentage of students enrolled in WLLL classes from each unit.



In our analyses below, we focused on enrollments in our 101-204 classes to illustrate the academic profiles of the students in our classes, as well as to indicate the interest in these courses, regardless of the Eberly BA language requirement. Data show that 40.2% of the students enrolled in these classes are not Eberly majors. Within Eberly, there are both BA and BS students enrolled in these classes. Of the students who are required to take the 101-204 sequence for the BA in Eberly, the majority of them have stated that they would enroll in these classes, even if they weren't required.

The following data are from **Argos**:

- **2,052** students enrolled in the 101-204 language classes (Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Russian, and Spanish).
- Of these students, **825** students (40.2%) are not enrolled in an Eberly BA program (i.e. are not in the classes for the Eberly BA language requirement).
- The remaining **1,227** (59.8%) students are Eberly BA students.
- There are approximately 17 BA degrees offered in Eberly out of 140+ majors offered at WVU.

World Languages 100-200 Levels

Enrollment Fall 2023

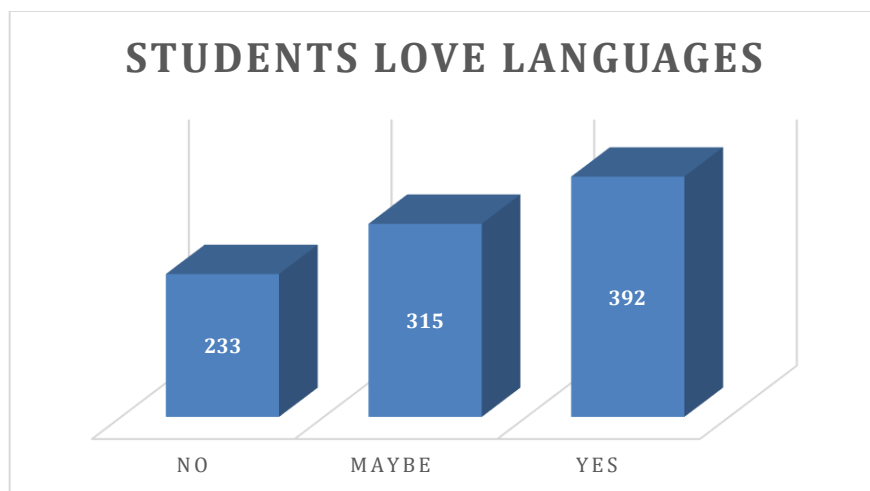
		%
Eberly BA	1227	59.80
All Other	825	40.20
Total	2052	

Data from Qualtrics gauging student interest

We disseminated a Qualtrics survey on August 17th and 18th in our WLLL undergraduate classes. According to the Qualtrics survey data (1755 responses, or about 66% of students enrolled in our undergraduate classes):

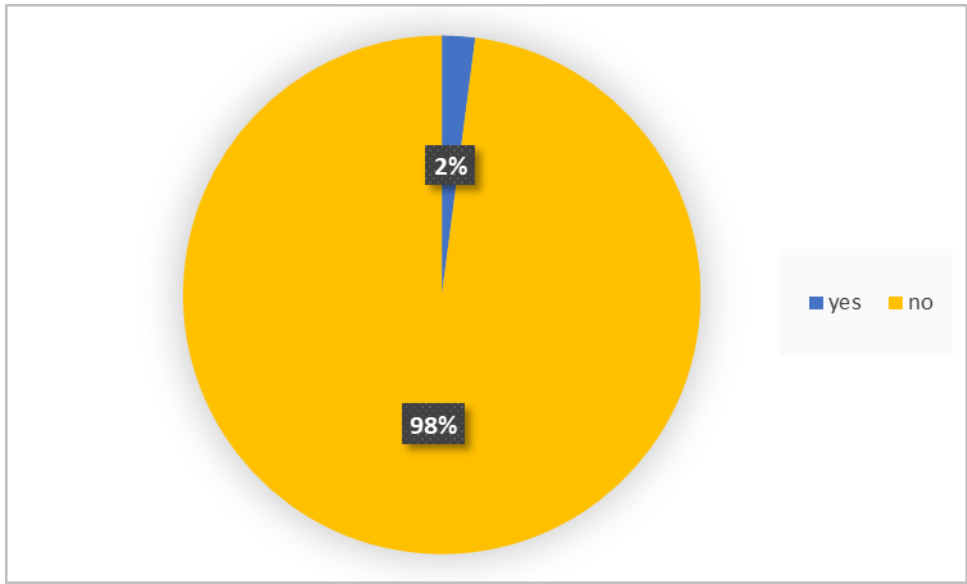
- **940** students taking the 101-204 language classes in Fall 2023 are doing a BA in Eberly as their major(s).
- **75.2%** report they would (41.7%, n = 392) or might (33.5%, n = 315) be interested in taking the class even if it weren't required for their BA.
- **Only 24.8%** (n = 233) say no.
- The “yes” answers plus half (as an estimate) of the “maybe” answers = 550 students, which is 45% of the total students who are BAs in Eberly (to estimate interest of BA students, despite requirement).
- If we take 45% of the total number of BA students (n = 552) and add them to the students who are NOT taking the classes for the Eberly BA requirement (n = 825), we can estimate that the number of students who would be interested in taking the 101-204 classes **even if there were no Eberly BA requirement** is **1,377**, or roughly 67% of the current number of students enrolled.

Survey Question: Would you take the class if it weren't required for your BA? The results in the figure are for Eberly BA students enrolled in the 101-204 language classes.



In the Qualtrics survey, we also asked those not doing a BA in Eberly if the language requirement was preventing them from doing a BA. 98% of the students said no (n = 1720); only a very small percentage of the students said yes (2%, n = 35).

Survey Question: Is the language requirement preventing you from pursuing a BA in Eberly College?



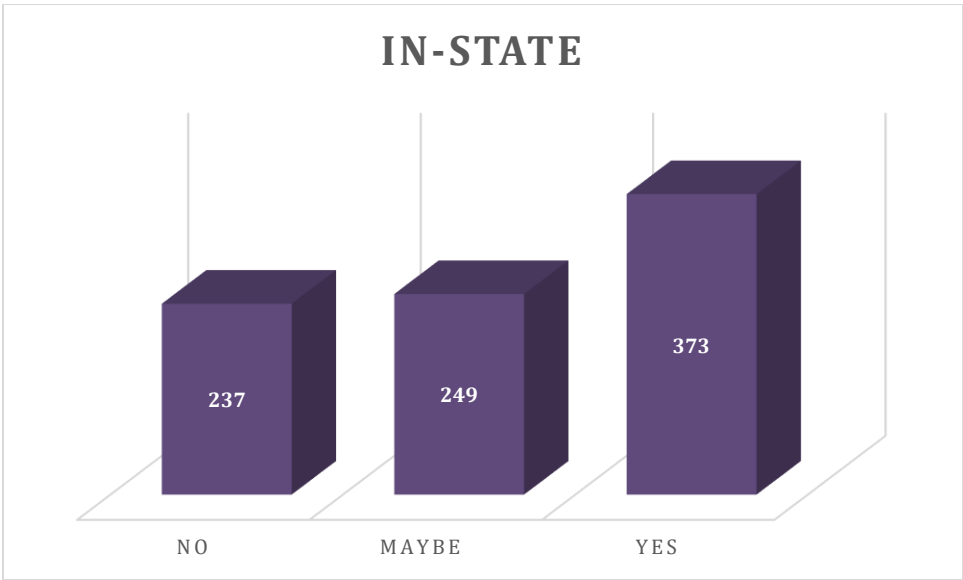
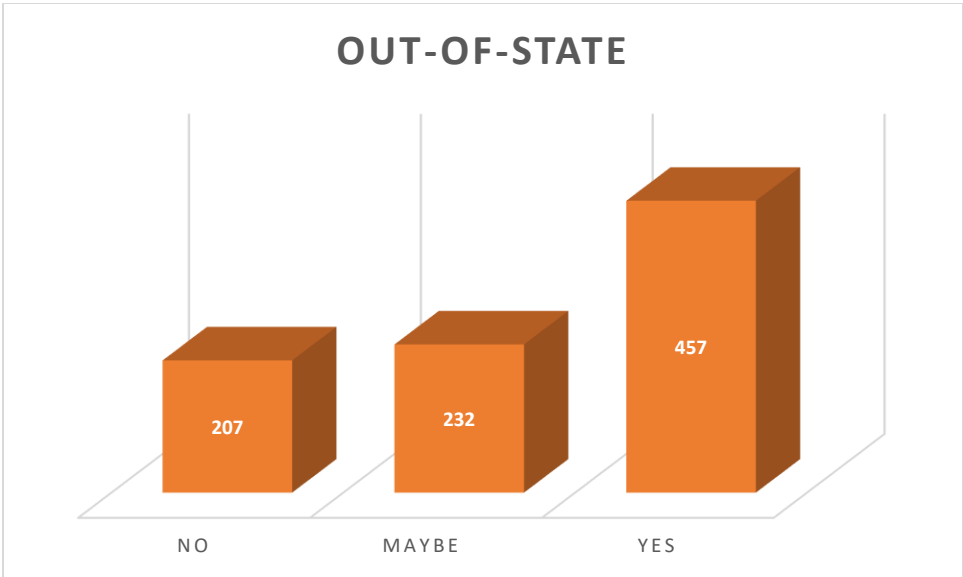
4. Potential student enrollment and revenue loss for WVU

Another key point is to understand the potential revenue loss for WVU if a certain percentage of students decided not to attend the university if there were no language, culture, or linguistics classes offered on campus.

According to the Qualtrics data, out of 896 responses from out-of-state students, 51% (n = 457) report they would still have attended even if they'd known there would be no language, culture, or linguistics. 23% (n = 207) report they would not have come if they'd known this. 26% (n = 232) said maybe. Proportions are similar amongst in-state students, but with a slightly lower percentage responding that they would have come (43%, n = 373), and slightly higher numbers in the other two categories (no, n = 237, 28%; maybe, n = 249, 29%).

Would you have still chosen to attend WVU if there were no language, culture, or linguistics classes offered on campus?

Response	Out-of-state	In-state
Yes	457 (51%)	373 (43%)
No	207 (23%)	237 (28%)
Maybe	232 (26%)	249 (29%)
Total	896	859



This begs the question of how much tuition and fees revenue WVU would lose if these students decided to go elsewhere. The calculation below does not include college-specific tuition (i.e. Eberly tuition, Statler tuition, etc.), nor does it take into consideration the loss of other types of revenue, such as housing, food, or other types of economic impacts to WVU and the Morgantown area.

For Fall 2023, out-of-state tuition and fees are \$13,680 per student per semester. In-state tuition and fees are \$4,824 per student per semester.

Potential Revenue Loss

	Out-of-state		In-state		Both in-state & out-of-state	
	n =	Tuition & Fees	n =	Tuition & Fees	n =	Tuition & Fees
Revenue Loss for [NO]	207	\$ 2,831,760.00	237	\$ 1,143,288.00	444	\$ 3,975,048.00
Revenue Loss for [MAYBE]	232	\$ 3,173,760.00	249	\$ 1,201,176.00	481	\$ 4,374,936.00
Total Potential Revenue Loss for the Fall semester	439	\$ 6,005,520.00	486	\$ 2,344,464.00	925	\$ 8,349,984.00

Total Potential Revenue Loss for the Academic Year (not including summer) \$ 16,699,968.00

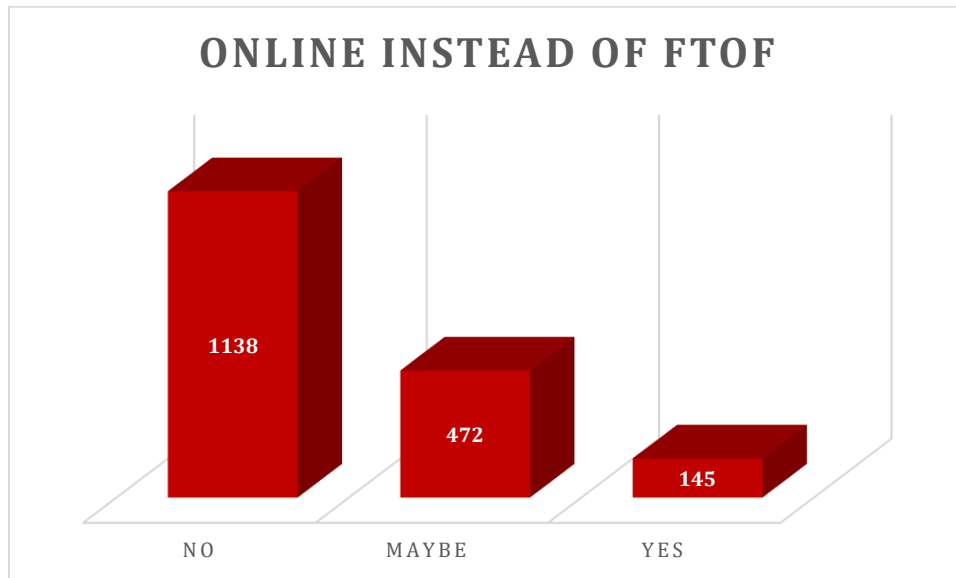
Student examples from Qualtrics: Why students would not attend WVU without language, culture, and linguistics classes

<i>A university without language, culture, and linguistics classes is a university lacking diversity, inclusion, and opportunity. I don't want to spend my time somewhere like that.</i>
<i>WVU is a land grant state school, this is a school that unfortunately is an only option for many in state students. Cutting this program will not only cut these in state students off from the rest of the world, but it also discourages international students to attend WVU. If you cut this program, you rip opportunities from 100s of eager to learn students.</i>
<i>Language, linguistics, and culture is my entire reasoning for returning to school. If WVU does not offer what I want to study, I'll go somewhere that does.</i>
<i>I am pretty far in my Japanese language courses, if they weren't at WVU, I would choose a different school to attend. Simple as that.</i>
<i>I applied to college knowing that I wanted to have a minor in Spanish. If the college didn't offer that option I didn't apply.</i>
<i>My only reason for taking classes here is to learn about language. If they want to make it an engineering and coding school, I don't belong.</i>
<i>I would've picked another school in a heartbeat if I knew this would happen. I chose WVU over the American University in Paris because of tuition and my ability to double major. I wish I would've given my other option a chance.</i>
<i>If a university cannot offer a well-rounded education to its students, including the arts, languages, and sciences together, then it is not worth the money.</i>

5. Students' perceptions of replacing all face-to-face instruction with online teaching or apps

Students' perceptions of replacing all face-to-face instruction with online teaching or apps is not favorable. This data comes from Qualtrics (n = 1755). Overall, 65% (n = 1138) of students say that online language classes can't replace the in-person experience 8% (n = 145) say they can (27%, n = 472, say maybe).

Survey Question: Do you think that online language classes can replace the face-to-face learning experience?



Below are some student answers from Qualtrics to the question: Do you have any comments about the proposal to eliminate all language, culture, and linguistics classes at WVU and replace them with external online classes or language learning apps?

*I think that replacing and getting rid of face-to-face classes or any language classes is **unfair** to students who are interested in learning new languages or learning about different cultures and **discredits the importance of diversity and inclusion**.*

As an R-1 University, we have the responsibility to promote language and break barriers that make West Virginia the least diverse state in the country. Furthermore, Spanish is becoming a dominant language in the US, and the nation is becoming increasingly multi-lingual. We need to have resources (in person language classes) for our students to learn diverse perspectives and language, and represent WVU as a true R-1 University.

*I don't think that a switch to learning apps or fully online classes would be beneficial to learning a language. So much of language is based in the culture they exist in, and learning about those cultures makes the process significantly easier. Being able to communicate and practice language with someone who knows it, like our WVU faculty, makes the process easier, more personal and fluid, and allows for mistakes to be made and learned from. **Proposing this idea was clearly done by those who have never experienced this, nor do they have any respect for cultivating a more culturally diverse West Virginia.***

*The proposal to eliminate all language [courses] disgusts me. This is an R1 institution that, according to its own mission statement, commits, "to creating a diverse and inclusive culture," and, "leading transformation in West Virginia and the world through local, state and global engagement." **The elimination of the language, culture, and linguistics departments sends a clear and direct message that this institution does not value inclusivity, or any cultures that do not represent the White American.***

*Although I only take these Spanish courses because they are required, it does not mean I don't feel they are **essential**. Knowing languages give people so many other opportunities. The only language offered at my West Virginia high school was Spanish. We need more opportunities for not just instate students but all students. Cutting out languages at WVU would be a huge mistake. We as a university need to have all opportunities and programs to that more students find this School appealing. **You're pushing students away by cutting these programs!***

It is a [complete waste of tuition](#) to the students and deprives them of an environment to learn languages with others, especially languages that aren't as common as Spanish, German or Standard Mandarin as some examples. Not to mention, to put it bluntly, it [will most definitely play into the stereotype of West Virginians being illiterate and poorly educated](#) if their students aren't at least adept in one language other than English.

I'm [planning to leave the school because of it](#).

This is [will only further ruin West Virginia University's reputation and discourage students from coming to Morgantown](#). If they remove the entire language/linguistics department (a completely unprecedented action), [what's to stop them from removing other departments in the future?](#)

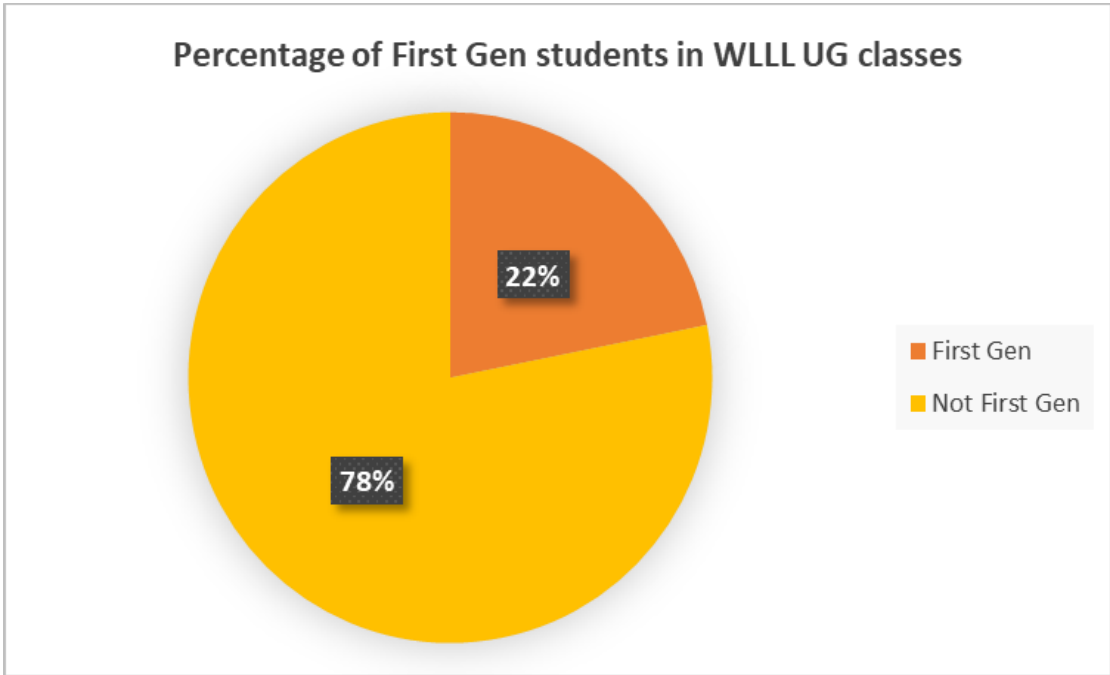
Employees from **Duolingo**, leading language learning app worldwide, indicate the importance of face-to-face language learning experiences (see letter of support): “This is exciting for a passionate language learner like myself, but learning on an app cannot replace the rigorous study that undergraduates complete in university-level language and linguistics programs. Formally studying a language means learning how to use that language as a vehicle for learning about communities, histories, and social movements. Language students learn to think and write critically—in their first and second languages—and they analyze data, evaluate resources, learn research tools, debate ideas, and collaborate with peers. That is what a language degree certifies. Language is the foundation, not the finish line...My work today is dedicated to making language learning accessible to all—it is not about developing learners' critical thinking and research skills or their deep knowledge of the history, politics, and current events of a region. Students learn those skills with faculty experts who connect them with the world (and job market) they'll encounter after graduation, for the benefit of the student and the larger community.

I can't help them to do that. But WVU can.”

6. Representation of first-generation college students in WLLL undergraduate classes

WVU has 23% of first-generation students enrolled. In our UG classes, it's 576 out of 2640 = 22%. We serve the same percentage of First Gen students as the overall university enrollment of First Gen. By removing opportunities offered by our department, WVU is limiting social mobility for this group of students.

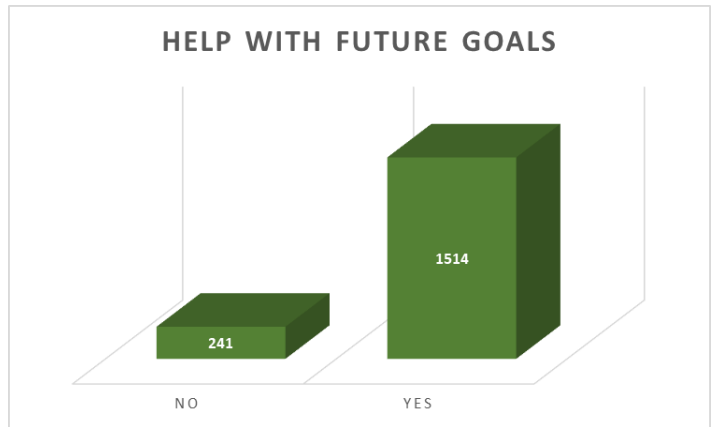
“As a first-generation student of color, a federal Pell Grant recipient from West Virginia, and a 2022 WVU graduate with a bachelor's degree in political science and international studies, I am afraid for WVU's future” ([Myya Helm](#)).



7. Return on investment

Students' perceptions are that the course(s) they are taking will help them with future goals. 1514 (86.3%) out of the 1,755 students who filled out the Qualtrics form indicated that their course will help them in their future goals. A mere 241 students (13.7%) said it would not.

Qualtrics Question: Do you think that this course will help you in your future goals?



Below are samples of students' descriptions of how WLLL courses will help with future goals.

In addition to supporting communication, interpersonal, analytical, and organizational skills, world language study improves employability and offers students more options on the job market.

<p><i>I've been taking Spanish classes since I was 12 years old. I've always loved them. Learning a language is fun and incredibly helpful in many different contexts in life. I'm going into veterinary science, a profession that requires me to communicate heavily with people. So many people from so many different backgrounds live in the U.S. Being able to connect and properly communicate with Spanish speaking clients allows me to help them and their animals much more efficiently than if we were communicating through Google Translate. I also love learning about other cultures, and nothing makes learning cultures better than learning them from someone who grew up in that culture. You can't learn about Spanish culture through Duolingo.</i></p>
<p><i>I am very interested in learning German and possibly living in Germany. It will look good to employers.</i></p>
<p><i>I am taking this course because of my interest in French. I love the language and the culture. The class is beneficial to my further understanding of French, as well as my career. I am currently on track to work for a global corporation and knowing multiple languages further enhances my ability to work. Languages help you stay connected with people and allows for diversity. We live in a global world and everyone is interconnected. Languages are insanely important. Without them, there would be no communication at all. Everything would fail if people didn't know multiple languages. Businesses would fail. Relationships would fail. There is a high demand for bilingual people. I am taking this class because it's important to me, to my career, and to the world around me.</i></p>
<p><i>I plan to join the Air Force after college, I believe this class along with the Chinese language classes I am taking will prove to be vital towards my career, considering knowing Chinese is of importance to the government.</i></p>
<p><i>It is essential for my desired career field, foreign intelligence. I also have a love and passion for Chinese cultural studies as well as the language. With boasting the largest population on the planet and becoming a rising economic power on the world stage, it is imperative I learn how to communicate with future business leaders from China.</i></p>
<p><i>Russian Language study is crucial not only to my major and minor, but also to my military future in the Army as an officer.</i></p>
<p><i>I plan on becoming a forensic pathologist, and I'd specifically like to pursue higher education/employment in Spanish speaking countries.</i></p>
<p><i>I am pursuing a minor in Spanish because I believe it will help me in my future career. Whether I will be working for the FBI or a police department I may have to interact with someone who speaks Spanish or help on a case where Spanish is involved. So, learning Spanish and becoming better at it is something that will give me a leg up when searching for a job. It is a skill that makes me stand out.</i></p>
<p><i>I aim to be an officer in the US military and this course will help me work together with a critical NATO ally. That being Germany.</i></p>

8. WLLL Proposal: New program and structural options

All options are drastically unique from those presented in the self-study, and all present options for RIFs. The reduction in faculty will consist of fewer faculty in most of our current languages in order to provide the diversity that students seek. We will eliminate Japanese. As the program structures would be flexible, if a faculty member resigns, the students could take a different language in its place, thereby not delaying progress towards graduation.

For all of the options, the language focus is 101-204 classes, potentially with some upper-level classes in Spanish offered on-campus and upper-level courses in other languages taught through study abroad, independent studies, etc.

Any of the options can be combined in terms of concepts and/or structural configurations. All of the options involve continued collaboration with the international studies program.

In terms of the International Studies Program, it offers broad, interdisciplinary training in international affairs drawing upon courses in world languages, political science, economics, geography, and history. IS majors select an area of emphasis in national security, diplomacy, or another area relating to global affairs. Students also choose a regional focus to concentrate their studies. As a major, our curriculum includes professional development courses that prepare students to enter the workforce after graduation. International Studies alumni are employed across the public and private sectors. Recent graduates have found employment in the intelligence community, the federal government, global non-governmental organizations, non-profit organizations, and prestigious and professional schools. Continuing language instruction at WVU will allow the continuation of this program, as well as future programs in national security and intelligence studies.

On various occasions, President Gee has emphasized national security as an area of differentiation for WVU. At the July 10th Faculty Senate meeting, President Gee said, “The final thing is what are the areas that distinguish us? What are the reasons why people come here? We know that cyber security, national security, forensics, neuroscience... all of these are essential components that differentiate us from other institutions, and that differentiation is what is important.” While speaking to a statewide audience on *Talkline with Hoppy Kercheval*, President Gee said, “We happen to have some unique opportunities because of the fact that we are a national security university.” With the proper placement of language instruction within the International Studies Program, we can grow WVU’s national security differentiation and attract new students from across the country. Below some potential options are outlined for how to proceed.

Option 1: Retaining WLLL with a new innovative major and some minors

Key points:

- Retain WLLL as a department.
- In a move to completely change the focus of the undergraduate language programs, we propose a science of language major with focus on intercultural communication, AI, linguistics for coding, and applied language studies with a strong world language component, given that national security positions require both linguistics and language proficiency.
- This new major, which is unprecedented in the state and region, would contribute to global economic development and the growing field of artificial intelligence and related software.
- There will be focused collaboration with International Studies for current and future programs.
- Focus on skills that can be used in national security and artificial intelligence, such as transcription, translation, coding, analysis, designing conversational scripts, annotating text data using linguistic categories, among others.
- This would also necessitate culture classes in English related to global regions represented by the department.
- Students would still have the option to minor in languages and/or do micro-credentials/Global Seal of Biliteracy.
- Language-specific courses would include general-interest language courses as well as courses such as language for the medical professions, business, STEM fields, and translation.
- Potential for revenue-generating add-on 1-year MA program (ABM) to the IS degree – focus on data analysis and national security - in the future, based on interest and need.
- Microcredentials, minors, and the Global Seal of Biliteracy would also be part of this option.
- The number of WLLL faculty needed for this option = 15 (see staffing plan)

Option 2: Combining with another unit, keeping minors

Key points:

- Structural combination with International Studies or another unit for whose major languages play a key role.
- WLLL courses can support language and linguistic development as it relates to national security, diplomacy, and global economic development.
- 101-204 would be taught to provide a basic proficiency level.
- Culture courses and linguistics courses in English would also be taught.
- Large FCLT courses can be offered for GEF credit.
- Language-specific courses would include general-interest language courses as well as courses such as language for the medical professions, business, STEM fields, and translation.
- Potential for revenue-generating add-on 1-year MA program (ABM) to the IS degree – focus on data analysis and national security - in the future, based on interest and need.
- Microcredentials, minors, and the Global Seal of Bilingualism would also be part of this option.
- The number of WLLL faculty needed for this option = 11-13 (see staffing plan).

Option 3: Academic support unit – combine world languages and cultures with ELLI

Key points:

- This option would create an academic support unit for language, culture, and linguistics classes, in conjunction with the English Language Learning Institute (ELLI, plans already in motion) with a focus on language learning outreach for the state.
- This is an option that would ensure continuation of language study; however, we know that students who still want to study languages and cultures as a discipline itself would not favor this option.
- Our online courses could be housed in this unit and made available to other universities in WV who do not offer the same languages. The rest of the courses would be with international studies or in our own unit.
- We are already in the process of conceptualizing the English Language-learning institute (ELLI) into an academic support unit. This idea is to put the language and culture classes in this support unit as well. The ESL side of things would continue the IEP and AMP ESL.
- In conjunction with Study WV, we could work on an agreement that would allow the completion of the highest level of the Intensive English Program to fulfill the English language proficiency requirement for undergraduate programs across the state. Currently, the IEP at WVU is the only ESL program still running in the state. Marshall and Fairmont State are trying to get their programs running again but have very few students (we will still try to do this, regardless of what happens with the world language side of things).
- The world language curriculum would be based on a certificate model (badge, micro credential) underscored by the Global Seal of Bilingualism (more so than in options 1 and 2).
- Courses would include general-interest language courses (101-204) as well as courses that focus on language for the medical professions, business, STEM fields, and translation.
- Through the Global Seal of Bilingualism, students can demonstrate language proficiency through an assessment with a recognized certification that appears on job application profiles, such as LinkedIn, and the delivery of the assessment could be a potential revenue-generating source. Novice, intermediate, and advanced proficiency levels can be certified based on assessments.
- Also based on this support unit, online courses could be offered to WVU satellite campuses as well as other universities in WV, perhaps in collaboration with the Study WV initiative – this would be an additional source of revenue for WVU.

- This framework would also support the Access program, in which high school students from across the country can participate.
- Possible housing in OGA or as an independent unit (like the Rockefeller center?). Faculty status, evaluations, and supervision would need to be worked out if it's no longer an academic unit. New courses offered at the 101-204 level would include courses that focus on language for the medical professions, business, STEM fields, and translation.
- Large FCLT courses can be offered for GEF credit and as part of a micro-credential.
- The number of WLLL faculty needed for this option = 11-13 (see staffing plan)

Additional information on the Global Seal of Biliteracy and StudyWV

Global Seal of Biliteracy

The Global Seal of Biliteracy is a nationally recognized program that provides students with certification of their language proficiency at three levels. Upon completion of a professionally delivered language exam by an outside organization, students receive a credential that can be immediately uploaded to their transcripts and job application sites. The program is used both as a reward system and a form of motivation to keep students in the curriculum and striving for the next level of proficiency. The Global Seal of Biliteracy can be implemented in each of the three options we propose.

The Global Seal Pathway to Proficiency



StudyWV: <https://www.studywv.org/>

StudyWV is part of USA: A Study Destination within the International Trade Administration in the U.S. Department of Commerce. More on that here: <https://www.trade.gov/usa-study>

WVU administration seems keen on collaborations with other universities – why not turn WVU into the provider, rather than the client? This would make us the leader in WV that a land-grant institution is supposed to be.

Note that at this time, the only other universities that offer world language degrees other than WVU are Fairmont State, Marshall, and Shepherd (<https://www.wvhepc.edu/resources/data-and-publication-center/degree-inventory/>). A number of other colleges offer language instruction, but those numbers are dwindling, giving WVU an opportunity to step in and provide those services to the state.

We have the most robust online offerings for Chinese, French, German, Italian, and Spanish. Note that I’ve tried to get the branch campuses to be able to do our online offerings but was told “we can’t figure out the billing.” Maybe it’s time to do so!

9. Conclusion

We have provided several options for how to move forward, and we are open to other configurations and staffing proposals. We, like the Eberly College of Arts and Sciences Dean's office, are most concerned with keeping some language and culture instruction on campus. As noted in Dean Dunaway's letter of support: "While I support and hope that we can maintain a language/culture degree program – one that would reduce staffing and operating expenditures greatly, if that is not possible we should not eliminate all language course offerings. To do so would diminish our educational opportunities for students would set us apart from all peer institutions."

We strongly believe, as do WVU students, the Eberly Dean's office, and faculty in various units at the university, that language, culture, and linguistics classes offered on WVU's main campus is imperative to preserving quality education at the institution. We have support letters from a number of department leaders and faculty at WVU and elsewhere, letters of support from a number of professional organizations, and over 22,000 signatures from supporters worldwide indicating the role that languages play in today's global society. This is particularly important for students located in contexts, such as West Virginia.

"West Virginians, trapped in the clutches of economic hardship, find themselves mercilessly shackled to a state most can ill afford to abandon, left to suffer the full weight of the WVU administration's harrowing decisions. We will learn only subjects aligned with the preferences of the rich, driven by their financial motivations. We will work for the oligarchs for the rest of our lives, just like our parents and our grandparents did for the global coal industry. We will continue to amass inconceivable riches for the nation's privileged elite until our last breath, and we will find our resting place in unadorned cardboard coffins beneath West Virginia soil" ([Myya Helm](#)).