

Cornell University
Graduate and Professional
Student Assembly

1 **GPSA Resolution 16: In support of further discussion on proposed**
2 **curricular changes to language requirements in the College of Arts &**
3 **Sciences**

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5 Sponsored by: Jesse Goldberg, GPSA Arts & Humanities Voting Member
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7 **Whereas**, on March 20, 2018 the College of Arts & Sciences Curriculum Committee (“the
8 committee”) released a final report of its recommendations for curricular changes; and
9

10 **Whereas**, as part of that report, the committee recommends “that we replace the current language
11 requirement — completion of one course taught in any language at or above the non-
12 introductory level or at least 11 credits in one language — with a requirement that students
13 complete one course taught in any language at the non-introductory level or at least two
14 courses of three credits each in one language;”¹ and
15

16 **Whereas**, on March 28, 2018, eighty-nine faculty members from departments and programs
17 including nearly all of the faculty in Romance Studies, as well as faculty in English, Near
18 Eastern Studies, Asian Studies, Food Sciences, Religious Studies, Sociology, German studies,
19 Jewish studies, Music, Medieval Studies, Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, Linguistics,
20 Comparative Literature, Science and Technology Studies, Classics, and Art signed a public
21 Letter to the Editor in the *Cornell Daily Sun* asserting that “[t]hese changes are wide-ranging
22 and, in our opinion, dramatically antithetical to the mission of the College. For this reason,
23 we believe that further discussion must be held that include the opinions of the many
24 members of the faculty who oppose the proposed changes;”² and
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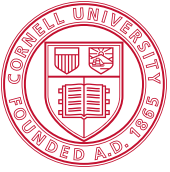
26 **Whereas**, the Letter to the Editor goes on to note, “we foresee a dramatic ripple effect from top to
27 bottom with the language requirement as proposed — on graduate students, on
28 undergraduates, on faculty;” and
29

30 **Whereas**, graduate students in Romance Studies have expressed concerns that one part of the
31 “dramatic ripple effect” noted by faculty may likely be a reduction in funding opportunities
32 via graduate teaching assistantships in language courses; and
33

34 **Whereas**, we believe that the March 28 Letter to the Editor evidences near unanimous agreement
35 among Romance Studies faculty and overwhelming support from faculty across the College
36 of Arts & Sciences for critical pushback on the committee’s recommendation; and
37

¹ <http://as.cornell.edu/curriculum>

² <http://cornellsun.com/2018/03/28/letter-to-the-editor-on-proposed-curriculum-change-to-language-requirement/>



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38 **Whereas**, while the members of the Graduate and Professional Student Assembly understand that
39 many factors influence curricular revisions, we generally believe that all possibilities should
40 be exhausted before making curricular revisions which have the potential to negatively affect
41 graduate or professional student funding; and
42

43 **Whereas**, while graduate teaching assistants are not recognized by Cornell University administration
44 as “employees,” we believe that the labor that graduate TAs provide to language courses
45 constitute treating those TAs with the same respect and procedural reverence as employees;
46

47 **Be it therefore resolved**, that the GPSA joins our constituent colleagues in Romance Studies as
48 well as the eighty-nine faculty member signees of the March 28 letter in calling for further
49 discussion of the committee’s proposal to reduce the language requirement; and
50

51 **Be it further resolved**, that the GPSA in no way dissents from, and in fact supports, the
52 committee’s recommendation “that the College adopt a policy that, for the purpose of
53 completing the language requirement, “language” means any living or extinct human
54 language, including sign languages, offered at Cornell;” and
55

56 **Be it further resolved**, that the GPSA urges the College of Arts & Sciences to explicitly consider
57 lost teaching assistantships as strongly as if they were employee layoffs; and
58

59 **Be it further resolved**, that the GPSA urges that should the College of Arts & Sciences finally
60 decide to reduce the language requirement, then the College ought to provide concrete data
61 demonstrating how a reduction in required courses that are heavily constituted by graduate
62 student labor will result in no lost funding opportunities for graduate students; and
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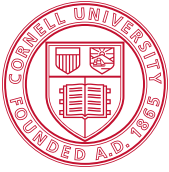
64 **Be it further resolved**, that the GPSA ultimately urges the College of Arts & Sciences to revise its
65 curriculum without cutting any courses that are heavily served by graduate student labor in
66 the form of assistantships; and
67

68 **Be it finally resolved**, that in addition to the normal procedure of being sent to President Martha
69 Pollack, this Resolution shall be sent to Gretchen Ritter, Dean of the College of Arts &
70 Sciences, Barbara Knuth, Dean of the Graduate School, and Rachel Bean, Senior Associate
71 Dean for Undergraduate Education in the College of Arts & Sciences.
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74 Respectfully Submitted,

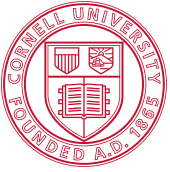
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76 Jesse Goldberg
77 *GPSA Voting Member, Arts & Humanities*
78

79 Ekarina Winarto



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- 80 *GPSA President*
81
82 Andy Barrientos-Gomez
83 *GPSA Field Representative, Romance Studies (Spanish & Portuguese)*
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85 Becca Harrison
86 *GPSA Voting Member, Arts & Humanities*
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88 Romain Pasquer
89 *Graduate Student, Romance Studies (French)*
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91 Cristina Hung
92 *Graduate Student, Romance Studies (Spanish)*
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94 Amanda Recupero
95 *Graduate Student, Romance Studies (Italian)*
96
97 Carol-Rose Little
98 *GPSA Voting Member, Social Sciences*
99
100 Brynhildur Stefánsdóttir
101 *GPSA Field Representative, Linguistics*
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103 Kristen Angierski
104 *GPSA Voting Member, Arts & Humanities*
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106 Vincent Guimiot
107 *Graduate Student, Romance Studies (French)*
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109 Nicholas Huelster
110 *Graduate Student, Romance Studies (French)*
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112 Mario Chacon
113 *Graduate Student, Romance Studies (Spanish)*
114
115 Mary Jane Dempsey
116 *Graduate Student, Romance Studies (Italian)*
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118 Lia Turtas
119 *Graduate Student, Romance Studies (Italian)*
120
121 Janet Hendrickson



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- 122 *Graduate Student, Romance Studies (Spanish)*
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124 Sebastian Antezana
125 *Graduate Student, Romance Studies (Spanish)*
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127 Samuel Carter
128 *Graduate Student, Romance Studies (Spanish)*
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130 Giulia Andreoni
131 *Graduate Student, Romance Studies (Italian)*
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133 Yen Vu
134 *Graduate Student, Romance Studies (French)*
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136 Kelly Camille Moore
137 *Graduate Student, Romance Studies (Spanish)*
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