

Planning Summary from The Citadel for the Modification of the Bachelor of Arts in Modern Languages to add a Teaching Specialization in Spanish

Proposed Date of Implementation: Spring 2009

Introduction

The Citadel is pleased to submit a Planning Summary for a Program Modification in the B.A. in Modern Languages to add a Teaching Specialization in Spanish. This is a collaborative effort for the Department of Modern Languages and the School of Education. We submit this planning summary following a very successful State and NCATE focus visit (September 30-October 2, 2007) , and with the understanding that consideration of this proposed program modification is contingent upon a full accreditation ruling by NCATE.

Justification of Need for the Proposed Program

The School of Education and the Department of Modern Languages at The Citadel recognize that a critical need exists in South Carolina and the tri-county (Berkeley, Charleston and Dorchester) area for Pre-K-12 teachers of foreign languages. On January 9, 2007, the Transition Leadership Team's Committee on the Teaching Profession, a body appointed by Dr. Jim Rex, the State Superintendent of the South Carolina Department of Education, finished its report that "issued seventeen recommendations in four areas that contribute to the development of a caring and qualified teaching workforce: teacher preparation, recruitment and retention, professional development, and leadership." In prefacing its recommendations, the committee wrote: "Yet today, as large numbers of experienced educators retire and too few candidates emerge to replace them, South Carolina and the nation as a whole are facing a critical shortage of qualified teachers. The shortage is especially acute in math, physical sciences, foreign languages, and special education; among teachers of color; and in inner-city and rural areas." Supporting these observations is the fact that during the 2005-06 school year, districts in S.C. reported 240 vacancies in French, German, Latin and Spanish and were only able to fill 216 (or 65%).

In the Lowcountry, of the three 4-year undergraduate institutions, only Charleston Southern University has a Pre-K-12 foreign language certification program, and it is limited to Spanish. Given the unique environment and academic regulations at The Citadel, cadets interested in pursuing foreign language certification have had no options. In the past, interested students simply majored in our current Modern Languages degree programs while taking select education courses to prepare them for the PRAXIS exams. After years of such a band-aid approach, and with the remarkable surge in students pursuing a major or minor in languages at The Citadel (a 96% increase since May 2006), we now wish to pursue a formal certification program to assist the Lowcountry area and the State in addressing the critical need for foreign language teachers.

The Citadel's Department of Modern Languages has already demonstrated its sustained commitment to foreign language education in the region and state with various programs. One is our annual South Carolina Spanish Teacher of the Year Award (www.scspanishteacheroftheyear.org), the only program in the State that recognizes outstanding K-12 Spanish teachers of both public and private schools. Founded in 2005, this program has garnered major corporate and local business sponsorships, and has become widely recognized throughout S.C. Second, since 2002 our Modern Languages Department has directed a statewide award certificate program (<http://www.citadel.edu/mlng/tauiota/merit.htm>) for outstanding high school students of Spanish. The program is a free service that provides award certificates to all high schools whose Spanish teachers verify the eligibility of their students. Each year, The Citadel's Department of Modern Languages issues approximately 250 certificates to high schools across the state. In addition, the past several years and due to increased student demand, our department has regularly offered an upper-level, special topics course entitled "Theory and Practice of Language Teaching" for French, German and Spanish majors and minors who are interested in teaching a foreign language. Enrollment has been steady for these offerings with six students currently in this course (spring 2008 semester). We believe the steady demand for this course, and our regular offering of it by qualified faculty, is further evidence of our ongoing commitment to foreign language education and the desire of our students to pursue careers in language teaching. Finally, our French faculty have been working with the local Alliance Française to create a French Club for youngsters, an endeavor that entails one of our faculty members teaching French to children one Saturday per month; and each spring our German faculty assists with the administration of the national ZD and ZMP German language proficiency.

Given these factors and the desire of the Department of Modern Languages to take one more logical step toward enhancing foreign language education in the region, The Citadel proposes the addition of a B.A. in Modern Languages with a Teaching Specialization in Spanish. Other existing teacher certification programs (graduate and undergraduate) at The Citadel in Social Studies, English, Biology, Mathematics, and Physical Education have provided strong teacher-leaders for the state and the region over the years. Adding a Teaching Specialization in Spanish at the cadet level to these programs will fill a long-standing void in our current undergraduate teacher education programs.

Anticipated Demand

Based upon expressed student interest teacher preparation in modern foreign languages and in the recent growth of our language programs, we anticipate enrolling 6 to 10 undergraduate majors in the Teaching Specialization in Spanish each year. Currently we have approximately 58 language majors and 138 minors, a significant pool to support a teaching certification program in foreign languages.

Duplication

As previously mentioned, since Charleston Southern University is the only undergraduate institution in the area that offers a similar program (but limited to Spanish), and since The Citadel's unique undergraduate environment prevents cadets from taking day classes at a neighboring institution, there would essentially be no duplication issues with the proposed new program.

New Costs for Program Implementation

This proposed new program will require no new courses. This means that we will be providing opportunities for cadets to select a path to becoming exceptionally qualified teachers in Spanish at no additional costs to the State.

Summary

In direct response to the aforementioned critical need of foreign language teachers in South Carolina, to the insufficient availability of similar programs in the Lowcountry, and to our Modern Languages Department's already demonstrated commitment to foreign language education in South Carolina, The Citadel proposes to the Bachelor of Arts in Modern Languages a Teaching Specialization in Spanish.

Date

Lieutenant General John W. Rosa (USAF, ret.)
President, The Citadel