Formation of the Committee

University Senate Resolution 1112-05R states, "Be it resolved that the Executive Committee of the Senate immediately establish a subcommittee composed of representatives from UAC, GAC and UPPC, as well as other faculty with relevant expertise, to determine which programs in European Language and Classical Studies should be activated, reactivated, or remain active in accordance with the liberal arts mission of the university, such subcommittee to report back to the Senate by 4/15/12."

This resolution was passed by the University Senate on 2/6/12. The Senate Executive Committee, in its meeting on 2/22/13, "discussed how the committee would be formed; the resolution calls for specific membership. Since forming committees in general falls under the work of the Governance Council, a motion was made that GOV be charged with forming the committee. The motion was seconded and approved by a vote with 7 in favor, 3 opposed and 1 abstention." (SEC Minutes, 2/22/12).

At the 2/27/12 GOV meeting, "There was a discussion concerning Resolution 1112-05R which the SEC has charged to GOV since GOV is the Council on Committees and the resolution calls for the establishment of a subcommittee to determine which programs in European Language and Classical Studies should be activated, reactivated or remain active. The subcommittee is to report back to the Senate by April 15. Senator Stefl-Mabry recommended contacting the Center for Technology in Government since they could offer resources that can assist. Secretary Leonard referred to a notation from the SEC that the French Program should provide a representative and the committee should include members from the Strategic Plan. Chair Lyons asked Senator Fox if she would take the responsibility for a representative from the French Program and she agreed to do so. Chair Lyons will look into other required representation." (GOV minutes, 2/27/12).

The minutes from the next GOV meeting, on 3/19/12, read in part, "There was a discussion concerning Resolution 1112-05R which the SEC has charged to GOV since GOV is the Council on Committees and the resolution calls for the establishment of a subcommittee to determine which programs in European Language and Classical Studies should be activated, reactivated or remain active. The subcommittee is to report back to the Senate by April 15. Senator Stefl-Mabry recommended contacting the Center for Technology in Government since they could offer resources that can assist. Secretary Leonard referred to a notation from the SEC that the French Program should provide a representative and the committee should include members from the Strategic Plan. Chair Lyons asked Senator Fox if she would take the responsibility for a representative from the French Program and she agreed to do so. Chair Lyons will look into other required representation." (GOV minutes, 3/19/12)

UPPC discussed its representation on the committee at its April 20th meeting. The minutes are as follows: "Discussion commenced regarding Senate Resolution 1112-5R (to determine offerings in European Languages and Classical Studies in accordance with UAlbany's mission) relative to whether Dr. Wills' offer to serve as the UPPC rep to this committee is in conflict with his role as sponsor of the bill, as well as a member of an affected department. Dr. Wills asserted that this legislation is in conflict with an administrative decision that has already been made. Chair Lifshin asked Dr. Wills if his personal interest in this committee would compromise his ability to report the activities of this group back to UPPC in terms of resource implications. Dr. Wills replied that it would not. Dr. Fessler asked Mr. Beditz about the conflict of interest definition. Mr. Beditz responded that broadly, we should not use our professional offices for personal gain or in conflict with our duties as officers of the State of New York.

Dr. Fessler felt that the result of the committee's decision could directly benefit Dr. Wills in terms of employment. Dr. Johnson reflected that having a vested interest could influence one's participation in such a group.

Dr. Lifshin issued a renewed call for an alternate volunteer to come forth. As no one came forward, Dr. Lifshin asked for a motion to decline Dr. Wills' offer to serve on the committee as the UPPC representative based on a perceived conflict of interest. Dr. Johnson asked what UPPC would want the volunteer to this committee focus on. Ms. DiDonna voiced a concern that since Dr. Wills authored the proposal, that there could very well be a perception of conflict within the university community if he also served on the committee, which was echoed by Dr. Wagner. Dr. Wagner requested clarification on the committee's role. (The committee's charge is to report back to Senate by 4/15/12 on recommendations for program reinstatement, which would ultimately go back to GAC, UAC and ultimately UPPC). A secret ballot approved Dr. Wills as the UPPC representative to the committee."

GOV also reached out to the Vice Provost for International Education, but after careful consideration he declined to serve on the committee.

In the end, the committee roster was as follows:

Name	Affiliation for the purposes of the committee
Lee Bickmore	Languages; UUP
Suraj Commuri	GAC
Sue Faerman	Undergraduate Education
Rick Fogarty	UAC; French Studies
Tim Groves	GAC
Trudi Jacobson	UAC
JoAnne Malatesta	UAC
Diana Mancini	GAC
Greg Stevens	CAS Office; Classics
David Wills	UPPC; French Studies

The committee met on 5/11/12. Senate Chair Fessler called the meeting to order, explained the committee's charge, and asked that the group elect a chair. She then left the meeting. In the end, no committee member was willing to chair the group. There was a general discussion, however, and David Wills followed up on 5/17/12 with an e-mail to the committee members, containing data about UAlbany peer and aspirational peer institutions.

No committee activity happened over the summer months. In late August, with the start of the new school year, Senate officers followed up on the issue. Two members of the original committee were no longer able to serve in Fall 2012: Greg Stevens (retired) and David Wills (on sabbatical). Susanna Fessler agreed to serve as the UPPC representative, and John Monfasani agreed to serve as a representative from the CAS office. In addition, GOV asked Professor Jeanette Altarriba to serve, as someone affiliated with languages. GOV decided that there should also be a representative from Languages, Literature, and Cultures, and asked the dept. chair, Lotfi Sayahi. Chair Sahayi declined to serve, and instead designated Professor Henryk Baran (Russian program) to serve.

The new committee roster was then as follows:

Name	Affiliation for the purposes of the committee
Jeanette Altarriba	Languages
Lee Bickmore	Languages; UUP
Suraj Commuri	GAC
Sue Faerman	Undergraduate Education
Susanna Fessler	UPPC; Languages
Rick Fogarty	UAC; French Studies
Tim Groves	GAC
Trudi Jacobson	UAC
JoAnne Malatesta	UAC
Diana Mancini	GAC
John Monfasani	CAS Office
David Wills	UPPC; French Studies

That the committee includes many members who are affiliated with languages was a result of GOV's interpretation of the resolution language, which indicates that the committee should contain "other faculty with relevant expertise."

The newly constituted committee met on 10/22/12, and elected Susanna Fessler as chair. This election was held by ballot, and was unanimous except for one abstention.

Articulation of the Committee's Charge

The language of the resolution states that the "subcommittee [will]… determine which programs in European Language and Classical Studies should be activated, reactivated, or remain active in accordance with the liberal arts mission of the university…"

The committee found this problematic, because UAlbany does not have a "liberal arts mission." No such mission is in our current Strategic Plan, nor was it in previous iterations. Our current Strategic Plan states our mission as "Expanding knowledge and transforming minds to shape the future of our community and our world." Our 1992 mission was articulated as follows:

- First, a commitment to the pursuit and advancement of knowledge, for its own sake and for its practical benefits to society.

- Second, a commitment to the teaching of students, to their growth in knowledge, and to that reinforcement of character, through co-curricular experiences, which enables them to develop emotionally, physically, and socially even as they mature intellectually;

- Third, a commitment to the larger interests of society through acts of public service, and by fostering the ideals of social justice;

- Fourth, a commitment to freedom of thought, inquiry, and expression, and to the rights and obligations of faculty and students to pursue knowledge, wherever it may lead;

- Fifth, a commitment to profit intellectually and imaginatively from differences of opinion and of culture.

Again, this does not indicate that UAlbany had (before the current Strategic Plan) a "liberal arts mission." Nonetheless, the committee returned to the "Whereas" section of the resolution to discern how the UA mission, as articulated in the Strategic Plan, might apply. In other words, how do the "whereas" statements in the resolution map onto arguments for "which programs in European Language and Classical Studies should be activated, reactivated, or remain active?"

One other area of the resolution was unclear to the committee: whether the resolution asked for a consideration of only undergraduate programs, or both undergraduate and graduate programs. The LLC representative on the committee was asked his opinion, but he did not answer the question. The committee decided that it would focus on undergraduate programs only.

The committee also discussed whether the financial resource implications of the resolution should be addressed. It was agreed that, given the absence of financial considerations in the resolution itself, the committee should keep its report to the issues that *did* appear in the resolution.

Peer Comparisons

The first two "whereas" clauses of the resolution are:

- Whereas none of UAlbany's peer institutions offers fewer than 3 baccalaureate programs in European languages,

- Whereas the deactivations of 10/1/10 reduce such offerings at UAlbany to 1 (Spanish),

These two points were seen as part of the same argument, that UAlbany should mirror or exceed its peer institutions in terms of European language program offerings. In the absence of a "liberal arts" mission, the committee discussed the merits of such "mirroring." Certainly not all SUNY campuses, or their peers, aim to perfectly duplicate others' curriculum. Each campus maintains its own identity, to some extent tied to the unique and/or particularly strong programs that it has. Indeed, when a SUNY campus proposes to create a new program, part of the approval process necessitates consultation with other SUNY campuses that have similar programs to ensure that the creation of a new program will not cause a negative impact. The concern there is largely one of supply and demand; if the demand of students does not meet or exceed the supply of programs, then the program does not serve the student body efficiently.

The argument that we should have the same programs as our peers or peer institutions, thus, did not sway the committee. There was discussion of how enrollments could tie in to such an argument, but it was quickly agreed that such an approach took us into the finances of program reactivation, and that we should focus on the arguments of the resolution solely.

<u>Strategic Plan</u>

The next two "whereas" clauses read:

- Whereas the Student Experience Objective #4 of the Strategic Plan, which calls for amplifying the 'World Within Reach' perspective through a dynamic, rich assemblage of experiences, includes as Action Step 4.5 "to encourage undergraduate student contact with foreign languages and world cultures,"

- Whereas the Strategic Plan charges the Vice Provost for International Education with organizing a group to identify critical languages and ways to build the University's capacity to deliver instruction in them, such group to be convened immediately following approval of the Strategic Plan, such group not having yet been convened,

The text from Action Step 4.5 above is from the Executive Summary of the Strategic Plan. The full text of Action Step 4.5 is as follows:

> Action Step 4.5: Provide training in the languages that students are most likely to need in an increasingly globalized world, ensure regular course offering at all levels of instruction (including advanced courses) in these critical languages, and focus on student proficiency in these languages for both study abroad and career development; charge the Vice Provost for International Education with organizing a group to identify those languages and ways to build the University's capacity to deliver instruction in them.

The language about the timeline above, that "such group [should be] convened immediately" implies an imperative which does not actually exist. Stepping back to look at the implantation of the entire Strategic Plan, it is important to note that all mention of timelines in the Strategic Plan is "suggested," not mandated. When the Strategic Plan was adopted, the Office of the President, working with the Provost, prioritized the action steps of the SPLAN. In that document, available at http://www.albany.edu/strategicplan/files/Strategic_Plan_Implementation_year1_2_priorities.pdf, the following parts of Action Step 4 are given Year 1 & 2 priority:

> Undergraduate/Objective #4: Enhance the international components of undergraduate education...study abroad/intersession...international student enrollment^...strategic languages...enhance global course offerings (see also Student Experience/Objective #4 (Amplify the 'World Within Reach' perspective through a dynamic, rich assemblage of experiences)

Of these, "international components of undergraduate education" and "strategic languages" are applicable to Resolution 1112-05R. The committee notes that "international components of undergraduate education" is a broad category, which subsumes most of the other categories. The issue of what is a "strategic language" will be addressed below.

<u>Measuring "Strategic Languages"</u>

The language of the Strategic Plan indicates that UA should "provide training in the languages that students are most likely to need in an increasingly globalized world, ensure regular course offering at all levels of instruction (including advanced courses) in these critical languages, and focus on student proficiency in these languages for both study abroad and career development." This led the committee to question how one would measure what languages "students are most likely to need in an increasingly globalized world." Suggested metrics were 1) the number of speakers of a language world wide, 2) The collective GDP of speakers of a language, 3) current demand in the United States for classes in a foreign language, 4) "Critical Language" designation by the U.S. government or 5) a combination of all the above.

1. Number of speakers worldwide

[info from Trudi]
2. GDP

Although there are many statistical resources available, there is general agreement among them that, based on the gross domestic product, the most important non-English European languages would be German, Spanish, French, Italian, and Russian (in that order).

[info from Trudi]

3. Current demand

The Modern Language Association recently published a report on foreign language learning trends in the United States. The full report can be found here:
http://www.mla.org/pdf/2009_enrollment_survey.pdf. The chart below comes from that report.

Table 6

Percentage of Total Language Course Enrollments, 1968–2009, for the Fourteen Most Commonly Taught Languages in 2009

	1968	1980	1990	1995	1998	2002	2006	2009
Spanish	32.4	41.0	45.1	53.2	55.0	53.4	52.2	51.4
French	34.4	26.9	23.0	18.0	16.7	14.5	13.1	12.9
German	19.2	13.7	11.3	8.5	7.5	6.5	6.0	5.7
ASL	–	–	0.1	0.4	1.0	4.4	5.0	5.5
Italian	2.7	3.8	4.2	3.8	4.1	4.6	5.0	4.8
Japanese	0.4	1.2	3.9	3.9	3.6	3.7	4.2	4.4
Chinese	0.4	1.2	1.6	2.3	2.4	2.4	3.3	3.6
Arabic	0.1	0.4	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.8	1.5	2.1
Latin	3.1	2.7	2.4	2.3	2.2	2.1	2.0	1.9
Russian	3.6	2.6	3.8	2.2	2.0	1.7	1.6	1.6
Hebrew1	0.9	2.1	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.6	1.5	1.3
Greek, Ancient	1.7	2.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.5	1.4	1.2
Portuguese	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.7
Korean	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.5
Other	0.7	1.4	1.2	1.5	1.5	1.8	2.1	2.4

Taking solely the European Language data from this table and charting it, we find the following trends:
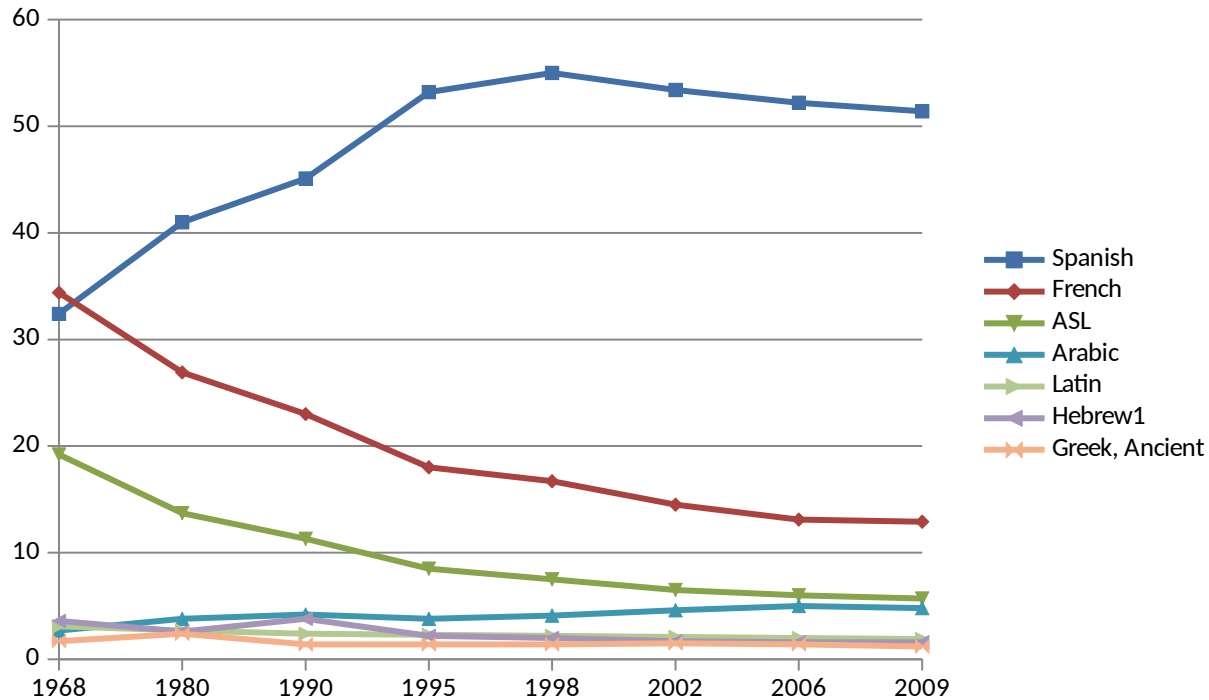
Both French and German have seen significant decline since 1968. Italian, by contrast, has seen a slight increase in enrollments. Latin, Russian, and Greek have also declined, although their numbers were never high to begin with.

4. Critical Language Designation

"Critical language" is a term used in the U.S. to designate languages for which there is large demand for language professionals but little supply. The list of which languages are considered critical changes over time as economic and political situations change and develop, but often these languages are radically different from English in grammatical structures, sound systems and writing systems. The current "critical languages" are:

- Arabic
- Azerbaijiani
- Bengali
- Chinese
- Hindi
- Indonesian
- Japanese

- Korean
- Persian
- Punjabi
- Russian
- Turkish
- Urdu

Russian is the only European language currently considered "critical."

In sum, these four interpretations of "strategic" do not result in a common conclusion. The first two indicate that French is perhaps the most "strategic" language, but the latter two indicate that linguistic trends and needs are shifting away from that.

Consideration of this data brought the committee to one more conundrum: concerns about "strategic languages" and consequently which programs should be "activated, reactivated, or remain active" conflate the offering of foreign language classes with the offering of baccalaureate degrees in those languages. UA still offers courses in French, Italian, Russian, and Classics on our campus. If we thus turn away from Action Step 4.5 that calls for "training in the languages that students are most likely to need in an increasingly globalized world, ensure regular course offering at all levels of instruction (including advanced courses) in these critical languages, and focus on student proficiency in these languages for both study abroad and career development" and try to find a mandate in the Strategic Plan for activating, reactivating, or keeping active *degree programs*, we end up empty handed.

Conclusion

The committee did not find the arguments of Resolution 1112-05 compelling. Additionally, there was concern that, should one want to accomplish the "activation or reactivation" of a program, a Senate resolution was not the proper method. Although it can and hereby does render an opinion on the matter, the ad hoc committee of Resolution 1112-05R has no power to instigate a proposal to activate or reactivate a program.

The committee would, however, like to point out that students on our campus are still able to declare a student initiated major in French, Italian, or Russian Studies. Additionally, faculty could propose a faculty initiated major in French, Italian, and Russian. Although this is not the same as having BA programs in these languages, it would be a first step toward rebuilding these programs in the future.

UNIVERSITY SENATE

UNIVERSITY AT ALBANY
STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

Introduced by: Senator David Wills

Date: February 6. 2012

RESOLUTION TO DETERMINE OFFERINGS IN EUROPEAN LANGUAGES & CLASSICAL STUDIES IN ACCORDANCE WITH UALBANY'S MISSION AND STRATEGIC PLAN

Whereas none of UAlbany's peer institutions offers fewer than 3 baccalaureate programs in European languages,

Whereas the deactivations of 10/1/10 reduce such offerings at UAlbany to 1 (Spanish),

Whereas the Undergraduate Education Objective #4 of the Strategic Plan calls for various initiatives designed to enhance the international components of undergraduate education,

Whereas the Student Experience Objective #4 of the Strategic Plan, which calls for amplifying the 'World Within Reach' perspective through a dynamic, rich assemblage of experiences, includes as Action Step 4.5 "to encourage undergraduate student contact with foreign languages and world cultures,"

Whereas the Strategic Plan charges the Vice Provost for International Education with organizing a group to identify critical languages and ways to build the University's capacity to deliver instruction in them, such group to be convened immediately following approval of the Strategic Plan, such group not having yet been convened,

Whereas Faculty By-Law 2.2.1 charges the Faculty with initiating, disapproving or approving and recommending for implementation "all changes in, additions to, or deletions from the Curriculum,"

Be it resolved that the Executive Committee of the Senate immediately establish a subcommittee composed of representatives from UAC, GAC and UPPC, as well as other faculty with relevant expertise, to determine which programs in European Language and Classical Studies should be activated, reactivated, or remain active in accordance with the liberal arts mission of the university, such subcommittee to report back to the Senate by 4/15/12.