

Department of European Languages

Discipline Profile

[Updated April 2005]

PREAMBLE

The Department of European Languages consists of ten language disciplines (Croatian, French, German, Italian, Macedonian, Modern Greek, Polish, Russian, Spanish and Ukrainian). Full undergraduate programs are offered in all of these languages, as well as BA Honours and postgraduate research degrees (MA and PhD) in some of them. In addition, the Department offers a Certificate and a Diploma in Languages that can be completed together with a degree, or as stand-alone programs. Both are undergraduate HECS-based awards.

Most languages offer flexible modes of delivery with online components in addition to on-campus classes. Community languages are offered nation-wide externally. The Department offers a comprehensive Study Abroad program, which includes Short Residential units and full-semester In-Country Study units. Exchange programs with prestigious European universities are in place.

The leadership qualities and administrative workloads of Heads of Disciplines, who have to coordinate what is effectively a sub-department with a complete academic program, other full-time and/or several casual staff, should also be taken into account.

QUALIFICATIONS

Level A

Essential qualifications are a completed first degree in the relevant language with a strong academic record, and native-speaker or near native-speaker fluency in that language. Desirable additional qualifications are enrolment in a higher degree program in a relevant area, training in the methodology of LOTE teaching, some experience in tertiary language teaching and a general acquaintance with the history and culture of the country or countries where the language is spoken. In the case of native-speakers other levels and types of academic background may be appropriate in view of their role in providing a linguistic or cultural model or resource. The Department of European Languages attaches great importance to native-speaker fluency or near native-speaker fluency in all staff as an important means of developing the language skills of students. At the same time, it requires native-speakers to have a good command of spoken and written English, and the ability to contribute to the corporate life of the Department, the Division of Humanities and the University.

In most language disciplines, experience in flexible modes of delivery, including online teaching, is desirable. Computer literacy is essential.

Level B

The additional essential qualifications at this level are a completed or nearly completed research degree, preferably a PhD, and appropriately documented evidence of successful teaching, administration and community service. Additional desirable qualifications are evidence of having begun publishing, usually in the form of a monograph or articles produced from a higher degree thesis, but also in less traditional forms such as computer software, and participation in strategically important activities such as the internationalisation of the teaching program and technology-assisted teaching and flexible learning.

Level C

Additional essential qualifications at this level are a research degree, normally a PhD, a solid research and publication record, documented evidence of high-quality teaching, and a record of achievement in curriculum development and course design, administration and community service. Additional desirable qualifications are evidence of special achievement in teaching, research or community service, and some experience in the supervision of advanced students (BA Honours, MA or PhD).

Level D

The additional essential requirements at this level are a substantial research and publication record, recognition as an established scholar, evidence of a leadership role in teaching, administration and community service, and a successful record of supervision of BA Honours and research degree theses.

Level E

The additional essential requirements at this level are an outstanding research and publication record, international recognition in a particular field of scholarship, and a proven ability to provide high-quality academic leadership in teaching, research, administration and community service, as well as in strategic academic and financial planning, together with the ability to represent the relevant Language discipline within the University, the national and international academic community, and the wider non-academic community.

TEACHING

Teaching in European Languages comprises practical language instruction from introductory or beginners' units right through to Honours level, as well as units in such fields as literature, film, culture, history and politics, comparative philology, applied linguistics and computer-assisted language learning.

All members of staff are expected to participate in practical language instruction as well as teaching in various options. As staff numbers have been decreasing, teaching loads in most disciplines are heavy. The average number of contact hours expected from all members of staff varies from 8 (research-active staff) to 12 (non-research-active staff). In some disciplines, these hours are replaced by external teaching hours, in others there is a combination of both. This is especially onerous for those who are responsible for course coordination and the supervision of BA

Honours and research degree theses, as well as for those who have sole responsibility for the management of their discipline.

The Department is committed to quality control in teaching and coordinators are expected to use TEDS questionnaires in all units, as well as peer review and graduate surveys where appropriate. Great importance is attached to the development of innovative curriculum and teaching methodology and members of staff are encouraged to apply for Teaching Development grants for specific projects. Staff members in European Languages are also encouraged to participate in the internationalisation of the teaching program, for example in the development and management of overseas exchange and trainee programs and in-country study.

Level A

Level A staff are normally members of a language teaching team, which includes more senior staff. However, in the current staffing situation, they may be asked to perform full unit coordination for a unit, and in that case will move to Step 6 of Level A if they are not already at that level. While they normally teach mainly in 100-level units, in some disciplines they are required to teach higher levels as well. Level A staff may, where appropriate, teach in optional units, normally in cooperation with a more senior member of staff.

Level B

Level B staff differ from Level A in that they normally teach at all levels of the undergraduate program, both in language units and in options. They participate in curriculum design and are responsible for the administration and examination of units. They are encouraged to design and present new options of their own, and to adopt innovative teaching methodologies, such as Computer-Assisted Language Learning or online delivery. They may also be required to undertake supervision of Honours and postgraduate students. In the absence of more senior staff they may be responsible for the management of their discipline.

Level C

Level C staff have similar duties to Level B, but with a heavier involvement in course planning and curriculum design, and in Honours and postgraduate supervision.

Level D

Level D staff normally teach at advanced levels, but also assist with core units at lower levels level, including practical language instruction. They are also expected to take a leadership role in course planning and curriculum design, as well as in the development of innovative teaching strategies and the introduction of new technologies.

Level E

In addition to Level D duties a professor has overall responsibility for the discipline's teaching, for the strategic development of the teaching program on the basis of the Department's Teaching and Learning Plan, and for the implementation of quality control.

SCHOLARSHIP AND RESEARCH

The Department of European Languages is committed to the development of its research profile and staffing policy will recognise this strategic aim. Staff are expected to conduct research in the form of individual or collaborative projects. They are encouraged to apply for grants (internal and external), and internal arrangements are made where possible to give staff time for research, usually one day per week free of teaching. Research is conducted in a wide variety of fields, including applied linguistics, historical linguistics and philology, teaching methodology, second language acquisition, computer-assisted language learning, multi-media, mass communication, film and television, literary history and criticism, area and cultural studies.

As in most Australian language departments, research output needs to be judged in terms of quality rather than quantity, as the demands of second-language teaching severely limit scholarly productivity. Teaching loads are normally heavy in terms of class contact and marking, because of the small-group skills-based instruction that is the starting-point of the language disciplines, and much of this teaching is unrelated to research interests. In addition, staff members are expected to be able to deal with a wide range of content-based units, which again may have no direct connection with their particular research area.

Level A

At this level, staff appointed to teach practical language classes will normally be working towards a higher degree if they do not already have one. Staff with a higher degree will be expected to keep researching in view of publication.

Level B

Staff at this level will normally have completed a higher degree and will be in the process of publishing their work as a monograph, as articles or, in some cases, as software. At this stage only a limited number of publications can be expected. They are encouraged to apply for grants to fund their research. Those who have not completed their degree are encouraged to apply for teaching release grants to enable them to do so as quickly as possible.

Level C

At this level staff will have begun to publish regularly and will be pursuing a regular program of research in spite of the heavy demands of teaching and administration. Publication may be in the form of scholarly articles or software, but staff are also encouraged to plan for a substantial monograph. They will be working towards establishing themselves as significant researchers in their field, both nationally and internationally. They will normally have been successful in gaining research grants for their projects.

Level D

At this level staff will have gone beyond establishing credentials in publication and will be seen as recognised scholars in a particular field. They will be engaged in major research projects, and will have been successful in gaining funding for them. They will normally have published at least one monograph, and have a series of high-quality scholarly articles to their credit. The quality and recognition of this work as a major contribution to the field will be more important than a long list of titles. Staff at this level will have come to terms with the restrictions imposed by heavy teaching loads and will have found a way to combine excellence in a range of types of teaching with a respected research record.

Level E

As for Level D, but with the additional requirement that the Professor will be an internationally recognised authority in a field of specialisation and have an outstanding publication record, normally containing a larger number of monographs and articles than expected at lower levels. Here too, however, the main criterion is not the number but the acknowledged quality of the publications, their significance as contributions to their field. The Professor has the responsibility of providing leadership and fostering excellence in the discipline's research activities, and overseeing the implementation of the Department Research Plan within the discipline.

SERVICE TO THE UNIVERSITY AND COMMUNITY

Staff in European Languages are expected to contribute to the management of the Department by participating in such activities as course coordination, annual program reviews and strategic planning, and to the management of the Division of Humanities through the committee structure. They are also encouraged to participate in University administration, particularly through membership of University committees.

The Department places a strong emphasis on community service beyond the University. This involves relationships with local communities speaking the languages taught at Macquarie as well as with their foundations and other organisations, with schools and language teachers, with diplomatic and consular representatives of the relevant countries and with their cultural agencies in Australia, as well as with institutions and organisations of the countries of the target languages. All staff are expected to contribute actively to the Department's outreach program.

Level A

It is assumed that the main priorities of staff members at this level are teaching and, in most cases, working towards a higher degree or be active in research. Nonetheless it is expected that they will familiarise themselves with the outreach aspects of the profession and begin to participate in them.

Level B

At this level staff members are expected to take responsibility for the overall organisation and coordination of at least one unit of study and for one or more aspects of the administration of their discipline. They also participate in the development of departmental policy. Level B staff are involved in management through membership of committees at Division level, and are encouraged to participate in University affairs, for example through membership of University committees. It is also desirable that they contribute to the fostering of relationships with other university language departments, especially through national associations and networks.

Staff members at this level are expected to contribute more substantially to outreach activities involving their discipline's stakeholders, such as activities organised in conjunction with the NSW Board of Studies, ethnic community organisations,

diplomatic and cultural representatives and institutions and organisations of the countries of the target languages. Other outreach activities are also valued, including membership of outside bodies and contributions to the media.

However, it should be noted that some staff at this level have more onerous responsibilities than others as Head of a discipline.

Level C

As for Level B, though at this level more managerial responsibility is expected, as staff may be required to run their discipline. Membership of more senior University bodies such as Academic Senate and the Undergraduate and Postgraduate Studies Committees is also appropriate, as is membership of some Promotion Committees.

Level D

As for level C, though greater managerial responsibility and higher-level involvement in University affairs is the norm.

Level E

As for Level D, but a Professor also has the responsibility to provide leadership in all administrative and service activities of his/her discipline, to oversee the implementation of the Department's Community Service Plan and to represent the discipline in the Division of Humanities, the University and the wider community.