February 2, 2015

TO: Sarah Mangelsdorf, Provost

FROM: John Karl Scholz, Dean

RE: Proposal to create new Undergraduate Certificate in Italian

CC: Gilles Bousquet, Professor and Chair, Department of French and Italian
    Gery Essenmacher, Associate Dean for Student Academic Affairs
    Elaine Klein, Assistant Dean for Academic Planning, L&S
    Jocelyn Milner, Associate Provost and Director, Academic Planning and Analysis
    James Montgomery, Associate Dean for Fiscal Initiatives, L&S
    Nancy Westphal-Johnson, Associate Dean for Academic Administration
    Susan Zaske, Associate Dean for the Arts and Humanities

On November 4, 2014, the L&S Academic Planning Council considered the attached proposal to Create a New Undergraduate Certificate in Italian.

Like other focused language certificate programs, in this program the study of Italian language is complemented by coursework in literature and culture. It is flexible enough that students may pursue it in combination with other majors, so students will be more marketable in seeking employment or in application for advanced studies that benefit from intentional study of other languages and culture. The program learning outcomes echo those of the AAC&U’s “Liberal Education and America’s Promise” initiative, which promotes 21st Century Liberal Education that includes knowledge of human cultures and intercultural knowledge and competence.

We anticipate that this certificate program will function within the L&S course array like a “mini-major” or “minor” by allowing focused study of a topic in fewer credits than are required for the major, in a program that calls upon courses that are already in the course array, arranged in a program that can be programmed into the Degree Audit System. Should students begin the certificate and wish to complete the major, they may transfer into the more robust program. In this respect, this program may well become a means of bolstering enrollments in the Italian program. We have observed this pattern with similar programs (notably, the Undergraduate Certificate in German), and consider this to be a good direction for the Department. I’m pleased to report that the L&S APC unanimously approved this proposal, which I now recommend to you.

Note on program review from Elaine Klein, 3/21/2015: Program review for all programs in the Dept of French and Italian is almost complete and scheduled for final L&S APC discussion on April 7/2015.

Jocelyn Milner, 3/22/2015
PROPOSAL
Certificate in Italian
Department of French and Italian College of Letters and Science University of Wisconsin-Madison September 8, 2014

1. Basic information.
   b. Sponsoring department: French and Italian.
   c. Faculty direction of program: Associate Chair for Italian, Department of French and Italian, in concert with undergraduate advisor and the department’s Italian Instructional Committee.
   d. Key program faculty and academic staff: all faculty and academic staff teaching in the Italian Program within the Department of French and Italian.

2. Intended timeline for implementation.
   Our Department’s Italian Instructional Committee began studying models for and gathering student feedback on the creation of an Undergraduate Certificate in Italian during AY 2013-14. We have been developing the proposal since then and plan to implement the Undergraduate Certificate in Italian beginning Spring 2015, pending approval during AY 2014-15.

3. Governance.
   From the students’ perspective, the Undergraduate Certificate in Italian works a lot like the Italian Major, in that it is a credential a student declares then works toward by taking a particular series of courses in Italian, in order to develop his or her proficiency, knowledge of the literature and culture of the Italian-speaking world, and to make him- or herself more marketable for jobs, graduate and professional programs, and myriad forms of service, both public and private. The Undergraduate Certificate in Italian will therefore be governed like our Italian Major: by the Department’s Italian Instructional Committee, which meets monthly during the academic year and which reports regularly to the general Department of French and Italian at its own monthly meetings. The Associate Chair for Italian is the de facto faculty director of the Undergraduate Certificate in Italian, but, once implemented, it will be governed in its minutiae by the Italian Instructional Committee and its existing protocols, per the specific mission of the Undergraduate Certificate in Italian itself. Every Undergraduate Certificate in Italian student will
be advised by the Department’s undergraduate advisor.

4. Purpose, rationale, justification.

The Undergraduate Certificate in Italian is designed to attract a more diverse group of learners. We first conceived of this Undergraduate Certificate in Italian as a way of reaching students specializing in non-humanities disciplines (like business, engineering, medicine, pre-law and the sciences) who might otherwise not have considered the value of a fuller program of study in Italian as a complement to their major studies and future careers. We also believe that this Certificate will not have an impact on our enrollment in the Italian major, since the Undergraduate Certificate in Italian responds to different needs and to a different student cohort. Based on a thorough survey of undergraduate students enrolled in all of our 100- through 300-level courses this semester (including all language, culture and literature courses), our Italian faculty as well as our Undergraduate Advisor in Italian have reported very strong interest in a Certificate option among our students. Demand for this Certificate appears equally acute among students majoring in humanities disciplines other than Italian, and several students majoring in STEM disciplines felt that the Certificate would enhance their overall education while also strengthening their resume. As one student wrote: “Being a STEM major, I have to take a lot of courses in science and math, which do take a lot of time. I would do a certificate in Italian because I would also be able to graduate on time, and it would help me out a lot.” Our target audience is clearly enthused about the flexibility this Certificate offers them as intermediate- to advanced Italian learners. This Certificate should not prevent such students from seeking majors in other disciplines. As one respondent wrote: “I was disappointed when I didn’t see an Italian certificate because it is definitely something I’m interested in, in case I decide not to complete a full major in it.” Clearly, our surveys have indicated great enthusiasm for an Undergraduate Certificate in Italian among students who may not have time to complete a major in Italian, yet who wish to achieve an advanced level of oral and written fluency and deepen their understanding of Italian culture and literature. One student wrote: “Just the opportunity to study more Italian and get recognition for it without having to commit to the major would be sweet because I’m already majoring in three other things.” Several respondents also suggested that the new Certificate might usefully be better linked to UW study-abroad programs in Italy. Student respondents have reported their goal to be making themselves more proficient in Italian and Italian culture, in order to be prepared to acquire advanced-level academic training later in their college careers; to make full use of study abroad and internship opportunities; and to provide them with the linguistic and cultural skills they believe will prove useful for them after graduation. We see many of these students in Italian classes during their first few years at UW-Madison. Yet currently, most tend not to continue beyond intermediate Italian at all, largely because the only recognizable, credential-bearing series of articulated courses available in our department is the Italian major, for which some of these students did not feel they had time and which others did not want as their major course of
study. Nevertheless, these students identify largely as both interdisciplinary and
global-minded; by complementing these students’ major academic studies, the
proposed Undergraduate Certificate in Italian and its attendant proficiencies will
allow them to both deepen that global interest and show, in their official academic
record, that they have done so. Several survey respondents expressed impatience for
the new Certificate option, writing: “Please hurry! I am a junior and would love the
certificate before I graduate”; and “please create this as soon as possible.”

By providing a curriculum dedicated to improving linguistic abilities and
intercultural skills useful to all kinds of students and professionals in the Italian-speaking
regions and communities of the world, this new Undergraduate Certificate in Italian
complements that wider range of majors for which the Italian language, in the short and
long terms, is useful—both internationally and in the United States.

5. Curriculum.

Below is a description of the Undergraduate Certificate in Italian as it would
appear in catalog format. Following that description, we address stipulations (as
described in the guidelines for certificate programs) we have not referred to
directly in the description.

a. Catalog description.

The Undergraduate Certificate in Italian offers students the opportunity to
develop their proficiency in Italian language and their knowledge of literature
and culture in the Italian-speaking world, thereby complementing their major(s)
in other subjects across the University. It also strengthens the applications of
students who intend to pursue careers or graduate study in areas where Italian is
useful. The Undergraduate Certificate in Italian is open to all undergraduate
students.

The Undergraduate Certificate in Italian requires 15 credits of Italian
coursework taken beyond Italian 204 (fourth semester of Italian). The 200-level
courses will provide students with a solid foundation on which they will be able to
develop proficiency in speaking and reading Italian. At the advanced stage,
comprised of 300- and 400-level courses, students will be able to build on that
foundation by choosing from a range of courses in Italian literature, linguistics,
cinema and culture. Transfer credits may be counted as a part of the certificate.
The requirement for 9 credits in residence will ensure sufficient credits are taken
at UW-Madison.

The Undergraduate Certificate in Italian Requirements:
15 credits
At least 9 credits in Residence
A minimum 2.0 GPA average in all required course work
2 courses required from the following foundation courses: ITALIAN 311, 312, 321, 322


One elective course may be chosen from: LITTRANS 253, 254, 255, 256, 260, or 410.

Written work in Italian required for Italian courses taught in English (IT460 and IT350). This will be carefully monitored by the Italian certificate advisor in order to prevent exceptions.

Maximum 6 credits of elective requirements may be taken through a UW-Madison Study Abroad program.

In the interest of helping students understand the purpose and value of the program, they may not declare the Certificate in Italian after all requirements are completed. Ideally, students will declare the Certificate in Italian before completing the first half of the required credits, and are encouraged to do so as early as possible, once enrolled as an undergraduate. Note: for courses taken on campus at the 300 level or higher, prerequisites must be met or permission given by the department.

b. Stipulations not addressed in the above description.

i. Foundation courses (311, 312, 321, 322) are distinct courses (not special topics courses), and are approved.

ii. All topics of special topics courses – 450, 452 and 453 – will satisfy requirements for the certificate.

iii. The certificate curriculum contains no unique requirements that could potentially impede a student’s progress to degree.

iv. The certificate is designed to accommodate students who start both as new freshmen and as transfer students.

v. Retroactive credits cannot be used to satisfy criteria for the certificate; they are equated to courses that, in the Italian language sequence, precede the courses required for the certificate.

6. Overlap limits.

This certificate does not overlap with any majors except the Italian major. The Undergraduate Certificate in Italian was designed so that certificate students who may eventually choose to complete an Italian major can continue to make progress in that direction. Students may not earn both the Undergraduate Certificate in Italian and the undergraduate major in Italian.
7. Assessment and program review.

a. Major learning goals and how required courses relate to them.

The foundation courses for the certificate include two of the following: Italian 311, 312, 321, or 322.

Upon successful completion of the required foundation courses, students will be able to express themselves in a clear and nuanced way in Italian. The foundation courses build critical and analytical skills through oral presentations, class discussions, literary analysis, writing assignments. Students will improve their linguistic competences (speaking, listening, writing, and reading). They will gain a comprehensive knowledge of Italian literature and culture in a multitude of historical, social, political, and cultural contexts. This outcome will be supported by coursework in Italian 311, 312, 321, or 322, and will be evaluated by individual instructors who teach these courses.

To complete the remaining nine credits required for the Undergraduate Certificate in Italian, students can take a wide range of electives in Italian language, culture and literature that will contribute toward enrichment of cultural competences and language skills. All of these goals adhere to the "essential learning outcomes" of the LEAP initiative (Liberal Education and America's Promise) of the Association of American Colleges and Universities. Those include “knowledge of human cultures,” “intellectual and practical skills” such as “communicational skills and critical thinking,” and “personal and social responsibility” skills such as “intercultural knowledge and competence.” The Undergraduate Certificate in Italian will help students acquire the World-Readiness Standards (Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, Communities) that will allow students to apply their competencies outside of instructional setting.

b. Assessment plan.

The success of the Undergraduate Certificate in Italian will be determined in the following ways.

i. Regular “exit” questionnaires will be given to all students completing courses for the Undergraduate Certificate in Italian. The Italian undergraduate advisor will administer these questionnaires to all declared Undergraduate Certificate in Italian students in their final semester of Certificate-required coursework. These questionnaires will be regularly reviewed annually by the Italian Instructional Committee (which includes undergraduate and graduate representatives at every meeting), in terms of the
Undergraduate Certificate in Italian goals and guidelines as they appear in practice. (NOTE: these program-specific questionnaires will supplement the course-specific questionnaires that students will complete at the end of each semester.)

ii. A separate questionnaire will be given annually to all instructors (faculty and academic staff) teaching courses required by the Undergraduate Certificate in Italian. These questionnaires will also be reviewed by the Italian Instructional Committee annually, in relation to the questionnaires described above (b.i.) in order to assess the program.

iii. Student performance will be regularly assessed in Undergraduate Certificate in Italian courses by a mix of written work, small- and large-group projects, group and individual presentations, and class discussion. Increasingly, individual courses are requiring students to produce digital media (such as short original videos, blogs, and websites). Department-wide workshops and pedagogical development projects involving technologies like Moodle and Critical Reader are producing in-class activities by which the majority of our Undergraduate Certificate in Italian students will be assessed or will have been assessed in class, in the near future. Note: in-class assessment of students includes “peer assessment,” or regular assessment of student work by other students (peer editing, written critical commentary, group work). The Italian Instructional Committee in concert with the Italian Certificate advisor will evaluate any of these artifacts to determine if students are meeting the learning goals.

iv. Regular observation of Undergraduate Certificate in Italian courses will continue, allowing for regular, comparative discussion (in the Italian Instructional Committee) of teaching and learning techniques in class.

c. Periodic program review.

Every spring semester, the Italian Instructional Committee will review all relevant data produced by and policy governing the Undergraduate Certificate in Italian. We will conduct this review at the same time as a similar review of relevant data and policy governing our Italian major.

L&S Dean's office will review the Undergraduate Certificate in Italian program after its first five years of implementation; this review will be followed by periodic program reviews thereafter.

8. Students are encouraged to declare the Undergraduate Certificate in Italian before completing the first half of minimum credits required. Students are required to meet with the Italian advisor to declare the program prior to completing the requirements.
9. The French and Italian Department does not foresee capacity issues with regard to the foundation courses or other courses applicable to the Undergraduate Certificate in Italian. Our tenured and untenured faculty are now prepared to staff additional sections of any course applicable to the Certificate when burgeoning enrollment requires it. Based on interest expressed by students, we expect approximately 30 students to enroll within the first year, and a steady enrollment of approximately 10-15 students a year, which we would consider a reasonable minimum for the certificate to be considered a success. We would be able to handle this range of enrollment with current instructional and student services resources.

10. Candidates for the Undergraduate Certificate in Italian will be advised by the undergraduate academic advisor in Italian (always an Italian faculty member). While this could contribute to their resource load, all current and potential advisors in Italian have welcomed this opportunity. In the event the advising becomes so much heavier that it is burdensome, the department will reallocate advising duties in ways that allow full service to both majors and Certificate students.

As addressed above (7), Undergraduate Certificate in Italian candidates who wish to complete the Italian major will be advised to select courses that will help those students move toward both goals simultaneously. In this way, the Certificate will not hinder a student’s timely progress to degree.

Exceptions can be made by the undergraduate Italian academic advisor who will consult with the Italian Instructional Committee when necessary.

Interactions with the school/college dean’s office and with the Registrar’s Office will be managed by the academic advisor(s) and/or the undergraduate coordinator.

Sharing precisely any concerns about the impact of an undergraduate certificate on the existing Italian major, the Italian Instructional Committee (of IIC, comprised of all Italian faculty and academic staff) carried out a study recently. A sub-committee of the IIC studied undergraduate certificates on the UW-Madison campus, as well as certificate programs at peer language and literature departments in the United States. The committee found that the number of majors tended to remain stable or even increase with the availability of an undergraduate certificate (the most useful example on our campus was the German undergraduate certificate). We remain confident that the Italian major would not be negatively impacted based on experience from other UW and non-UW language programs.

In addition, in the Fall of 2014, we surveyed students enrolled in Italian language courses to gauge their interest in a certificate option. 510 students replied to the questionnaire distributed. Of these students 508 responded that they would be interested in the Certificate, if it were to be available. About dozen of graduating seniors stated strongly that even though they are graduating they would love to see
an Italian certificate in place for other students in the future. In the meantime, after submitting our certificate proposal to the L&S APC, on November 18, 2014, our department received an unsolicited request from the Associated Students of Madison (ASM) that stated a strong interest in an Italian certificate among our undergraduate student population while also providing additional evidence of student interest based on their own survey of all UW-Madison undergraduate students. According to the letter:

“Creating a language certificate in Italian would benefit both the students and the department. In a Qualtrics survey administered to the entire undergraduate student body from 11/12 – 11/19, 2,123 said that they would be interested in pursuing a language certificate in general. Of the respondents, 211 students are interested in pursuing a certificate in the language of Italian. And of the 2,315 people surveyed, 1526 said that they would be interested in ways that they could help create language certificates at the UW-Madison. The factors motivating students to support language certificate expansion are diverse. Firstly, students will benefit from a certificate in Italian because they will receive a tangible form of recognition for years of study. That recognition also carries weight. For example, receiving a certificate in Italian from Madison is prestigious and will demonstrate competency of Italian culture and language to future employers. Secondly, studying Italian is complementary to other areas of study. Unfortunately, students find it hard to balance a language major with their primary major. With a language certificate, students will be able to have this balance and take part in a more holistic education. … Certificates will help the French and Italian Department ease students into the major. Students may see that once they have filled their certificate requirements that they are actually not far away from the major. A certificate in Italian also eliminates students’ fears of higher-level classwork that come with the major and receive a more cultural based learning.”

Please see the attached letter and survey results provided by the ASM in appendix to this proposal.

We also believe that an Italian certificate would be a useful option for the hundreds of UW-Madison students who participate in study abroad programs in Italy. As available data readily shows, for nearly two decades, Italy has been one of the top destinations for UW students wishing to study abroad – vying for top honors with Spain and the UK. Furthermore, according to the 2013-14 statistics reported by International Academic Programs at the UW-Madison, Italy has clearly secured its place as the number one destination for study abroad students from our campus, with 226 students enrolled in programs in Italy -- while in that same year, 145 students studied in Spain and 136 in the UK (China was a distant 4th place with 88 students). Indeed, the last few years have seen a significant increase in students studying in Italy, going from 68 students in 2000-2001 to 147 students in 2011-12 and 226 students choosing Italy in 2013-14.¹ We believe that the Italian Certificate could serve these large (and ever growing) numbers of students participating in programs

¹ For IAP data and annual reports, see: https://www.studyabroad.wisc.edu/datareports.html
in Italy, allowing them to better integrate their study abroad experience into their academic development on campus while also enabling them to better translate study-abroad experience into useful credentials.