

Memorandum

To: Senate
FROM: Cigdem Gurgur, Executive Committee Chair
Assem Nasr, Senate Member, Department of Communication
DATE: August 22, 2024
RE: Elimination of Language Programs

WHEREAS, the University has announced cutting the French minor in Spring 2024,

WHEREAS, non-native languages endows students with intercultural and linguistic communication strategies,

WHEREAS, acquiring a second language leverages student cultural awareness and global understanding (Hogan-Brun, 2020) among students and aptly equips them with tools to navigate an increasingly globalized world (Churkina et al., 2023; Hogan-Brun, 2020)

WHEREAS, language learning is critical to learning skills and enhancing problem-solving abilities (de Abreu et al., 2012; Costa et al., 2009; Fox et al., 2019; Shirkhani & Fahim, 2011) further affording students qualities imperative for leadership roles and essential in daily life contexts;

WHEREAS, [PFW's Strategic Plan](#):

1. States that PFW's mission is to "educate and engage our students and communities with purpose by cultivating learning, discovery, and innovation in an inclusive environment,"
2. "Champion[s] student success" (institutional aspiration),
3. Places "Students First" a top-priority core value in which the Plan attributes "Support[ing] programs and teaching pedagogies that advance student learning and success" as one of four elements to meet Expected Behaviors under the said core value.
4. Highlights "Diversity and Inclusion" as a core value that recognizes the importance of "[fostering] multicultural experiences and global engagement" as an Expected Behavior.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Senate regards the elimination of language programs as antithetical to PFW's Strategic Plan, mission, core values, and institutional aspirations,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Senate recognizes that cutting language programs deprives students of essential skills and tools thereby diminishing the value of our degrees and undermining student success in their future endeavors,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the University Administration offer meaningful and effective solutions to compensate for undercutting our education and uphold the integrity of PFW's mission and role in our community.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the University Administration pledge to work collaboratively through established channels of shared governance including representative faculty bodies to enact any changes both to the curriculum and to academic requirements, areas where faculty and not administration hold primary responsibilities.

Sources:

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- Churkina, O., Nazareno, L., & Zullo, M. (2023). The labor market outcomes of bilinguals in the United States: Accumulation and returns effects. *PloS One*, 18(6), e0287711–e0287711. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0287711>
- Costa, A., Hernández, M., Costa-Faidella, J., & Sebastián-Gallés, N. (2009). On the bilingual advantage in conflict processing: Now you see it, now you don't. *Cognition*, 113(2), 135–149. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cognition.2009.08.001>
- Fox, R., Corretjer, O., & Webb, K. (2019). Benefits of foreign language learning and bilingualism: An analysis of published empirical research 2012–2019. *Foreign Language Annals*, 52(4), 699–726. <https://doi.org/10.1111/flan.12424>
- Hogan-Brun, G. (2020). *Linguanomics: What is the Market Potential of Multilingualism?* Bloomsbury Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.5040/9781474238304>
- Shirkhani, S., & Fahim, M. (2011). Enhancing Critical Thinking In Foreign Language Learners. *Procedia, Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 29, 111–115. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2011.11.214>