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1 **The Associated Students of the University of Montana**
2 **Resolution Regarding Critical Languages**
3 **March 19, 2014**
4 **SB71-13/14**

5 **Authored by: Eamon Ormseth, ASUM Senator**
6 **Sponsored by: Betsy Story, ASUM Senator**
7

8 Whereas, Arabic, Chinese, and Russian have been designated critical languages by the
9 US Department of State;

10
11 Whereas, such a designation entitles programs and students involved with these
12 languages to unique scholarship and funding opportunities from the federal government
13 and other organizations;

14
15 Whereas, the University of Montana (UM) offers interdisciplinary minors in Arabic
16 Studies and Russian Studies as well as a minor in the Chinese language;

17
18 Whereas, much of this enrollment increase was the result of recruitment efforts at
19 Missoula high schools and the establishment of an Arabic Language Program in Missoula
20 County Public Schools;

21
22 Whereas, the summer high school program Montana Arabic Summer Institute (MASI),
23 has graduated over 100 students in the past, most of whom show interest in taking
24 college-level Arabic courses at UM-Missoula after finishing high school;

25
26 Whereas, both of the aforementioned programs are funded by the US federal government
27 through a National Security Agency grant;

28
29 Whereas, due to the funding shortfall in the spring of 2013, one section of Arabic 101
30 was zeroed out for several weeks until the other could be filled;

31
32 Whereas, due to scheduling conflicts, the zeroed-out section prevented existing UM
33 students as well as potential UM students in high school from registering for Arabic;

34
35 Whereas, the decrease of two sections of 100-level Russian language classes in the fall
36 semester to only one section in the spring is detrimental to students' academic
37 opportunities and harms long term enrollment in the Russian language program;

38
39 Whereas, Arabic, Russian, and Chinese are small language programs and any factor
40 inhibiting enrollment in introductory sections can threaten the long-term viability of
41 student recruitment for these expanding programs;

42
43 Whereas, the Montana Board of Regents approved an Arabic minor in 2011 with two
44 full-time equivalent (FTE) faculty members;

45

46 Whereas, many critical language alumni from UM have gone on to win prestigious
47 national scholarships such as the Fulbright, Critical Language, and Mitchell Scholarships,
48 enhancing UM's reputation for academic excellence;

49
50 Therefore, Let It Be Resolved, that the Associated Students of the University of Montana
51 (ASUM) requests that critical language programs be maintained at current staffing and
52 funding levels, as calculated by FTE, to protect the institutional knowledge and expertise
53 they have developed;

54
55 Therefore, Let It Be Further Resolved, that ASUM requests that the current number of
56 sections, advisory duties, and other funding of critical language programs be maintained;

57
58 Therefore, Let It Be Further Resolved, that funding methodology take into account the
59 unique and integral role of these programs;

60
61 Therefore, Let It Be Further Resolved, that a copy of this resolution be sent to Dr. Khaled
62 Huthaily and Professor Samir Bitar, Arabic Department; Professor Alice Harris, Russian
63 Language Professor; Professor Robert Greene, Chair of History and Professor of Russian
64 History; Professor Ona Renner-Fahey, Professor of Russian Language; Professor Zhen
65 Cao, Professor of Chinese Language; Dr. Gilbert Quintero, Chair, Department of
66 Anthropology; Dr. Mehrdad Kia, Director of Central and Southwest Asian Studies
67 Center; Chris Comer, Dean of College of Humanities and Sciences; Perry Brown,
68 Provost; and Royce Engstrom, President of the University of Montana.

69
70 Passed by Committee: March 17, 2014

71
72 Passed by ASUM Senate: March 19, 2014
73 19Y-3N-2A

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77 _____
78 Sean McQuillan,
Relations and Affairs Chair

77 _____
78 Mariah Williams,
Chair of the Senate