

**RESOLUTION TO APPROVE DISCONTINUANCE OF MASTER OF ARTS (M.A.)
DEGREE PROGRAM IN FOREIGN LANGUAGES, CULTURES, AND
LITERATURES**

Academic Area: College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences, Department of Modern and Classical Languages and Literatures.

Degree program discontinuance effective Fall 2026.

Enrollment in the degree program has been declining since 2020. Enrollment and graduation data indicate that the degree program will not meet the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV)'s productivity and viability standards when reviewed during the next review cycle.

A teach-out plan for the 3 current students is planned to begin in Fall 2026 and continue through Spring of 2029. This plan will allow three (3) full years for students to complete the degree program. To ensure that students with challenges can meet the deadline, the discontinuation of the degree program has been extended three (3) years beyond the expected date for all students to graduate.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the resolution to discontinue the Master of Arts (M.A.) degree program in Foreign Languages, Cultures, and Literatures (CIP code: 16.0101) be approved and the attached proposal forwarded to the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) for approval.

November 18, 2025

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Proposed Intent to Discontinue

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech) requests to discontinue the Master of Arts (M.A.) degree program in Foreign Languages, Cultures, and Literatures (16.0101). The degree program is located in the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences, Department of Modern and Classical Languages and Literatures.

Background

Since 2008, Virginia Tech has offered the Master of Arts (M.A.) in Foreign Languages, Cultures, and Literatures degree program in the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences, Department of Modern and Classical Languages and Literatures. The purpose of the program was and remains to enhance students' linguistic proficiency, cultural understanding, and critical analysis skills. The program was designed to teach students the specialized knowledge and skills to communicate competently using a foreign language.

On August 1, 2024, the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences, the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and Research in the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences, the Chairperson of the Department of Modern and Classical Languages and Literatures, and the Director of Graduate Studies in the Department of Modern and Classical Languages and Literatures met to review the M.A. in Foreign Languages, Cultures, and Literatures degree program. The group discussed enrollment trends, the financial viability of the degree program, and college and departmental resource allocations. The possibility of closing the degree program was also discussed.

Also on August 1, 2024, the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences communicated via email with the Executive Vice President and Provost, the Dean of the Graduate School, and the Associate Vice Provost for Academic Portfolio Management and SCHEV Compliance about the content of the meeting with the college's Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and Research, the Chairperson of the Department of Modern and Classical Languages and Literatures, and the Director of Graduate Studies for the department. The Dean relayed the college's concerns about the M.A. in Foreign Languages, Cultures, and Literatures degree program's declining enrollment and that the current enrollment and completions data does not meet the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia's (SCHEV) minimum productivity standards. The Dean also discussed the possibility of developing a plan to close the degree program. The Executive Vice President and Provost expressed support for developing a plan to close the degree program.

On August 8, 2024, the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and Research in the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences, the Chairperson of the Department of Modern and Classical Languages and Literatures, and the Director of Graduate Studies in the Department of Modern and Classical Languages and Literatures met with the Associate Dean of the Graduate School and the Dean of the Graduate School to discuss the M.A. in Foreign Languages, Cultures, and Literatures degree program enrollment trends and the topics discussed with the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences on August 1, 2024. The group also discussed the possibility of closing the degree program and the internal and external processes required for a degree program closure.

On August 10, 2024, the Chairperson of the Department of Modern and Classical Languages and Literatures and the department's Director of Graduate Studies met with the department faculty. The group discussed the enrollment trends, the limited resource allocations in the college and department, and the discussions with the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences as well as the Dean of the Graduate School. The group also discussed proposing a closure of the degree program.

On August 26, 2024, the Director of Graduate Studies and the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and Research in the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences met with the Director of SCHEV Compliance to discuss the requirements for proposing a closure of the M.A. in Foreign Languages, Cultures, and Literatures degree program. No further action occurred until summer of 2025.

In June of 2025, the Chairperson of the Department of Modern and Classical Languages and Literatures contacted the Associate Vice provost for Academic Portfolio Management and SCHEV Compliance to seek information about the previously discussed plans to propose closing the M.A. in Foreign Languages, Cultures, and Literatures degree program. The internal and external processes were communicated with the Department Chairperson.

On August 21, 2025, the plan to propose closing the M.A. in Foreign Languages, Cultures, and Literatures degree program was reviewed and endorsed by the Institutional Planning Committee.

On October 16, 2025, the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences Curriculum Committee voted unanimously to discontinue the degree program.

Rationale for Intent to Discontinue

The Master of Arts (M.A.) in Foreign Languages, Cultures, and Literatures is no longer a degree program that should be offered by Virginia Tech. There are two (2) reasons why the degree program should be discontinued at this time: 1) lack of enrollment, and 2) productivity standards.

Enrollment

Student enrollment in the M.A. in Foreign Languages, Cultures, and Literatures has not met institutional expectations. Institutional records show enrollment has declined since 2020.

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Enrollment	21	17	15	17	11
New enrollment	2	5	4	4	2
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Grads	8	6	3	8	8

It is apparent that the degree program is no longer desirable for students at Virginia Tech. It has also become increasingly difficult to recruit new students into the program. The lack of student enrollment supports the need to discontinue the degree program at this time.

Productivity

Student enrollment and graduation data indicate that the Master of Arts (M.A.) in Foreign Languages, Cultures, and Literatures degree program will not meet the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV)'s productivity and viability standards when reviewed during the next review cycle. The current SCHEV Productivity data for the degree program indicates the 5-year average data for FTEs at 10.3 and graduates at 5.4, below the threshold requirements of 18 FTEs and 6 graduates, respectively. The institution has decided not to pursue efforts to maintain the degree program. Thus, discontinuing the degree program is needed at this time.

Critical Shortage Area

The Master of Arts (M.A.) in Foreign Languages, Cultures, and Literatures is not in a critical shortage area. The curriculum will not be offered as a sub area in any other existing degree program offered by Virginia Tech.

Teach-out Plan

A total of three (3) students are currently enrolled in the Master of Arts (M.A.) in Foreign Languages, Cultures, and Literatures degree program. One (1) student is expected to graduate in Fall 2026. Two (2) students are expected to graduate in Spring 2026.

The last semester that students will be able to complete the M.A. in Foreign Languages, Cultures, and Literatures is Spring of 2029. This plan will allow three (3) full years for students to complete the degree program. To ensure that students with challenges can meet the deadline, the discontinuation of the degree program has been extended three (3) years beyond the expected date for all students to graduate.

All faculty have been made aware of the impending closure. No faculty positions will be lost as a result of the discontinuance of the degree program. Faculty teaching core and required courses in the M.A. in Foreign Languages, Cultures, and Literatures degree program will teach coursework in other degree programs.

“Stopped Out” Students

Institutional records show nine (9) students have “stopped out” since 2018. These students have been considered. One (1) student last enrolled in 2018. One (1) student last enrolled in 2019. One (1) student last enrolled in 2020. One (1) student last enrolled in 2021. Two (2) students last enrolled in 2022. One (1) student last enrolled in 2023. One (1) student last enrolled in 2024. One (1) student last enrolled in spring 2025. This group of students will be notified in writing about the discontinuation of the degree program.

There is a three (3) year period in which students may return and complete the M.A. in Foreign Languages, Cultures, and Literatures degree program. The Department of Modern and Classical Languages and Literatures faculty will offer “stopped-out” students the opportunity to complete the M.A. in Foreign Languages, Cultures, and Literatures degree program. Students will also have the option to pursue another degree within the university.