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Dean Erika Lindemann
Office of Undergraduate Curricula
CB 3504

Dear Dean Lindemann:

I am writing to request that students whose placement exam results indicate Hebrew 101 despite having completed two or more years of Hebrew language instruction in high school be given credit for 101 at UNC. I make this request since Hebrew is among those "less commonly taught" languages with no established training programs or licensure for high school teachers.

The quality of instruction as well as students' proficiency levels necessarily are not comparable to other more widely taught languages where curriculum standards and appropriate texts exist. More specifically, there are, to date, no texts in Modern Hebrew geared specifically to English-speaking high school students. Teachers are, therefore, left to create their own curriculum and materials. In the absence of being a trained professional in curriculum development, a teacher is often blending language studies with cultural activities, music, current events, Holocaust studies, etc., to the detriment of the students' language skills development.

In the absence of standardized high school texts and curriculum, it would be highly unreasonable to expect an incoming freshman to demonstrate any knowledge remotely equal to the vocabulary base and extensive grammar background acquired in Hebrew 101 at UNC. We ask that these students not be penalized but be encouraged to begin their studies in Hebrew 101 where they can pursue, for credit, a challenging curriculum that will lead them to becoming articulate readers, writers, and speakers of Modern Hebrew.

We are requesting that this exemption to the usual policy be granted for a period of five years, through academic year 2018-19, after which we will reassess the situation.

Sincerely,

Jan Bardsley
Chair
Department of Asian Studies