

Resolution of the University of South Florida Faculty Senate in opposition to legislation allowing two credits of computer coding courses to substitute for foreign language study (SB 104)

Whereas, the Faculty Senate of the University of South Florida (USF) is the primary faculty advisory body on matters pertaining to the welfare of the university; and

Whereas, the USF Faculty Senate is concerned about the global competitiveness and cross-cultural competence of its students; and

Whereas, those who study foreign languages enjoy a multitude¹ of cognitive², affective³, and social⁴ benefits, and are more competitive on a global scale; and

Whereas, the proposed legislation would require college system institutions and state universities to accept these computer coding credits (2) as foreign language credits; and

Whereas, students who substitute computer coding credits for foreign language credits during their K-12 education will compromise their eligibility to apply to many colleges and universities; and

Whereas, students who do not have experience with a foreign language would be disadvantaged in applying for jobs requiring an understanding of and an interaction with diverse languages and cultures⁵; and

Whereas, the Florida Department of Education would be responsible for the oversight of the computer coding courses that would count for credit, potentially without representation from the higher education institutions that would be required to accept these courses; and

Whereas, students could take these computer coding courses at the Florida Virtual School if their high schools do not offer them, and college system institutions and state universities would likewise be required to accept these computer coding credits; and

Whereas, foreign language study is an integral part of USF's mission, as evidenced by activities such as the Global Citizens Project (<http://www.usf.edu/gcp/>) and the bid to house a chapter of the nation's oldest academic honor society, Phi Beta Kappa; and

Whereas, Florida is a multicultural state⁶, foreign language study is imperative in fostering an appreciation for all of its citizens; therefore

Be it resolved that the USF Faculty Senate strongly opposes the proposed legislation that would allow substitution of computer coding courses for foreign language courses in satisfaction of foreign language requirements for college admission.

Passed: 03/22/2017

- ¹Thompson, A.S. (2016). How learning a new language improves tolerance. *The Conversation*.
<https://theconversation.com/how-learning-a-new-language-improves-tolerance-68472>
- ²Valian, V. (2015). Bilingualism and cognition. *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition*, 18(1), 3–24. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1366728914000522>
- ³Dewaele, J.-M. & Wei, L. (2013). Is multilingualism linked to a higher tolerance of ambiguity? *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition*, 16(1), 231–240. doi: 10.1017/S1366728912000570
- ⁴Nguyen, H.T. & Kellogg, G. (2010). “I had a stereotype that American were fat”: Becoming a speaker of culture in a second language. *Modern Language Journal*, 94(1), 56–73. doi: 10.1111/j.1540-4781.2009.00983.x
- ⁵Hogan-Brun, G. (2017). *Linguanomics: What is the market potential of multilingualism?* New York: Bloomsbury.
- ⁶Ryan, C. (2013). Language use in the United States: 2011. *United States Census Bureau*, 1–16. Accessed 17 June 2016 at <https://www.census.gov/prod/2013pubs/acs-22.pdf>