

A SOLUTION TO THE WRITING PROGRAM:  
AN ALTERNATIVE TO THE PROPOSAL OF THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

1. Require the same number and kinds of courses that the faculty voted for in 1980: E 306, E 316K, a course permitting writing in the discipline of the student (E 346K--Arts & Humanities, Business, Sciences & Technology, Social Sciences--or E 317, Technical Writing, or E 310, Intermediate Expository Writing).
2. Establish a new administrative entity, the Writing Program, to oversee these writing courses, to assist with the operation of the substantial writing courses required by the university, and to work with writing problems of students at all levels of the university.

This entity would report to the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts in much the same manner as, for example, the American Studies Program. Writing is such an important concern on campus that it should be the major concern of interested people.

RATIONALE FOR THE PROGRAM

1. Professional Interest and Capability.
  - a. The English department does not want to teach E 306; its members voted 53-18-2 to require the course but not teach it.
  - b. The English department does not want to teach an advanced composition course devoted to the professional interests of the students, especially those in technical and business fields. The department stripped such courses from the E 346K course and did not reinstate E 317 (Technical Writing) or E 310, which had served these needs earlier. The members of the English department want to teach some version of a course in literary analysis.
  - c. The Division of Continuing Education does not have the professional expertise to teach such a course.
2. Quality of the Courses.
  - a. Freshman English as presently taught and administered here is arguably the best freshman course in the state. This proposal maintains that status. The English department's proposal would turn it into one of the worst in the state.
  - b. The technical writing program at The University of Texas has a national reputation for excellence. John Walter and Gordon Mills, who developed it, have received

national awards for their work. This proposal retains that excellence. The English department's proposal would totally destroy the technical writing program, which responds to the needs of all undergraduates registered in technical, business, and professional schools--more than two-thirds of the undergraduate population.

3. Feasibility of the Program.

a. Administration. The policy committee which currently administers the freshman program in the past has administered the two required composition courses, and could easily manage the proposed courses, with the same space and office help which were needed in the past.

b. Cost. This program would cost students less. The courses in extension are three times as expensive as the regular courses.

The faculty to teach these courses would include the same regular faculty, assistant instructors, and part-time faculty as the proposal offered by the English department.

4. A Program which Meets the Demands of Students and Faculty.

a. In the Hereford-Sledd report of 1976, over two thousand students and over 500 faculty were asked what type of writing program in the English department they would like at this university. They responded overwhelmingly that a freshman course in the first year was needed and a follow-up course with the students writing in their own disciplines.

This program answers that request. The proposal of the English department adroitly offers neither.

b. The same criteria were used by the general faculty in its adoption of the proposal currently in the catalogues in the vote of 1981. Two faculty out of 2000 opposed the proposal.

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