

# General Faculty approves new English requirement

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A University-wide English requirement proposed by James Kinneavy, professor of English, in February was accepted Thursday by the General Faculty and sent to President Peter Flawn for review.

H. Paul Kelley, secretary of the General Faculty, said Monday that by Thursday's protest deadline only two protests had been received. Ten faculty protests are necessary to send the proposal to a full meeting of the General Faculty, which would vote on whether to accept the new requirement.

Kinneavy had proposed replacing the current second semester freshman composition course with a composition course to be held during the junior or senior year.

If the program is accepted by the higher administration, the course, English 346K, will offer specialized writing in either arts and humanities, social and behavioral sciences, natural sciences or business.

In addition to 346K and the current freshman composition course, English 306, the revised nine-

hour core requirement includes English 316K which will be offered during the student's sophomore year. In 316K students will read either world, English or American "masterworks."

Kinneavy based his proposal for a junior- or senior-year composition course on a 1976 report by James Sledd, professor of English, and Susan Hereford of the Measurement and Evaluation Center. In the report, 76 percent of the more than 1,400 faculty respondents favored an English composition course taught in the junior or senior year.

In addition, 85 percent of the 2,500 student respondents said they would be more motivated by a composition course at the junior or senior level, with 77 percent saying that composition instruction should begin during the freshman year.

Kinneavy called the report a mandate for the upper-division course.

But Sledd, a critic of the revised requirement, and one of two faculty members who protested to the office of the General Faculty, sees the revised requirements as the English department's solution to enrollment problems.

"They want to reduce the number of people

taking freshman composition," he said.

Sledd mentioned some faculty members' disdain for teaching freshman composition and said those courses are being taught by assistant instructors and instructors.

"I think some of them are qualified and some are not," said Sledd, adding, "If they are fully qualified, why can't they teach upper-division courses?"

"If they are fully qualified, then pay them accordingly, and if they are not, then get people in the classroom who are," he said.

Sledd said the University does not "dramatize" the importance of composition to its students. "People with no hope of tenure or promotion carry a heavy burden and low wages," Sledd said.

Under those conditions, he said, "students will know that the University does not give a damn about composition."

In his protest to the General Faculty, Sledd wrote, "The proposed upper-division courses have not been adequately planned and will not be adequately supported. The cooperation of the entire faculty and the full support of the administration are essential to the success of any such

scheme."

Sledd compared the new upper-division writing requirement to that at the University of Michigan. At that school, \$500,000 is allocated annually for the program, in which faculty members from all over the university take part.

But Kinneavy said that while the University of Michigan was adding 101 courses, UT was only adding four — the four writing areas of the upper-level course. In addition, all of the teachers will be from the Department of English. He said the new UT program does not require that much money.

Kinneavy gave three reasons for his proposal. He cited a Harvard study which found that newly graduated science majors' writing had declined over the undergraduate career, whereas liberal arts majors' writing had progressed.

He said the proposal would keep science majors, as well as other undergraduates, writing over three of the four years.

He said his proposal was also prompted by staffing problems caused by high enrollment. But he said that was not the main reason for the pro-

posal.

Kinneavy said when faculty members met to hammer out the new requirements they divided into eight committees with two or three given logistical problems such as enrollment.

The bulk of all of the "slugging and fighting" took place in the content committee and that logistic decisions were a corollary to content committee decisions, Kinneavy said.

He said faculty members and instructors, who next semester will be called lecturers, will teach the upper-division course, with mostly AIs and instructors to continue teaching the freshman course. The sophomore level course will be taught by AIs, instructors and faculty members.

Kinneavy said the department had one of the best programs in the country for training composition instructors.

He said about 40 of the current 260 freshmen courses are taught by faculty members and that in the past three years he has not observed a problem among the faculty members with regard to teaching freshmen.