

To: LDEPC
From: John Ruszkiewicz
Re: New English 306 course
Date: April 6, 1990

I apologize for missing the LDEPC meeting of April 3. I had mistakenly thought the meeting was scheduled for Wednesday.

While I realize that the committee has already voted to approve Professor Brodkey's proposals for modifying English 306, I think the issues raised by the change weighty enough to merit more extensive discussion. Consequently, I am asking the LDEPC committee at its next meeting to consider (and reconsider) several matters of consequence to the implementation of this major course change.

At that next meeting, I request that the committee discuss the following propositions.

1. Any major alteration in E 306, a university-wide required writing course, should follow from a systematic process of syllabus design, revision, and approval. A significantly new E 306 course design--which has no track record of successful implementation--should be proven first in a small-scale pilot program before being implemented more widely.
2. Any E 306 course syllabus should permit and encourage a diversity of approaches. At a minimum, experienced assistant instructors should have able to choose from a variety of textbooks representing the various main currents in composition theory and practice. The program should not require experienced Assistant Instructors using mainstream approaches to submit "variant course proposals" simply to follow methods or to use textbooks that have worked well in the past.
3. An anthology used to present the issue of "difference" should itself be aware of "difference." The essays within the collection should provide sufficient diversity to challenge instructors and students alike; they should encourage balanced teaching, full class participation, and significant writing. The single required anthology proposed for the new E 306--St. Martin's Racism and Gender--is too narrow in its political agenda to meet these criteria.

Other books surveying a broader spectrum of political and social opinions and addressing a wider range of issues are available and should be adopted in its place. (Attached please see a copy of a memo sent to the LDEPC office on March 27, 1990.) Greenhaven Press also offers an entire series of inexpensive paperback anthologies on specific social and political issues, all of which cover a wider and more challenging range of opinions than those represented in Racism and Gender.

I would appreciate your patience in permitting me to speak to the LDEPC committee about these matters on April 10.