

Change relieves staffing problems

Department of English still searching for long-term solution to recruitment

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The new English course requirement that took effect in all colleges this fall has temporarily relieved the staffing problems in the Department of English, the department's chairman said.

The new requirement, which eliminated E307 as a required course, has reduced the demand for instructors teaching the freshman composition class, said chairman William Sutherland.

Although the English department escaped a staff crunch this fall, Sutherland said, the department will need more E346K teachers next year when many students will be eligible to register for the class. Only students who have completed 54 hours can sign up for E346K, an upper-division intensive writing class.

Under the new requirement, all incoming freshmen and transfer students in the 1983-85 catalog will have to take E306, a freshman English class; E316K, a sophomore literature class; E346K; and six hours of courses containing "a substantial writing component." The six hours can be taken in any college as long as they contain a "substantial writing component."

"Every department faces an annual recruitment problem," Sutherland said. "The challenge is in trying to bring in the best people."

Sutherland said the department already is looking into the problem and will have a better idea of its recruitment needs by the end of September.

The new requirement also marks the beginning of the department's serious attempt at balancing English class enrollment.

Maurine McElroy, associate professor of English and the department's undergraduate adviser, said

the higher than anticipated freshman enrollment this fall has put pressure on the department to open up more classes.

McElroy said all writing and sophomore English courses for the fall are closed and many students have to be turned away. "We have added the maximum number of sections we can afford to," McElroy said.

To balance enrollment in fall and spring semesters, Sutherland said, advisers should not tell all their students to take the same English classes at the same time. The common practice has been for advisers to tell students to take English classes as quickly as possible, Sutherland said.

Advisers should spread the enrollment load by suggesting that half the students take a particular class in the fall and that the other half take the same class in the spring.

By balancing class enrollment, the department will not have a shortage of teachers in the fall followed by a surplus in the spring.

Sutherland said most freshmen were able to enroll in E306. Sophomores who failed to get E316K have been very understanding about the situation, he said.

But the situation was different for those clamoring for E346K classes.

Patience ran short and tempers flared last week as many seniors were unable to add the course during departmental adds and drops.

Keith Byerman, assistant professor of English and the department's associate undergraduate adviser, said the biggest problem stems from everyone insisting on taking the course at the same time.

"Most students do not have to have (E346K) this fall, but for some reason they think they do," Byerman said