**The English Major: A Short Introduction**

(Written by Prof. Brook Thomas and slightly revised by Prof. Ann Van Sant. For catalogue description of the major and courses, see http://www.editor.uci.edu/catalogue/hum/hum.7.htm.)

**FRESHMAN YEAR**

In their freshman year declared English majors, as do all declared Humanities majors, take Humanities Core Course. Most of our majors who are not transfer students take HCC, which has traditionally served as a magnet for the English major. Of the students taking HCC who switch to a Humanities major, most become English majors.

Students in HCC take 8 units a quarter–4 for their GEN ED Humanities requirement–4 for their Lower Division writing requirement. HCC is an interdisciplinary course that introduces students to various disciplines of humanistic inquiry, almost always including literature, history, and philosophy, and sometimes including art history, film and media studies, etc.

The Writing Component: Matches the interdisciplinary nature of the course and is not geared specifically to literary analysis.

**SOPHOMORE YEAR**

An English major at UCI takes the E 28 series, which is called “The Nature of Literature.” It introduces students to various literary modes. E 28A is “The Poetic Imagination”; E 28B is “Comic and Tragic Vision”; E 28C is “Realism and Romance.” In practice these modal courses are often taught generically, with A focusing on lyric and epic; B on drama; and C on prose fiction. Sections enroll up to 25 students and are taught by graduate students with a faculty supervisor.

Students in the Creative Writing Emphasis will substitute either E 28D for E 28A or E28E for E 28C. D is for poets and is called “The Craft of Poetry”; E is for fiction writers and is called “The Craft of Fiction.”

The Writing Component: Students are instructed how to write specifically about literature. E 28D and E also include creative writing.

**UPPER DIVISION**

As soon as possible, students should take E 100, E 101w, and begin the E 102 series.

E 100. History of Literary Theory and Criticism from the Classics to the Present. Offered twice a year and required of all majors, this is a large lecture course. It covers–if necessarily selectively-- the major works of literary theory and criticism from the Greeks to the present. If the E 28 series is designed to introduce students to the “nature” of literature, this course is designed to introduce them to the “nature” of theory and criticism in their various historical and philosophical manifestations. Encourage students to take this course as early as possible their junior year.

The Writing Component: At least one essay.

E 101w. Undergraduate Seminar: This seminar is limited to 20 students and teaches them how to apply a particular literary theory, mode of criticism, conceptual topic, or interdisciplinary method to the analysis of works of literature. Ideally, having taken this course early in their junior year, students will bring what they have learned in it to bear on works read in other courses, such as E 102s, E 103s, E 105s, and E 106s. In discussion, therefore, instructors in those courses should feel free to encourage students to try out the approach they learned and share it with other students. [Catalogue: To be taken as early as possible in the junior year. Prerequisites: three courses from the English 28 series, or Literary Journalism 20, 21, and an English 28 course; and satisfactory completion of the lower-division writing requirement. May be taken for credit twice as topics vary.] **E101 is a prerequisite for the capstone seminar, E106.**

The Writing Component: This course fulfills our students’ upper division writing requirement. Campus wide requirements, therefore, apply. Although the E 28 series is supposed to teach how to write about literature, it is important to remember that, because of the large number of transfer students we have, many of our majors will not have taken the E 28 series. E 101w is, therefore, the course where we teach all of our majors how to write within their discipline. The quality of writing we get in other courses depends in large part on how well we teach writing in this course. Essays should not only be assigned, class time should be taken to teach writing.

E 102s. Students are required to take one each of A: Medieval and Renaissance; B: Restoration and Eighteenth Century; C: Romantic and Nineteenth Century; D:Twentieth Century. If the E28 series introduces students to the “nature” of literature modally and generically, E 100 introduces them to the “nature” of theory and criticism historically and philosophically, and E 101w teaches them how to apply a particular theoretical or critical mode, the E 102 series introduces them to literary history and/or how works of literature relate to a particular historical period. The courses can be surveys, although they need not be. Some focus on a decade; some on a century. They can be on British or American literary traditions, but they can also be transatlantic or global in scope. At a minimum they must treat more than one author and more than one genre. Courses on one author or one genre should be taught as an E 103 or an E 106.

Because many of our students have a bias toward the present, some put off taking A and B. Since for those teaching the later periods and E 106s there is often a pedagogical advantage in having students who are familiar with earlier periods, try to encourage students to take A and B early. Note: insofar as topics vary, students can repeat 102s. An additional course counts as an elective.

The Writing Component: At least one 5-7 page essay.

Once students have taken E 100, E 101w, and started fulfilling their E 102 series requirements, they should begin to consider fulfilling their E 105 and E 106 requirements and taking E 103s and E 160s as electives.

E 105. This required course focuses on ethnic or minority literature and/or issues of cultural identity. In recent years, because we are understaffed, many sections have been cross-listed courses taught by faculty in other departments. Like 102s, 105s can be repeated as topics vary. An additional course counts as an elective.

Writing Component: At least one 5-7 page essay.

E 106. This advanced seminar is required of all majors and is a capstone course. It allows students to focus on a single topic in a relatively small class. Enrollment is limited to 25. 106s can be taken for credit twice, as topics vary. An additional course counts as an elective. [Catalogue: **106 Advanced Seminar (4).** Capstone course. Required of all English majors. Limited to 25 students. Focuses on a topic within the area of literatures in English. Provides intensive work on a single topic in the field of English in a discussion setting. Prerequisites: English 101 or Writing 101 and at least two upper-division English courses; English major and senior standing. May be taken for credit twice as topics vary.]

Writing Component: Students should write at least as many pages as required for E 101w. Those who plan on graduate study should be given the option of writing a term paper of about 15 pages to serve as a writing sample and to teach them methods of research. This option can be extended to the entire class, but, if so, it is important to schedule class sessions along the way to help students come up with topics, a bibliography, etc.

E 103: Upper division electives. Topics vary from major authors like Chaucer, Shakespeare, and Milton to the Modern Novel to Renaissance Lyric Poetry. The same topics can be used for E 106s, but E 103s are usually larger than E 106s. Can be repeated as topics vary.

Writing Component: At least one 5-7 page essay.

E 160: English Language Cinema. Serves as an elective. May be taken for credit twice as topics vary.

Writing Component: At least one 5-7 page essay

**LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT**

Students must complete the two-year lower division sequence of a foreign language, plus either one upper division literature course in that language or two upper division language courses in translation.