

March 19, 2004

To: St. Olaf College Faculty
Fr: CEPC
Re: Proposed Revisions to English Major Requirements

At the April 1 Faculty Meeting CEPC will move the approval of proposed revisions to requirements for the English Major.

The proposed new requirements will be described in the catalogue as follows:

Requirements for the Graduation Major

Nine courses, including English 185, 221, 222, and one course from a group designated “Global Literatures in English, 1850 – Present”; plus five electives, two of which must be at level three. Requirements for the Communication Arts/Literature (CAL) Teaching Licensure with an Emphasis in Literature: eight courses, including English 185, 221, 222, and one course from a group designated “Global Literatures in English, 1850 – Present”; 251 or 257; 274; two courses at level three. Plus three Theatre courses: 100, 160, and 115 or 130; plus the requirements in professional education, including Education 245. (Consult the CAL Licensure Adviser.)

Rationale:

The proposed revision comes after some years of experience with the current structure of the English major, and after a self study completed in 2002. Two changes are proposed.

First, English 223, at present the third course in a historical core comprising 221, 222, and 223, will be replaced by the requirement for a course from a group designated “Global Literatures in English, 1850 – Present.” The department approaches English literature through the concept of global literatures in English. Demands of coverage in the current conception of 223 forestall appropriate coverage of global literatures. Moreover, many faculty do not think that the body of works in English during the period covered by the current English 223 can be shaped in a single coherent literary/historical narrative. The proposed requirement for a course chosen from a group designated global literatures in English insists on treatment of literature within the time period, but is open to fuller treatment of global literatures, and allows for greater variety of offerings.

Second, English 399, at present a required capstone seminar, will become an option among many level three electives. To accommodate all senior English majors, several sections of English 399 must be offered each year. In 2003-04 English 399 sections were six of nine literature courses offered at level three. The prescriptions on this course (broad subject, theory, individual and ambitious student projects), suit some but not all students and faculty. The department will continue to offer 399 for students who are best suited to and most interested in this kind of work. But the department would like to provide more varied options for majors completing their level three work.