

English requirement remains intact

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The University Council voted overwhelmingly Monday against Professor James Sledd's proposal to alter the new English requirements despite student representatives' attempts to garner support for his proposal.

Sledd is opposed to a plan already approved by the council and President Peter Flawn that eliminates the second-semester freshman composition course, English 307, and replaces it with E346K, an upper-division composition course.

Sledd proposed at the council's Dec. 13 meeting that E307 not be abolished but, instead, be retained as an option for students who want to take more composition at the freshman level beyond E306. Under this proposal, students could take either E307 or E346K to fulfill their composition course requirements, or they could take both.

The proposal, tabled at the December meeting, was defeated Monday by a 45-12 vote, with seven abstentions.

The approved English course sequence, to be adopted "in spirit" by the council for the different colleges, was developed by the Department of English to comply with recommendations of the council's Committee on Basic Education Requirements chaired by James Vick, assistant dean of the College of Natural Sciences.

The department's plan requires students to take E306, E316, a sophomore literature course, and E346K. At the Vick Committee's recommendation, students also will be required to take two additional courses "with a substantial writing component," one of which must be upper-division.

Sledd said he was sorry his motion was defeated because it would have provided "a better writing program than the

one which is being forced upon students."

Students' Association President Paul Begala, a student representative to the council, said he believes although Sledd's proposal failed, Monday's debate on the proposal taught the council a valuable lesson about "the patronizing attitude at the University."

"The 'father knows best' mentality prevails," Begala said.

Begala offered a "friendly amendment" to Sledd's proposal, which Sledd accepted, requiring that the additional six hours of courses with substantial writing components be in a student's major. Begala later changed the word "major" to "college" after a faculty member pointed out that students changing majors would have to take one or both of the courses more than once.

Begala said his amendment would alleviate the burden on the Department of English by making other departments staff the additional courses while encouraging students to write in their field of study — thereby answering two objections posed by opponents of Sledd's proposal.

Begala's amendment was defeated, however.

Communication junior Barbara Dugas, a student representative, then moved that action on Sledd's motion be postponed until a survey of faculty and students' opinion on the matter can be taken.

However, several faculty members expressed doubts as to what such a survey would prove.

Alan Friedman, professor of English, referred to the 1975 Hereford-Sledd study of faculty and student opinion of the English program, the results of which Sledd claims have been "misrepresented" to support the new English requirements.