



THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN
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Department of English
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To: Joe Kruppa

From: John Ruskiewicz, Director of Freshman English *JR*

Re: E 346K Committee

For obvious reasons, I was not surprised to see the E 346K Evaluation Committee extending its agenda to include E 306.

I do hope that in making any recommendations about the future of "Rhetoric and Composition," the committee acknowledges some facts about the course: that it is in the mainstream of composition instruction; that it has the highest student evaluations of any of our required English classes; that it has been validated by more research studies than any other course in the department; and that it is the cornerstone of an integrated, and nationally-respected program which includes AI/TA orientation, AI training (E 398T), teacher assessment (AI/TA supervision), and a writing lab.

It would be professionally irresponsible to suspend or replace the successful E 306 course simply because a few people in the department don't like it. I would expect that any proposal to alter the rhetorically-based E 306 would be grounded in scholarly evidence that change is needed--not in opinion, hearsay, anecdote, or prejudice. I would support innovative alternatives or complements to "Rhetoric and Composition" shaped by research and scholarship as formidable as that which informs E 306.