

# E 346K demoted to elective

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*Daily Texan Staff*

Students taking English 346K for a graduation requirement should not drop the class, although it is no longer required, English faculty members said Monday.

Faculty members were officially notified Friday that E346K — Writing for Different Disciplines — has been waived as a requirement for graduation.

"What we tell (students) is that before they take any action they should talk to their advisers," said William Sutherland, chairman of the Department of English.

Sutherland said students in the more than 105 sections of the class must have their dean's approval to drop the class, and not that of the Department of English. He said he hoped students would not drop the class.

"It counts three hours toward graduation, it's a substantial writing component and it's an upper division elective credit," Sutherland said. "Most students will find it valuable.

"They may be in a section they enjoy. It may be educational for them," Sutherland said.

Darrell Clingman, business junior, said he does not know if he will stay in his E346K class. "I don't think it's hard, but it's more time consuming," he said. "It cuts into the other classes you have to study for."

Other students also indicated the class is not one they would have chosen for an elective.

"I'm taking a substantial writing component class for an elective — it's kind of difficult," said Asad Anwer, finance junior.

Cathy Clark, accounting junior, said she enjoys the class, but is upset she did not know the course requirement was to be canceled. "I'm kind of disappointed that I went ahead and took the course now."

Clark said she plans to stay in her class, even if it gives her an extra substantial writing component class.

The University defines classes with a substantial writing component as ones that require at least 16 pages of written work. Most E346K students write from six to eight pa-

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pers. Teachers also are encouraged to require one research paper.

Before Friday's announcement, students under the 1983-1985 catalog were required to take E346 in addition to E306 and E316K. Students also must take an upper-division class in their college that has a substantial writing component.

A new approach is also in store for the required literature class, E316K. Instead of offering small sections with a maximum of 35 students, several sections will be merged into larger lecture sections of 175 to 200 students. Instructors for the larger sections will use teaching assistants to grade papers.

"We're trying a couple (of the larger sections) this term, and we'll see how they come out," Sutherland said. Two large E316K are offered this semester, in addition to the smaller classes. More larger sections will be offered in the fall, Sutherland said, but students will

retain the option to take smaller sections.

When the present English requirements were adopted by the University Council in 1981, both E346K and a similar substantial writing component requirement were proposed. Both programs were approved, creating "two requirements to do the same job," Sutherland said in his letter Friday.

"While E346K is in abeyance, the substantial writing component courses will continue," the letter continued.

Kurth Sprague, an English lecturer teaching E346K, said the class was created to give upper-division students a chance to write about subjects in their field. He said writing skills had generally declined since the 1960s.

"If I'd been dreaming up a course to answer the misgivings (about the decline), I honestly would have come up with the same course,"

Sprague said.

The course was still in its pilot stage when Friday's decision to postpone requiring it was handed down. The future of the course remains uncertain, Sutherland said.

Sprague said the sheer numbers of students taking the course — an estimated 7,500 next year — made the program unwieldy.

"It's growing like some enormous fungus, in leaps and bounds," Sprague said.

Sprague said he did not think the E346K postponement was a move by the department to eliminate the lecturer position. "I really don't see any far-fetched conspiracy to deprive the lecturers of their job," he said.

But in a letter accompanying the one announcing the E346K postponement, lecturers discovered the change had made their jobs obsolete.