

To: Betty Sue Flowers, Joe Kruppa, Mike King, John Trimble, Kurt Heinzelman,
Joe Moldenhauer, and other interested colleagues

From: Alan Gribben, chairman, E.346K Arts and Humanities subcommittee

Date: September 25, 1981

This past summer I spent several days consulting with the chairmen and instructors of departments at the university ~~whose~~ whose students are likely to enroll in our proposed course, E.346K Arts and Humanities. The response of these professors was gratifying; they immediately grasped our concept for the course, and they evinced enthusiasm about its goals as well as its methods. Some even offered to look over the textbooks we have been considering, and their suggestions have proved invaluable to me in making up my own mind about the choice that faces us.

I also had the opportunity this summer to visit with Kurt Heinzelman, who had criticized our initial course description, and who remained dubious about some of the textbooks on our tentative list. Kurt's letters and his arguments helped keep my thinking on these matters flexible.

I also found time to talk with a number of our other colleagues in the department, and I listened intently to what they said about their desires regarding these upper-division writing courses.

The result of these and even subtler influences: I have changed my mind about most major features of the course, including its textbooks. Attached you will find my new recommendations for the course description, syllabus, and textbooks.

Can we meet on Friday at noon in Parlin 114 to discuss these topics? If the department still wishes to offer experimental courses next year, it is essential that we reach some conclusions as soon as possible. I hope that you will try to be present.

Thanks,

Alan J.

E.346K: Writing in the Arts and Humanities

An upper-division course in writing skills, particularly those involving analysis, with readings drawn from classic and contemporary essays and books. More than half of the readings should have been written originally in English (i.e., not be translations), so that students can imitate effective styles for discussing art, philosophy, history, music, languages, culture, and literature. A standard grammar and style book should be assigned.

The course is intended for all students in the arts and humanities, not merely those majoring in English. Therefore its format and subject matter can explore a range of questions concerning European and American civilization. No more than three weeks should be devoted to the study of any individual literary text or author, however important that work or figure may seem to the instructor; ~~the~~ the other weeks the class studies various products of creative and intellectual endeavor, as well as the writing skills expected of students who have majored in the arts and humanities. Students should develop the ability to explain and expound their chosen discipline to the educated nonspecialist; they should also develop the skills necessary to analyze and assess critically the nature of their discipline. Variant sections of E.346K can only be accommodated if they offer practice in standard procedures of written communication and close analytical reading of a wide range of humanistic works.

Proposed Textbooks for English 346K, Arts and Humanities

Each instructor should choose one book on grammar and style as well as at least four of the following texts:

Maimon et al., WRITING IN THE ARTS AND SCIENCES (Winthrop, 1981)
THE PRACTICE OF WRITING, ed. Robert Scholes and Nancy R. Comley
(New York: St. Martin's, 1981).
THE CONSCIOUS READER: READINGS PAST AND PRESENT, ed. Caroline
Shrodes et al., second ed.
(New York: Macmillan, 1978).

Ernest Becker, THE BIRTH AND DEATH OF MEANING.
THE NORTON READER.
Kenneth Clarke, CIVILIZATION.
Gombrich.
LEARNING TO LOOK.
LEARNING TO LISTEN.
THE BIBLE.
Freud, CIVILIZATION AND ITS DISCONTENTS.
Jung, MAN AND HIS SYMBOLS.
Fussell, THE POEM ITSELF.
Aries, WESTERN ATTITUDES TOWARD DEATH.
Stevenson, SEVEN THEORIES OF HUMAN NATURE.
Margaret Mead, BLACKBERRY WINTER.
Leslie Fiedler, THE ART OF THE ESSAY, (Crowell).
William Smart, EIGHT MODERN ESSAYISTS (St. Martin's).
A. Kazin, THE OPEN FORM: ESSAYS FOR OUR TIME (Harcourt).
Greenberg, ART.

Carl Becker, THE HEAVENLY CITY OF THE EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY PHILOSOPHERS.
A. J. P. Taylor (shorter work)
George Dangerfield, THE STRANGE DEATH OF LIBERAL ENGLAND.
Joseph Kerman, LISTEN, third edition (Worth, 1980). Assisted by Vivian Kerman.
Robert Hickok, EXPLORING MUSIC, third ed. (Addison-Wesley, 1979).
Daniel T. Politoske, MUSIC, second ed. (Prentice-Hall, 1979).
Gustave Schwab, trans., GODS AND HEROES (Pantheon).

Lewis Mumford, THE CITY IN HISTORY.
J. Huizinga, PLAY.
Alfred Whitehead, SCIENCE AND THE MODERN WORLD.
Hanslick, BEAUTIFUL IN MUSIC.
Benjamin, WORK OF ART IN AN AGE OF MECHANICAL REPRODUCTION.
Leo Marx, THE MACHINE IN THE GARDEN.

Proposed Syllabus for E.346K, Writing in the Arts and Humanities

(as developed by Mike King)

Unit I: Introduction to Definitions, Aims

A. Objectives:

1. Ascertain status of the class members by an early piece of writing.
2. Propose and discuss some general definition of the arts and humanities; introduce the course and its fields of study, explaining the emphasis on writing skills in each student's major.
3. Enable the students to recognize the various aims of writings in their fields, the diverse audiences, and the general effects of such differences on one's writing (ranging from scholarly investigations to polite essays to official documents).
4. Review basic sentence patterns and problems. Reminds students about the pitfalls of jargon.

B. Textbook assignments:

Unit II: The Scope of the Humanities

A. Objectives:

1. Enable students to begin to grasp the historical development and contemporary range of fields within the humanities.
2. Help students recognize and employ the types of abstraction characteristic of their major fields.
3. Increase the students' awareness of the philosophical, historical, and social sources of the abstractions important to each field.
4. Increase the students' ability to think critically and creatively about the paradigms in their fields--the models according to which significant abstractions are made.
5. Develop the first of the students' descriptive-analytical writing assignments.

B. Textbook assignments:

Unit III: Writing to Inform

A. Introduce the characteristic logic, organization, and style of informative writing in the humanities.

1. Using the material in the second volume of readings, allow the students to differentiate their disciplinary interests, making these the purpose for writing essays that describe, classify and define a specific area or discipline.
2. Prepare students to organize longer pieces of informative writing as composites of modes.
3. Review additional elements of style.

B. Textbook assignments:

Unit IV: Library (Research Paper or Report)

A. Objectives:

1. Enable students to identify and limit topics appropriate for library research in the professional publications of their fields.
2. Start the students on projects requiring practical research and synthesis on topics in the humanities of special interest, possibly planning an oral as well as written presentation of this research, (for selected students only).
3. Give the students practice in writing short project proposals and reports on progress.
4. Assist the students in learning proper research notes, documentation of sources, and intent of research in the humanities.
5. Make certain that students begin their research for a paper or report with the aim to inform, demonstrate, and explore.
6. Familiarize students with specialized libraries in their fields, such as the Humanities Research Center, the Fine Arts Library, and special collections in the PCL.

B. Textbook assignments:

Unit V: Writing to Persuade

A. Objectives

1. Introduce the most effective types of logic, organization, and style for the purpose of persuasion.
2. Help students employ inductive and inverse-inductive organizational methods for individual sections and paragraphs, and for entire works of writing.
3. Review the elements of argumentation and demonstration.
4. Allow the students to explore current conditions and approaches in their chosen fields, and to study (and then argue) a specific development, theoretical or practical.

B. Textbook assignments:

Unit VI: The Humanities in Crisis? Writing to Explore

A. Objectives

1. Introduce types of reasoning for which answers cannot be satisfactorily proven at the present time.
2. Enable students to employ dialectical organizations
3. Assist students in considering their particular interests (cultural and professional) in the context of history, and in applying their judgment and knowledge to some specific problem or work in their fields.

B. Textbook assignments

1. Include a current production, work, or event in progress in Austin as the subject for student reviews, critiques, debates, or speculations.

Summary: six papers of moderate length.
readings average one essay or chapter per class meeting
for sections that meet
three times weekly.