

## Tips for English Advisors

Web resources for advising

### RoNet

The place to start. Be sure you have training and permission to use the resources on RoNet, including removing of advising holds and running degree audit reports.

### WebCat

Access advisee records, including placement test scores, etc. This Web-based resource combines a lot of information on one page. Training and permission required: phone Jane Parker at 5-1491.

### The Catalog

The official source of information about regulations, programs, courses. Call it to students' attention and remind them to look at catalog descriptions before choosing classes.

### The Time Schedule

Check which courses are actually being offered in a particular semester. Urge students to click on section numbers for each course to read the catalog copy, including possible prerequisites.

### Search for Classes

Note the ability to search for open GER courses; very handy. Check the box labeled "Only list sections with available seats." Note that with every re-use in a single session you have to undo previous menu choices to start over: the form does not clear itself.

### zzusis

Where students find out when they are supposed to register and actually do their registering. They have access to most of the resources listed above here. Students can also log in to find out *when* they register.

### Schedule Surfer

The quickest way to find out if a schedule will work; runs better on some browsers than others. Loads rather slowly on some browsers and computers; be patient. Requires you to allow pop-up windows.

### Transfer Course Equivalencies

A great tool for determining whether a course at another school transfers in and vice versa.

## General advising tips

Be sure to post sign-up sheets on your office doors for advising times; students are told to use them. Be available at the times you've said you would be; it's the single biggest complaint we get on exit interviews from students: being unable to find their advisors or the advisor failing to be in the office for a scheduled appointment.

Remind students to come in with a tentative list of courses or ideas of what they want to take. You should not have to start from scratch; but urge them to be flexible and understand that their first choices may not be the most appropriate ones.

If students phone up saying "I need you to remove my advising hold" and you have not yet advised them, remind them that they need to come in for advising first. Removing the hold is only the consequence of the advising, not the point of the exercise. On the other hand, if you have advised them, you may have forgotten to remove the hold. At the end of every appointment, remember to remove the advising hold. You can do this while they're filling out the Enrollment Advisory Form. If the student later calls to say a hold is still in effect and you can confirm you released their advising hold, ask for the precise wording of the hold. It may be for nonpayment of fees or lack of inoculation rather than for lack of advising.

Remind students to read the first general section of the guide to the degree.

It's nice to welcome new advisees, and very useful to ask them first about their interest in English. Try to determine what their vocational plans are and if they seem vague, go over the various options.

Ask students to bring paper and something to write with them. Don't start the advising session until they are ready to write.

Have English majors get their file from Jerri's office (in the case of SALC students, advisors keep those files in their offices). Remind students to register when they are supposed to: small enrollments in courses may result in cancelled classes. If you have made substitutions which need to be changed on the student's DARS, bring that to Jerri's attention either by mentioning them or placing a note on the front of the file so she can make the changes quickly. Student folders can be placed in the mail slot outside Jerri's door or on a chair in her office. You don't have to make a special trip to return them; you can wait until you have several or at the end of the day or whenever it's convenient for you.

In the student's folder is a form which invites advisors to record what they have told the student, what they have discussed during the session. Please remember to fill out that form at each session and have the student sign it. It is your insurance (and the student's) and documentation should there ever be a question about what you advised the student to do.

[Also remember to complete the Enrollment Advisory Form.](#) Remember to fill out the student's information, particularly their cell phone number so we have a current way to reach them should the need arise. These forms used to be used for the student to be allowed to register. Now, they just are kept in the student's folder, again, as proof of what classes you advised them to take. Students routinely overlook the blank for Date. Be sure they put the semester and year in this so we have a record of when the advising took place. Be sure to draw a line and add up the total number of hours on each of them so if they take on more of a load

than you advised, it will be evident. Anything over 18 hours is an overload, and the student must pay a heavy per-credit fee for the extra hours. 15-16 hours is a normal semester load.

15-16 hours is a normal semester load and 12 hours is the minimum load for a full-time student. International students, athletes, and financial aid students have specific requirements for the number of hours they must maintain. They usually know these, but ask about them if it seems an issue.

At the end of every appointment, remember to remove the advising hold.

When you are talking with students about courses they must take, please don't use the phrase "get this or that class out of the way." It's insulting to our colleagues and to the institution. We take great pains to create requirements that we believe will make for a better education, and we should not encourage the attitude that they are meaningless hurdles to be gotten past.

Make sure students are doing the writing portfolio. hanging on to sample papers, signing up. The rule says that students are to submit their "Junior Writing Portfolio no later than the end of the first semester after completing 60 credit hours. Transfer students entering with 60 or more credits must initiate the Junior Writing Portfolio by the end of their first semester at WSU." Students who wait until just before they plan to graduate may find they are unable to get their degree without further study, so it is extremely important to urge them to do this in a timely manner. Direct them to the Writing Portfolio Site at <http://www.wsu.edu/~jrpf/>. It also contains a good page of information for advisors: <http://www.wsu.edu/~jrpf/JPAAdvisorInfo.html>.

Make sure they take a Tier III class in their junior or senior year. Note that some Tier IIIs have prerequisites. Be sure to check. Remember that Humanities 410: Love in the Arts, is designed as a Tier III for English majors, containing lots of poetry, drama, and fiction in translation. Spring 2007 we are also offering Humanities 450: Representations of the Holocaust, which is also an excellent Tier III class and will count for English majors as well as others. The Tier III requirement applies even to transfer students with an AA degree, since that degree satisfies only lower-division GERs.

Remind students to be sure to complete the English Writing Portfolio requirement, which includes bringing in a paper from Engl 302 and one from their senior (or upper division) literature or creative writing course as well as completing the exit questionnaire and turning it in. Make clear that this is not the same as the Junior Writing Portfolio required as part of the GERs of all students.

#### English Major Advising Tips

Students wishing to certify a major in English must have a 2.0 grade point average and must maintain that to graduate. They can certify as soon as they have completed 24 hours. There are no additional prerequisites. Send them to Jerri Smith's office in Avery 202B to certify.

[The current English major and its options are described in the current advising handbook.](#) There are copies available in Jerri's office, but you can also download, view, and print it on the department Web site at <http://libarts.wsu.edu/english/undergraduate/FacRes.html>. Just click on "Download Guide to the English Major." This is a pdf file, and you will need Adobe Acrobat Reader or an Acrobat plug-in installed on your computer to read it.

[For information about advising students who are interested in English Teaching,](#) see the [English Education Advising Notes.](#) Remember when people indicate they are interested in Teaching and Learning to hand them the white four-page paper of information as well.

Creative writing remains unchanged. Follow the patterns in the current handbook. There will be some changes beginning fall 2007 which will affect only students declaring their major then or later.

As you know, we approved major changes for this year. Here are some tips about phasing in the new options.

Students scheduled to graduate in the spring who wish to follow the old option patterns need to finish their degree using the current guidelines as described in the 2005-2006 Handbook (available on our Web site) and in the 2005-2006 WSU Catalog. However, since we greatly loosened our requirements, it would make sense to be more than usually flexible about letting students substitute courses for requirements where they need to. Do remember that the writers-of-color requirement is being maintained, and will not be waived. For spring 2008 English 315, 321, and 492 have been approved as fulfilling this requirement.

Remember to note all substitutions on the advising form and initial them. They will not be entered into the students DARS report until you've initialed them and called Jerri's attention to the substitution.

Some students are still graduating under the old requirements. Be sure to check to see which track they are on. They may not be following the current curriculum if they certified their major under the old requirements. Those interested mainly in writing should begin the rhetoric and professional writing option by taking English 302, 301, and perhaps either 371 or 373 (they need one of the readings classes). Another good choice would be 401. Those particularly interested in professional writing will need 402 or 403. This option is especially aimed at serving the needs of pre-law and business-oriented students, but it is also attracting a number of would-be journalists.

The English options of Business and Pre-Law are being phased out. Encourage students interested in business or law to do the Rhetoric and Professional Writing major. We no longer recommend that students do a business minor, since those minors have become very difficult to enter. Students should also be told that many law schools are happy to admit English majors without the "prelaw" label on their transcript.

Those options with a Humanities requirement have expanded it in recent years to include more courses: Hum 101, 103, 302, 303, 304, 335, 350, 410, or 450. Remember that these courses can count as GERs or be substituted for English literature classes where appropriate. All of our options now have an identical Humanities requirement.

#### General Education Requirement tips

Be sure to check for each student you advise to see that they have completed the foreign language requirement. Students from smaller schools are often admitted without a second year of a foreign language. They should check with Foreign Languages if they are uncertain which course to take.

In fulfilling their GERs in written and spoken communication, students sometimes think that COMST 102 (Public Speaking) is required, but this not true. Even the teaching option no longer requires it.

On the English option sheet in each student's file, there are two columns beside each requirement. The first space is for the year and semester in which the class is going to be taken and the second space is for the grade received. It is suggested you do the same for GERs as well.

Note that the American Diversity (D) GER and the Intercultural Studies (I) requirements are not necessarily add-ons to the total number of hours required, and can be satisfied by designated courses that also offer an H (G) or S (K). They must be outside the major (no ENGL prefix) to satisfy the GER requirements. You can use the Search for Classes tool to find open classes that satisfy the requirements. Humanities classes can fulfill the H requirement for English majors, and are a good choice.

Students who have tested on the Math Placement and are found to need remedial math must now pay big bucks beyond their basic tuition charges to take those courses. Students who do not place into a college-level math class can transfer such a class in from a community college, bypassing the remedial course. If they seem qualified and are willing to take math in summer school, they may want to take this option, provided there is a community college where they will be living which qualifies. They can check transferability by consulting the Transfer Course Equivalencies Page:

[http://www.it.wsu.edu/AIS/SIC/cgi-bin/dars\\_tca\\_rqst.cgi](http://www.it.wsu.edu/AIS/SIC/cgi-bin/dars_tca_rqst.cgi).

Math 205 is a good suggestion for advisees who qualify. Students generally find this course in statistical literacy more useful and interesting than 210, which is a general survey of math. Students taking 210 should be urged to take it seriously. It is not uncommon for them to stop going after the first few weeks because it reviews familiar material, and then get blindsided by the later less familiar material in the course and flunk out. Math 107 is precalculus, good for students planning further studies in science or engineering, but much tougher than 205 or 210. You cannot judge the difficulty of lower-division math classes based on their numbers.

English majors must have 12 hours of science credits to graduate--not the 10 of people in most other colleges. Most English majors take ES/RP 101 (now a laboratory class), Biol 102 and Geol 101. Students often take a three-credit class like FSHN 130 which leaves them one hour short of the 12-hour requirement. Good choices for filling in the missing hour are Astr 390 and Biol 201 (which has a pre-requisite of 102 or other lower-division biology class).

If you have time and are interested in the process, consider asking an advisee to log on to myWSU while they are in your office and register as you watch them. This works only after the student's assigned advising time has arrived. You will be able to help them navigate and will see the problems which they incur as they go along. Certainly not something you'll want to do with every student, but very educational if you've never seen how myWSU works for them. Note that students now go to myWSU rather than Metro to register. Encourage your advisees to go talk to the professor teaching the course in which they are interested if they have questions about whether the class is right for them. Another great idea is to look at the textbooks in the Bookie to see what the material looks like.

Students often find that a 1-credit PEACT class is useful for giving them a break from studies and earning them a low-risk credit of one hour toward graduation. These courses are graded on an A/S/F basis, so unless the student really messes up, they will not hurt a GPA and can be fun. Strenuousness ranges from fly-fishing to scuba diving. Note that some of the classes have extra equipment fees. There are separate schedule line numbers for men and women only in the social dance course, where they try to provide everyone with a partner. Other PEACT courses are coeducational, except for fencing (men's arms average longer). Students interested in dance should be told that besides the PEACT courses, there are excellent ones in modern and jazz dancing offered under "DANCE."

Ask transfer students whether they have an AA degree. If they say they do, but it doesn't appear on their DARS report, ask them to check to make sure that their transcript was sent to the Admissions Office. If they are just a few courses short of an AA, tell them they can complete the missing courses here and transfer them back to their community college. Having an AA satisfies all the lower-division GERs (though not the College of Arts and Sciences requirements, including the two extra hours of science, including one of lab). Remind them that it does not satisfy the upper-division GER requirements, like the writing portfolio and the Tier III class. Note that Jerri Smith can check to see whether Admissions has received a student's transcript from another institution.

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