

Peyton Sammons

University of New England introduces three new track plans for the English majors to make their arts and humanities division stronger.

UNE is known for being a healthcare driven university. So what happens to the art and humanities section? A whole new layout is being created to help benefit the students within the department.

We will have a literature track for students who are in the English major for literature, a writing track because we always have English students who are interested in the major to become writers, and then we have the third track that is the English education track. That's the track for secondary education majors that are doubling with English," said Dr. Michael Cripps, head of the department of English and professor at UNE.

With this new plan, it makes the English major customizable for the students. Instead of a strict, written out 24 required credits, it will become more flexible. The required credits will drop down to 18 instead and provide more choice to the students based on which track they decide to take.

Unfortunately, a lot of UNE students are not aware of this new plan taking effect in the future, but that doesn't mean that they aren't excited for the change.

"No, I didn't know that was happening! That's really neat honestly. I have a writing minor now because there weren't a lot of choices for writing in the English major. I love creative writing, but I want to take it to the next level and this sounds just like it," said Lizzy Baker, freshman English major.

The driving plan behind this new change was primarily for the students adapting their classes to their needs within their field, as well as interests. Most of the required credits needed by English students are not offered anymore or as frequently, resulting in an influx of substituted course paperwork.

This is the biggest change within the arts and humanities program since Dr. Cripps has been a professor at UNE, which would be thirteen years. This decision was made after a long review process. The English department has been a small portion of such a huge campus. Seeing a change this vast in one of the smaller programs is a serious accomplishment.

The new program also offers a new seminar class for arts and humanities students to take part in. It's a great way to meet new people that share a common interest in majors as you.

“Lil120 was a seminar class I took that was an overview of the learning objectives for the arts and humanities department. It moved into a more in depth view of your major and what you could really do with it for your career path. It was really interesting, I bet especially for freshmen, to see if that major is really a good fit for them,” Mya Hanks said, sophomore and double major in Communications and English.

The other aspect of the class for freshmen is creating new friendships within your major. Lizzy Baker said, “The class was great for me because I’m a commuter so making friends on campus can be a little harder. But, the other English majors in my graduating class ended up having a lot of classes with me so it created a mutual friendship where it’s not awkward to sit and hang out with them.”

This new English plan will be a huge first step for, hopefully, more change in the future. This plan has not yet been enacted, but stay tuned for future semesters as it will soon be in action. Thankfully, this new English track plan motivates students to take more classes that interest them and create an environment that doesn’t scare them for the real career world.