More Than a Language: A Detailed Look at the English Major

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MORE THAN A LANGUAGE: A DETAILED LOOK AT THE ENGLISH MAJOR

by
Hannah Woods

A thesis submitted to the faculty of The University of Mississippi in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College.

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ABSTRACT

HANNAH WOODS: More than a Language: A Detailed Look at the English Major
(Under the direction of Dr. Erin Drew)

This thesis analyzes the perceptions of the English Major in order to come up with suggestions for the University of Mississippi English Department with the purpose of increasing enrollment in the English Program. The last decade has seen a large decrease in the number of English Majors throughout the country, and this decrease has been reflected in the University of Mississippi. This thesis looks at recent opinions of the English Major in society, including popular criticisms of the major and responses from the English community. It was found that the two main criticisms of the English Major are that graduates with English degrees do not make a satisfying amount of money, and that the program strayed from its original subject manner too much, including topics such as gender studies in accepted courses. Then, the opinions of students of the University of Mississippi are analyzed through surveys and interviews. Some insights found from this research include student’s desire for community, and that they found personal interest to be the most important factor when picking a major. Based on previous findings, ideas for change within the department as well as marketing and outreach strategies are presented with the hope of making the English Major a more attractive option for potential students. Both primary and secondary research are utilized in this thesis in order to find insights on what the English Department can improve.
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INTRODUCTION

I knew from a young age that I wanted to be an English Major. I remember, when college seemed like a lifetime away, getting lost in book after book, and looking forward to learning all that I could about my favorite subject. I was not sure yet what I wanted to be when I grew up, but I knew that it would have something to do with reading and writing.

I did not understand at first why people, children and adults alike, showed such disdain when I would tell them of my intended major. Even if they do not like English, I thought, why do they care if that is what I want to study? Then, as I grew older, things became clear. “Have fun being a Starbucks barista,” “You know you’ll never make any money,” and of course, “So, you want to teach?” were some of the most frequent responses. People, essentially, did not see the value of obtaining an English degree. I began to dread the “What’s your major?” question, because nine times out of ten I knew the look that people would give me, and it was not a good one.

After four years of dealing with this in college, I started to question why people thought this way. As people in the English community already know, being an English major opens so many doors for students. By completing an English program, students learn numerous valuable skills that are sought after by job recruiters everywhere. However, with so much false information spread about the English Major, students are pressured to choose something more “practical” to major in.
I saw that this way of thinking could be disastrous for the English Department that I had grown to know and love over the last few years. It became evident that the perception of the English Major must change on our campus and others in order to keep the study of literature alive. This study aims to correct some of the misconceptions surrounding the English Major by examining society’s view of the major, and gaining insight into the opinions of current students. The findings of this study will be able to help our department and others navigate this uncertain time, and show everyone just how much the English Major has to offer.
CHAPTER I: THE CURRENT CLIMATE OF THE ENGLISH MAJOR

Right now, the number of English majors is at an all time low. As of the 2015-16 school year, the number of English majors had gone down by 22% over the last decade.1 These numbers are especially troubling because college enrollment has gone up2, which means that the loss of majors can not be attributed to a loss of college students. So, why are so many students saying no to a degree in English? This trend is due in part to Great Recession of 2008, which left many young adults very worried about their future financially. Since this recession, data from the National Center for Education Statistics shows that English has seen a decline in majors of over a quarter, which is the largest drop that the center has recorded for any major.3 This and the steady rise of college tuition due to decreasing public finding4 caused students entering college to focus on majors that would guarantee the best possible financial results after graduating. They did not want to waste such an expensive degree on a major that would leave them at a disadvantage.

New students began to prefer undergraduate programs that are more career focused and turned to STEM, business, and medical fields of study. The draw to these

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programs was skill training that could be directly translated to post-graduate careers. Students thought that being groomed for a specific career during college would make it easier to find jobs than learning a broad set of skills that could be applied to many different areas, which is the basis of any degree in the humanities. Many programs also added more future job security by encouraging or even implementing internship and shadowing programs with outside companies. For example, history professor Johann Neem explains, “because business programs are better integrated with the business community, they offer their students greater access to internships and employers.”

As an English major, I have learned so many valuable skills that I will take with me as I start my career. In my opinion, the English degree does not deserve the doubt and scrutiny that people have shown it in the last decade. And, although teaching is a difficult and rewarding occupation that deserves more respect, English majors have so many other job options and should not feel limited to only that profession. As it turns out, there are many other people who agree with me and have conducted research backing up these opinions. Throughout this chapter we will look at whether or not students’ doubts in the humanities are warranted, and what this shift in student ideals means for the humanities. To do this, I will first examine recent criticism aimed at the English major, following with a response in defense of the major.

**RECENT CRITICISM OF THE ENGLISH MAJOR**

Recently, the humanities, and the English major in particular, have come under heavy scrutiny, leaving students, parents, and employers wondering what the value of an English major actually is. The main criticism is that English has moved away from

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canon works to more modern literature and has begun including topics such as gender and environmental studies. This, in critics’ minds, has made the modern English major weaker compared to English programs from years ago.

In a recent Wall Street Journal article titled “Is Majoring in English Worth It?” William McGurn, former speechwriter for president George W. Bush, voices some his opinions of the English major. Before the article even starts, readers see a three-minute video embedded at the top of the page of economist Dr. Richard K. Vedder discussing problems in higher education at various think tank events. In the video, Vedder explains that one of the problems with higher education is the high volume of administrators compared to faculty at Universities. He then implies that modern administrative roles, such as diversity coordinators, are unnecessary, saying, “In 1950 there weren’t any [diversity coordinators] and if you said ‘How many diversity coordinators do you have?’ the first question would be ‘What in the hell is a diversity coordinator?’”

Another point that Vedder makes later on in the video is that traditional families have become disenchanted with universities because “they increasingly despise the riots, the call for safe spaces, the sanctimonious demeanor of college presidents.” The video concludes with Vedder calling for more information available for students about the vocational outcomes associated with different universities and majors, something that McGurn focuses on in his article. While this video did not say anything explicitly about the English major, it set a very conservative tone for the following article, telling readers that universities need to return to their former glory days of the 1950s and 70s.

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7 Ibid, 2019.
With this article, McGurn is essentially warning parents of the possible negative outcomes that could occur if their children major in English because, according to him, “someone—most likely mom or dad—has written a hefty tuition check,” making information about college majors more relevant for parents than for their children. However, in Sallie Mae’s 2019 “How America Pays for College” report, it was found that on average parents pay less than half of college costs, while the student, student loans, or scholarships and grants pay the rest. This is only one oversight made by McGurn in his article, as we will see from writer and assistant English professor Aaron Hanlon’s response to it later on.

McGurn’s criticism of the English major begins with a comparison of the median income of English majors ($47,800) with that of electrical engineering majors ($99,000), as found in a recent study conducted by Bankrate. He went on to describe the English major as “watered down” and pointed out that it was “the most regretted college major in America,” citing articles from Campus Reform and MarketWatch, respectively. Throughout the article, McGurn uses many of the other popular reasons why people are turning away from the English major in addition to the lower income. He states the small amount of English departments that require Shakespeare classes, condemns the political correctness that has “infected” the humanities, and even questions the improvement of English majors’ critical thinking skills after college. McGurn comes to the conclusion that universities can get away with “dumbed-down” humanities programs, but it is much too obvious to cut corners when it comes to STEM programs. McGurn did a good job of summarizing many of the arguments against the English major, but now we will examine some of the sources that he included in the article in order to get a fuller picture.
The MarketWatch article by Catey Hill is titled “This is the most regrettable college major in America” and details one of the main criticisms against the English major: low paying jobs and high unemployment rate. The article starts off by saying that 54% of English majors regret majoring in English. This percentage of dissatisfaction was the highest one found by website Trade-Schools.net when they surveyed 1,035 American college graduates in 2017. Hill goes on to guess at why this may be the case, saying,

Some of this may be the earnings that graduates face depending on their major. People with a bachelor’s in English earn a median of $53,000 a year and fine arts $49,000 a year, according to Georgetown’s Center of Education and the Workforce. And a study from policy organization The Hamilton Project shows that over a lifetime, English and fine arts majors earn less than $1 million. Meanwhile, an accounting B.A. can earn you a median of $69,000, a computer science degree $83,000 and an IT major $73,000. That adds up over a lifetime: The Hamilton Project shows that accounting majors will rake in nearly $1.5 million in lifetime earnings, and computer science majors top $1.5 million in lifetime earnings. The likelihood of getting a job may another factor. A 2015 report from Georgetown’s Center of Education and the Workforce found that college grads with experience and a major in the computers, science and math field had an unemployment rate of just 4.3%. Meanwhile, humanities and arts majors with experience saw unemployment at 5.8%.

While these points may seem convincing at first, once we look at the sources of data more closely we see that there are several reasons why these assumptions are not the reason that English degree holders regret their majors. First is the Trade-Schools.net survey. A section of the survey not discussed in Hill’s article breaks down the reasons that students switched from one major to the other. It was found that the biggest reason that students changed from a major in the humanities to a different field of study was not because of low pay or even lack of available jobs in the field (although that was a

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close second), but because they thought that an “alternative field would provide more value.”\(^{10}\) It is unclear what exactly is meant by the term “value,” but it certainly means that the reason people are giving up on the humanities is much deeper than money or unemployment rates. Another thing to note is that, although English has the lowest satisfaction for majors, business administration was also in the bottom five.\(^{11}\)

The next set of data comes from a report by Georgetown’s Center of Education and the Workplace. According to their study, the number one least popular major is geological and geophysical engineering. In fact, the five least popular majors are all in the STEM category, with metallurgical engineering, physical sciences, geosciences, and neuroscience following after geological and geophysical engineering. This is interesting because graduates with a degree in geological and geophysical engineering have a higher median salary than English majors according to this study, and this major is actually number 10 in the top 10 highest earning majors list in the report. It was also found that the second least popular major, metallurgical engineering, is the third highest paid major. On the other end of the spectrum, some of the ten lowest paying majors included social work (third lowest) and human services and community organization (second lowest), and at number one lowest paying was early child education.\(^{12}\) In the Trade-Schools.net survey, however, the public and social services category said they were more satisfied with their majors then those with humanities degrees.\(^{13}\) This means that one of Hill’s points, that satisfaction of major and income are positively correlated, is false.

\(^{10}\) “Would You Change Your Major?” 2017.
\(^{11}\) Ibid, 2017.
\(^{13}\) “Would You Change Your Major?” 2017.
Hill also cites a 2014 study conducted by The Hamilton Project, saying, “a study from policy organization The Hamilton Project shows that over a lifetime, English and fine arts majors earn less than $1 million...The Hamilton Project shows that accounting majors will rake in nearly $1.5 million in lifetime earnings, and computer science majors top $1.5 million in lifetime earnings.”14 After examining the findings, however, we can see that there are several things that make this statement misleading.

In her article, Hill links to a chart included in The Hamilton Project’s study that shows lifetime earnings of many different majors compared to each other. The chart shows that “English Language and Literature” is just barely under the $1 million mark, and the “Accounting and Actuarial Science” is farther behind $1.5 million than English is to $1 million. After examining the actual study (Hill only links to the chart, to find the full study one must search The Hamilton Project’s website), titled Major Decisions: What Graduates Earn Over Their Lifetimes, it was found that the actual median earnings of English majors was $.99 million, while the median for accounting majors was $1.41 million.15 Without knowing this information, readers could easily misunderstand Hill’s comment, thinking that English majors earn significantly less than $1 million over a lifetime. It is also unclear why Hill grouped English majors with Fine Arts majors, as they are 20 majors lower on the chart at $.83 million.16

Brad Hershbein and Melissa S. Kearny, the researchers leading this study, warn not to make assumptions solely based on median earnings, saying, “median earnings convey what the graduate in the middle of the earnings distribution can expect, and half

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14 Hill, “This is the Most Regrettable,” 2017.
of graduates will earn more and half will earn less.”\textsuperscript{17} This means that the median, measured at the 50\textsuperscript{th} percentile, will not be accurate for every graduate and does not show the full picture. Hershbein and Kearney then bring up another factor to consider:

In general, majors that are associated with low earnings have larger relative spreads between earnings at the 25th and 75th percentiles than majors associated with high earnings. Loosely put, this means that graduates in nursing or engineering fields who have high earnings for their major do somewhat better than the graduates who have low earnings in that major, but that art history graduates who have high earnings for their major do much, much better than low-earning art history graduates.\textsuperscript{18}

Basically, lower median income does not necessarily equate to low potential earnings. I subsequently found within the Hershbein and Kearney data the lifetime earnings of the four majors that Hill mentioned in her article at the 95 percentile: Accounting ($4.77 million), Computer Science ($3.56 million), English ($3.18 million), and Fine Arts ($2.52 million). In addition, when factoring out part-time workers or including those with graduate degrees, English major’s earnings overtake those of Computer Science majors at the 95 percentile.\textsuperscript{19} Obviously, not every English major will be in the 95\textsuperscript{th} percentile when it comes to earnings, but this demonstrates how the gaps between majors can widen and close depending on several different factors.

Another source that McGurn cited in his article is an article written by Kyle Hooten for Campus Reform. This article also contains information from the Bankrate study and MarketWatch articles examined previously. In addition to this, Hooten includes comments from Johnathan Pidluzny, director of academic affairs for the American Council of Trustees and Alumni, that explain why Pidluzny thinks humanities

\textsuperscript{17} Ibid, 2020.
\textsuperscript{18} Ibid, 2020.
\textsuperscript{19} Ibid, 2020.
majors are paid less after graduation. Pidluzny says that the humanities are no longer “taught with vigor,” which lead to majors not learning “even basic numeracy and literacy,” which in turn lead to undesirability in the workplace. This lack of “vigor” is a result of the inclusion of “popular culture and identity politics,” according to Pidluzny. This is a point that McGurn draws on: the importance of traditional topics and classic literature. However, if STEM programs are encouraged to evolve with new discoveries and technology, should the study of humanities not be allowed grow in time with our changing culture?

Aaron Hanlon, author and assistant professor of English, responded to McGurn’s Wall Street Journal article in a lengthy twitter thread (28 posts in total), starting with, “This article is so misleading that I'm gonna go through it piece by piece.” Hanlon proceeds to do just that, posting screenshots of different parts of McGurn’s article and then addressing why that particular section is misleading. Throughout the thread, Hanlon explains several holes in McGurn’s article, pertaining to both financial outcomes and claimed structural problems of the English major. Hanlon also points out that when comparing STEM to humanities people often leave out students majoring in more “applied” sciences, such as plant sciences or geology, that have similar financial outcomes to English majors. He looks at the Bankrate study from McGurn’s article and compares English with several STEM majors, saying “In terms of salary, English ($47,800) is pretty close to clinical psych ($43,100), plant science ($50,000), neuroscience ($50,000), animal sciences ($47,500), etc. In terms of unemployment rate: English (3.4); clinical psych (1.2); plant science (3.5); neuroscience (1.9); animal sciences (1.9).}

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Hanlon also explains that, while many schools may not have a specific Shakespeare requirement, a point brought up by many English major critics, these schools may instead have a “pre-1800 requirement,” which would include many canonical writers such as Shakespeare and Chaucer. To expand on this point, he uses the Open Syllabus project, a database of “seven million English-language syllabi from over 80 countries” that, among its many functions, lets users search how many times an author or title has been included in a syllabus. With this database, Hanlon found that Shakespeare was still the most frequently taught author in all of the syllabi, with over 20,000 more appearances than Plato at number two. By refuting both of McGurn’s major criticisms of the English major, Hanlon’s Twitter thread exposes the “culture-wars” that fuel this heavy scrutiny in the first place.

**ENGLISH MAJOR DEFENSE**

Criticisms such as these made by McGurn are a big reason that students are flocking to STEM studies in droves. How could they not, when many critics only present them with information that shows the English major in a negative light? This misinformation has caused many proponents of the English major to speak up in its defense in recent years. For example, it is understood among students that recent

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21 Hanlon, Aaron. “1) This Article Is so Misleading That I’m Gonna Go through It Piece by Piece. I Will Try to Do so without Lurching into Mega-Thread Territory. I Do Not Accept Propaganda Written to Damage the English Major, Particularly When Done so to Serve One’s Partisan Commitments. Thread: Https://T.co/pQ5lscgWns.” Twitter. September 13, 2019. twitter.com/AaronRHanlon/status/1172561899558461440?s=20.


23 *Open Syllabus Project.* Last Modified April 3, 2020. opensyllabus.org/results-list/authors?size=50.
college graduates with degrees in English and other subjects in the humanities look unimpressive when compared to recent graduates with more “practical” degrees, like engineering or business. As we have already seen, studies show that the median income of recently graduated English majors is lower than their more career driven counterparts.\(^\text{24}\) However, associate professor David Deming stresses that this is only true in the beginning of their respective careers. By the time they reach 40, adults with degrees in humanities catch up to and oftentimes surpass STEM majors in annual income.\(^\text{25}\) Deming breaks down the numbers in a New York Times article:

> Computer science and engineering majors between the ages of 23 and 25 who were working full time earned an average of $61,744 in 2017, according to the Census Bureau’s American Community Survey. This was 37 percent higher than the average starting salary of $45,032 earned by people who majored in history or the social sciences (which include economics, political science and sociology). Large differences in starting salary by major held for both men and women. Men majoring in computer science or engineering roughly doubled their starting salaries by age 40, to an average of $124,458. Yet earnings growth is even faster in other majors, and some catch up completely. By age 40, the average salary of all male college graduates was $111,870, and social science and history majors earned $131,154 — an average that is lifted, in part, by high-paying jobs in management, business and law. The story was similar for women. Those with applied STEM majors earned nearly 50 percent more than social science and history majors at ages 23 to 25, but only 10 percent more by ages 38 to 40.\(^\text{26}\)

English majors’ employment rates also catch up to STEM majors a few years after graduating.\(^\text{27}\) There are a couple different reasons why this phenomenon occurs.

\(^{26}\) Ibid, 2019.
Many careers in STEM revolve around technology, which is always evolving. This means that techniques that college students are learning now will be outdated in a few years, and this year’s hot new hires will soon become obsolete. Not to mention the many careers that could soon be replaced by algorithms and artificial intelligence.\textsuperscript{28} This is one reason why, according to recent studies, employers prefer many of the skills that are learned through humanities degrees, such as critical thinking and reading comprehension, to those that career driven programs focus on. These skills are valuable because they are so versatile and continue to be relevant as an employee moves up the career ladder. As former president of Missouri State University Michael Nietzel says, “Preparing students for the careers of the future requires more than job training. We don’t need more engineers who know nothing about the Civil War, police officers who believe Churchill was a fictional character, or nurses who have never been moved by a great novel.”\textsuperscript{29}

According to Deming, “a liberal arts education fosters valuable ‘soft skills’ like problem-solving, critical thinking and adaptability. Such skills are hard to quantify, and they don’t create clean pathways to high-paying first jobs. But they have long-run value in a wide variety of careers.”\textsuperscript{30} Another source says, “EMSI’s analysis found that the very skills held by those who had majored in English — or philosophy or social sciences or business or communications — seemed to have prepared them well for jobs in fields like sales, marketing, training, and management, which are all now in high demand.”\textsuperscript{31} Data

\textsuperscript{28} Deming, “In the Salary Race,” 2019.
\textsuperscript{29} Nietzel, “Whither The Humanities,” 2019.
shows that humanities majors are also more satisfied with their careers on average, which makes them less likely to leave their jobs.\footnote{32 “The State of the Humanities 2018: Graduates in the Workforce & Beyond.” American Academy of Arts & Sciences. February 1, 2018. www.amacad.org/publication/state-humanities-2018-graduates-workforce-beyond.}

We have established that English majors actually can and do make plenty of money after graduation, and current undergraduates should not be worried about living off of ramen noodles for the rest of their lives. Now, we will look at some of the value gained from an English degree that is not monetary. I have already mentioned how English majors learn many cognitive skills, such as reading comprehension and critical thinking, that are valuable to employers. However, these kinds of skills can be useful on a much larger scale, and can actually affect whole economies.

In a recent Washington Post article, Heather Long describes a need for English majors that was discovered by many renowned economists. The first economist that Long writes about is Robert Shiller, Nobel Prize winner and author of Narrative Economics, who explains in his book the importance of skills and knowledge gained from humanities courses. In the book Shiller explains that one of the history classes that he took in college taught him about the Great Depression, which helped him to understand the negative consequences of a bad economy better than any economics classes he had taken. Throughout Narrative Economics, Shiller argues that economists who only focus on the numbers do not pay attention to the “beliefs” that influence a country’s economy, and that this is why stories – and storytellers – are important.\footnote{33 Long, “The World’s Top Economists,” 2019} Humanities classes that teach students the importance of stories are necessary so that people can learn the reasoning behind certain events, like the Great Depression, to better predict and plan for the future.
Another important economic figure and head of Australia’s central bank, Philip Lowe, agrees with Shiller on the importance of the narrative in economics. Lowe spoke about this topic at an annual gathering of economists in August 2019, saying, “It’s important we don’t just talk about numbers, coefficients and rules, but stories that people can understand. Stories about how policies are contributing to economic welfare and the things that really matter to people.” This demonstrates that storytelling is not only important for understanding, but also for communication and transparency. Excellent understanding, communication, and transparency are all things required for many different types of careers, not just one in economics, and the storytelling skills in which English majors are proficient can improve all three of these areas in a person, business, government agency, etc.

Recent studies have found another practical use for studying literature: cultivating empathy. Jamil Zaki, associate professor of psychology in the Stanford School of Humanities and Sciences and head of the Stanford Social Neuroscience Laboratory, conducted research on the nature of empathy. Zaki gained much insight through his studies, and actually wrote a book about his findings in 2019 titled, The War for Kindness: Building Empathy in a Fractured World. One aspect of empathy he discovered is that, contrary to popular belief, empathy is not a fixed trait. People are not born with a set amount of empathy. Zaki found that empathy is actually more of a skill that a person can develop throughout their lifetime. When interviewed, he said, “Through the right practices, such as compassion meditation, diverse friendships and even fiction reading, we can grow our empathy on purpose. Empathy is something like a

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muscle: left unused, it atrophies, put to work, it grows.”35 This shows that literature is a valuable tool that can be utilized through English classes to shape a more caring society. A need for empathy is expressed not only by English majors, but by everyone who interacts with other people, including healthcare workers, business professionals, and those in the service industry.

Another article, titled Abolish the Business Major, details the importance of humanities studies and points out some problems with career-focused fields of study like the business major. Johann N. Neem does this by comparing students with business majors, which is currently “the largest undergraduate major in the United States,36” to students studying humanities in this article. Neem suggests that, while most business majors pick their area of study in order to “get ahead” with regards to income after graduation, students studying humanities have other reasons for selecting their majors and actually end up with higher job satisfaction, saying,

They (students majoring in arts and sciences) may choose nonvocational majors because they are interested in doing work that produces social value or greater personal satisfaction even if it does not maximize their income. Thus, less than 40 percent of business majors report that they had enough money to “do everything I want to do,” compared with 45 percent of graduates in the natural sciences and 42 percent of graduates in the humanities. Moreover, when asked about how satisfied they are with their work, humanities majors were in every measure (opportunities to advance, salary, benefits, job security, and job location) within a handful of percentage points of degree holders in other fields.37

Neem is basically saying here that when deciding on a major, students weigh their future goals heavier than their actual interest in studying a subject. For example, my sister,

currently a freshman in college, has told me in the past that she would greatly enjoy studying sociology or philosophy because she is fascinated with why people think or act the way that they do. However, when she was deciding what to major in, she ended up choosing a biomedical engineering major, largely because of the job prospects and large paycheck presumed to some with it. This is definitely not the only reason that my sister chose this major; she has always been good at both science and math, and she genuinely wants to help people with her degree after she graduates, and I think that she made the right choice for herself. This simply demonstrates that students will come to different decisions when picking a major depending on what they value most, whether that be job satisfaction, job security, personal fulfillment, income, etc.

With that being said, including future income as a factor when choosing a major is not a bad idea. It would be foolish not to consider that part of your future when making such a big decision. It is only when that becomes the deciding factor that things start to get dangerous. If someone majors in business only because they think they will make more money, then when that actually start working, they will have no interest in bettering that company beyond what will earn them a larger paycheck. Even if they did want to fix deeper problems that the company might face, they might not know how to because they lack the cognitive skills that a degree in humanities offers. Neem explains in his article that this problem had been discovered as early as 1953, when International Harvester president John L. McCaffrey saw that a business major’s “perspective tends to be too narrow,” and that he or she “does not see the overall effects (an action or decision
may have) on the business,” which led McCaffrey to believe that graduates should have a “rounded education” if they wanted to become “business leaders.”

Neem continues by stating that one of the many reasons that the business major should be removed from college campuses is because the humanities lead students to become both better workers and better citizens due to the skills that they develop while at college. He even goes so far as to say that the business major is unethical because it robs the student of their ability to contemplate their value to society or what they have to offer the world. Neem criticizes the modern view of liberal degrees as “luxury goods,” saying that focusing on more practical and job focused degrees takes away what makes a college graduate special. “The issue is not just skills, but character,” he says.

College is the time when young people should be able to take time and find out who they are, what is important to them, and where their place is in the world. This important part of college should not be a “boutique product” only accessible to students that do not have to worry about making money. For example, the business major only teaches students to think about how a business is run; it does not encourage students to think about why a business exists or where it fits in to the bigger picture. I do not know if I agree that we should do out with the business major all together, but I think that these points are important for a student to consider when choosing a major so that they can make a more informed decision.

Some departments have started to respond to the English major by modifying their programs. One department at the University of Kentucky started to encourage more highly esteemed professors to teach introductory English courses that are part of

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the core requirements of the university. This way, freshmen of all majors, and even those who haven’t decided on a major, are exposed to professors that have years of experience in making English interesting. This makes it more likely for students that wouldn’t usually care about English to enjoy themselves and want to take more English courses. This department hopes to gain more English majors by getting more exposure and interest through this method. Spelman College’s English Department has taken a different approach. To demonstrate their focus on students’ future careers, Spelman has implemented a one-credit course for both semesters of an English major’s sophomore year. This course requires students to create résumés attend networking events, and it culminates in a speech presented to members of the faculty based on completed community service. Both of these techniques involve students opening their minds to aspects of the English major that they might not have discovered otherwise.

CONCLUSION

After looking at all that the English major has to offer, it seems obvious that humanities degrees, and English degrees in particular, are a great investment in students’ futures. However, students must also see the value of majoring in English, or else our departments will continue to shrink. Recent graduates need to be able to pay student loans, put down payments on houses and cars, or simply be able to pay rent. All of this is weighing on students’ minds as soon as they get to college, and maybe even before, which is why they want structure from their chosen academic program. Students


want a clear path to take not only during college, but also in the job search that follows, or, even better, the ability to say that they already have a job lined up before they even have a diploma. Right now, these are not things that incoming students associate with the English major. Many students are also unaware of how enriching an English degree can be when embarking on this new chapter of their lives. Because of this, if English departments cannot figure out a way to communicate their value to undergraduates, students will continue to choose STEM and business programs instead
CHAPTER II: THE ENGLISH MAJOR AT OLE MISS

In the previous chapter, I researched the current climate of the English major and found that there are two major criticisms that the major is facing: that English majors do not get high paying jobs, and that the English major has become too “politically correct,” focusing on topics such as gender studies instead of the canonical authors. Since I had thoroughly explored and defended the English major on both of these fronts, I wanted to take what I had learned and apply it to my own university. It was time to narrow my focus from what the world thinks of the English major and find out what people here at The University of Mississippi think, as my ultimate goal with this project is to come up with a way for the English Department to increase English major enrollment. Using information gained in the past chapter to guide me, I conducted research in order to understand the current climate of the University of Mississippi English program.

BACKGROUND

The University of Mississippi, commonly referred to as Ole Miss, is the first university founded in the state. The main campus is located in the small town of Oxford in northwest Mississippi, but the University of Mississippi also has regional campuses in Tupelo, Booneville, Grenada, and Southaven and a medical center in Jackson, the state capital. The main campus of the university is composed of the College of Liberal Arts as well as several schools, including the School of Business, the School of Applied Sciences,
The School of Pharmacy, the Center for Manufacturing Excellence, the Graduate School, and the Law School. The university is the largest in the state, with a combined 24,000 students at all campuses and divisions.

From the about page of the University of Mississippi website:

Founded in 1848, the University of Mississippi, affectionately known to alumni, students and friends as Ole Miss, is Mississippi’s flagship university. Included in the elite group of R-1: Doctoral Universities - Highest Research Activity by the Carnegie Classification, it has a long history of producing leaders in public service, academics and business. With more than 24,000 students, Ole Miss is the state's largest university and is ranked among the nation's fastest-growing institutions. Its 15 academic divisions include a major medical school, nationally recognized schools of accountancy, law and pharmacy, and the Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College, renowned for a blend of academic rigor, experiential learning and opportunities for community action.42

Ole Miss is known throughout Mississippi as the “preppiest” of the top three universities. It is understood that this is where you go if you want to be a lawyer, doctor, or businessman. The university has a very conservitave history, which makes sense considering that Mississippi itself is an extremely conservitave state. The university was turned into a confederate hospital during the civil war, and there is still a confederate statue in the center of campus.43 However, recent years have seen a growing liberal presence among students, likely due to an increasing number of out-of-state students. There have been many shifts on campus due to this liberal influence, including changing the mascot and school song and the relocation of the confederate statue. Sports are a big part of the culture here at Ole Miss, especially football. The whole town basically shuts down on football game days, with thousands of people congregating at “the grove,” the

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area located in the middle of campus where “Ole Miss Rebel” fans can set up their tailgating tents. The campus has been voted the most beautiful college campus in the country multiple times, including 2011, 2013, and 2016.44

The English Department at Ole Miss is an attractive option for English majors for many reasons. Oxford, MS, described in the English Department website as an “idyllic town,” was home to William Faulkner, world-renowned author and previous University of Mississippi student. Yoknapatawpha, the fictional setting of most of Faulkner’s stories, was based on Lafayette County, MS, where Oxford is located. Faulkner’s historic home, Rowan Oak, is actually part of the Ole Miss campus. Students can take guided tours of the house for free, and can even walk a trail similar to the route that Faulkner himself took to campus everyday many years ago45. Many other famous writers, including John Grisham, Barry Hannah, and Larry Brown, started out in the city of Oxford.

The University of Mississippi English Department boasts a distinguished faculty, full of successful and even award-winning scholars and writers.46 The current English program requires 48-51 hours of general education courses and 30 hours of English courses. 18 of these hours must correspond with specific literary periods or topics, while the other 12 can be fulfilled with English electives. Students must take 3 hours each of

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literary interpretation (ENG 299), medieval literature, modern literature, 18th and 19th century literature, 20th and 21st century literature, and counter-canon and critical issues. 12 hours of English courses must be at the 400 level. The courses that fulfill these requirements vary, and the topics can change each semester. For example, Game of Thrones classes have been offered to fulfill the Medieval requirement, and classes such as Women in Science Fiction and Fantasy Fiction in the UK (a study abroad opportunity) are currently being held to fulfill the 20th and 21st century requirement. English majors are also required to complete a capstone survey class before graduation. Capstone courses are offered in a variety of topics, and the class usually culminates in a longer essay of about 15-20 pages. The capstone course requirement can also be fulfilled with the completion of a senior thesis, an independent research or creative writing project typically 60-100 pages long. The department currently offers a creative writing emphasis, where the 12 English elective hours are fulfilled with four creative writing courses.

The department does put forth student engagement efforts, but the attempts are met with mixed response. The department currently has a student ambassador, as well as a small team of student PR Interns, although the interns have taken a step back this school year while the department redefines the internship. Past duties of the PR interns include running departmental social media accounts, event planning and promoting, writing and uploading blog posts, writing student, professor, and alumni profiles, and outreach. There are a few student groups within the department, including the honors society Sigma Tau Delta, Cover to Cover, and Rebel Writers. Rebel Writers and Cover to

Cover are both student lead clubs, where the former focuses on creative writing, and the latter is a place for students who share a love of books to meet and simply hang out. Students have also recently started their own undergraduate literary magazine called Hyperbole. The department holds regular events that are mostly literary in nature, such as poetry readings, but has recently been experimenting with more career focused opportunities. Although the English program has a great foundation, with exciting classes and talented, caring professors, the number of English majors has declined about 30% in the last 3 years.

**RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

Secondary research and knowledge of the University of Mississippi led me to develop five research questions.

**QUESTION I.** What do English majors think about the English major at the University of Mississippi?

Students are the most important part of any learning institution. Understanding what current English majors like or dislike about the program is vital when deciding steps the department should take in order to gain more majors in the future. This includes students’ opinions on classes, program structure, involvement, extracurricular activities and events, resources, etc. One of the most important things to figure out is why English majors chose this program in the first place. Once this is known, the department can try to recreate that experience in other students.

**QUESTION II.** What are students’ current perceptions of the Ole Miss English Department and English majors in general?
In order to actually get more students to major in English at The University of Mississippi, it is important to understand what the students who did not choose English think about the department and the major overall. Similar to Question 1, an accurate answer to this question must include the reasons why students chose not to major in English. Is it simply because they are not interested in the subject, they do not like the classes offered, they think the degree is limiting, or something completely different? After this information is gathered, it is possible to see if there is any room to change student’s minds from their decision to not major in English.

**QUESTION III.** What are some elements that today’s students want in a program that the English department has or can easily adopt?

In order to raise the number of English majors at the University of Mississippi, the department has to make the English program as attractive as possible to the modern student. This includes both implementing new, innovative ideas and highlighting the great features that the program already has. This means asking students for some of their favorite things about their major or the one thing they wished their program had. If the English program contains as many of these elements as possible, that could be the push that causes a student to pick English over similar programs like journalism or history.

**QUESTION IV.** What are the most important factors for students when choosing a major?

It is necessary to understand UM students’ opinions on this, as this decision is the one that the department is trying to influence in order to increase their number of English majors. Whatever is most important to the students should also be important to the department, or there will be a major disconnect with the target audience. These
factors should be prioritized in all marketing materials and communication with potential majors. For example, if it is found that students really care about making money, brochures should highlight how the English major can help students reach that goal.

METHODOLOGY

In order to gain insight into the research questions, two different surveys were created, one for English majors and one for students majoring in any subject. Sampling for the “all major” survey included English minors and Honors College students. The surveys are completely anonymous and do not reveal any identifying information in order to protect the subjects. There are no anticipated risks involved with taking the surveys, and participants had the ability to skip questions and stop taking the survey all together if they wished. The surveys were reviewed by the University of Mississippi Institutional Review Board (IRB) before invitations were sent out to students via email. Surveys were then taken online using Qualtrics Survey Software. All respondents were volunteers, and the survey took less than 5 minutes to complete. Qualtrics Survey Software was also used to store and analyze survey data.

In addition, two different interview scripts were written using many of the same questions as the surveys. The purpose of this was to obtain qualitative as well as quantitative data. The interview scripts were also reviewed by IRB. Five subjects from diverse backgrounds and fields of study were selected for interviews. These subjects included men and women, English majors and STEM majors, seniors and Freshman, as well as several other demographics. One English major is so involved in the English department that she is actually the current student ambassador. The other English
major interviewed had not taken an English class in over a year, and currently gets all of the Ole Miss emails sent to her redirected to a spam folder. These choices were made in order to observe multiple perspectives of the Ole Miss English program, as well as other topics pertinent to the research questions. The interviews took place in person, both on and off campus. Additional interview questions were asked depending on the subjects’ previous answers. Interview subjects’ permission was asked before including direct quotes and revealing names in this report.

OBSERVATIONS

SURVEYS

The all-major survey ($n = 121$) yielded a response rate of 9%, while the response rate for the English-major survey ($n = 26$) was 14%. Descriptive statistics are presented in the Appendix.

Overall English majors seemed satisfied with the academic aspects of the program. The respondents were asked if they were happy with the current overall structure of the English program at the University of Mississippi. 62% responded with “somewhat happy,” and 29% responded with “very happy.” Figure 1 shows English major responses when asked if they felt their major has prepared them for a career in their chosen field. 55% of respondents strongly agreed with this, and only 10% disagreed at all.
English majors also show satisfaction with the current classes being offered through the English Department, as shown in Figure 2.

These were great results, but I would soon see that English majors thought other aspects of the program were somewhat lacking. When asked about involvement in the
English Department, no students claimed that they were “very involved.” The most popular response was “neutral” with 33%. “Somewhat involved” and “somewhat uninvolved” followed, tying at 29%. Subsequently, 76% of respondents said that they would become more involved if given the opportunity. Figure 3 shows respondent’s interest in added emphases and specializations to the current English program. This is obviously something that students want, as 71% of respondents claimed to be very interested in this idea.

**Figure 3.** English majors’ response to the question, “Would you be interested in more emphases/specializations for the English major (such as book publishing/screenwriting/modern literature/digital writing) if offered?”

Only 45% of English major respondents found resources from the English Department to be helpful when looking for internship or career opportunities, compared to 58% in the all major survey (shown in Figure 4).
When asked why they decided to major in English, 94% of respondents included a love or enjoyment of the subject as their reason. 39% also said that future career goals or options played a factor, and 17% of respondents specifically mentioned law school.

In the all major survey, respondents showed overall positive opinions of the English Department, as shown in Figure 5. Respondents also had mostly positive experiences in English classes that they had taken. 44% of respondents who had taken an English class at the University of Mississippi reported “very positive experiences,” and 35% reported “somewhat positive” experiences. When asked why they did not major in English, most students said they were simply not interested in the subject. However, 13% of respondents said they did not choose an English major because of limiting career options and the degree not being profitable. One student responded, “my dad was an English major but encouraged me not to major in it because nowadays it is unemployable.”
In both surveys, personal interest was found to be the most important factor for students when deciding what they will major in. Respondents also agreed on the importance of personal aptitude in this decision, with 44% of all majors and 50% of English majors saying it is very important. However, the surveys had differing results for other factors. 66% of all majors said that future career options were very important to them, while only 30% of English majors said the same. Similarly, 50% of all majors said that the likelihood of higher paying jobs was very important, compared to 25% of English majors. Detailed tables of student responses to this question will be included in the Appendix for further examination.

INTERVIEWS

Two English majors were interviewed for this project. One obvious observation I had was that both English majors had vastly different experiences, both from each other and from me. Experiences depended on what classes and professors were taken and how involved the students were. When asked if they were embarrassed to be English majors, both said no but one student said they would be if they could not find a desired job after
graduation. Both students said that they chose an English major because of personal interest, although future career plans also influenced their decisions as one student planned to go to law school and the other wants to be a writer and creative writing professor. The students were both satisfied with their experiences and enjoyed the English classes they took. One student pointed out that the range of classes that the English department offers is very impressive and might be a reason that a student would pick the University of Mississippi over another school.

When questioned about improvements the department could make, English majors said that students should have more of a voice in the English Department. One student even suggested a student advisor that would attend faculty meetings and offer a student perspective. She said, “If they [the faculty] don’t hear our voice, there’s no point.” The same student thought there should be more events that encourage “intermingling” of English majors because “no one knows about each other.” The other English major I interviewed displayed this lack of student community as she did not know about many of the events or classes offered through the department. A buddy system where each underclassman is paired with an upperclassman was suggested. Both English majors showed interest in specializations and more emphases being added to the program. I initially brought up career oriented options like book publishing and digital writing. The students thought these were good ideas, but personally would be more interested in further exploration of topics already taught in the program, like screenwriting or medieval studies. One student said that one creative writing class should be required because “people will find that they are more creative than they think.”
When asked about ideas to increase the number of English majors at the University of Mississippi, both students said there should be more high school outreach. They also thought that the department should show how many career paths are actually available to English majors. The students agreed that there should be more focus on portfolio building.

I also interviewed two STEM majors, since these students are the ones that English majors are most often compared to, as we saw in the previous chapter. One student is a Biochemistry major, while the other is majoring in Biomedical Engineering. Both students said that the likelihood of getting a high-paying job after college played a part when picking a major. The Biomedical Engineering major said she also wanted to be able to help people in a meaningful way. I asked these students about their experiences with their respective programs and departments, and they had mixed responses. The Biochemistry major said that he was not involved with his department at all, and did not want to be. He was involved with other things instead, like the Honors College and eSports teams. He said that he did not really like the STEM classes that he took, and that the advising was not very helpful. However, he does feel that his major adequately prepared him for dental school next year, as he aspires to be an orthodontist. On the other hand, the Biomedical Engineering major expressed enthusiasm for the many involvement opportunities that the Engineering school offers. She said that the Engineering Student Body (ESB) is great because it lets student’s voices be heard by the faculty. Similar to the Associated Student Body (ASB), ESB is a group of students that makes decisions and plans events for the School of Engineering. She follows the Engineering school’s social media pages because she wants to stay informed. ESB and
other organizations, like Engineers Without Borders, are advertised on the social media pages.

When asked about their opinions of the English department, one student said they did not have any experience with the department yet, as they are still a Freshman. The other student thought that the non-STEM classes he had taken, like English and Ceramics, were more enjoyable than stem classes. He also mentioned that STEM majors looking to go to medical school have a similar likelihood of getting a job as English majors do, because STEM majors have to actually get into medical school in order to get the job that their degree is suited for. Both STEM majors said that there was absolutely nothing that would make them change their mind and major in English. Neither of these students had as much respect for English majors as they did for other majors. This is largely because of misconceptions that the students had about the English major. The Biomedical Engineering major thought that English was much easier than STEM programs because “you don’t learn anything new in English classes.” She thought that an English major was like any other language major, but since we already know English so there is no point majoring in it. This student actually knew of two girls that switched from Biomedical Engineering to English, but this was only because they did not actually know what they wanted to major in yet. These students “wanted a brain vacation on their way to their next major” and used English as a sort of stepping stone because they saw it as easier than most other majors. Meanwhile, the biochemistry major was convinced that English majors have very few career options and will probably be poor after college.

Lastly, I interviewed one Journalism major to get the perspective of a student participating in a program more closely related to the English program. This student
had actually thought about majoring in English, as this was her favorite subject throughout high school, and she had a very good relationship with her English teacher. However, she was discouraged by her father, who told her that English majors’ only career option was teaching, and pointed her towards Journalism. She looked into the Journalism program more and decided to major in it, because it was important to her to have a flexible major. She almost minored in English too, but freshman advising at the University of Mississippi suggested a Business minor instead. They showed her statistics for the Business minor, specifically about its benefits when job searching.

When asked about her experience with the University of Mississippi English department, this student seemed to have more respect for English majors than the STEM majors did, but did not personally like some of the aspects of the department. She admitted that she did not know much about the English department, but that it seemed very traditional to her. Her main experience came from the literature survey classes that are required core classes for her major. One thing that stuck out to her was how boring the names of these classes were. These classes reminded her of high school English classes, but she found the discussion-based sections to be more interesting and enjoyable than the lecture part of the class. Another thing that she liked about the survey classes was that she could use her imagination, and called them a “good break from other, typical classes.” She was not aware of the many different, non-traditional English classes offered and thought they were all like the survey classes. She also mentioned that she thought Bondurant, the English Department building, was depressing and needed more cheerful decor. However, she is sympathetic with English majors because she says that the Journalism degree gets a lot of the same criticism that the English program does.
One thing that this student liked about the Journalism School was the many networking opportunities offered. There are weekly guest lectures, and many professors have connections from their experience in the field. A drawback to this is that journalism teachers are more traditional, and couldn't really help students find jobs in fields like social media. Another aspect that impressed her was the school’s efforts to keep students informed. Some classes required students to follow many different social media pages, which she ended up appreciating because they are useful. The journalism school also recently started sending weekly updates to students via email that contain reminders, updates, and information about events. She thought that career preparation activities were useful, but she found it difficult to go by herself. A lot of the career fairs on campus did not feature companies that she was interested in.

CONCLUSIONS

Through this research, I have seen that English majors are happy with the bones of the program, but the modern student wants more than just a degree. They want a college experience that is personalized to them, with opportunities for both personal and occupational growth. They want an innovative department that really understands them and their goals. Lastly, they want to be part of something bigger than themselves, of a community that truly cares about them, where their voices will be heard. Luckily, there are several things that the English Department can do in order to meet these desires.

It is apparent that the misconceptions seen in Chapter 1 are reflected in the students of the University of Mississippi. Many non-English majors simply do not know what the English program is, or why it is important. We need people to understand that English is so much more than a language. It is a study of people, of what stories say
about both the people who write them and the people who read them. This will increase the respect for English majors across campus, which will in turn lead to a boost in English major enrollment.

The students who have a love for English but believe these misconceptions are a huge missed opportunity for the English Department. These are the students who do not realize that the English major is just what they need in order to unlock a career that is both profitable and enjoyable. The English program has all of the important factors that these students care about in a major, they just do not know it yet.
CHAPTER III: PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

DEPARTMENTAL CHANGES

The English Department at the University of Mississippi has a great foundation with renowned teachers, engaging classes, and impressive alumni. However, in order to attract more English majors, the department has to make some changes so that we can become a community that others will want to be a part of. We have to show that the department’s values align with those of the modern student. Here I have compiled a few ideas that the department can use to further improve English major’s college experience.

STUDENT ADVISOR

One of the most important things that I learned while surveying and interviewing Ole Miss students is that they want their voices heard. They want to take an active part in their education. A great way that the English Department could respond to this would be by appointing a student advisor. The new student advisor role will serve as the bridge between the students and the faculty in the English Department. Students can apply for this role on the English Department website, and applicants should have references that include at least one member of the English faculty. The faculty will then select the student advisor from the applicant pool, conducting interviews to narrow down the choice if needed. Once chosen, this student will perform several duties essential to fostering the English Department community. One major thing that they will do is
attend faculty meetings in order to give a student’s perspective on issues discussed. The student advisor will have the opportunity to present ideas and concerns of their own or those brought to their attention by other students. The advisor will also send out weekly departmental updates to students via email. This can include event announcements and reminders, internship, study abroad, or volunteer opportunities, birthday announcements, faculty/staff updates, and any other information relevant to English majors.

The Ole Miss English Department should be the student advisor’s top priority. It is the advisor’s job to get to know every student and faculty member in order to foster a better community for both groups. They must understand the goals and values of the English Department. The advisor would also ideally be involved with most if not all of the clubs within the English department. Since this position will require a lot of hard work and responsibility, the student advisor should be compensated with either course credit or work-study pay, depending on the student’s needs.

**STUDENT ENGAGEMENT TEAM**

The student advisor will select a student engagement team whose purpose is to support the advisor in forming a close knit community within the English Department. Students can apply for these positions on the English Department website. Team meetings will be held every week during the term. This team will be sponsored by a faculty member who will guide the team and provide insight and information about the English Department that the team might not have access to. However, most decisions will be made by the Student Engagement team.

The student ambassador will be in charge of the team. They will assign duties, delegate workload, and set weekly as well as semester long goals. Members will each be
assigned a different area that they specialize in. The following assignments are examples and can change depending on team members’ interest and abilities and the department’s needs. One team member will be in charge of managing the departmental social media accounts, including Instagram, Facebook and Twitter, along with any accounts made in the future. They will create the majority of posts, but other members can send social posts to the social media manager for them to edit and upload. Ideally there would be 3-5 social posts per week. This “social media manager” will monitor analytics and come up with social campaigns that other members can help with. Another team member will manage the English Department blog. All members should create content for the blog, but the managing team member will edit and post all entries. The team member will probably post to the blog more than others. There should be at least 2 blog posts per week. A third team member will serve as a “creative lead.” This team member will work on longer projects that require more time and attention, such as creating videos, conducting interviews, and even creating t-shirt or game day sticker designs. There can be a secretary/treasurer that is in charge of budgeting and other administrative tasks. This member also communicates to the team ideas submitted by the English community via email.

All team members will help to plan, promote, and execute events. This includes figuring out logistics, posting on social media, creating and posting flyers, tabling, and setting up and attending events. The team will be encouraged to work closely with the faculty, including them in social media, blog posts, and events. This will bring students closer to each other and to their professors. This team will either take the place of the PR interns, or the PR interns will focus more on alumni engagement.
SURVEY CLASSES

Most programs require students to complete two English literature survey classes as part of their General Education courses. Since the survey classes are many students’ only experience with the University of Mississippi English Department, I think they should be a better representation of what other English classes are like. This can mean many different things. As we saw from interviews, something as little as the course name can play a factor in students’ opinion of the class. The English survey classes are in the University of Mississippi course calendar as “Eng 223: Survey of American Lit to the Civil War,” “Eng 225: Survey of British Lit Since the Romantic Period,” etc. Professors should be encouraged to alter the class names, the same way that upper level English courses can have different names each semester. For example, I am currently taking a class that is officially called “Eng 347: Studies in 20th & 21st Cent. U.S. Lit.” However, the title that appears on the top of our syllabus is “English 347: Nectar and Monsters: Greek Mythology in 20th and 21st Century Literature.” This title is a small change that gets students more excited to come to class.

As I have found most of my English classes to be very discussion based, I think that the survey classes could benefit from a similar structure. The survey classes are set up to have multiple lecture meetings and one discussion meeting a week. I propose that this be flipped, with more discussion meetings and fewer lectures. This gives students more opportunities to be engaged with the text and exposed to others’ opinions. When interviewed, students preferred this aspect of the class already, because it was easier for them to pay attention and use their imagination. Tactics that have worked for other schools include encouraging “the department’s best and most experienced professors” to teach general education and introductory courses. The idea behind this is to have the
most “engaging” faculty take advantage of the “captive audience” that these courses provide, turning required courses into “recruitment opportunities.” The University of Kentucky implemented this practice by providing rewards for professors who teach a “successful intro course.”

**UNDER/UPPERCLASSMAN BUDDY SYSTEM**

As a freshman, it can be hard to navigate college life at first. It can be difficult to make friends in your major when the main bonding experience is in class. Something the English Department could do to help with this common anxiety is implement a buddy system. The student engagement team would pair up every incoming freshman English major with a junior in the first week of the fall semester. Names for the buddies can be determined by the faculty or student engagement team, but for this paper the younger buddy will be called the “lit” (short for literature) buddy, and the older buddy will be called the “writ” (short for writing) buddy. The pairings would be based on profiles submitted by students that include interests, clubs, favorite books, etc. Pairs will be notified of their buddy’s identity via email, and there will be an event (ice cream social, etc.) for the purpose of meeting your buddy. Freshmen or sophomores that decide to major in English later will be added to an existing pairing.

The “writ” buddy will serve as their “lit” buddy’s guide to the English Department. They will inform their younger buddy about any upcoming events or clubs and advise them about different class and professor options. They will introduce their lit buddy to other English majors, and be an automatic friend to go to English events with. Buddies are also encouraged, but not required, to attend non-English related events, such as sporting events, clubs, career fairs, concerts, etc. This buddy system will
encourage more student involvement and develop a greater sense of community among the students.

**PORTFOLIO BUILDING WITH CLASS PROJECTS**

One of the most common reasons that students said they did not major in English is because they do not like writing papers. Giving students more options on some projects will show that, yes-English majors write papers, but that is not the only thing that we do or are capable of. Students should be able to show potential employers what all they have learned in their English classes. Professors will be encouraged to provide multiple options for midterm and/or final projects. A paper can still be an option, of course, but students can also show their knowledge of the subject in a blog, article, short film, speech, screenplay, Facebook page, podcast, etc. The purpose of this is not to lessen the importance of writing essays; essays should still be required assignments for most classes. However, if a class typically has four writing assignments, one of these assignments can be changed to allow a bigger variety of projects, and students can still develop their writing skills because of the other three assignments.

This change allows students to build a portfolio of several useful projects for use in finding internships and jobs. This can also serve as a fun opportunity for teachers, who must get tired of always grading papers. Students can also be encouraged or even required in Literary Interpretation (Eng 299) classes to develop a portfolio website where they can upload projects throughout their time at the University of Mississippi. If students are encouraged to think ahead while they are still underclassmen, they will be more prepared when they are actually looking to start their careers. This portfolio building initiative can even be used in the Survey classes to show non-English majors how fun, creative, and useful English classes can be.
EMPHASES AND SPECIALIZATIONS

Similar to the portfolio building idea, creating more emphases and specializations allows students to personalize the English major according to their needs and encourages them to start thinking about their future well before graduation. English majors showed great enthusiasm for this idea in both interviews and survey results. These specializations should offer a wide variety of subjects. There should be more applied subjects offered, such as book editing/publishing, digital writing, and political writing. Other possibilities for specializations include creative writing and literary subjects that students are exposed to in the base program but want more experience in, like poetry, screenwriting, modern lit, etc. Since many students who want to go to law school consider majoring in English, it would be smart to add the existing accelerated law program to the English course requirements page in the course catalog. The specializations would require 9 hours of coursework within that specialization, while the emphases would require 12 hours.

Specializations are beneficial to students because that allows them to focus their studies on their topic of choice, and it is something that they can use to show future employers that they have a proven area of expertise. Including these specializations would also be attractive to non-majors, because they would help change the traditional perception of the English Department and show the versatility of the English major.

INTERNSHIP/JOB OPPORTUNITIES

A website will be created with the purpose of helping English majors and minors find job and internship opportunities. This website will be updated weekly with job listings targeting English majors. This allows students to have a job location resource specifically tailored to them. The English department will also reach out to companies
looking to hire English majors, especially ones that currently employ English alumni, to learn about internship and job opportunities for students. If interested, a representative from one of these companies can visit the campus and conduct a guest lecture. This lecture could be about a variety of topics, including the current climate of their industry, what a typical day at their job is like, if they are an English major, how that helped or affected them, etc. In a best case scenario, several companies would be interested in sending representatives to the department for an English major job fair.

Advisors should also help students find internship, job, and further education experiences. Advising should be more than telling students what courses they need to take in order to graduate; they can use Google to figure that out. Advisors should be there to make sure a student is on track, both for graduation and after. Since the English degree is such a flexible one, students might need extra help navigating their options. Students might not realize just how many options they have, or conversely, they might be overwhelmed with the options available to them. English advisors should really try to get to know the students that they are advising. They should ask students about future career goals and seek out opportunities for them through the department’s resources as well as their own connections. This is not only a huge help to students; it also helps to foster that community that we are trying to build.

MARKETING AND OUTREACH

After the Department makes some inside changes, it then must effectively communicate everything that the major has to offer to potential students. Here, I have come up with a marketing plan and some engagement activities that will help boost English major enrollment at the University of Mississippi. Ideas from the previous
section, such as the survey class changes or engagement team social media posts, will also serve as engagement activities since those are opportunities to connect with the target audience.

**TARGET AUDIENCE**

The target audience consists of high school students and undergraduate students at the University of Mississippi. However, the target must be narrowed down further, because we have already seen that it is a waste of time trying to change some students’ minds. The target will show an interest in the humanities, and enjoy reading and writing. These students did not see the English major as an option, or perhaps they briefly considered it but decided against it, because they believe the misconceptions about English majors that are widely accepted in society. They may also be majoring in a subject where double majoring in English would be beneficial. They do not want to be tied down to one career path; they want options and prioritize flexibility. They are active on campus and on social media. They can be found at campus events, museums, or at local bookstores. They want to be part of a community that cares about their future.

**CORE MESSAGES**

I have come up with five core messages to use when marketing the University of Mississippi English Program to the target audience. Together, these messages encompass the aspects of the English major that the target needs to know. These will serve as the taglines for marketing materials.

**Message 1:** English: It’s More Than a Language. English majors learn much more than how to write effectively. They learn about humanity, society, communication, etc.
Message 2: Not Your Mother’s English Major. This message highlights the non-traditional class offerings and innovative additions included in the English program.

Message 3: The English Major is Flexible. An English major can do so much more than teach! It is one of the most flexible majors, and it pairs well with most other liberal arts majors.

Message 4: Love What You Learn. Students should not have to study something that they hate in order to get a good job. This will show that if you love something, you will probably perform better and be more motivated to find a job that you enjoy in that field.

Message 5: Welcome to the Family. The English Department is a tight knit community that cares about each and every student. This message can be used to encourage current students to bring their friends to English events. Even if they do not switch to an English major, there will be more positive opinions spread about the English department. This can start to break down some of the misconceptions that students have about English majors.

HIGH SCHOOL OUTREACH

Outreach must begin in high schools, as high school English classes can sometimes turn students away from English because of strict rules and grammar heavy courses. There are some high school outreach activities already taking place. Ivo Kamps, the English Department Chair, says, “The English Department does all kinds of outreach. Individual faculty members often visit high schools in Oxford and elsewhere, participate in student recruiting days, and teach in summer programs for high school
students.” These activities are all great ways to interact with the target audience. While on regular high school visits, I think that it would be interesting for faculty members to offer to teach an English class. The high school teacher would communicate with the professor in advance to discuss the course and the specific topic covered the day of the visit. The professor would then come up with a lesson plan that they would use in a college level course. The purpose of this is for the high school students to experience what it would actually be like to take an upper level English course at the University of Mississippi.

Another way to give high school students this experience is to actually put them into our environment. This idea has been discussed within the English Department, but not yet implemented. High school students from Mississippi and surrounding areas will be invited to visit the University of Mississippi English Department for an entire school day. Hotel arrangements can be made if the high school a farther distance than is reasonable to drive. Students and teachers or other chaperones will be required to send in names and emails to rsvp for the event. Student emails can be used later for recruitment purposes.

Visiting students will begin the day by attending a welcome lecture that includes an introduction to the English Department and plans for the day. Here, students will be given packets that include the day’s activities, as well as promotional items such as program brochures, stickers, pens, social media post cards, etc. The student advisor and or student engagement team will be very active in this process, and will give the group a tour of Bondurant, the English Department building. The high school students will eat

lunch at the Johnson Commons (commonly called the rebel market). Visitors will then attend an English class of their choice. They should have a variety of options to choose from, including creative writing classes and a class on each literary period. During the afternoon, there will be a snack break that English majors are encouraged to attend as well in order to mingle with the high school students and answer any questions they may have.

English majors can also help with high school outreach. English undergraduate students that have good relationships with their high school English teachers or administration will be encouraged to reach out to them. Incentives, such as extra credit or a raffle entry, can be used for encouragement. With a professor’s permission, participating English majors will then invite students from their high schools to attend an English class with them virtually. All of these methods serve to correct some of the misconceptions that society has about English majors by directly showing them what the English program is all about.

**CAMPUS EVENTS**

The student engagement team, as well as different English clubs, will be encouraged to set up tables during prime times for target audience engagement. These include high school leadership conferences, freshman orientation, and freshman welcome week. During these events, there are often opportunities for student clubs and organizations to meet high school and freshman. For example, an event during Freshman Orientation called Rebel Roundup is described in the orientation schedule as follows: “During and after dinner, stop by some of the many tables set up by campus clubs and organizations, and find out how you can get involved at Ole Miss from day
one!”50 English Department student groups will participate in these events, so that they can spread the five core messages to the target audience.

**FRESHMAN ADVISING**

It would be extremely beneficial to make separate brochures to give to freshman advisors that show how much the English program can supplement other programs. Brochures can be made for the English minor as well. As we saw in the interviews, students are sometimes discouraged from minoring in English and are pointed towards business instead. They are apparently shown statistics of business minors helping with job prospects. If the English department could work out something similar with the freshman advisors, we could show that the English program is helpful to any student, no matter what their other major is. The ability to properly communicate ideas is important in all career fields, and, as we have seen in chapter 1, employees with cognitive skills learned in humanities programs actually rise higher than those who do not display these “soft skills.” Giving advisors these materials will help them better inform students.

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CONCLUSION

The English Department at the University of Mississippi has a solid foundation, with an impressive faculty, creative students, and engaging classes. However, the recent trend among students is to major in something that has a clear path to a career. In order to change the negative perception of the English Major and keep up with the modern student’s needs, the department will need to employ some changes. By fostering a closer community within the department, and taking more steps to prepare students for their job searches, the department will grow from the inside out, and others will see how great the program actually is. With these new tools, the department will show people that English is truly so much more than a language. The study of literature helps us understand ourselves and those around us, and it leads to a huge amount of opportunities.


Hanlon, Aaron. “1) This Article Is so Misleading That I’m Gonna Go through It Piece by Piece. I Will Try to Do so without Lurching into Mega-Thread Territory. I Do Not Accept Propaganda Written to Damage the English Major, Particularly When Done so to Serve One’s Partisan Commitments. Thread: Https://T.co/pQ5lscgWns.” Twitter. September 13, 2019. twitter.com/AaronRHanlon/status/1172561899558461440?s=20.


Open Syllabus Project. Last Modified April 3, 2020. opensyllabus.org/results-list/authors?size=50.


ALL MAJOR SURVEY QUESTIONS

1. What is your age?
2. What is your gender?
   a. Male
   b. Female
   c. Other
3. Choose one or more races that you consider yourself to be:
   a. Caucasian
   b. African American
   c. Black, but not African American (Caribbean, Africa, etc.)
   d. American Indian or Alaska Native
   e. Asian
   f. Indian Subcontinent
   g. Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
   h. Hispanic
   i. Other
4. What is your class rank?
   a. Freshman
   b. Sophomore
   c. Junior
   d. Senior
   e. Other
5. What primary college or school within the University of Mississippi are you a part of?
   a. College of Liberal Arts
   b. Graduate School
   c. Patterson School of Accountancy
   d. School of Applied Sciences
   e. School of Business Administration
   f. School of Education
   g. School of Journalism and New Media
   h. School of Law
   i. School of Pharmacy
6. Are you an in-state, out-of-state, or international student?
   a. In-state
   b. Out-of-state
   c. International
7. What is your family’s estimated household income before taxes?
   a. Less than $10,000
   b. $10,000 to $19,999
c. $20,000 to $29,999

d. $30,000 to $39,999

e. $40,000 to $49,999

f. $50,000 to $59,999
g. $60,000 to $69,999

h. $70,000 to $79,999

i. $80,000 to $89,999

j. $90,000 to $99,999

k. $100,000 to $149,999

l. $150,000 or more

m. Don’t know/Prefer not to say

8. What is your major(s)?

9. When choosing your major, how important was the following factor?
   a. Family expectations
      i. Very important
      ii. Somewhat important
      iii. Neutral
      iv. Somewhat unimportant
      v. Very unimportant

   b. Personal interest
      i. Very important
      ii. Somewhat important
      iii. Neutral
      iv. Somewhat unimportant
      v. Very unimportant

   c. Future career options
      i. Very important
      ii. Somewhat important
      iii. Neutral
      iv. Somewhat unimportant
      v. Very unimportant

   d. Likelihood of higher paying jobs after college
      i. Very important
      ii. Somewhat important
      iii. Neutral
      iv. Somewhat unimportant
      v. Very unimportant
e. Ease of degree
   i. Very important
   ii. Somewhat important
   iii. Neutral
   iv. Somewhat unimportant
   v. Very unimportant

f. Personal aptitude
   i. Very important
   ii. Somewhat important
   iii. Neutral
   iv. Somewhat unimportant
   v. Very unimportant

10. Do you feel that your major has prepared you for a career in your chosen field?
   a. Strongly agree
   b. Somewhat agree
   c. Neutral
   d. Somewhat disagree
   e. Strongly disagree

11. Do you feel that the faculty/staff of your department/school actively tries to help you with your career goals, plans after college, etc?
   a. Strongly agree
   b. Somewhat agree
   c. Neutral
   d. Somewhat disagree
   e. Strongly disagree

12. Have resources from your department/school been helpful when looking for a job or internship?
   a. Very helpful
   b. Somewhat helpful
   c. Neutral
   d. Somewhat unhelpful
   e. Very unhelpful

13. Do you believe that activities such as resume workshops, mock interviews, job fairs, and networking events are helpful for students?
   a. Very helpful
   b. Somewhat helpful
   c. Neutral
   d. Somewhat unhelpful
   e. Very unhelpful

14. Have you ever participated in any such events?
   a. Yes
b. No
c. No, but I plan to in the future
15. How familiar are you with the University of Mississippi English Department?
   a. Very familiar
   b. Somewhat familiar
   c. Neutral
   d. Somewhat unfamiliar
   e. Very unfamiliar
16. Have you taken any English classes while attending the University of Mississippi?
   a. Yes
   b. No
17. If yes, how was your experience?
   a. Very positive
   b. Somewhat positive
   c. Neutral
   d. Somewhat negative
   e. Very negative
   f. I have not taken any English classes while attending the University of Mississippi
18. What is your opinion of the English Department?
   a. Very positive
   b. Somewhat positive
   c. Neutral
   d. Somewhat negative
   e. Very negative
19. Have you ever thought about majoring in English?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   Please explain your answer briefly.
20. Have you ever thought about minoring in English?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   Please explain your answer briefly.
ENGLISH MAJOR SURVEY QUESTIONS
1-14. See All Major Survey Questions.
15. How happy are you with the structure of the undergraduate English program?
   a. Very happy
   b. Somewhat happy
   c. Neutral
   d. Somewhat unhappy
   e. Very unhappy
16. Are you satisfied with the current English class offerings?
   a. Very satisfied
   b. Somewhat satisfied
   c. Neutral
   d. Somewhat unsatisfied
   e. Very unsatisfied
17. Do you feel that you are being challenged in your English classes?
   a. Very challenged
   b. Somewhat challenged
   c. Neutral
   d. Somewhat unchallenged
   e. Very unchallenged
18. Do you plan to earn an emphasis in creative writing?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. Unsure
19. Would you be interested in more emphases/specializations for the English major (such as book publishing/ business writing/ digital writing) if offered?
   a. Very interested
   b. Somewhat interested
   c. Neutral
   d. Somewhat uninterested
   e. Very uninterested
20. Do you know what you want to do after graduation?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. Unsure
21. Do you plan on going to graduate school?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. Unsure
22. How involved are you in the English Department?
   a. Very involved
b. Somewhat involved
   c. Neutral
   d. Somewhat uninvolved
   e. Very uninvolved
23. If you had the opportunity, would you become more involved?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. Unsure
24. How do you feel about the number of events executed by English Department?
   a. Too many
   b. Adequate amount
   c. Not enough
25. Why did you decide to major in English?
## Students Rank Factors by How Important They Were When Choosing a Major

### English Majors’ Response

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Very important</th>
<th>Somewhat important</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Somewhat unimportant</th>
<th>Very unimportant</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Family expectations</td>
<td>5.00% 1</td>
<td>20.00% 4</td>
<td>30.00% 6</td>
<td>25.00% 5</td>
<td>20.00% 4</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Personal interest</td>
<td>80.00% 16</td>
<td>20.00% 4</td>
<td>0.00% 0</td>
<td>0.00% 0</td>
<td>0.00% 0</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Future career options</td>
<td>30.00% 6</td>
<td>60.00% 12</td>
<td>10.00% 2</td>
<td>0.00% 0</td>
<td>0.00% 0</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Likelihood of higher paying jobs after college</td>
<td>25.00% 5</td>
<td>25.00% 5</td>
<td>25.00% 5</td>
<td>25.00% 5</td>
<td>0.00% 0</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Ease of degree</td>
<td>5.00% 1</td>
<td>25.00% 5</td>
<td>35.00% 7</td>
<td>15.00% 3</td>
<td>20.00% 4</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Personal aptitude</td>
<td>50.00% 10</td>
<td>50.00% 10</td>
<td>0.00% 0</td>
<td>0.00% 0</td>
<td>0.00% 0</td>
<td>20</td>
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</table>

### All Majors’ Response

<table>
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<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Very important</th>
<th>Somewhat important</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Somewhat unimportant</th>
<th>Very unimportant</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Family expectations</td>
<td>12.75% 19</td>
<td>34.00% 52</td>
<td>23.49% 35</td>
<td>17.45% 26</td>
<td>11.41% 17</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Personal interest</td>
<td>82.43% 122</td>
<td>12.84% 19</td>
<td>4.73% 7</td>
<td>0.00% 0</td>
<td>0.00% 0</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Future career options</td>
<td>66.44% 99</td>
<td>30.20% 45</td>
<td>2.68% 4</td>
<td>0.67% 1</td>
<td>0.00% 0</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Likelihood of higher paying jobs after college</td>
<td>49.66% 74</td>
<td>25.50% 38</td>
<td>15.44% 23</td>
<td>6.71% 10</td>
<td>2.68% 4</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Ease of degree</td>
<td>0.67% 1</td>
<td>6.71% 10</td>
<td>25.50% 38</td>
<td>33.58% 50</td>
<td>33.56% 50</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Personal aptitude</td>
<td>43.62% 65</td>
<td>39.60% 50</td>
<td>14.77% 22</td>
<td>2.01% 3</td>
<td>0.00% 0</td>
<td>149</td>
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Showing rows 1 - 6 of 6
ALL MAJOR SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS

Age:

Average: 21

Standard Deviation: 7.5

Gender:

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<th>Field</th>
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<td>1</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>17.63% 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>81.53% 128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0.64% 1</td>
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Showing rows 1 - 4 of 4

Race:

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<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Choice Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>84.34% 140</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>African American</td>
<td>4.22% 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Black, but not African American (Caribbean, African, etc.)</td>
<td>0.00% 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>American Indian or Alaska Native</td>
<td>1.20% 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>4.22% 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Indian Subcontinent</td>
<td>1.20% 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander</td>
<td>0.00% 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>3.61% 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1.20% 2</td>
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Showing rows 1 - 10 of 10
### Class Rank:

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<th>#</th>
<th>Field</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Freshman</td>
<td>22.93% 36</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Sophomore</td>
<td>22.29% 35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>22.93% 36</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>31.85% 50</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0.00% 0</td>
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<td></td>
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Showing rows 1 - 6 of 6

### Household Income:

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<th>#</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Less than $10,000</td>
<td>3.62% 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>$10,000 to $19,999</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>$20,000 to $29,999</td>
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<td>$30,000 to $39,999</td>
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<td>$40,000 to $49,999</td>
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<td>$50,000 to $59,999</td>
<td>1.27% 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>$60,000 to $69,999</td>
<td>3.85% 6</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>$70,000 to $79,999</td>
<td>1.91% 3</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>$80,000 to $89,999</td>
<td>5.73% 9</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>$90,000 to $99,999</td>
<td>8.29% 13</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>$100,000 to $149,999</td>
<td>29.30% 46</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>$150,000 or more</td>
<td>20.39% 32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Don’t know/prefer not to say</td>
<td>14.01% 22</td>
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<td>157</td>
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Showing rows 1 - 14 of 14
ENGLISH MAJOR SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS

Age:

Average: 20

Standard Deviation: 1.3

Gender:

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<th>#</th>
<th>Field</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>13.04% 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>86.96% 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0.00% 0</td>
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</table>

Showing rows 1 - 4 of 4

Race:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Choice Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>87.50% 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>African American</td>
<td>4.17% 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Black, but not African American (Caribbean, African, etc.)</td>
<td>0.00% 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>American Indian or Alaska Native</td>
<td>4.17% 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>4.17% 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Indian Subcontinent</td>
<td>0.00% 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander</td>
<td>0.00% 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>0.00% 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0.00% 0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Showing rows 1 - 10 of 10
### Class Rank:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Choice Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Freshman</td>
<td>17.39% 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Sophomore</td>
<td>13.04% 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>39.13% 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>26.09% 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4.35% 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Showing rows 1 - 6 of 6

### Household Income:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Choice Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Less than $10,000</td>
<td>13.04% 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>$10,000 to $19,999</td>
<td>0.00% 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>$20,000 to $29,999</td>
<td>4.35% 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>$30,000 to $39,999</td>
<td>0.00% 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>$40,000 to $49,999</td>
<td>4.35% 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>$50,000 to $59,999</td>
<td>8.70% 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>$60,000 to $69,999</td>
<td>0.00% 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>$70,000 to $79,999</td>
<td>4.35% 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>$80,000 to $89,999</td>
<td>0.00% 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>$90,000 to $99,999</td>
<td>13.04% 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>$100,000 to $149,999</td>
<td>8.70% 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>$150,000 or more</td>
<td>21.74% 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Don't know/prefer not to say</td>
<td>21.74% 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Showing rows 1 - 14 of 14