**To: Glynis Ridley, Chair, Department of English**

**From: Hristomir A. Stanev, Director of Undergraduate Studies, Department of English**

**Date: 6 August 2020**

**Re: Report on the Beginning of Academic Year 2020-2021**

**State of the Major:**

Last year, we had a total of 267 active confirmed majors, prospective majors, and minors (133 majors, 69 prospective majors, and 65 minors). This year’s preliminary data indicates that, as of July 27, 2020, we have a total of 260 active confirmed majors, prospective majors, and minors (136 majors, 55 prospective majors, and 69 minors). Of those majors, about 20 are still expected to enroll. If they do so in the following two weeks, the data would represent a slight increase of 2.3% in the number of majors and a decrease of 20.3% in prospective majors. Our current minors have increased by 4 (5.8%). Given the uncertainty of the times, the potential drop in majors, should those 20 not enroll, is concerning, but represents a trend, I believe, beyond our control and one that has to do with the general decline in enrollment across Arts and Sciences and with the economic effects of the Covid-19 pandemic.

According to the EAB Analytics platform, used by the Dean’s Office and Central Planning, English currently has 272 undergraduate students enrolled in registered coursework. This represents a drop of 16.8% in rollup over the last 3 years but, given that the average drop in rollup for certain units exceeds 50%, the figures for English do not look severe.

The current enrollment-per-course figures look reasonably healthy with 12 sections at the 300-level achieving 100% enrollment (over 20, in fact, if we include 303, 306, and 309), and most others at this level being enrolled at 80-90% of their capacity. The introductory sections for the three tracks are full at about 99.5% capacity, which bodes well. The 400-level offerings are similarly 80-95% full, while the 500-levels currently maintain a 75-90% enrollment (better than last year’s figure).

In addition, we graduated 31 majors and 17 minors during Spring 2020.

Also, we gave out four awards in Spring 2020, a number that was reduced from our usual practice of awarding 5 or 6 scholarships, due to the projected ~20% cut in scholarship endowments:

* One half of the Riedley scholarship ($5,821) was awarded to Zoey Morris
* The other half of the Riedley scholarship ($5,821) was awarded to Benjamin Poe.
* The Smith scholarship ($5,500) was awarded to Beccie Grimes (to be applied in Spring 2021 since we share this award with the Department of History).
* The Thomas scholarship ($ 5,273) was awarded to John Cox (to be applied in Fall 2020).

In addition, the Mary Burton award (received by the student with the highest GPA in the major) recipients was Mary Jo Hooper.

**Initiatives for Academic Year 2020-2021:**

Two springs ago, the Undergraduate Committee and the Department of English faculty voted on a new structure for the English major, one that incorporates a common core and three tracks. This structure was approved by The College of Arts and Sciences and the Upper Administration in May 2020 and is now in place for the very first time. One of our main tasks for this academic year will be to obtain more information about how students perceive our new major by sending out a short survey either in the fall or in the spring (or in both semesters). We also plan to go carefully over our extended existing catalog and make sure that any overlaps in prerequisites (for instance, old 310 vs. new 310) are taken care of. The Undergraduate Committee also plans to revise our existing department SLOs in order to be able to account for the new structure of the major when we score artifacts (junior and senior-year student essays), required annually by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness. In addition, the Undergraduate Committee will manage student scholarship competitions, represent the Department of English at major recruitment events if those events take place in some form (virtual, etc.), given the pandemic realities of 2020 (recruitment events typically include Accolade in August, The JCTC Majors Fair and the UofL Majors Fair in September, Cardinal Preview Day in October, and Admitted Student Day in March). Also, the departmental advisors (Stanev and Mozer) will continue to advise majors and minors throughout the academic year.