November 2, 1951

Professor James A. Work
Chairman, English Department
Indiana University

Dear Professor Work:

The Advanced Writing Committee met on Wednesday afternoon, October 31, for the first time, with all members present. By unanimous agreement, the committee drew up the following proposal for the consideration of the Undergraduate Major Committee:

The Advanced Writing Committee suggests to the Undergraduate Major Committee that, in surveying the undergraduate major, the committee consider the possibility of setting up a major in Writing And Literature. It is the feeling of the Advanced Writing Committee that a student majoring in Writing And Literature should take no more than 12 hours of credit in advanced writing courses and, as a rule, should be enrolled in no more than one advanced writing course at a time, and also that such a student should not be allowed to major in Writing And Literature without the permission of the Chairman of the Writing Program. It is further the opinion of the Advanced Writing Committee that the courses required in Literature for such a student should be similar to those required for a major in Literature.

The Committee recommends to the Chairman of the English Department the following changes in the advanced writing courses listed in the college catalogue:

2-2 hrs W201-W202 - Creative Writing (Mr. Smalley and Mr. Merrill)
(Description)
Prerequisite: W103 with grade of B or above; or exemption from W103; or consent of the instructor.

2-2 W211-W212 - Expository Writing (Mr. Mitchner)
(Description)
Prerequisite: Same as above.

2-2 W301-W302 - Round Table for Student Writing, I and II (Miss Piercy)
(Description)
Prerequisite: W201 or W202, or W211 or W212, with grade of B or above; or consent of the instructor.

3-3
2-2 W401-W402 - Prose Writing, I and II (Mr. Wilson)
(Description)
Prerequisite: W301 or W302, with grade of B or above; or consent of the instructor.

3-3
2-2 W403-W404, The Writing Of Poetry, I and II (Mr. Yellen)
(Description)
Prerequisite: W301 or W302, with grade of B or above; or consent of the instructor.

3-3 W 405-6
It is suggested that W405-W406 be dropped from our curriculum if arrangements can be made for credit in the Playwriting course in the Speech Department to apply to an undergraduate major in Writing And Literature.

Respectfully submitted,

William E. Wilson

Professor William R. Parker (ex officio)
Professor Samuel Yellen
Professor Philip D. Appleman
Professor Melvin L. Plotinsky
Professor Alan M. Hollingsworth

INDIANA UNIVERSITY
INTERDEPARTMENTAL COMMUNICATION

TO: Professor Robert G. Kelly
Professor Don L. Cook
DEPT. Professor Robert Klawitter
Professor Paul Strohm
SUBJ. Professor Seamus Cooney

FROM: William E. Wilson

DEPT. English

TELEPHONE.

DATE. November 14, 1966

Professor Parker has asked me to create and chair an ad hoc committee to survey the Department's creative-writing program and advise him where we should be heading. Questions Professor Parker asks are: Do we need new courses, or revision of present ones? Do we need additional teachers? Other questions that might be considered are: What is the purpose of a creative-writing program in a state university? What is the maximum number of students teachable in a creative-writing seminar? What is the best system for determing who should be admitted to these courses? Should an undergraduate major in writing be reconsidered? What relationship, if any, should the creative-writing program have to courses in freshman composition? Etc.

I shall be pleased if you will be a member of this ad hoc committee and will attend a meeting at my house, [redacted], on the evening of Wednesday, November 30 at 8 o'clock.

William E. Wilson

WEW:ss

R. S. V. P.

Dec. 14, 1966

Professor Parker —

Dear Bill —

I am having more copies of the ad hoc committee (on writing courses) report mimeographed to distribute as you wanted.

As for ascertaining the demand for writing courses, the only idea I have is a check-list kept by undergraduate counsellors, recording the number denied admission as well as those admitted to writing courses.

It was Paul Sturkey, I think, who made the suggestion of "ascertaining," and I haven't been able to reach him. No suggestions of methods were made in the meeting, as I remember. Maybe everybody just assumed that Agnes could do it with a crystal ball!

Bill Wilson

TO: Professor William R. Parker

FROM: Professor William E. Wilson

December 12, 1966

COPIES TO:
Professor Yellen
Professor Appleman
Professor Plotinsky
Professor Hollingsworth
Professor Kelly
Professor Cook
Professor Klawitter
Professor Strohm
Professor Cooney
Professor Burgan
Professor Edelen

The ad hoc Committee to Survey the Creative Writing Program of the English Department met at my home on the evening of Wednesday, November 30, 1966, at 8 o'clock.

Present were Professors Wilson, Yellen, Appleman, Plotinsky, Cook, Klawitter, Strohm, Cooney, Burgan, and Edelen. Professor Kelly was out of town, and Professor Hollingsworth had another engagement.

The group was in general agreement on the following proposals:

1. That the English major be readjusted so that it will be possible for a student to take a series of writing courses for credit. As the major is now defined, a student can use credit for only one course in writing.

2. That the course numbers W204, W304, and W402 be eliminated and a statement be written into the catalogue that W203, W303, and W401, offered in both the Fall and Spring semesters, may each be taken twice for credit. This change should eliminate the difficulty now existing among students who wish to take writing courses in Spring semesters or Fall semesters only.

3. That an attempt should be made to ascertain the demand for writing courses. It is the belief of the committee that many students are turned away because of the complications of scheduling and the limited amount of credit that English majors can use in writing courses.

4. That if the demand is as great as the committee believes, there should be six to eight sections of W203-204, instead of the present four, and eventually two sections each of W303-304 and W401-402.

5. That the ideal maximum number of students per section is:
W203-204 -- 15
W303-304 -- 12
W401-402 -- 10
And that every effort should be made to keep sections down to this maximum.

6. That the course in Playwriting should be re-activated, if not by the Department of Speech and Theatre, then by the English Department.

7. That visiting professional writers be invited to the campus for a period of two or three weeks each semester, to give lectures and readings, attend writing classes, and keep office hours for consultations with students.

8. That a date be set late in each semester, and official notice thereof published, for submission of manuscript by students wishing to enroll in W303-304 and W401-402 the following semesters and that instructors teaching these courses, after reading these manuscripts, post lists of students accepted before the semester ends.

9. That there should be no prerequisite for W203-204. — to be eliminated?

10. That W405-W406 be offered regularly and be regarded as a part of the Creative Writing program.

William E. Wilson
Chairman of the Committee

INDIANA UNIVERSITY

INTERDEPARTMENTAL COMMUNICATION

TO: Bill Wilson FROM: Phil Appleman TELEPHONE.

DEPT. DEPT.

SUBJ. Creative Writing Program DATE. Dec. 20, 1966

I have had only one afterthought on the subject of the Creative Writing Program, and it concerns point 7 of your memo to Bill Parker (to whom a copy of this).

The more I think about it, the more uses I imagine for a visiting professional writer on campus. He could be of value not only to classes in writing but to classes in literature, too; given the right man, he could be useful as a resource person for classes in modern literature, American literature, poetry or fiction, and literary criticism. His mere presence on campus (given regular office hours and availability to students) could be a continuing stimulus to both student writers and students of literature. And of course his presence would help to solve our problem of finding authors to give readings from their own work.

All in all, it now seems to me that two or three weeks is too short a time for a writer to be of optimum value to the department and to the campus. We could settle for such a short term, of course, if it were necessary, but it would be better to try for at least one full semester -- say, spring semester each year -- of residence.

To: Creative Writing Committee
Brantlinger, Mitchner,
Pletinsky, Sanders, Wilson,
Yellen; also to Pat
McClelland & Don Gray

From: Phil Appleman

Date: January 21, 1972

It would probably be a good idea for us to get started early in case our pioneering turns out to be complicated. Let's meet in the Parker Library from 3:30 to c. 5:00 on Thursday, January 27, to discuss our agenda for the semester and--even--make a decision or two.

These are the issues that have been put forward so far, in what I casually take to be their order of urgency.

1. The question of some sort of magazine as a showcase for students in the writing courses.

2. Visiting writers: hospitality, transportation, opportunities for making use of them while here, encouraging attendance at readings, etc.

3. Memos from Murray Sperber, John Woodcock, and Pat McClelland about admissions procedures for W203.

4. Memo from Murray Sperber about a freshman creative writing course.

5. W401 and W403 class size.

6. Some questions about the graduate writing program: admissions, theses, record-keeping.

7. Distribution of ILP and 1495 duties.

8. Liaison with the Committee on Lectures and Public Occasions, and with the Language Arts Conference.

9. Should Comp. Lit C570, Theory & Practice of Translation, be dross-listed & available for M.A. in writing?

Don,
If you're still around & willing, it'd be good to have your advice on items 1, 3, 4, & 8, which we could take up first.

+9

Phil

1-31-72

Don,

Some remarks on pp. 1-2 of Bill Wilson's letter you might want to have.

At the rate the M.A. in writing applications are pouring in (mss., I mean), I think we not only could justify, but would be hard pressed to justify not, having more than one W611 & one W613 in the fall. At least five W612 (fiction) people will be wanting W611, plus an unknown # of current W614's wanting W613; and there are now three fiction mss. on my ddsk, awaiting decision, plus 8 poetry mss., and new ones coming at the rate of 1 or 2 per day. Something to ponder...

Dick A.

F-6-Wilk

[redacted]

Jan. 28, 1972

Dear Phil—

Good of you to think of me with the Creative Writing Material, which I have read. Since I have always kept my W401 class maximum at 12, that change would not affect me. I don't know what C 570 is and therefore cannot comment. Sperber's suggestion of a freshman Creative Writing course makes good sense, I think, provided W203 then becomes a more disciplined course. I have never liked the casual way in which instructors have been assigned to it and the irresponsible teaching to which it has been subjected by some instructors. The situation of course has been due, in large part, to our crowded schedules and to the fact that our Creative Writing Program has been a "program" in name only. Although I am sometimes referred to as the "chairman" and although for years I have done all the minor dirty work (answering letters, reading mss of applicants for the graduate work, etc.), I have no official title or authority and since Phil Daghlian's chairmanship, with the exception of Bill Parker's brief years, have never been consulted about assignment of T.A.'s [illegible] At this late date, I do

their house. His books, as you may know, was a flop, so far as sales are concerned. No 2nd printing after the first 20,000, which did not sell. Did you see his angry outburst in PW? Well justified. I think Like Any Other Fugitive is a damn good book. Joe has got me invited to the "Round Table" that meets Fridays at the Plaza in Sarasota, but so far I have not attended, and I may not do so. Gatherings of writers have never appealed to me much. I think people are better off when they don't associate with their own kind too much. But then, as you know, I'm an old curmudgeon.

Best wishes to you both.

Bill

We have been swimming regularly until a few days ago, when a school of hundreds of sting-rays appeared in the shallow waters along the shore. I nearly stepped on one last Monday and haven't been in the water since. What does one do about stingrays?

To: Members of the Faculty

From: Donald Gray

January 31, 1972

At the request of the members of the faculty who consistently teach undergraduate and graduate courses in creative writing, I have named a committee for the creative writing program. William Wilson has agreed to serve as chairman of the committee. In his absence this semester, Philip Appleman is serving as chairman pro tem. The other members of the committee are Patrick Brantlinger, Robert Mitchner, Melvin Plotinsky, Scott Sanders, and Samuel Yellen.