Gardner-Webb University

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Winter 1-27-2016

Major Highlight – English

Madison Wait

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Photo by: Elizabeth Banfield

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Declaring a major is a big life decision that all four-year college students must undergo. Most universities offer a wide range of undergraduate degrees, and Gardner-Webb is no exception offering over 50 different majors. Each week we will highlight one major and what students feel are the important things to consider.

This week we will take a look at the English Department. Senior Jonathan Goldberg, also known as Jogo, wrote out list of pros and cons. "Pro, you gain a wealth of knowledge on a wide variety of topics spanning different fields of academia, and you get to read novels as class work," Goldberg said. "Cons, people expect you to be a 'Grammar Nazi,' or to know how every word ever is spelled. Some people think your major is useless if you aren't going to teach."

Junior Haley Spurlin, former nursing student, transferred into the English Department. "Being an English major at Gardner-Webb has been one of the best decisions I've ever made," she said.

Spurlin said what really won her over were the department professors. "They are always willing to grab coffee and talk, offer advice, and help in any way they can." However, Spurlin also said that the senior thesis is problematic. "Since we are required to write a thesis our senior year, we [should] be introduced to the requirements earlier on."

**Announcement board located in Craig Hall.
Photo by: Elizabeth Banfield**

Throughout each semester, the department holds meetings, plans social events and produces a monthly publication, The English Channel.

The English Channel features stories written by students. "Anyone is welcome to contribute," student editor, Mariana Mellado, said. "But, submissions typically come from English majors and minors."

The layout of the publication includes articles on department events, faculty interviews, movie and book reviews and major spotlights. At the beginning of each month, Mellado sends an email out to all of the students in the department with a list of story ideas. Students may then either choose which story they would like to write, or submit their own work.

According to Mellado, the biggest challenge is getting new contributors to submit stories. "People see the same names appear [in the English Channel] every month, and think that there's an exclusive staff, but that's not true," she said. "It's open to everyone."

Since Mellado is a senior this year, the department will be looking for a new editor soon. However, there are no applications. Mellado will nominate some of her contributors that she believes have the skills and passion to run the publication successfully. Dr. David Parker, the faculty advisor for the English Channel, will then evaluate each candidate, and select the one he thinks has the most potential.

"We love our department and our majors because of our mutual dedication to and love of the beauty of words, whether it's writing them, reading and interpreting them,or teaching them to others," said Parker. "That, and [the] fact that we're an extraordinarily good-looking group of people."

If you'd like to know more about the English Department, please contact Chairman Dr. David Parker at dparker@gardner-webb.edu.

If you'd like to know more about the English Channel, please contact Editor Mariana Mellado, at mmellado@gardner-webb.edu.