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# English perfect for alcohol ed

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Dear Editor:

I appreciate the interest in the English 111 curriculum expressed by the Round Up editors (17 March 2005). As director of Writing Programs (and responsible for what happens in 111) I disagree with their assessment that "English not the place for alcohol education."

No other course seems more appropriate to engage students in issues central to their lives. I would not have volunteered the course for this program if I thought otherwise. Nor would I be teaching a pilot section in which my students and I are examining ways to integrate alcohol education, as well as other social issues such as violence towards women, into the curriculum. The seriousness of these issues and their impact on NMSU and its students merit as much attention as possible.

English 111 provides a structured environment for critical thinking, open discussion, and careful reading in addition to opportunities to write and to reflect on a number of topics central to students' lives.

Our curriculum engages students in various inquiries by asking them to write about their majors, to develop narrative arguments from personal experiences, and to present substantiated points of view to the public. Students research, read, and write about a number of different societal issues, including personal identity, fast food and its effects on our culture, and individual rights. Alcohol use and personal safety are very much part of our classroom discussions and investigations.

The Round Up editors provide several proposals, ones I would like to see the university investigate and ones that could involve interesting connections to English 111. I doubt whether their proposal for another mandatory course (University 150) would be well received by students. However, the more attention alcohol use and other risky behaviors receive from different venues the better. As such, I don't understand how English 111 cannot be involved in addressing the deadly risks so many students encounter.

Respectfully,  
Stuart C. Brown

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