

Lecturers in English department note hiring, workload issues

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For lecturers in the University Department of English, the fall 1982 semester began with the same problems that have plagued English lecturers' positions for the past few years — late rehiring, heavy workload and ambiguous rehiring criteria — with the administration seemingly unable to solve the problems. But now, says one lecturer, "There's a spirit for improvement ... the time is right for some change."

Joseph Moldenhauer and Joseph Kruppa, chairman and associate chairman, respectively, of the Department of English, and Sidney Winestock, associate dean of the College of Liberal Arts, recently met with approximately 30 lecturers.

"I thought it was a very positive meeting. It was a good idea to air grievances and feelings. Most (lecturers) who've talked to me said they found it very useful," Kruppa said.

"Some lecturers felt after that meeting that Moldenhauer and Kruppa wanted to do something. But other lecturers felt that nothing had happened, that Moldenhauer had stated the same old thing," said Sharon Wevill, who, along with James Skaggs, was elected representative to the Department of English

Senate by fellow lecturers.

"There was a feeling that the meeting made a lot of strides in clarifying By clarification we're trying to make an unstated situation into stated clear policy," Skaggs said.

Wevill added, "By forcing them (the administration) to state policy they'll change policy."

Policy changes, which include gaining representation of lecturers in the Department of English Executive Committee, a departmental governing body, and improving the rehiring process, look more hopeful than before.

"I'd like to give the lecturers a sense of ongoing employment. I'd like to find some method of evaluation everyone agrees on," Kruppa said.

But he added, "Any sort of real changes has to come with approval and help from the upper administration. It would start with the dean."

Skaggs said, "The dean seems to be behind us ... the dean doesn't want us to be treated as temporary. Temporary has become permanent."

Robert King, dean of the College of Liberal Arts, along with Winestock, has been working on a letter to Moldenhauer and Kruppa.

In the letter, which Winestock said should be finished by Friday, "We rec-

ognize and fully support the lecturers. We're going to do what we can to improve their situation," Winestock said.

"We're trying to urge the EC (Department of English Executive Committee) to see if they can't try to do more for the lecturers Now I think the EC sends out notices in the spring to about 50 percent of the lecturers telling them they will be rehired in the fall. We're going to try to get them to increase the (early) rehiring to 60 or 70 percent," Winestock said.

One problem lecturers have complained about is the importance of student evaluations in rehiring of lecturers.

Several lecturers said course-instructor surveys provided by the Measurement and Evaluation Center are too general and short to be the sole criterion upon which rehiring and promotions are based.

William Koch, associate director of the Measurement and Evaluation Center, said in a June 1981 letter that "most of the questionnaires in use were originally designed and intended for other purposes."

A proposal to "re-evaluate the system we use now" is being drafted to go before the University Council, said Luis Salas-Tull, coordinator for course-in-

structor surveys at the Measurement and Evaluation Center.

Alice Korach and Terri LeClercq, lecturers in English, also are working on a tentative new student evaluation form they say is "more specifically aimed at measuring student perception of the effectiveness of skill-focused English courses."

Skaggs and Wevill say they wish to dispel notions that the lecturers are people whose lack of expertise or motivation prevents them from making it on the tenure track. In fact, the opposite is true and "all administrators and faculty need to realize the importance of the role of lecturer and its positive advantage to the departments and to the University," they said in a policy statement concerning the lecturers.

"Instead of being frightened or threatened by the number of Ph.Ds for whom there are not enough tenure track positions, the University should take advantage of these trained people who need work, who want to teach, who are much more than the technicians they have often been thought, who, whatever their specialties, are willing to teach courses that up till now most of the regular faculty have not wanted to teach," they said.

Kruppa said he found "several things

in the lecturers' statement "admirable," but he considers it "a draft document of ideas," rather than a completed proposal.

Although some lecturers would like their full-time workload reduced to three sections one semester and four the other, Wevill said, "The salary is acceptable. The concept of janitors or slaves came from how we were treated."

Skaggs and Wevill added: "We lecturers, however, feel the time has come to cease lamentations and recognize the role of the lecturer for exactly what it is, a permanent, on-going part of the overall staffing situation."

A memo from Cliff Endres, a lecturer in English, states: "This is the largest English department in the U.S.A., and it exists at a university which has clearly vocalized its aim of becoming a first-rate educational institution.

"The lecturer 'problem,' i.e. that of exploitation of part-time faculty as a response to budget cuts, uncertain enrollment, and the demonstrated need for improved writing instruction is not local but national in scope. It follows, therefore, that this English department can assume national leadership by achieving a workable, humanistic response to this national dilemma."