

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

MINUTES - 21 September 1979

The Department meeting was convened at 3 p.m., Mr. Moldenhauer presiding.

The Chairman made announcements of memos and lists already distributed and forthcoming, of needed faculty information still outstanding, of the posting of an EC calendar and agendas at PAR 120, and of the delay in information from the Dean's office on Academic Development and Visiting Lecturers' funds. He spoke about possible responses by faculty to textbook shortages: the library stacks, library reserve collections, commercial duplicating services, complaints to the bookstores if they were at fault. He asked, in the interest of faster workflow in the Main Office, that faculty allow the receptionist to receive them.

Mr. Twombly made an announcement about the Honors Program. Mr. Wadlington made one on University Governance study. Mr. Malof answered questions on his description of the ombudsman position. The Chairman read his letter on MO&E to Dean King, 18 September.

The Chairman's report used portions of his November 1978 letter to Dean Werbow's Consultative Committee as a point of departure for remarks on the following subjects:

1. The embattled spirit of the faculty at a time of national as well local constraints; our need to preserve the idea of a university and to remind ourselves that a love of learning and teaching, a love of books and thought, are our reason for being in the profession;
2. The absence of a necessary inconsistency between our creative and scholarly pursuits, on the one hand, and our teaching of lower-division literature and composition, on the other; the benefits of lower-division teaching to teacher and student alike;
3. The need for the University faculty at large to share in the work of writing instruction; plans to attempt persuading colleagues in other departments to incorporate in their courses writing assignments and the annotation of student writing;
4. The redefinition of the Undergraduate Course Committee as a group that recommends upper-division assignments on the basis of quality of teaching, and not only on the grounds of teacher preference and anticipated student registrations. This committee will also take care that junior members of the faculty are given adequate opportunity to teach upper-division courses.

Recruitment policy was then discussed by the Department. Mr. Hilfer, presenting the proposed MLA Joblist copy, read into the text two minor changes: add "or" after "American"; add "except for Creative Writing" after "Ph.D." In behalf of the Rhetoric and Composition interest group, Ms. Hairston proposed four motions: (1) add "Rhetoric" to the list of named disciplines for recruitment; (2) specify as a criterion "demonstrated commitment" to lower-division and especially composition teaching; (3) approve the recruitment of a technical writing teacher at tenure; and (4) advertise also in The Chronicle of Higher Education. Mr. Moldenhauer observed that ads in the Chronicle, Affirmative Action Register, and

other outlets were contemplated, and that the present meeting concerned junior faculty recruitment only. After observations by Mr. Lesser and others that "demonstrated commitment" would have precluded the recruitment of many on the current faculty who, before coming to UT, had had no opportunity to teach composition, the second motion was abandoned. The first motion gave rise to a lively debate on the merits and hazards of hiring in the field of composition research, and on the question of writing instruction by literature teachers vs. the same by specialists in the writing process. Professors Hainston, Rossman, Moldenhauer, Whitbread, DeCamp, and Newshaw addressed these issues from various viewpoints.

A substitute motion by Mr. Carver, that the specification of fields in the ad be replaced by "all fields considered," passed. Other successful motions collapsed the second and fourth sentences into one: "All candidates must be able to teach lower-division courses in literature and in writing, and have prospects for excellent publication and teaching."

Expressing the desire for a year's "grace period" for the determination of departmental policy in various areas, including staffing, Mr. Carver moved that no ad be placed in the Joblist. After discussion, the motion was tabled in a vote of 16 to 14, with 4 abstaining, in response to a motion by Mr. Friedman. Another motion by Mr. Friedman, that a 5-member at large elective committee ascertain departmental sentiment on recruiting and report back to the Department for a confirming vote before 1 November, was superseded by a successful substitute motion by Mr. Wadlington—that the Joblist ad be submitted and Department meetings be scheduled as soon as possible to hammer out Department recruiting policy, after Mr. Moldenhauer described the schedule of Recruitment Committee obligations prior to 1 November.

The meeting was adjourned shortly before 6 p.m.