

University Council discusses role of faculty in proposed Division of Rhetoric and Composition

By H. Paul Kelley
Secretary, University Council

In the absence of Interim President William S. Livingston, Executive Vice President and Provost Gerhard J. Fonken presided at the University Council meeting of Sept. 21.



The main topic at the meeting was the recently approved proposal for a Division of Rhetoric and Composition. John R. Durbin (mathematics), as Chair of the Committee of Counsel on Academic Freedom and Responsibility, had submitted several questions to the president having to do primarily with the role of the faculty in the Division. In the absence of Acting Dean of Liberal Arts Robert D. King, Fonken said that he would respond to the questions.

Principle of sound governance

Durbin had, in his questions, stated that he takes it "as an essential principle of sound university governance that the faculty should have primary responsibility for the curriculum, the choice of new faculty, and appointments to tenure. The proposal raises questions about the degree to which this principle is being followed in establishing the new Division."

He had asked whether a faculty appointment to the Division would be comparable to one in a department. He had also asked whether the Division would have a budget council and whether the Division's budget would cover salaries for faculty who teach in the Division. "If so, what will be the faculty's role in determining those salaries and in awarding merit raises?"

"Who will be primarily responsible for recommending tenure and promotion for those who teach in the Division? The Division or the faculty member's department? What if the reward systems of the Division and the faculty member's department are in conflict (which seems not unlikely)?"

"In most departments TA and AI appointments are made taking into account the needs and resources of both the

'I take it as an essential principle of sound university governance that the faculty should have primary responsibility for the curriculum, the choice of new faculty and appointments to tenure. The proposal (for a Division of Rhetoric and Composition) raises questions about the degree to which this principle is being followed in establishing the new division.'

-- John R. Durbin
Chair of the Committee of Counsel on Academic Freedom and Responsibility

undergraduate teaching program and the graduate program. This proposal states that 'the Director of the Division of Rhetoric and Composition will appoint all TAs and AIs within the Division, subject to the approval by the Dean.' This appears to introduce a potential conflict between the wishes of the Director and those of the graduate faculty (in this case, presumably, that of the English Department). Has thought been given to this?

"Finally, could you share with us how much faculty involvement there was in the formulation of this proposal? I have had the impression that new graduate programs or units are discussed by the Graduate Assembly. Is there a reason why the proposal for a Division of Rhetoric and Composition was not presented to the University Council before it was approved?"

Fonken's comments

Fonken said he would "offer a few comments. This concerns the proposal to establish an administrative unit currently referred to as the Division of Rhetoric and Composition. That unit is to be established in the College of Liberal Arts and is to administer and otherwise tend to the instruction in the area of both freshman English and other related rhetoric and composition-type courses offered, I think primarily, at the undergraduate level. I am not totally clear on that yet.

"This was a recommendation which most recently emerged from the Committee on the Undergraduate Experience.... I would like to point out that administrative units somewhat akin to this, that is, nondepartmental units..., are reasonably well known.... The lower division...biological sciences courses are separately administered from the departments in the biological sciences area through a Division of Biological Sciences headed by a director who is appointed by the dean of the college; and it seems it has served useful purposes in the College of Natural Sciences for many years.

"There are interest areas most often shown in the budget and in Course Schedules under the title 'Center,' but sometimes not even...that. For example, there are courses listed as Museum courses; they are attached to no particular department. We have [the Centers for] Asian Studies, Middle Eastern Studies,...Latin American Studies, and...several others. Those centers are not academic departments but were put in place years ago...to better manage and

administer special areas of interest — courses in, for example, Asian Studies, which are rather often cross-listed with either history or political science or government or whatever the case might be.... Many of these concepts, ranging from the Biological Sciences Division to the...academic-type centers, are being considered by Dean King...in his efforts to put together a proposed administrative structure and an operating policy...for this proposed Division of Rhetoric and Composition.

Issue surfaced in 1985

"There have been some comments that this is...a totally new thing.... Here is a letter dated May 16, 1985,...addressed to Dean King, from a group of senior faculty in English. It said, 'We have formulated a comprehensive and we think workable solution to many of the problems facing the English Department.... We believe our plan can significantly reduce the current disharmony within the department. Many members of the department would like us to get out of the composition business entirely. Well, we can't get out. The University would hardly allow us. But we can employ an administrative structure that places writing courses off in a semiautonomous wing, much like American Studies.... This body...would consist of a director of writing appointed by and reporting to the Dean of Liberal Arts, a coordinator of upper division writing, and a coordinator of lower division writing'....

"I bring that to your attention simply because it suggests that this newly proposed [Division of] Rhetoric and Composition, which has yet to be put into final organizational form,...is in fact not new. It is at least seven years old, and I am told that...similar thoughts extend back almost as far as 20 years...."

Fonken added, "There are probably many questions.... They are a subject of discussion within the College of Liberal Arts in order to develop an operating plan and a structural plan. The proposal itself is mostly conceptual at this point."

William O. S. Sutherland (English) said there were several things that some of the English faculty found disturbing in this, having to do with such things as faculty governance. He wondered whether the proposal, in its final form, would come before the Faculty Senate and the University Council. Fonken replied that it was his understanding that it would not come before the Council, that it was "not an action that would be within the purview of

the Council. But it is certainly open for Council discussion."

Lack of faculty input

Sutherland said he thought that a number of the English faculty are concerned about the lack of faculty input, that they "have received a proposal...which has the whole unit...under the control of a director, which seems to me to violate the best canons of faculty governance.... This is essentially a lower division unit, and yet, according to the information we have gotten, it will have an executive committee which will be responsible for hiring, promotions, terminations, and all the rest. That seems to me to be in direct violation of the Handbook of Operating Procedures. It seems to me that it ought, for that reason, to come before the University Council."

Fonken suggested that "We may be engaged in speculation, because I have not seen a draft operating plan...It is my understanding that Dean King and others in Liberal Arts are going to be working on the development of such an operating plan in the fall and spring semesters, with the hope of implementing this operational unit by June of next year. But the Council...did not have brought before it, or approve or disapprove, the establishment of the Division of Biological Sciences, nor the Center for Asian Studies, nor the American Studies Program. And they employ faculty."

Sutherland asked whether they hire and promote.

Fonken answered, "Yes, they do. Their faculties are, for the most part, but not exclusively, cross-appointed between various departments and the centers or divisions,...and they have a role in the evaluation of those faculty. The promotion guidelines require, in the case of a joint-appointed faculty member, recommendations from all of the units in which that individual holds a partial appointment."

Sutherland said, "Where matters of curriculum and where matters of faculty governance are concerned, the University Council ought to be interested and ought to take that into its purview.."

Fonken replied, "I would respond to that only in a very limited sense. The Council does not, or has not in the past, taken it upon itself to engage in disputes within departments about modes of governance and things of that nature, and personally, I suspect it probably should not. Since we do not yet know what mode of governance is going to be proposed for this unit, it may be speculation to suggest that this all needs to come before the Council."

Formal documentation

Waneen W. Spirduso (kinesiology and health education) agreed that it is not the prerogative of the Council to make decisions that are administrative in nature. But because there is a lot of information, some of it probably only partially true, in the newspapers, she thought it would be helpful to have some formal documentation. It would also be helpful to have a list of concerns that people have expressed.

Fonken agreed, and he instructed

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Secretary H. Paul Kelley (educational psychology) to distribute to members of the Council copies of the proposal and of the President's response to that proposal. "Then discussions can begin. I will offer again what is my opinion, that at this point in time it may be advisable to allow this matter...to be discussed extensively within the College of Liberal Arts. It is my understanding that will take place.... But the Council, of course, can bring before itself anything it wishes."

Education Policy Committee

Joseph E. Kruppa (English) asked whether there were any plans to bring the

proposal before the Educational Policy Committee. He noted that two years ago the English Department was told that changes in E 306 were of University-wide concern and should go before that committee.

He wondered whether the process is not being rushed a little too much and is being acted on as though this is just a College of Liberal Arts matter, whereas this is going to affect the University in a very sweeping way.

Fonken replied, "...At this point we have a conceptual proposal which has been approved by the President and remanded back to the Dean [of] Liberal Arts...to work

out an operating plan. So far I have seen nothing in there that would necessarily suggest taking it to the Educational Policy Committee. There has been no proposal that there be some change in the curriculum itself.... It is at this point a matter referring to the administration of an established curriculum.

"Nonetheless, I think that these are questions that can be better addressed by the Dean and those who are working on this proposal, and you should probably take them up at the next Council meeting."

Under unfinished business, discussion of, and action on, a resolution concerning distinguished speakers/visitors was

postponed until the October meeting of the Council.

Sean Mast (Cabinet of College Councils) presented, under new business, proposed changes to the Institutional Rules on Students Services and Activities, published in the UT 1992-1993 General Information Bulletin.

The changes would prohibit students and student organizations from posting signs on trees, since new kiosks are available on campus for the posting of signs. The proposal was approved unanimously.

The University Council will meet next on Oct. 21, 1992.

UT Austin among top three universities nationally in Fulbright grant recipients

By Erin Blair

Twenty-one UT Austin graduate and undergraduate students have received Fulbright grants this year, a record for the University and a number that places UT Austin in the top three universities receiving the grants nationally.

Last year, UT had eight Fulbright grant recipients.

"The 21 awards represent the largest number of Fulbrights given to students in the 46 years the program has been at the University of Texas at Austin," said Dr. Tomasson Jannuzzi, a professor of economics and chairman of the Fulbright Campus Committee.

"This is an important moment in the history of international programs at the University and I am delighted."

Jannuzzi said the New York office of the

Institute of International Education (IIE) confirmed that the University ranked among the top three universities in the number of Fulbright recipients, but the office declined to name the other universities.

The Fulbright grants cover one year of travel, tuition and living expenses for a student who wishes to study abroad. Fifty-one UT students applied for the grants through the IIE and 11 UT Ph.D. candidates applied through the U.S. Department of Education (DOE).

The DOE awarded Fulbrights to two UT students, Linda Boxberger, a history Ph.D. candidate, and Thomas Solomon, a Ph.D. candidate in anthropology, to do dissertation research abroad. Boxberger will study in Yemen and Solomon will study in Bolivia.

IIE Fulbright grantees, their UT depart-

ments and countries of study include:

Jessica Chapin, anthropology graduate student, Mexico; Alexandra David, history graduate student, Brazil; Kendall Dunkelberg, comparative literature graduate student, Belgium; Fred Ehrman, Germanic languages graduate student, Germany; Howard Fredrics, music graduate student, Sweden; Jeffrey Grossman, Germanic languages graduate student, Israel; Greta Ham, classics graduate student, Greece; and Michelle Hamilton, Spanish undergraduate, Israel.

Others are Carl Hershiser, anthropology graduate student, Turkey; Cynthia Hood, Latin American studies undergraduate, Costa Rica; David LaWare, history graduate student, Costa Rica; Laura Lyons, literature graduate student, Ireland; Felix Meyer, economics undergraduate, Belgium; Jodie Nagel, music graduate student,

Australia; Kathryn Sampson, literature graduate student, Egypt; Dianne Schrader, foreign language education graduate student, France; Monica Swartz, zoology graduate student, Costa Rica; Christopher Swezey, geology graduate student, France; and Janna Weiss, anthropology graduate student, Mexico.

Dr. Ivy McQuiddy, the UT International Center's Study Abroad Office adviser, said the large number of University students who received Fulbrights this year should encourage more students to apply for them.

"This is an accessible grant and people shouldn't be intimidated by it," she said.

The deadline for the 1993-94 Fulbright competition is Oct. 1.

For more information, contact the Study Abroad Office at (512) 471-1211.

Technological innovations fuel telephone access war

By Erin Blair

"Please leave your message at the sound of the beep." It's a phrase that



strikes terror in some hearts, but Robert Hopper, a University speech communication professor, says we should stop worrying and learn to love the answering machine.

"For a century, callers have had an advantage over telephone answerers," Hopper says. "They choose the time, place and agenda for phone calls. The answerer takes a pig in a poke, and must speak first without knowing what sort of event he or she is in. "With the answering machine, the answerer strikes back."

Users' strong feelings about the machines are one indication that the telephone access war has heated up. In his recently published book, *Telephone Conversation*, Hopper analyzes the access conflicts emerging with new telephone technologies and phone company add-on services such as call waiting, unlisted numbers, mobile phones, multi-party calling, call forwarding, fax machines, call-screening, voice mail, caller identity tracking — and of course, answering machines.

The predominant telephone problems revolve around who gets to talk to whom and when.

"Each new technological innovation brings its own disturbing ecology," Hopper says. "For instance, the increase in unlisted numbers protects answerers from some sales pitches, but it also screens out friends and family and makes answerers into electro-hermits who are unavailable to respond to intimates or emergencies."

Then there's the caller identity device, which gives answerers a digital display of the caller's phone number. "The device has sparked an immense legal wrangle over whether a caller's privacy is invaded if an answerer learns his or her phone number," Hopper says.

"So now there is a service in some places that allows a caller to 'block' the access of a machine that might give away the caller's number — one more skirmish on the boundaries of the access war."

Less objectionable is the personalized ring option, which gives each of an answerer's frequent callers a distinctive phone trill. "That technology allows recognition of frequent and desired callers without invading any occasional caller's privacy," he says.

And what about call waiting? "Unless you are responsible for teen children, call waiting is bad communication karma. I've had it disconnected," Hopper says.

"The problem is that we cannot resist

using the thing, and every time we do, we place a party 'on hold' waiting for us to get back to him or her. This is a nasty thing to do to someone you care about, and they are justified in resenting the intrusion."

Hopper sees the answering machine as the most beneficial recent technology in the access war. It is simple to use, widely accepted and reasonably priced.

"Most of us hated the answering machine at first — I objected to it myself, and perhaps the first 20 times I got connected to an answering machine I hung up without leaving a message. But now I believe that this emotional reaction was a consequence of the answering machine's reversal of caller hegemony," he says.

Instead of the caller having the advantage, it is the answerer who benefits from an answering machine. The "robot receptionist," as Hopper calls it, provides a mechanical response to the caller's summons, forcing the caller to state his or her identity and business. The machine commits to nothing.

"The machine eventually seduces most of us into using it effectively," he says. "The first time your call gets answered by a machine, you may hang up. At this point you may denounce the machine. But eventually you come to a situation in which you benefit from leaving a message."

Hopper's research suggests that there are two common types of messages left on answering machines — those of caller-

friends and caller-strangers.

Caller-friends generally say "hi (answerer's name)," offer minimal self-identification, leave messages that are usually requests to return the call (without including their phone numbers) and close the call with "bye." Caller-strangers are more likely to open their messages with "yes," state their full name and other identification, leave a phone number and end with "thanks."

The answering machine teaches communicators that some messages are best delivered by serial monologues — the answerer's prerecorded one on the machine and the caller's "fresh" one.

"This is how to tell your mom that you lost the watch she gave you for your birthday, or to tell your former pal that you cannot make it to New Haven this weekend," Hopper says.

"It cuts down on time spent in futile calling and in procrastinating about calling."

It also shifts the power to the answerer by enabling the screening of calls.

"In this way the answerer forces the caller to self-identify to a machine, even when the answerer could pick up the phone," he says. "Screening is the ultimate reversal of caller hegemony."

Europa Books at 2406 Guadalupe St. will host a reception and book signing for Hopper at 2:30 p.m. Thursday (Oct. 1)