

An Alternative

A Plan For Improving the Hiring of Lecturers

drafted by Sue Rodi, 2/21/83

No system of hiring is perfect. But progress has been made in the last two years in recognizing the important contribution of lecturers in The University of Texas English Department. Steps have been taken to give lecturers, particularly those of long service with teaching success, better pay and more stability of employment. Any plan to further improve the status of lecturers should build on this progress and should not return to a radical new beginning.

The following suggestions are offered as simple, concrete steps that can be taken in this direction that are likely to find strong support at all levels of discussion, even with the Dean of the College.

- (1) Over the next 4 years, gradually increase the number of lecturers who are appointed as line items in the budget. A suggested goal is 4 or 5 line items each year. This will simplify budgeting problems for the Dean and the Department and give increased stability to lecturers who earn and merit it.
- (2) Perhaps the severest irritation for current lecturers is the late point in the summer in which reemployment notices are received. Steps should be taken to work out in the Department and at the Dean's level procedures that would allow 50% of the number of lecturers projected as needed for the following year to be hired by June 1. This would be an almost 20% increase over current early hirings and yet is a modest enough percentage to protect the Department and the Dean against unexpected enrollment fluctuations.
- (3) Apparently in some departments some lecturers are hired with 2 and 3 year appointments. (One way to do this might be as follows: give 2 or 3 year agreements--as opposed to contracts. An agreement would assure these lecturers top priority among lecturers in hiring for the period of the agreement but not bind the Department if there is an unexpected enrollment drop.) Some have indicated that the Dean might be favorable to such an arrangement for a certain percentage of lecturers who have merited such an appointment by experience and appropriate evaluation. The lecturers should ask the Senate to investigate this possibility and encourage the Senate to act favorably on multi-year agreements of some sort for an appropriate percentage of lecturers.] ✓
- (4) New departmental Ph.D.'s who after appropriate effort are unable to obtain employment elsewhere should be considered on the same basis with all other new lecturer applicants with the following proviso: when their credentials are judged equal to other applicants, they should be given priority in hiring among new applicants. In all cases, of course, they would have priority among less well-qualified applicants, be these applicants new or returning lecturers.

These simple steps will build on current procedures, improve the lot of all lecturers, recognize service and merit, create within the department a renewable pool of teaching talent, treat new Ph.D.'s equitably with all other applicants, and diminish irritation caused by uncertainty in hiring. These steps are consistent with University operating procedure and are realistic enough in scope to have a solid probability of adoption at all levels.