

## THE DAILY TEXAN

## Editorial Board

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## VIEWPOINT

## POWER PLAY

## English faculty dispute gets bolder

So much of the frustration with the curriculum war going on in the Department of English has been caused not by what the faculty do, but how they do it. During the E306 debate, Professor Allan Gribben, the unfortunate victim of a political war, was driven away from the University by cold ostracism. He was one casualty in an ongoing battle of subterfuge.

Over the summer Robert King, interim dean of liberal arts, announced his intentions to change English Department governance from an executive committee of 10 members to a budget council comprising all full professors. In response, professor Joseph Kruppa, chairman of the department, attempted to control dialogue by sending a letter to all faculty that suggested a reply they might want to give the King concerning the change. The next day, Kruppa wrote King: "The Department has asked me to respond as follows ..."

After such efforts to undermine the department, the latest act in this battle is a bit surprising. Kruppa quite suddenly replaced Professor James Duban, the chair of the English Honors Committee for eight years running. What is odd about how Kruppa made the change is that he didn't inform the former chair until the fourth week of the semester: Duban found out Wednesday, and it was effective beginning this semester.

It is very telling that Kruppa's announcement came less than 24 hours after Duban criticized the recently recommended six-hour multicultural course requirement at a University Council meeting yesterday. "I, for one, do not think that we should ask the public to finance something predicated upon definitions that tend to be illogical and discriminatory," Duban stated. "... With respect to enlarging the sphere of cross-cultural tolerance and learning, the *Report of Recommendations* stands to be counterproductive."

This debate is quite similar to the one over the proposed changes for E306. But whether or not Duban has a political agenda for the English Department, he was not making a political statement when he spoke against the University Council's proposed multiculturalism requirement. He is concerned about the academic direction of the University's curriculum.

Duban had done a good job with the honors program, the largest honors program in the college. The only reason Kruppa gave is that it is time for a change. It shouldn't be surprising, when the department chair strongarms opposition, that Dean King decided to switch the governance of the department to a budget council. These attempts to control the direction of the English Department alienate the faculty and rob the department of credibility, demonstrating exactly the reason why it needs a change.

—Matthew Connally