

Freshman English Policy Committee Meeting

October 21, 1977

Calhoun 323, 3:00-4:00

Members present: Kinneavy, Trimble, Cameron, Hanev, Ruskiewicz,
Saldivar, Creel, Wainwright

Agenda: (starred items deferred)

Approval of Minutes

Standing committee reports

Textbook

- * Grade inflation
- * Teacher performance evaluations
- Staffing
- * Continued use of the ECT
- * Freshman Office research projects

1. In the discussion of the minutes, Trimble wanted to know whether the apprentices would meet 398t after or during their apprenticeship. Cameron replied that such was not addressed directly, and Creel noted that they would continue as they are at the present. The minutes were approved.

2. The textbook subcommittee presented tests for English 307 for the spring semester:

Correll and Laird, Modern English Handbook

Knott and Parker, The Triumph of Style

choice of: Pickering, Fiction 100

Cassills, The Norton Anthology of Short Fiction.

Saldivar explained the rationale for offering a choice of fiction collections: the two books are both excellent, and taste is the primary reason for taking one over the other; therefore, we will let individual teachers make their own decisions. Hanev questioned whether we should require the use of G&L in the course, as she was concerned that the course would be merely a literature course unless some text accompanied the course which stressed writing. General discussion of the use of the handbook in the course and in other Freshman courses ensued. Kinneavy pointed out that having a rhetoric or handbook in the course will not cause a teacher to teach composition instead of a literature. Cameron noted that G&L was adopted last spring as the standard handbook in all Freshman courses, so in fact it is not an optional text; he also noted, though, that the book is primarily a handbook and not a rhetoric. Cameron cited the plans of the text committee to prepare a discription of each of the fiction texts which will be given to every person who will teach E307 in the spring so that intelligent choices can be made (neither book will be published before mid-December). The committee's recommendation was adopted.

Further discussion about the Modern English Handbook pointed up general faculty dislike of the book. Trimble said he had had heard numerous complaints. Other said they had heard the same, the most common gripe being that there are not enough exercises in it. Cameron said the text committee would circulate a questionnaire asking for specific opinion for all faculty using it. The committee

showed considerable interest to Kinneavy's suggestion that we look into the possibility of publishing student syllabi for every Freshman English course; such could provide revenue for the Freshman Office, and we certainly have staff qualified to write the materials.

3. Kinneavy reported on his meeting with John Walter regarding staffing problems and proposed solutions. Walter seems to think that there is not nearly so much discontent as Kinneavy said there is. The committee responded with various comments noting that Kinneavy understood the situation far better than Walter. Kinneavy said Walter will distribute a document to explain what he does when he makes staffing assignments; he noted that Walter seems to take the whole issue as an attack on his person rather than as an attempt on the part of all concerned to avoid a confrontation and, at the same time, to solve a serious problem. Walter plans to have Kinneavy read the document before it is distributed (NOTE-the document was distributed the week of October 24, though Kinneavy did not see it before its distribution). Kinneavy said that Walter said he was open to suggestions. The committee encouraged Kinneavy to give Walter whatever he and Fritch could work out. Too the committee was in concensus that the problem exists, regardless of Walter's refusal to believe that it does, and that Kinneavy and Fritch should try to help him understand such without serious confrontation if possible. The committee agreed, though, that the complaints of AGSE, of the GSW, and of the various full-time faculty could be brought to Walter's attention if specific information is needed.

Further discussion of the Freshman English Handbook pointed up general family dislike of the book. Kinneavy said he had heard numerous complaints. They said they had heard the most common criticisms being that there was not enough exercises in it. Cannon said that some criticisms would involve a revision asking for specific changes. The committee's recommendation was to...