

To: Tenured and Tenure-track English Faculty

From: English Department Governance Committee--Alan Gribben
(chair), Rolando Hinojosa-Smith, Wayne Rebhorn

Date: February 11, 1985

The Governance Committee held an informal meeting for the English Faculty on February 7th. As a result of suggestions received there and other ideas submitted to the committee in written form, we have modified our original proposal. The number of full professors on the Executive Committee has been reduced from six to five, the term of the assistant professor on the Executive Committee has been extended from one semester to one year, and the number of appointments the Chair can make to membership on the Executive Committee has been reduced from three to two. We are also recommending that a digest of the Executive Committee minutes be made available to the regular faculty, that women be elected or appointed to the committee, and that each voting faculty member be allowed to cast a ballot for half of the Executive Committee candidates selected in a previous nominating round of voting. To encourage a sense of community, we now stipulate that the Department should convene at least once a semester to advise the Executive Committee, and we are lowering the number required for quorums and petitions. Most of the other changes are relatively minor, representing small adjustments to accommodate existing practices. All of these alterations originated with concerned colleagues, and we thank you for the interest and help in drafting this document.

The Guidelines still reflect our original intention to produce a less legalistic procedure for our governance. And they continue to chart a larger role for the Chair in directing our departmental conversations, restoring the Chair's vote on committees and enabling him/her to conduct more of the day-to-day business of our organization. They retain the balance of Executive Committee membership in favor of senior members of the department, and provide for more rapid circulation of associate professors through that committee. Since the Associate Chair has routinely, within recent memory, been elected to membership on the Executive Committee, our document simply recognizes this probability; by automatically making this person an ex officio voting member of the committee, we open up another electoral slot that someone else can fill. Although there will be an assistant professor on the Executive Committee, these Guidelines take into account the undesirability of having very many people of this rank invest their energies in departmental governance during their tenure-track years. By instituting a direct voting method in place of the intricate Hare system, we hope to see more clear-cut decisions by the regular faculty regarding their preferences for Executive Committee

candidates. Since the experimental English Senate could always be overruled by the voting department, and since it accomplished nothing of lasting value, we are recommending its abolition in an effort to recapture lost time that all of us need for teaching and research. Perhaps by entrusting our Chair (who is, after all, appointed with our concurrence) and our elected Executive Committee with more responsibilities, we can cope with sudden developments more flexibly and be less preoccupied with matters of procedure and governance. Your comments have encouraged us to hope that we have matched these proposals to prevailing faculty sentiment.

Only tenured members of the English faculty are eligible to vote on adopting new governmental guidelines. All ballots, sealed in signed envelopes, should be returned to the Chair's office by 4 p.m. on Friday, February 15th. Max Westbrook (Elections Officer) and Bill Todd will count the ballots.