

Faculty still questioning writing division proposal

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The Faculty Senate is demanding more information on a proposal to create a writing division separate from the English Department after bitter faculty complaint about the lack of input.

The Faculty Senate is calling on the University Council to answer questions about the proposal to establish a writing division under the College of Liberal Arts at the council's Oct. 19 meeting.

Faculty Senate members are currently drafting the questions after members voiced frustration over the proposal at their meeting Monday. But they declined to say Tuesday specifically what those questions will be.

"It was evident that people were concerned that very little input has been available," said Waneen Spir-

duso, Faculty Senate chairwoman.

"There are a lot of little procedural questions people still have about this new division in rhetoric and composition," she said. "Generally, members were concerned with the way the division was developed."

The move by former UT President William Cunningham to establish the Division of Rhetoric and Composition came on the recommendation of the Presidential Committee of the Undergraduate Experience, which said a division would "improve the University's writing program."

Robert King, interim dean of the College of Liberal Arts, said the plan submitted in early September would match views of the presidential committee in that "it would improve the writing" of students studying under the new curriculum.

In accordance with the plan, students registering for writing courses after June 1993 will do so under a

division in the College of Liberal Arts, instead of the English Department.

But Elizabeth Fernea, a Faculty Senate member representing the English Department, said not enough "open discussion into the nitty gritty of the new division" and more effort should be made to inform faculty members of the plan's intentions.

"This is not a narrow issue," she said. "This is something that will affect the whole of the University. We have to consider how the proposal will impact the students and the University in general."

Fernea said she hopes to have most faculty-generated questions answered at the UC meeting, but said "for right now, I can't see any reason for doing it. I don't see anyone trying to convince me that this would benefit students."

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King said he welcomes questions from skeptical faculty members.

"I will do my best to answer every question," King said. He added that "a larger number of people have expressed their support" of the new division.

But John Durbin, committee member from the Department of Mathematics, said questions he had raised at an August Faculty Senate meeting remain unanswered and

will be submitted in addition to the concerns from Monday's meeting.

"What roll will the faculty have in deciding on the curriculum?" Durbin asked. "And what about salaries and promotions? Essentially, why is this being done?"

King's proposal on the division seeks to work closely with the English Department "to maintain a 2 traditional relationship" between literature and writing courses.