

EDITORIALS

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VIEWPOINT

ROUGH DRAFT

Kruppa wrong for predetermining department's position

Joe Kruppa, Chairman of the Department of English, must be clairvoyant. On July 8 he sent to all faculty a memo attached to "a draft of a possible response from me to Dean King about the governance issue." He added, "It is meant to serve as a way of focusing the issues and raising pertinent questions." Just like Linda Brodkey had wanted to "focus" the minds of freshman in English 306, her sympathizing chairman wanted his department to have only the right vision.

In a letter dated July 9, Kruppa wrote to Dean Robert King, "The Department of English met today in order to deliberate on your letter of June 26 to me in which you say that you are 'inclined not approve a continuation of the Executive mode of governance.'" Miraculously, Kruppa knew in advance to write: "The Department has asked me to respond as follows.

"We are surprised and dismayed by your letter," sang the entire faculty. He even knew why they would find King's letter, "based on misinformation and a misunderstanding of how the English Department and its Executive Committee function," so unsettling.

One finds it particularly distressing that the administration should not be paying this guru more than mere Nobel laureates. To think that he knew there would be a conflict before he met his *entire* department should fascinate even troublesome skeptics.

Nostradamus could not perform such feats. Rest assured the department's chair couldn't either.

Kruppa's haphazard attempt to control dialogue demonstrates exactly the reason why the department should switch its governance to a Budget Council. Attempting to set a party line

before the faculty convenes shows just how Kruppa strong-arms opposition. But such tactics should surprise few. During the E306 debate, Kruppa isolated E306 opponents as just self-seeking right wingers, even while conceding to the *Houston Chronicle* that elements of the course were "radical."

Another significant note concerning Kruppa's collective statement. Though the two-page letter was dated July 9, 1991, and was completed even down to the salutation, in the left corner was printed: DRAFT. His anticipation was warranted, because a few faculty voiced opposition to Kruppa's scheme. But to think that the imaginative chair thought enough to cover his tracks by writing this disclaimer makes one question the designs of the department head.

Such cunning would be great for personal finances. It would be like postdating checks that will be overdrawn. And just to make sure that you don't commit yourself unnecessarily, you write in the corner "void" or "just kidding."

The department, though, will continue to have bad credit, if its leaders persist in employing guerrilla tactics against their colleagues. Kruppa's clan loves subterfuge. No where in Kurt Heinzelman's guest column ("Cries of factionalism in the English Dept. come from sore losers," Tuesday) did he mention Kruppa's letter. Instead he dazzled readers with his poisonous sophistry that James Duban and Dean King were the only ones responsible for the factions in the department.

Kruppa and the faculty should lay their arms down and surrender, before they find themselves professionally buried in their own collective plot.

— Geoff Henley