

A Proposal on the Lecturer Situation

Over the past decade, the structure and direction of the English Department at the University of Texas at Austin have been substantially altered by increases in lower-division teaching responsibilities, drops in graduate enrollment, a decline in the actual number of regular faculty positions, and substantial increases in the number of temporary faculty employed to meet departmental teaching commitments--most notably in lower-division writing and literature courses.

New undergraduate admission standards instituted in 1982-83 promise a more stable future. So it seems appropriate, in this Centennial year, for the English Department to evaluate its current staffing situation and to suggest measures that will enable it over the next decade

to attain the highest standards of undergraduate English instruction,
to maintain the integrity of its graduate program,
to promote research and scholarship of the first rank, and
to grant all of its faculty members the security and
academic freedom essential to their academic missions.

At the same time that it begins to offer a new undergraduate program to the university, the English Department must also seek a new direction for itself, one that affirms what is right and productive in its past and recognizes what is challenging and difficult about its future. As Wayne Booth has observed, we cannot continue to lament the condition of the humanities if we flee the responsibility of cultivating literacy where it is needed most.

1. The English Department, in consultation and cooperation with the College and University, should over a period of ten years undertake a program of gradual and steady growth, adding tenure-track and tenured lines until the number of its temporary teaching faculty (excluding Assistant Instructors) does not exceed (in FTE's) _____% of its tenured and tenure-seeking faculty.
 - a. Whenever possible, the new lines and positions should be added in areas of staffing need at the upper-division and graduate levels or in areas not currently covered by the tenure-seeking and tenured faculty.
 - b. The growth should be slow and managed. Budget-line goals should be established over a period of a decade. The department should present a plan for using the new lines to shape a department capable of meeting its substantial undergraduate teaching responsibilities with distinction while maintaining and advancing a wide-range of scholarly activities.
 - c. The department should, early in its period of growth, consider what modifications of its structure and government and what

additions to its staff and resources are necessary to support first-rate teaching and scholarship.

- d. The English department should seek assurances from the administration that promotion and merit raise systems will be modified to reflect the increased lower-division teaching responsibilities and decreased graduate course opportunities likely to result from any substantial increase in the size of the tenured and tenure-track faculty.
2. The English Department recognizes its professional obligation to the Lecturers it has hired to meet its teaching responsibilities. It seeks to recognize and reward good service, to nurture them professionally, to insure their academic freedom, and to encourage the highest quality of undergraduate instruction.
 3. Two categories of Lecturers shall be recognized by the English Department: Lecturer I and Lecturer II.
 4. The Lecturer I category shall be composed of those lecturers who, by means of a substantial review of their credentials (teaching and, when applicable, service and publication) by the English Department Executive Committee, are shown to merit regular annual reappointment.
 - a. Members of this group shall be reappointed regularly for as long as the English Department requires their service, except where good cause for dismissal, such as continued professional incompetence, is proven.
 - b. Lecturer II's may be recommended for appointments as Lecturer I's after a minimum of six semesters service in the Lecturer II category. The EC shall determine which members of the Lecturer II category meeting the minimum service standard shall be considered for appointment to Lecturer I.
 - c. All current "Super Lecturers" shall be considered Lecturer I's and shall enjoy first hiring priority within this category in all subsequent years.
 - d. All current "Lecturers" with a minimum of six semesters service shall be considered for a Lecturer I position in order according to seniority. However, the EC or other empowered body shall not be required to render a full evaluation on every current lecturer eligible for a Lecturer II position when it is very clear that a full review of credentials is not likely to result in appointment to a Lecturer I position. Lecturer II's with substantial prior teaching service elsewhere may be recommended by the EC for early appointment to Lecturer I.

- e. Hiring priority within the Lecturer I rank shall be determined by seniority within the rank. Lecturers appointed to this category in any given year shall have hiring priority over Lecturer I's appointed in subsequent years. Within a given appointment year, priority shall be determined by total semesters of teaching service in the UT English Department (including teaching as an AI).
 - 1) While Lecturer I's shall continue to be evaluated in a manner consistent with their appointment, their individual hiring priority shall not be altered on the basis of such evaluations.
 - 2) Lecturer I's may take a leave of up to one full year without losing their hiring rank.
 - f. Lecturer I's shall have hiring priority over all members of the Lecturer II category with the exception of up to five new U.T. Ph.D.s designated annually as Lecturer II's. (See #6 below.)
 - g. The English Department should negotiate with the College and University for an increase in funding and services in order to enable Lecturer I's to enjoy regular professional benefits including secretarial support, release time for program development, travel money, reduced teaching load for departmental service or teaching supervision, etc.
5. The Lecturer II category shall include, initially, all current lecturers and all new lecturers hired in the future.
- a. All current members of this group with a minimum of six semesters teaching experience as a lecturer in the UT Department of English shall be ranked for hiring priority after up to five new UT Ph.D.'s (see #6 below) and the "Super Lecturers", but ahead of lecturers with less than six semesters experience and new applicants. This priority for Lecturer II's with six semesters or more of experience shall extend only through a transition period during which eligible Lecturer II's are given a preliminary review for Lecturer I appointments. During this transition period, Lecturer II's with a minimum of six semesters of experience shall be ranked for hiring within their group according to a procedure based upon recent teaching evaluations and service.
 - b. During the transition period, lecturers with less than six semesters of experience and new applicants (excluding up to five new UT Ph.D.'s designated for special priority by the EC) shall be ranked for hiring within the group according to evidence of teaching effectiveness. Due consideration, however, will be given to the service of all current lecturers.

- c. Following the transition period, Lecturer II's shall be hired after up to five new UT Ph.D.'s and all Lecturer I's.
 - 1) Within the group, Lecturer II's shall be ranked annually for hiring priority according to a review conducted by the EC.
 - 2) Lecturer II's shall be ranked along with new applicants both from within and without UT.
 - 3) Lecturer II's shall be ranked according to student teaching evaluations, course evaluations performed by directors and associate directors of the freshman, sophomore, and E346 programs, departmental service, and publications.
 - 4) Lecturer II's reviewed, but rejected, for appointment to Lecturer I may continue as Lecturer II's and may be reconsidered for Lecturer I appointments.
6. Up to five lecturer positions will be reserved each year for new UT Ph.D.'s in English who have demonstrated continuing teaching excellence.
 - a. New Ph.D.'s awarded these positions will enjoy hiring priority for one year only. In all respects except hiring priority, new Ph.D.'s in this category will be considered as Lecturer II's. (see below).
 - b. New Ph.D.'s awarded hiring priority in their first year of lecturer appointment may subsequently apply as Lecturer II's.
 - c. New Ph.D.'s not among the five awarded hiring priority may be considered for appointment as Lecturer II's.

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