

To: FEPC members

From: Richard Hart

Date: November 26, 1978

The agenda for our meeting tomorrow at 11:00 in Parlin 8C tentatively contains the following items. Because of the holiday, I have not discussed this list with Dr. Kinneavy. If there are changes, I'll bring a revised agenda to the meeting.

1. Approval of minutes
2. Report from Grading Criteria Subcommittee
3. 306 syllabus

Minutes, Freshman English Policy Committee

November 20, 1978

Parlin 8C

Members present: Kinneavy, Trimble, Ruszkiewicz, Witte, Newcomb,
Cameron, Creel, Byars, Hart

Agenda:

Introduction of Dr. Brumble

Approval of minutes

Report on funding for Kinneavy-Witte-Cameron project

398T

Grading criteria problem

1. Dr. Kinneavy introduced Dr. David Brumble, who will direct the composition program at the University of Pittsburgh beginning next semester. Dr. Brumble had come to Austin to study our program and to interview job candidates.
2. The minutes of November 13 were revised and approved.
3. Dr. Kinneavy reported that the Kinneavy-Witte-Cameron project had been fully funded, the only one of fifty-eight projects to be so honored. He added that he had written a formal acceptance to the Vice President and now needed only to ask Dr. Abrahams to approve course-load reductions for Dr. Witte and Mr. Cameron.
4. The committee revised Dr. Kinneavy's draft of a letter to Dr. Lieb outlining our 398T plans and agreed to send it on to the GPC under the supervision of Ms. Byars, who serves on that committee. also. Mr. Hart reported that most respondents to our questionnaire had favored our plans and had indicated that they had derived chief benefit from the practical guidance offered in the pedagogical courses.
5. Mr. Cameron recalled that page 2 of the syllabus introduces the grading criteria statement by declaring that student papers "will be graded" according to it. This introduction, he said, has prompted some instructors to regard the criteria sheet as official policy and to distribute it as such to their students rather than devise their own standards, as the committee had intended. This movement toward an official set of criteria, he added, suggests that we might do well to reconsider the current statement with an eye to producing a new one that all instructors could accept.

Dr. Newcomb, Ms. Byars, and Mr. Creel each proposed that we make clear to instructors that the statement in the syllabus contains merely suggested criteria. Dr. Kinneavy said that we could do this next semester by inserting the word suggested in the syllabus along with a note clarifying our intentions and then consider changing the

criteria later for the following year. Mr. Cameron agreed, adding that parts of the current statement may not fully apply to some 306 paper assignments.

Dr. Trimble said that the committee actually had intended for instructors to pass the sheet out to their students if they felt that it reflected their own standards. But we shouldn't, he continued, nor can we legislate criteria for teachers; they will do what they deem best anyway. He granted that the current criteria may seem too rigorous, but demonstrated some ways that it might be rendered less offensive and more intelligible to students.

Dr. Kinneavy created a subcommittee of Dr. Trimble, Mr. Cameron, and Ms. Byars to consider the grading criteria problem.

6. Dr. Kinneavy then created a swell of reluctance in the room: he observed that the committee could make history (and, one member silently added, establish a precedent) by adjourning early. Mr. Creel wondered about discussing Mr. Swift's publishing proposal, Dr. Trimble mentioned the syllabus itself, and Dr. Kinneavy noted that questions about the syllabus are logically prior to those about its publication--but the meeting was nevertheless adjourned at 11:44.