

# English lecturers question hiring on short notice

**Editor's Note:** This is the second of a three-part series examining controversies surrounding the UT English lecturers' positions. Today's article focuses on why every semester some lecturers are hired on short notice.

By LAURA FISHER  
Daily Texan Staff

Although unpredictable enrollment and budget restraints were primarily responsible this year, as in past years, for the late hiring of lecturers in the Department of English, some lecturers still question the policies regarding their reappointments.

Lecturers do not accrue tenure and are appointed on a year-to-year basis.

Joseph Kruppa, associate professor of English and associate chairman of the Department of English, said 22 lecturers were hired in mid-March, 13 in mid-June, 14 on Aug. 23 and 16 between Aug. 30 and Sept. 9.

A lecturer points out that to not be told until the Saturday before classes begin if or what one will be teaching leaves inadequate time to order textbooks and prepare a syllabus.

This "nightmare" of last-minute hiring "is built into the system, into the way we run admissions and registration ... we would like to see a much earlier admissions deadline," Kruppa said.

Last year the Department of English urged the University to consider estab-

lishing an admissions deadline of May 1. The administration changed the deadline for fall 1982 from July 1 to June 1.

With the new admissions requirements implemented this year, predicting the "show rate," that is, the percentage of students who actually register for classes once they gain admittance to the University, was especially difficult, said Mike Barron, assistant director of admissions.

"It seemed we had a fewer number of freshmen and transfer students because the number of applications was down ... but we had a larger summer enrollment than usual of freshmen ... (who) met admissions requirements to begin in the summer but not in the fall and so (by continuing in the fall) ducked in under the wire," Barron said.

"We would like to be given the opportunity to say 'we can offer X number of classes' (in the spring)," Kruppa said. Because enrollment "... literally changes day-to-day," lecturers cannot be hired much earlier than they are.

When being considered for reappointment, lecturers are ranked numerically by the Executive Committee of the Department of English according to student evaluations of the lecturers. Those with higher rankings are supposed to be given priority in hiring and therefore rehired earliest.

But one lecturer who asked not to be identified, said, "I know that a number

of lecturers with lower evaluations were hired ahead of me. ... They do not use evaluations — that I'm sure of." He said he believes student evaluations do not count as much as "contacts" when it comes to rehiring.

In comparing his evaluations with those of other lecturers, it seemed that with his "upper percentile" rankings he had fared well.

"I thought I had it (a fall position) in the bag. But then three weeks before school started I hadn't heard anything and began wondering," he said.

Although in his first year at the University he was notified of his hiring in April, this year he was not told until Aug. 28 he was hired.

Kruppa, however, said, "I'd have to have specific evidence of that. We don't consciously or unconsciously hire lecturers with low (evaluations) over (those with) higher evaluations."

Lecturers are not told their rankings. Several suggested the University does not want lower-ranked lecturers to leave in case they are needed should more students than were expected enroll in English courses during late registration.

To reveal the numerical rankings would be "counter-productive" as it would lead to "guessing games among the lecturers" as to why one received a fractionally different score from another, Kruppa said.

However, lecturers argue it would be more "humane" and less "insulting" to divulge the list, so those with lower rankings and therefore less chance of reappointment could cultivate other options for the fall.

"I don't know what can be served by the secrecy," said Clifford Endres, a lecturer in English.

Hiring lecturers early would be fine unless fewer students than were anticipated enrolled in English courses, Robert King, dean of the College of Liberal Arts, said. The newly hired lecturers would have to be laid off as it would be unfair to have a below-average student-teacher ratio in English classes when business school classes are "bursting at the seams."

Below-average student teacher ratios could also result if more permanent faculty positions were created, he said.

However, "no state university is ever appropriated (by the Legislature) enough money for permanent faculty positions in English," King said.

"I like my job except for the lack of job security ... I'd be delighted to have three-year renewable contracts," said one lecturer who asked not to be identified.

King also favors three-year renewable contracts but said that by law state positions are good for one year only.

**Wednesday: Problems with the lecturers' workload.**