

Dec. 1, 1992

To: English Department committee members on the Rhetoric and Composition Division

From: Evan Carton and Terry Kelley

This is a draft of the statement that we drew up to address departmental concerns about the proposed Division and to present to the EC on Thursday. It represents our understanding of the general attitudes and commitments of our committee and of its hopes for the governing principles of the Division. All of us on the committee may not agree on every point and anything can be deleted or changed, but we felt that this statement would be effective in helping win EC cooperation with the immediate agenda for and of the Division. Please bring any revisions and suggestions to our committee meeting tomorrow morning. We understand that our plan is to distribute a final version of this statement, combined with the other components being drafted by other committee members, to EC members' mailboxes after the committee meeting tomorrow morning.

JOHN R.

Status Report

English Department Committee on the Division of Rhetoric and Composition

At this point in our meetings as a departmental committee, and in our meetings as the departmental contingent of the committee to advise Dean King on the formation of a Division of Rhetoric and Composition, we have come to feel that the potential exists both for a closely cooperative relationship between the governing bodies of the English Department and those of the proposed Division and for the accrual of benefits to the Department in the establishment of such a relationship. It is important to preface this report by reiterating that most of the members of the departmental committee remain deeply troubled by the process (or lack of it) that led to the University administration's commitment to this Division. Nonetheless, we believe that the shape of that Division and the nature and success of its operations now lie principally in the hands of members of the English Department (especially those specialists in rhetoric and composition who form the core of this departmental committee), people with a continuing stake in the quality and collegiality of the Department and in the welfare of all of its students and programs. Accordingly, this committee has already taken steps, which it expects to formalize in the ultimate definition of the Division, to address the concerns that many English Department members have expressed at the Department meeting earlier this fall, at University Council and Faculty Senate meetings, and elsewhere.

We are committed to, and believe that the Department may be reasonably assured of, the following:

1. That the Division will be run neither by the dean (Dean King himself will have departed before it becomes fully operational) nor by an autocratic director but by a committee that will be composed principally of current--and continuing--English Department faculty (faculty who will eventually have split appointments of varying sorts in the Department and the Division but who will inevitably wish and need to remain engaged Department members); that the Division's governing committee will function democratically; and that the Division committee will work cooperatively with the English Department executive committee on matters of mutual concern and possibly, by charter, will have members in common with it.
2. That the English Department graduate program, its graduate teaching assistantships and assistant instructorships, and its graduate admission committee's ability to award these instructorships based on promise and merit will not be jeopardized; that instructors in lower division writing courses in the Division will be drawn principally, as they are now, from

students in the English Department's graduate program; that Assistant Insatstructors will not be replaced by lecturers; and that supervision of graduate instructors and teaching opportunities in the writing program are likely to be enhanced, rather than diminished, under the Division.

3. That more resources in the form of additional faculty hires, staff support, instructional technology, the possible re-establishment of a writing lab and tutorial positions for graduate students within it, and general attentiveness by the University administration to English Department, as well as Rhetoric and Composition Division, needs may be expected as a result of the administration's public stake in, and of the Department's cooperation with, the Division.