

Faculty called education's enemy

By DAVID SHARPE
Texan Staff Writer

(Editor's Note: this is the second of a three-part series about the University teaching assistant (TA) situation.)

Dr. James Sledd of the English department believes professors prefer to concentrate on research and publication rather than instructing freshmen and sophomores.

The faculty has become the "primary enemy to education," wanting to make itself the "brains of the interlocking bureaucracies," he said.

In the March-April, 1976, *Alcalde*, Sledd wrote, undergraduate education is damaged because "UT assigns its high-priced teachers to the student who least needs teaching, not to the freshmen and sophomores who need help the most."

Dr. Roger Abrahams, chairman of the English department, conceded Sledd's statement about faculty devoting more time to research and not teaching was "in the main correct." "A much greater weight is put on scholarly activity than whether we teach

freshmen and sophomores successfully," he said.

However, he said that Sledd is incorrect in charging that the department had not made an attempt to get faculty members to accept their responsibility to teach lower-division courses. It has.

The department is also placing added weight on service and teaching in making promotion and salary decisions, Abrahams said.

However, in the spring of 1975 at an English department meeting the faculty rejected a motion that regular faculty be required to teach at least one course in writing (freshman, sophomore or upper-division) every three semesters.

Whether faculty or administration should assume responsibility for faculty devoting more time to research and publication and less time to teaching freshmen and sophomores is a matter of contention.

According to Prof. Maxine Hairston, former director of freshman English, the faculty spends a substantial amount of time doing research and publication, because the

reward system of the University has been such that tenure and promotion and professional prestige depend on publication in one's field.

Sledd said to blame the administration for setting the reward system is "rubbish." The criteria for advancement is determined by "organized professional academics."

Mike Rush, an assistant instructor, agrees with Sledd when he says the faculty ought to teach more. However, he defends the TA system and believes TAs should not be drastically reduced as Sledd wants. If that occurred, then

classes would get larger and informal contact with the teacher would dwindle, in his view.

"Why would classes get bigger?" Sledd asked.

The former supervisor of freshman English courses at the University said Rush assumed that the University would not spend the money needed to hire ranked faculty to teach freshmen and sophomores, and that freshmen and sophomores are not worth being taught by ranked faculty.

(Friday: The concluding article of the three-part series.)

Conference to study classroom discipline

"Discipline in the Classroom: Ideas That Work," will be the theme of a conference Thursday and Friday in the LBJ Auditorium.

The conference will start at 1 p.m. Thursday with opening remarks by Dr. Demetri Vacalis, assistant professor of health, physical education and recreation, and Dr. Lorrin Kennamer, dean of the College of Education.

For more information interested persons may contact Vacalis at 471-4405. Tickets are \$10 and \$15. Registration is scheduled from 9 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. Thursday at the LBJ Auditorium.