

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT MEMORANDUM

September 18, 1979

TO: English Department Faculty

FROM: Joseph J. Moldenhauer, Chairman *JM*

SUBJECT: Recruitment Policy

I'll start by bootlegging into your field of view two announcements. (1) Norman Farmer assumed a place on the Executive Committee as of 12 September. He replaces Betty Sue Flowers, who resigned due to the demands upon her time of her new post as Associate Dean of the Graduate School. (2) Joe Malof is distributing this week a statement on the new departmental post of ombudsman. At Friday's meeting of the Department he will answer any questions you may have for him.

Tony Hilfer has prepared the following MLA Joblist copy in consultation with me and the Executive Committee. The deadline for receipt of copy for the October issue of the Joblist is 28 September. Since all the machinery and deadlines of the Department's recruiting effort are linked to the October announcement, it's essential that the Department make a commitment as to wording at Friday's meeting. Tony and the Executive Committee ecknowledge the possible advantages of an ongoing departmental discussion of recruitment policy; the proposed copy is framed so as to keep the Department's hands free for such deliberations.

UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

AUSTIN, TX 78712

Assistant Professorships possible: Creative writing; Technical writing; Linguistics; Folk Literature; British, American, Comparative Literature. All candidates must be able to teach basic courses in literature and in writing. Must have Ph.D. by June, 1980. Essential: strong commitment to Freshman-Sophomore teaching and prospects for first-class scholarship. Application by November 1, 1979. No exceptions to deadline.

Joseph J. Moldenhauer, Chairman AA/EOE

In the remainder of this memo and in a supplementary one I'll issue almost immediately, let me offer some factors that seem to me important as a context for thinking about recruitment at Friday's meeting and any subsequent meetings. Here and in the supplement I'll organize my points under broad headings.

Fields for Recruitment

1. Recent Recruitment Committees and Executive Committees have looked for high applicant quality and promise without specific reference to fields of specialization. The principle of "slots" has not been systematically applied. The Executive Committee avoids making appointments which exactly duplicate the field of specialization of a continuing faculty member. It avoids overloading a given field with Assistant Professors. If a field is very narrow, and student demand small, it avoids making an Assistant Professor appointment when a continuing tenured faculty member specializes in that area. The Executive Committee has been stressing the value of second fields and versatility.
2. True specialists in composition and rhetoric--the only area where student demand regularly exceeds regular faculty capability--are scarce and in high demand. A true specialist is a person with a doctoral degree in that specialty, and publication in theoretical and applied aspects of the field. Many applicants with degrees and dissertations in literature and language have a strong second interest in, and competence for, rhetoric and composition.
3. I would be suspicious of any applicant for a faculty position here who declared an incompetence at teaching either basic expository writing or basic interpretation of literature. We are, after all, a Department of English.
4. The present policy of this Department, endorsed by the Dean, is to involve the regular faculty in the composition program to the maximum extent consistent with the health of the upper-division literature and language offering and the graduate program.

Definition of "Need"

1. Need for faculty can be defined absolutely in terms of staffing capability versus student demand in our various courses, fields, programs. By this standard, only composition, including technical writing, is consistently a "need" field.
2. Need for faculty can be defined relatively in terms of the extent of involvement of the staff in a given field in the upper-division and graduate course of their specialty. If the faculty in a given field is so closely adjusted to student demand for upper-division and graduate courses in the specialty that these faculty members share less than other colleagues in the teaching of "service" courses--composition and Introduction to Literature--a relative need for faculty in that field can be identified. Fields where present faculty habitually have 50% to 100% of their annual teaching assignments in specialized upper-division and graduate courses include--besides Rhetoric and Composition--Creative Writing, Lang-ling, and Folklore.
3. Need can be further defined quantitatively in terms of average section size, with allowance made for the appropriate differences in section size for a writing course and a literature course. By this standard, post-civil-war American literature and perhaps other areas can be identified as fields of need.

4. Need can be abstractly defined in terms of an idealized curriculum. If, however, sufficient numbers of students aren't induced or required to register for a course deemed essential to a program, that course will not run.

5. Need can be qualitatively defined in terms of talent and accomplishment of the continuing faculty and new applicants in a given field of teaching and research or creative effort.