

DOCUMENTS AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE FACULTY SENATE

MINUTES OF THE FACULTY SENATE

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

MARCH 13, 1978

The first "special" meeting of the Faculty Senate for the academic year 1977-78 was held in Room 212 of the Main Building at 2:15 P. M. on March 13, 1978.

Chairman William Livingston (Government) presided at the meeting.

I. ATTENDANCE

Present: Barbara Aldave, Rebecca Baltzer, L. Joe Berry, Sinclair Black, John Bordie, Robert Brooks, Patricia Cain, Vincente Cantarino, Heather Carter, C. T. Clark, James Daniel, Mitzi Dreher, Wm. Duesterhoeft, John Durbin, Donald Foss, Bill Francis, David Gavenda, Austin Gleeson, Philip Gough, Robert Hardgrave, Clark Hubbs, William Livingston, Neill Megaw, Thomas Philpott, Kenneth Prescott, Mary Ann Rankin, Bonnie Rickelman, James Sledd, Larry Tomassini, James Vick, Glenn Welsch, Ralph White, Martha Williams, Gary Wise, Lee Worrell, Ron Wyllys.

Absent: George Blanco (excused), John Breen, Michel Breger, John Brokaw (excused), Lyle Clark (excused), William Glade (excused), Charles Holahan (excused), Ira Iscoe (excused), Paul Kelley (excused), William Lesso (excused), Alan Ross (excused), Waneen Spirduso, Kenneth Stokoe (excused), David Warner, Leslie Willson, Susan Wittig, Orville Wyss (excused).

Total members present: 36

Total members absent: 17

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

None.

III. REPORTS OF OFFICERS

A. Report of Chairman

Chairman Livingston (Government) first announced that the Senate resolution which urged the Board of Regents to initiate procedures for presidential selection had been sent to Governor Shivers. As yet, no response had been received.

Next it was reported that the report on Grade Inflation, (undertaken by the Senate and acted upon by the University Council) had been protested by a sufficient number of faculty members to warrant a called meeting of the General Faculty.

Finally, Mr. Livingston reported on the membership of the Senate Committee on Plagiarism. Serving with Donald Foss (Psychology), previously appointed chairman, will be Professors Vick (Mathematics) and Glade (Economics). The committee will work closely with the University Standing Committee on Discipline (Policies) in order to avert duplication of effort.

B. Report of Vice-Chairman -- None.

C. Report of Secretary -- None.

IV. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

- A. Report from Committee on Ways and Means to Implement General Faculty Resolutions Concerning Faculty Workloads and Teaching Assistants -- Philip Gough (D&P 1198-1208)

Discussion began on revised recommendations 7 - 10 (concerned with Teaching Assistants) of the Gough Committee Report. (The revised recommendations are shown in Appendix B of the Minutes for the Faculty Senate meeting on March 6, 1978, D&P). Philip Gough (Psychology) first introduced recommendations 7 - 10 which concern Teaching Assistants. "We think it is essential that the University continue to make use of Teaching Assistants. There are a few other means by which graduate study at this University is subsidized. Our graduate students in many instances are apprentice faculty and need training in teaching, and we think the use of Teaching Assistants is entirely healthy and entirely justifiable. At the same time, we think that Teaching Assistants at the University have been, in too many cases, unprepared, overworked, and underpaid. And we think something must be done about these things. We considered at great length what might be done about these matters, and [revised] recommendations [7 - 10 resulted] In order to assure that no unqualified graduate student is placed in front of a class, we suggested [REVISED RECOMMENDATION 7]:

- (7) No Teaching Assistant shall be permitted to assume major responsibility for any class at the University, with the exception of laboratory or discussion sections clearly labeled as such.

"In addition, when a Teaching Assistant has shown to be qualified through registration in 398T or prior experience . . . to be qualified to [teach] a class, that Teaching Assistant should be promoted to an Assistant Instructor. So the eighth [REVISED] RECOMMENDATION is:

- (8) An appointment to the rank of Assistant Instructor to teach a given course shall require prior departmental certification of qualification to teach that course.

"Next we are concerned that too many of our departments, while accepting the idea that [many] Teaching Assistants are here to become . . . faculty members, in too many cases [have simply used Teaching Assistants to replace faculty members]. We think that one symptom of this is that when Teaching Assistants are given responsibility for courses, it is almost without exception the very lowest, the very first course offered by a department; they're seldom, too seldom in our view, given an opportunity to teach or even assist in more advanced courses in their discipline. We're not prepared to make any judgments about any individual department nor to think of any regulation which could be applied uniformly to the various departments at the University, so we framed our ninth [REVISED] RECOMMENDATION simply as an admonition, if you will, that:

- (9) Every department shall carefully examine the possibility of training its graduate students to teach a wider range of courses, by giving them the opportunity to assist, and even to lecture, in such courses. To serve this purpose, it shall be possible for a graduate student simultaneously to hold appointments as Teaching Assistant and Assistant Instructor in different courses.

"Finally with respect to Teaching Assistants, we are concerned that Teaching Assistants have been taken advantage of. It seems clear that the demand on the part of the Graduate School that any graduate student . . . employed by the University must [be registered for] 9 hours [of coursework], coupled with the requirement in many departments that a graduate assistant may be asked to take on complete responsibility for two different sections of a given course, amounts to what is in many instances an overload. We could come to no agreement on how to settle this issue. I would convey to you that the College of Humanities sent us . . . a request that we consider incorporating in our report the recommendation that the Graduate School drop

the nine-hour requirement for TAs. We did not do this; there were members of our committee who felt that the Graduate School's justification for the requirement--namely, that the primary purpose of the graduate student's presence here is to make good progress toward a degree--is an adequate justification of the rule, and . . . to relax that rule while allowing departments to continue to assign two teaching courses to the graduate students would not be in the best interest of graduate education. So we could come to no clear recommendation on this matter, and again we tried to invite . . . each department to consider carefully the plight in which its graduate students are to be found and to do what it can to ease their burdens. So our tenth [REVISED] RECOMMENDATION is:

- (10) Each department, with the active and meaningful participation of its graduate assistants, and in consultation with the Graduate School, shall determine the minimum number of hours per week required to carry out each of the duties it requires of its assistants as employees, and then guarantee that none is required to devote more hours per week to the total duties required than the number of hours for which the assistant is paid, and that the total demands on the student in terms of both teaching and graduate study shall not be exorbitant."

Mr. Gough then MOVED the adoption of REVISED RECOMMENDATIONS

7 - 10.

Mr. Worrell (Pharmacy) expressed the view that the wording of Revised Recommendation 7 minimized the importance of laboratory and discussion sessions. Mr. Gavenda's (Physics) interpretation of Revised Recommendation 7 was that laboratory and discussion sections implied supervision of the TA by a faculty member.

Mr. Prescott (Art) asked if the committee had access to the "President's study on TAs and Assistant Instructors which has been submitted to the deans, apparently approved, and will be instigated within the next six weeks." Mr. Gough responded negatively. Mr. Prescott then said that his understanding was that the new policy of the administration would be that "TAs will not teach regular classes, (those that have unique numbers), Assistant Instructors can, and TAs must take 398T before they can even apply for being a discussion leader. It seems to be a well-thought proposal, and it is germane to the questions being raised here and now." Mr. Prescott asked if other Senators were familiar with the soon-to-be implemented policy; apparently only one other Senator was.

Mr. Gavenda proposed an amendment to REVISED RECOMMENDATION 7, the effect of which was to replace the last four words with "which are supervised by a member of the regular faculty." The amendment was APPROVED without dissent.

There was then discussion about the variance in TA responsibilities, both inter- and intra-departmentally.

Mr. Gough reiterated that the committee had "no quarrel with the idea that some teaching responsibility in any department, and even extensive teaching responsibilities in certain departments, might be taken on by graduate assistants. Our concern is that the department be required to demonstrate that those graduate assistants are qualified to perform that task, and if they are, they should be promoted to Assistant Instructor."

After considerable discussion about a number of aspects of TA responsibilities, Mr. Brooks (RTF) offered another amendment to REVISED RECOMMENDATION 7. The Brooks amendment would cause the Recommendation to read:

- (7) No Teaching Assistant may be listed as the instructor of record or assume major responsibility for any course with a separate unique number at the University, with the exception of laboratory or discussion sections which are supervised by a member of the regular faculty."

Following a lengthy discussion, Mr. Sledd (English) stated that he could not take the Committee's recommendations seriously and that he felt argument was useless since, in his view, "the faculty is literally incapable of correcting the known abuses." He asked that the following interpretation be placed on the record.

"In the 1950's and 1960's, the big state universities very foolishly over extended their research. Under-graduate education suffered, and the universities came to depend on grants and contracts from outside sources, notably the federal government. Now the volume of those grants and contracts is greatly reduced, so that the universities are left with the tremendously expensive apparatus; and at the same time the tax-paying public has lost its confidence that the huge investment in higher education is justified by the visible results. The states are neither able nor willing to provide the subsidies which in flush times came from Washington.

"In this situation, the faculties are unable to make the necessary changes, because the faculties are selfishly involved. They are defending their position of unique privilege as the brains of the great interlocking bureaucracies, and they cannot acknowledge the fact that their position is indefensible. The special meetings of the faculty at U. T. Austin last spring were not called willingly and not attended willingly. The resolutions which were passed were designed to prevent intervention by the Legislature, and even so those resolutions would have failed if they had not been carefully left toothless. The Gough committee has been similarly reluctant. During its deliberations, one member came to me to complain that the committee was dragging its feet, another to report that the Chairman of the Senate had refused a suggestion that a meeting of the Senate be devoted to the exploration of the evidence of abuses; and the committee's report strikes me as proposing the absolute minimum of concession to unfavorable public and legislative opinion, with no real desire or intent to make the really fundamental changes which in my view are necessary. Even so, the Senate's final action on the report will have no binding force whatever; and action by the Council, the President, and the Regents, if it ever comes, cannot possibly come until next year. Meanwhile the Senate's talk about reform will be publicized as evidence that all is now well at U. T. Austin.

"I do not believe that what I have said is applicable only to U. T. Austin. On the contrary, I think that the big state universities work together for common ends in a crisis in which they are all involved. I think their efforts to maintain their privilege will fail, because the money they demand is simply not available any longer and because the tax-payers do not believe that the universities' service to the people justifies the costs which the people are asked to pay. If all that is true, then legislative intervention is inevitable, and changes will be forced upon us, whether or not we like them; but more argument here will serve no purpose."

Ms. Baltzer asked if he would be content to see the Legislature step in; Mr. Sledd replied that he had done his best to bring about such intervention.

REVISED RECOMMENDATION 7 as amended was then ADOPTED unanimously by a voice vote.

Attention next turned to REVISED RECOMMENDATION 9:

(9) Every department shall carefully examine the possibility of training its graduate students to teach a wider range of courses by giving them the opportunity to assist, and even to lecture, in such courses. To serve this purpose, it shall be possible for a graduate student simultaneously to hold appointments as Teaching Assistant and Assistant Instructor in different courses.

Donald Foss (Psychology) proposed an amendment to REVISED RECOMMENDATION 9, the effect of which was to add the following sentence:

"It shall also be possible for an individual to be appointed to the rank of Assistant Instructor at any time during the year."

After some discussion, the Foss amendment was ADOPTED unanimously.

Mr. Brooks then proposed another amendment to the just-amended REVISED RECOMMENDATION 9, which would change it to read:

(9) Every department shall carefully examine the possibility of providing opportunities for its graduate students to teach a wider range of courses, by giving them the opportunity to assist, and even to lecture, in such courses provided they are certified by the department as being qualified to do so. It shall also be possible for an individual to be appointed to the rank of Assistant Instructor at any time during the year.

After a lengthy discussion, the amendment proposed by Mr. Brooks was ADOPTED.

Once again there was discussion about the extant variation in responsibilities of graduate student assistants. Mr. Gavenda (Physics) said he thought it a legislative requirement that persons designated T.A.'s or A. I.'s were required to teach. Other Senators did not agree with that interpretation.

After further discussion, Mr. Foss decided that the sentence his amendment added to REVISED RECOMMENDATION 9 more properly should have been added to REVISED RECOMMENDATION 8. He MOVED that this change be made, and the motion was APPROVED.

Mr. Megaw then introduced two amendments--the first to REVISED RECOMMENDATION 8, the second to REVISED RECOMMENDATION 9. He MOVED that the recommendations be changed as follows:

(8) An appointment to the rank of Assistant Instructor [to-teach-a-given course] shall require prior departmental certification of qualification to teach [that] at least one course. Separate certification shall be required for each new course taught thereafter by the Assistant Instructor. It shall also be possible for an individual to be appointed to the rank of Assistant Instructor at any time during the year.

(9) Every department should carefully examine the possibility of providing opportunities for its graduate students to teach a wider range of courses, by giving them the opportunity to assist, and even to lecture, in such courses provided they are certified by the department as being qualified to do so. To effect this purpose it shall be possible for the Assistant Instructor to serve in a Teaching Assistant capacity in more advanced courses (without a unique number for that Teaching Assistant in that course) without any reduction in stipend.

Discussion of the Megaw amendments and other issues related to the conditions of TA/AI employment followed. The discussion was halted when Mr. Sledd (English) asked for a quorum call. There being no quorum present the Senate adjourned at 4:15 P. M. to meet next on April 3, 1978, at 2:15 P. M. in MAIN 212.

A brief summation of action/inaction follows. The main motion to adopt REVISED RECOMMENDATIONS 7 - 10 was still on the floor. REVISED RECOMMENDATION 7 had been amended and adopted. REVISED RECOMMENDATION 8 had been amended. REVISED RECOMMENDATION 9 had been amended. Two additional amendments, one each to REVISED RECOMMENDATIONS 8 and 9, had been moved but not acted upon. REVISED RECOMMENDATION 10 had not been debated.

H. Paul Kelley, Secretary
The Faculty Senate

Distributed to members of the Faculty Senate and to Members of the General Faculty who want Minutes on August 29, 1979