

April 4, 1973

TO: Stephen H. Spurr, President of The University of Texas at Austin

FROM: Concerned women of the University staff, faculty, and student body
and concerned Austin community women

We hereby request to meet with you, the head administrative officer of the University, in order to discuss the status of women on this campus.

We are turning to you because several women have called the Committee on the Status of Women only to learn that this committee no longer handles individual complaints. We turn to you because you are the person with whom final responsibility lies for administration policies.

We specifically wish to discuss with you the following matters:

1. Although the University has had eighteen months to prepare an Affirmative Action Plan to eliminate discrimination, both of the University plans submitted have been unacceptable to the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. Why has the University failed to develop a program to end sexual discrimination?

2. In October, 1971, the Department of Health, Education and Welfare ruled that Janet Berry had been discriminated against on the basis of sex. The University was ordered by HEW to promote Janet Berry to associate professor and to pay her a salary commensurate with that rank and with her years of service. Why has the University failed to comply with this ruling?

3. Two University employees who protested sexual discrimination in the University seem to have suffered administrative reprisals. We are extremely concerned that such administrative actions may serve to intimidate other University employees who may wish to file complaints against the University.

Jennie S. Liston and William Berry have been fired without adequate explanation for their dismissals.

Although Jennie S. Liston has appealed to you according to the Grievances and Appeals Procedures, Par. 6.9, Board of Regents Rules and Regulations for University Employees, in a letter dated January 8, 1973, you have yet to respond.

Mr. Berry, the husband of Janet Berry, was given no reasons for the termination of his contract as Assistant Professor of Art, in spite of numerous requests by the national and local American Association of University Professors that Mr. Berry be given a hearing and be supplied with reasons for his dismissal.

Why has the University failed to furnish Ms. Liston and Mr. Berry with adequate explanations for their dismissals?

4. Women have been denied proportional representation on policy-making committees affecting their employment and their studies. Why are women not fairly represented on these committees? No standing committee of The University of Texas at Austin is chaired by a woman. Why not?

April 18, 1973

The University can no longer afford to pursue policies which discriminate against women faculty, women staff, and women students. Because the University administration has been unable to develop a successful Affirmative Action Plan to eliminate this discrimination, and because the University administration has failed to handle in a fair and proper manner the specific charges of sexual discrimination in the cases of Janet Berry and Jennie Liston, we petition you to meet with us to discuss steps the University might take to eliminate sexual discrimination. It seems reasonable to us that within the next two weeks you could find time to speak with us about this crucial matter.