

Faculty okays compromise on workload

By JULIE FERNANDEZ

Staff Writer

The General Faculty of the University of Texas Thursday unanimously accepted a resolution that, in effect, would offer a compromise to the faculty workload requirement being considered by the state legislature.

Thursday's meeting was forced by a petition drive headed by associate history professor Dr. Tom Philpott to approve officially two resolutions passed by a straw vote at an emergency meeting last week. A quorum of the faculty was not present at that meeting.

Faculty members Thursday endorsed a statement that would "clarify ... and improve" existing mechanisms for continuous review of the university's teaching assistants and teaching workload.

The resolution came in the wake of a House hearing on House Bill 833 dealing with the use of teaching assistants in universities. The bill, introduced by West Texas Rep. John Hoestenbach, has passed out of the House Higher Education Committee.

Faculty members also unanimously approved a resolution commending English professor James L. Kinneavy on his analysis of HB 833. He outlined its potential impact on UT.

The analysis revealed that the bill would bring on "radical changes in instructional techniques" by throwing students into huge and impersonal classes. The university, says Kinneavy, would also be forced to hire a substantial number of full-time faculty to meet the required reduction in teaching assistants.

English professor James Sledd, a critic of the TA system, favored the compromise resolution Thursday.

The proposal projects improved use of the TAs and assistant instructors, making sure they are not "overused or used in inappropriate courses."

In a third unanimous vote Thursday, the General Faculty passed Philpott's resolution to commend the state Senate subcommittee on nominations for its inquiry into gubernatorial appointments to the UT Board of Regents.

The subcommittee recently approved the appointments of regents Jess Hay, Jane Blumberg and Dr. Sterling Fly Jr.