



OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

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June 13, 2007

Dr. Sue Greninger
Secretary
The General Faculty and Faculty Council
WMB 2.102 (F9500)

Dear Sue:

I write to you regarding the Faculty Council "Proposal to Improve Course Availability for Undergraduates," *Documents of the General Faculty* 3835-3837. The proposal was approved by the Faculty Council on May 9, 2005 and was reviewed by then Executive Vice President and Provost Sheldon Ekland-Olson (cf. his letter of January 19, 2006 to then President Larry R. Faulkner). At my request, it was reviewed again this spring by Executive Vice President and Provost Steve Leslie (cf. his letter of April 10, 2007 to me). The proposal makes five recommendations, the details of which are in the legislation itself. In their respective letters regarding the legislation, Dr. Ekland-Olson and Dr. Leslie made recommendations about each of the five items.

1. Create a new symbol, *N*, that is assigned when a student drops a class for a documented non-academic reason

Both Dr. Ekland-Olson and Dr. Leslie have recommended approval. I note, however, that the Texas Legislature passed Senate Bill 1231 ("An act relating to dropping courses and student withdrawals at institutions of higher education, including the refunding of tuition and mandatory fees") in the session just concluded. Before I take action on this Faculty Council proposal, I am asking Provost Leslie to work with Mr. Shelby Stanfield, Registrar, to review the proposal in light of Senate Bill 1231 and provide a further recommendation after that review.

2. Adopt four changes in the add and drop policy for all undergraduate courses

Both Dr. Ekland-Olson and Dr. Leslie have recommended disapproval of this item. I concur.

3. Require faculty to provide students a course syllabus with specified information by the first meeting day of all classes

Both Dr. Ekland-Olson and Dr. Leslie have recommended approval but with modifications to the list of information specified in the original proposal. In his response, Dr. Leslie recommended that the following information be required in the syllabus.

- a. Course number and name
- b. Faculty member's name
- c. Faculty member's office location and office hours
- d. Name of teaching assistant (if any) and the office location and office hours of the teaching assistant
- e. Overview of the course, including course prerequisites
- f. Grading policy for the course, including information about whether class attendance will be used in determining the grade
- g. Dates during the semester for quizzes, examinations, and assignments that will count for 20% or more of the total course grade
- h. Date and time of the final examination
- i. Required materials for the course (e.g., textbooks, supplies, packets, etc.)
- j. Course Web site
- k. The statement:

The University of Texas at Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact Services for Students with Disabilities at 471-6259 (voice) or 232-2937 (video phone).

I approve Dr. Leslie's recommendation.

4. Adopt a new course repeat policy for all undergraduate courses

Both Dr. Ekland-Olson and Dr. Leslie have recommended disapproval of this item. I concur.

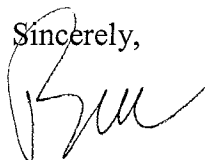
5. Require a student who has received three *Qs* [drops without academic penalty] to have documented, non-academic reasons for any additional drops after the fourth class day of the semester

Both Dr. Ekland-Olson and Dr. Leslie have recommended approval of this item with the modification that the limit be increased to four *Qs*. Before I take

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action on this Faculty Council proposal, however, I am asking Provost Leslie to work with the Registrar to review the proposal in light of Senate Bill 1231 and provide a further recommendation after that review. (See also no. 1, above.)

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "W Powers, Jr.", written in a cursive style.

William Powers, Jr.
President

WP/sl

cc: Dr. Steve Leslie, Executive Vice President and Provost
Mrs. Patricia Ohlendorf, Vice President for Institutional Relations & Legal Affairs
Dr. Charles Roeckle, Deputy to the President
Dr. Terri Givens, Vice Provost
Mr. Shelby Stanfield, Registrar
Ms. Laura Kobler, Office of the Registrar
Debbie Roberts, Senior Administrative Associated, Office of the General Faculty
Faculty Council Executive Committee