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Iranian Aggies

Precaution key to new admissions policy

By MERIL EDWARDS Battalion Reporter

Texas A&M University will continue to admit Iranian students, according to Admissions and Records Dean Edwin H. Cooper.

"It is not our policy to exclude Iranians from enrolling here," Cooper said. "Unfortunately, there has been some misunderstanding about our position."

Cooper said because of the recent turmoil in Iran, the University is proceeding with unusual caution in admitting Iranians.

"We cannot be certain of the validity of credentials we receive from Iran," he said. "In times of crisis when people are trying to leave, transcripts are a passport out of the country. Buying transcripts and producing and selling false records is more commonly done."

Cooper said Iranian students are also having difficulty getting money to pay fees.

"It's sad for a student to get here and then not have enough money to pay room and board," he said. "I've seen it happen. Then they can't go to school and are illegally in the United States. I don't want to be a part of that."

Cooper said the Iranian Embassy in Washington told Texas A&M University it will attempt to pay the support of currently enrolled students, but will not take on new students who can't pay.

Cooper said this precautionary procedure is temporary and there has been no official change in policy or admissions.

In a memorandum dated April 6,

Cooper asked Loyd Taylor, associate director of admissions, to maintain contact with appropriate organizations and agencies to determine when it will be feasible to resume normal admission procedures.

Of the 1,150 international students enrolled at Texas A&M, 94 (or 8.6 percent) are Iranian.

"Considering we normally enroll students from about 75 countries, we feel that admission to Iranian students has been more than equitable," Cooper said.

Cooper said he foresees no decrease in the number of Iranian students in the next school year.

"We had 2,700 Iranians apply to A&M last fall," he said. "I expect about the same number this fall. Many of them are already in the United States and can easily transfer. If a student is doing superior work in English and can pay his fees then he is eligible to be admitted if his records are credible."

Cooper said the University tries to maintain a balance, a mix in international students. He said Texas A&M tries to have a reasonable proportion and an equal distribution of students from other countries.

Cooper said as of Tuesday, only one Iranian student had been in to see him about the policy. A delegation of students representing the International Students Association went to see Cooper a couple of weeks ago to see what the University policy was.

Elia Tasca, president of ISA said the group decided to endorse the

administration's policy contingent on the administration setting up a policy framework.

"The real test if the administration acted in good faith," Tasca said, "will come when we see if the proportion of Iranians declines or remains."

The Society of Iranian Students (SIS) has also spoken to Cooper. In a letter written Friday to the admissions and records office and in an open letter sent to The Battalion, Iranian students asked Cooper to explain in greater detail the basis for his hesitation in admitting Iranians.

"It bears mentioning," the letter said, "that the young government of Iran has been recognized as the legitimate government by the United States, and that this summary decision to bar Iranian students admission violates the comity which exists between legitimate governments."

SIS also asked what sources of information are available to the administration.

"If your decision is based on accounts of Iran as they appear in the media," the letter said, "we would like to point out that what appears in the press and TV is a concentration of selective and distorted events. According to reports from the Iranian officials as well as private sources, by and large the country has functioned smoothly even through the height of the revolution."

SIS said it wants to know if there has been any incidence of falsified

records or any other concrete reason to suspect the validity of academic documents under the new government.

Cooper said he will do his best to clarify and explain to the Iranians the administration's precaution.

"The position we have taken," Cooper said, "is no different from that we would take with regard to applicants from any country where

current political, social or economic conditions exist that preclude an accurate evaluation of all credentials required for admission."

The president of SIS, Ali Naraghi, said "the current policy does not seem fair."

"That is why we wrote the letter," he said. "We want more explanation. It seems like we are being discriminated against."



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Drive less now or shiver later

Whatever their differences, government and oil industry spokesmen agree on one thing — Americans either will drive less this summer or shiver more when the snow flies.

Energy Secretary James Schlesinger said Tuesday the government may have to force oil refiners to cut back on gasoline production and make more heating oil.

He told a House energy subcommittee the nation's stock of heating oil "is at a historically low level, below the minimum level acceptable," and said the government "may have to turn to mandatory orders" to assure priorities.

In New York, Charles J. Dibona, president of the Oil Industry Trade Association, was in accord with Schlesinger.

"Home heating oil stocks must be built up, which could significantly impair the oil companies' ability to meet gasoline demand this summer," he said. "Weekend closings of service stations are a reasonable probability."

He said oil stocks now stand at 112 million barrels — "an all-time record low for this time of year" — and they must be raised to 224 million barrels by winter.

Expectation of gasoline shortages, however, was about the only accord

between the White House and the oil industry as battle lines formed on Capitol Hill over President Carter's windfall profits tax amid reports of huge oil profit margins.

Exxon was the first to report, detailing first-quarter profits of \$995 million, up 37.4 percent. Other companies were quick to match or top the Exxon tally — among them, Texaco, up 81 percent; Gulf, up 61 percent; Marathon, up 108 percent.

President Carter, who charged Monday the oil lobby was pressuring Congress to pass a well-loopholed version of his windfall profits tax, seized upon the reports as proof the industry has adequate profits now. He said oil companies were trying to "hoodwink the American people" and turn the tax measure into "a charade."

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