

Local/State

Defining professors' responsibilities is difficult task

By TRACEY BUCHANAN
Battalion Reporter
Ask any university professor what his job entails, and he will reply: Teaching, research and service — three small words that are hard to juggle and next to impossible to conquer.

Nevertheless that is a professor's job, and the majority say the three facets are necessary in order to make Texas A&M one of the best schools in the country. They are usually required to excel in at least two of the three areas in order to be considered for promotion and tenure. Tenure assures a faculty member that he

will continue in an academic position. Faculty members are considered for tenure after a certain period of time, which normally doesn't exceed seven years. Some faculty members are hired solely for teaching or research and can not qualify for tenure. For example, faculty titles "lecturer" or "instructor" are usually on a non-tenure track and are involved only in teaching. Some faculty who work at the Texas Engineering Experiment Station are hired to do research only.

Charles Hix, dean of the College of Architecture and Environmental Design.

Teachers in the architecture college don't have to be involved in research and publication to be promoted, he said. To be promoted to a full professor, though, a teacher must be nationally recognized in his field.

Rod O'Connor, assistant professor of chemistry, said that although it is formally and official-

the department and then sign a letter of agreement based on those terms.

"If they (University administrators) don't (change the reward system), we're going to have the worst undergraduate lower division teaching program in the state of Texas," O'Connor said. "That's where I think we're headed."

The question of which comes first — teaching or research — varies with the philosophies of the

Teaching is almost equally as important, but it takes much more time to be recognized."

The route to promotion is explained to faculty by the department heads either informally, through personal interviews and departmental meetings, or formally, through individually written guidelines.

Even when a written guideline is used, it isn't detailed. For instance, it would not specify 44 percent of a teacher's time must go to research, 35 percent to teaching and 21 percent to service or administrative work.

"I never like to tell a man exactly what's expected of him because that's what he tends to do," said Gordon R. Hopkins, department head of mechanical engineering.

Research can get in the way of doing an effective job just like other responsibilities can, he said. However, it is not a matter of sacrificing teaching for research.

"We're not just hiring teachers at A&M," Hopkins said. "High schools hire teachers. Universities hire leaders in their fields."

R. Alan Wiley, assistant profes-

sor of economics, said quality people don't have a problem doing research and teaching. Aspects are necessary to have a nationally strong college, he said.


William Bassichis, associate professor of physics, said the university needs to establish an atmosphere conducive to teaching and research in order to achieve its goals. "There is a punishment for a guy who does a crappy job of teaching, but a guy who does a similar job in research is in big trouble."

"To stand up once a year and say, 'You people are doing a good job teaching and we appreciate it,' won't hack it," he said.

Defining good research and good teaching is more difficult than deciding whether or not they are necessary.

Faculty members have periodic departmental meetings to discuss their goals and to evaluate their past performance. These meetings, along with self-evaluations of the faculty members, evaluation and student evaluation, play a part in determining whether or not an individual is doing a good job.

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Insurance rate hike recommended

United Press International
AUSTIN — The State Board of Insurance staff recommended Thursday an average 6.2 percent statewide increase in property insurance rates, including an average 5 percent raise in the rates for homeowners' insurance.

The staff announced its recommendations for the first overall average property insurance increase since 1978 at the opening of the board's annual rate hearing.

The staff also recommended a change in the way the State Board of Insurance considers investment income earned by insurance com-

panies in determining insurance rates in Texas.

"The new approach effectively anticipates investment income to be earned by insurance companies, and directly includes these earnings in the rate development formula," said Gaylon Daniel, a staff actuary.

"As a consequence of this revised formula, the traditional 5 percent property insurance profit loading in the rates has been reduced to approximately 1.5 percent."

He said if the insurance board staff had used the old formula in

recommending new rates, the average statewide increase for property insurance would have been 11.4 percent rather than the 6.2 percent recommended by the staff.

The Texas Insurance Advisory Association, representing the insurance industry, is seeking a 11.3 percent statewide average increase for property insurance.

Under the staff proposal, the cost of a one-year policy for a \$25,000 brick-veneer home in central San Antonio or El Paso would rise from \$184 to 200. The

cost of the same policy on a similar home in central Dallas would rise from \$194 to \$212, a 9.3 percent jump.

The cost of a one-year policy on a \$50,000 brick-veneer home in south Houston would go from \$368 to \$371.

The largest price hike for the same policy on a similar home would be in Fort Worth and Dallas, where the cost would go from \$339 to \$371.

For brick-veneer homes costing \$75,000, the cost of a one-year

policy would go from \$470 to \$510 in central Waco and Fort Worth, from \$804 to \$812 in North Lubbock and from \$510 to \$515 in south Houston.

The cost of a one-year policy on fire and extended coverage on a \$50,000 brick-veneer home would go down in many locales under proposals.

Residents of northwest Lubbock could see their rates drop from \$430 to 425. Rates would drop 11.1 percent in south Houston, from \$234 to \$208 a year.

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Black U.S. judge refuses Klan bid for her removal

United Press International
HOUSTON — A black federal judge Thursday refused a Ku Klux Klan request that she withdraw from a lawsuit in which Vietnamese fishermen seek court protection from threats by the Klan and native Texas shrimpers.

"You are not entitled to a judge of your choice, but you are entitled to a judge who will give you a fair trial," U.S. District Judge Gabrielle K. McDonald told Klan leader Louis Beam.

"I am deeply committed to equal justice under the law and you will get it. You are entitled to nothing more and nothing less."

Beam, the Klan and native Texas fishermen represented by the Seabrook-Kemah Fishermen's Coalition are defendants in a lawsuit filed April 16 by the Vietnamese Fishermen's Association.

The defendants have complained about the influx of Vietnamese refugees, but deny plans for violent actions.

Beam said he doubted the defendants' chance of a fair trial before a black woman judge, who as a lawyer, handled civil rights cases. The defendants charged that the judge's law clerk favored the Vietnamese in an incident Tuesday.

"I have no confidence that I'd get a fair trial here any more than you might have in going before a trial by the KKK," Beam told the judge in testimony. "I know the prejudice of your people against the Klan."

"I have been a member of the Klan since 1969, since I returned from Vietnam. I have had ample opportunity to see the prejudice against whites who join the Klan. Everywhere I go, blacks holler death to KKK."

The Vietnamese lawsuit accuses the defendants of threats, intimidation and violence in order to eliminate the Vietnamese fishermen as competitors in Texas coastal fisheries. The suit seeks a court order and the protection of U.S.

marshals. Defense lawyers filed the motion asking the judge to disqualify herself after an alleged incident in which her law clerk, Charles Barber, asked Vietnamese fishermen were intimidated by Klan members wearing white robes to deposit hearings.

"I wanted to give you the benefit of the doubt," Beam said. "I wanted to wait and see if it would be impartial. I had no intention of filing this motion until the court showed its prejudice."

The judge denied giving Barber instructions to act improperly. Barber testified he intended an unfair action in favor of the plaintiffs. She said there was insufficient reason for her to shift duties to another judge.


A hearing was scheduled Monday on the plaintiff's request for preliminary injunction forbidding harassment of refugee fishermen.

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Embalming bill called outrageous

United Press International
AUSTIN — The Senate has refused to hear a controversial bill that would have required embalming if a person was buried within 24 hours of death.

The bill, which Wednesday passed a 14-12 vote to be heard, was sponsored by Sen. Grant Jones, D-Abilene. It was supported by the state's funeral directors.

Sen. Lloyd Doggett, D-Dallas, opponent of the bill, said it would have required that a body be embalmed within 24 hours of death or a special sealed container purchased for temporary storage.

State health officials have said embalming is not necessary in cases where the body does not pose a threat to public health.

Doggett said the bill took away a family's choice over whether they wanted a deceased relative embalmed. He used cremations as an example.

State law requires a waiting period of 48 hours after death before a cremation can be performed. Under Jones' bill, a person would have had to be embalmed before cremation or buy the special container, Doggett said.

"I think this bill is outrageous after the health department and everyone else has said we don't need it," Doggett said.

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