

## State and Local

# Faculty Senate offers opposition to plan cutting retirement funds

By Yvonne DeGraw  
Staff Writer

The Texas A&M Faculty Senate passed a resolution Monday expressing opposition to a plan to make cuts in a retirement plan used by many faculty.

The plan, which has received preliminary approval from the Texas House of Representatives, would cut the state's contribution to matching funds for the Optional Retirement Plan by 1 percent. This would result in an 11.7 percent cut of its contribution, the resolution says.

The Faculty Senate's resolution recommends that A&M's administration convey its opposition to the proposal to the Texas Legislature.

Faculty members may choose between the Teacher Retirement System and the ORP. TRS pensions are based on years of service. Benefits do not begin until an employee has worked 10

years. The ORP, which is not available to many staff members, allows the money set aside to be invested. The House's proposal would increase the number of years — from one to three — required to wait before removing the money.

The Senate also passed a rule intended to streamline the process of approving the numerous changes needed to make degree plans conform to the core curriculum plan.

"I was told there are 470 pages of documentation being sent to us from the Department of Modern Languages alone," said Dr. Don Russell, who introduced the measure.

The rule allows a curriculum plan to be passed without coming to the floor unless two senators object.

In the committee session following the meeting, Dr. Mark Busby made a related proposal. He wanted to direct the curriculum implementation committee to tell colleges that extremely restric-

tive requirements for categories like humanities and social sciences could be rejected by the Senate.

As an example, he related a rumor that the College of Business will require Economics 203, Principles of Economics I, and Economics 204, Principles of Economics II, to satisfy the six hours of social sciences required by the core curriculum.

His motion was defeated 15-27. Earlier, a policy on academic honesty was returned to committee after much discussion.

While the document refers to Rules and Regulations, which lists avenues students may take to defend themselves from charges of plagiarism or cheating, it lists no options for faculty.

Currently, there are no formal rules covering sanctions against faculty. Dr. Clinton Phillips, dean of faculties, said such a policy is in the works.

# Taiwanese Association rallies to get backing for own Democratic Party

By Rodney Rather  
City Editor

While many Texas A&M students focused their attention on Saturday's final exams and contemplated where to celebrate the close of the first summer session, one group rallied for a different way of life in their country.

The theme of the Southwestern Taiwanese Association's annual conference, which attracted over 600 people to Rudder Tower over the weekend, was to build support and spread awareness of the fledgling Progressive Democratic Party of Taiwan. It is the first party to compete against Taiwan's ruling government — Ko Men Ton — in over 40 years, said Mike Kuo, chairman of the conference and president of the Houston Taiwanese Association.

With the aid of an interpreter, party chairman Peng Chiang said the movement, which climbed out of underground organization on Sept. 28, mustered almost 30 percent of the votes in a national election less

than two months later on Dec. 12. Dr. Do Chen, president of the Oversea Taiwanese Association, acted as the translator.

The party hopes it will receive official integration as a political body from the Taiwanese government this September, Chiang said.

The organization's ultimate goal is to replace the current ruling party and democratize a government that has been administered by mainland China for 47 years — a process impossible under a 40-year-old regime of martial law, he said.

"Anytime we have an election, we only elect a very small fraction of people," Chiang said. "There are 319 people who are administrators and 219 people don't have to be elected; they are permanent administrators. So only 100 people are elected every three years."

Such a small number of elected officials can't project an effective voice in the government, he said.

Taiwan's political soil is primed for democratic cultivation, Chiang

said, because the economy is strong, the educational system is good, and the people rely on "self-do" — a more democratic way of life.

Kuo said the party, using conferences as a conduit, informs people in the United States about the situation in Taiwan and employs their efforts to strengthen the movement. It also expresses concern about the human rights oppression the KMT imposes on Taiwanese living in America who criticize their homeland government, he said.

"I'm one of the several hundred people who have been prohibited to go back to Taiwan to visit my family," he said.

Chen said KMT martial law extends to the United States — people are intimidated and spied upon.

Kuo said he knows some A&M students who have been asked by KMT agents to act as spies but have refused. But he suspects there are others who are acting as informants.

"They have tried to force some of the students to report to them," Kuo

said, "but those students have told me they were contacted, but did not accept the job. So I believe that there must be somebody who has accepted the job."

The KMT often uses benefits, such as money or a visitation trip to Taiwan, to attract students to work for it, he said.

The U.S. government, Chiang said, has been cautious in its support of the opposition party and hasn't made any public acknowledgement of it, although frequent contact is kept with several congressmen and State Department personnel.

For instance, Chiang said he was invited by Sen. Walter Mondale, D-Minn., to a special conference of the National Democratic Institute in Washington D.C. last January to bolster support for the party.

Active U.S. support of the movement, he said, won't come until after the party becomes powerful. The only way for Taiwan to achieve a democratic society, he said, is through its own effort.

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