

10/2/00

To: Bob Glenn

President, Faculty Senate

From: Bill Blass

Chair, Research council

#### Re Faculty Titles

The Council sees this as a very important issue and plans to continue to give serious consideration to the proposals of the Task Force on Faculty Titles. The first reaction of the Council is that the time for consideration is far too short considering the fact that the first meeting of the Council took place on September 11. The second is that there seemed to us to be a shortage of senior faculty on the Task Force.

Our first suggestion is "If it isn't broken, don't fix it." And to us, it seems that this is the case. It is nice to want an orderly set of boxes to place people in but the unintended impact of the adoption of the proposals has in no way been explored.

For example, to replace the title of a continuing part time Assistant Professor or Associate Professor (non-tenured, of course) by Lecturer or Senior Lecturer is an insult to their intelligence as well as ours (the tenured full time faculty). If one spends some time in various departments and actually finds out what goes on with continuing part-time faculty, one would never have the audacity to want to re-title them as Lecturer. In Physics, for example, some of our most fully-engaged professorial persons are in fact continuing part timers. I wager that one finds the same in numerous departments where a particular style of mentoring is the standard.

What for example does the Task Force suggest for the continuing part-time spouse of the next potential Nobel Laureate we want to try to hire?

There are in fact Senior Professors who will refuse to come to UT if they must settle for a title of Senior Research Scientist. Why do we persist in fixing what isn't broken? Remember, the Trustees entered into the Post-tenure Review arena when the Department Heads, Deans, and Vice Chancellors did not use the tools always at their disposal to resolve the "retired in place" problems. It is our judgement that appropriate use of titles and safeguards are already in place – if they are used.

Finally, the Task Force should adjourn sine die after giving the project to the Faculty Senate for deliberation during this entire year.