



Faculty members have been asked to respond to the Financial Exigency Plan Draft of April 25, 1983. UT-AFT has submitted recommendations that will make the faculty less vulnerable to destructive decisions made during a declared financial emergency.

But UT-AFT is under no illusions concerning the effectiveness of its proposals since the Financial Exigency document will necessarily reflect existent procedures of faculty governance on this campus. The draft proposal, accordingly, places ultimate authority in the Board of Trustees and the President to determine when a state of financial emergency exists and which departments and programs are to be reduced or eliminated. The power to identify the specific faculty members to be terminated is placed in the hands of the deans of the colleges. The role of faculty in this process, after all of the procedural details are unraveled and in keeping with the current system of "collegiality," is simply to give advice.

Faculty are going to be hurt needlessly when decisions are made in this fashion. To state this is not to assume any malevolence on the part of the Board of Trustees or the administration. It is simply to note that the faculty has no check upon the power of these groups other than to advise and publicize its discontents. Such an arrangement is fraught with danger.

Faculty can only protect themselves effectively against arbitrary, needless, or premature decisions if they have the power to do so. It should be obvious to all who care to see, certainly after the events of the past couple of years, that we do not have such power nor can we obtain it under current rules of governance. Only a collective bargaining agreement can construct a system of governance where faculty will deliberate with the Board of Trustees and the administration as equals. Only then will we be able to have an effective voice in our own professional futures on this campus.

UT-AFT will conduct an open meeting on June 10th at 2 p.m. in the Continuing Education Center, Room 10, to begin to plan for collective bargaining elections to take place during the winter or spring term of 1983-84. This election will take place under the auspices of a state law granting public employees the right to organize. And it will be an election organized by the faculty with the intention of establishing collective bargaining, not scuttling it.