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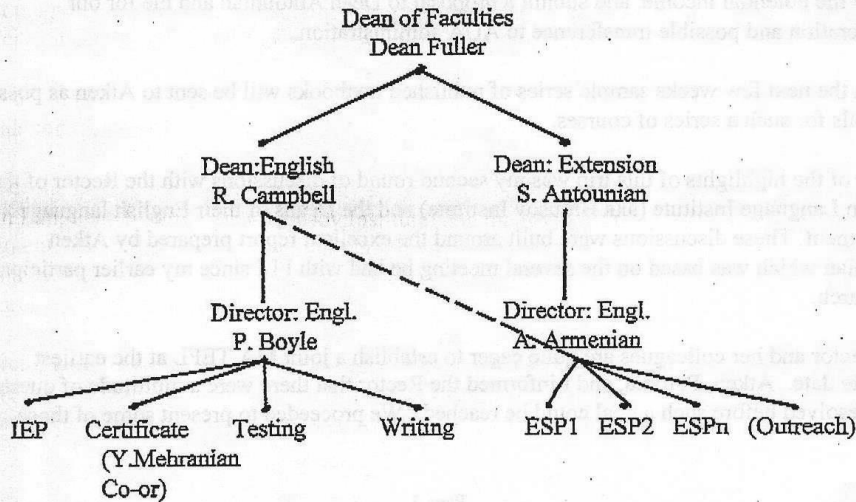
FROM: Russ Campbell, Dean, English, AUA *Russ Campbell*

RE: Trip report: Yerevan: May 30-June 7, 1996

I want to begin this report by expressing my appreciation to all those at AUA who so generously gave of their time and energy to make my short stay in Yerevan as comfortable and productive as they possibly could. I especially want to thank Don Fuller, Michael Conrad, Suzy Antounian, Armen Petrosian, Michael Kouchakdjian, Atken Armenian, Patricia Boyle and all of the members of the English Department faculty for their warm welcome to AUA and their valuable contributions to our planning efforts for the 1996-1997 academic year.

The following will report on a number of meetings I had with key AUA (and Brousov Institute; aka Foreign Language Institute) personnel during my recent visit to Yerevan. I will also present resultant questions, requests, and recommendations that emerged from these meeting for your consideration and, when appropriate, your response. These are presented in no particular order of priority.

I. Dean Don Fuller graciously allowed me to review the various responsibilities of the two major English language operations at AUA. Following is an abbreviated version of the diagram of the components of these programs:



(By agreement, the line connecting the position of the Director of the Extension English language program to the English Program's Dean pertains only to professional language teaching and testing concerns.)

I also presented to Dean Fuller detailed information on one "distance education" system (*ImageTel*) that may be considered by AUA in establishing a vehicle for enhancement of AUA's academic and administrative operations from southern California. I was encouraged by Dean Fuller's understanding of the potential contributions this technology has for AUA, and other institutions, and informed him that we are prepared to work with him to test out this potential as soon as feasible.

2. The exchange of responsibilities for Atken Armenian and Patricia Bolye had nearly been completed by the time I arrived in Yerevan. Both are to be commended for their willingness to redirect their academic and professional energies in a way that will ultimately serve AUA best.

3. Patricia Boyle will produce, in the very near future (within the next week or ten days), a detailed accounting of the distribution of the UCLA employed faculty for the period September 1, 1996-July 31, 1997. There will be some realignment of UCLA staff so that all IEP students will benefit from instruction by both local and foreign faculty. Additional demands on the foreign faculty, as indicated by the diagram above, includes major commitments to the TEFL Certificate Program, placement and achievement testing, academic writing courses (beginning in March, '97), the new LLM program (with its yet unpredictable demands on human resources), and, when possible, service in the Extension programs. IT IS ANTICIPATED THAT SIMPLE ARITHMETIC WILL DEMONSTRATE A SHORTAGE OF UCLA FACULTY TO ADEQUATELY MEET ALL OF THESE OBLIGATIONS. Once I have Patricia's report, I will return to this concern.

4. From a meeting with Dean Antounian and Atken Armenian it was determined that AUA extension should explore the possibility of offering to the public a series (from beginners to advanced) general English language courses. To that end, Atken will carry out an informal market analysis and, subsequently, design such a series of courses, calculate the investment against the potential income, and submit a proposal to Dean Antounian and me for our consideration and possible transference to AUA administration.

Within the next few weeks sample series of published textbooks will be sent to Atken as possible materials for such a series of courses.

5. One of the highlights of this trip was my second round of discussions with the Rector of the Foreign Language Institute (aka Brousov Institute) and the Deans of their English language Department. These discussions were built around the excellent report prepared by Atken Armenian which was based on the several meeting he had with FLI since my earlier participation last March.

The Rector and her colleagues are quite eager to establish a joint MA TEFL at the earliest possible date. Atken, Patricia, and I informed the Rector that there were a multitude of questions to be resolved before such a goal could be reached. We proceeded to present some of those

questions and issues which, without exception, were received graciously and without immediate objection. Following are some of the issues we presented:

- a) The degree would be an MAT (i.e. an MA in Teaching) rather than a research oriented degree. This decision has serious consequences related to the array of courses, examinations, and required papers required for the degree. The FLI representatives accepted (hopefully with understanding and appreciation) this distinction.
- b) We discussed our expectation that the courses included in the MAT program would be a suite of interrelated and interdependent courses offered over four semester terms and that almost without exception, individual courses would begin and end within the semester time frame. This was explained in terms of course credits, time, and distribution of faculty FTE. Again, FLI representatives saw no problem with such a format.
- c) We spoke of the probability that different students enrolled in the MAT program might well have different interests and different academic strengths; therefore, we should consider the possibility of students having some "elective" courses that would accommodate those interests and strengths. Thus some would emerge from the MAT program with some specialization in one or more sub-areas of TEFL, e.g. teaching reading, writing, English linguistics, language testing, materials development, etc. etc. It may be that FLI's greatest contribution to this proposed degree would be that it has a greater number of faculty resources to offer than AUA to allow students to choose courses in these sub-specializations.

Over the next several months it is planned that Atken and Patricia will continue to negotiate with FLI personnel towards the completion of a proposal that can be submitted to AUA administration for its consideration. Following are questions that must be addressed and resolved in these negotiations:

- a) Where will the administrative offices for this degree be located?
- b) What will be the criteria for admission to the program?
- c) How will selection and support of faculty for the courses be determined?
- d) Where will library and media resources for the program be housed?
- e) What will be the precise wording on the degree (diploma)?
Will this be an FLI? AUA? AUA-FLI? FLI-AUA? degree in TEFL?
- f) What will be considered core (obligatory) courses and what courses will be allowed as electives?
- g) What support funds will be required and where will they be obtained for the inauguration of this degree?

It is anticipated that the proposal that is presented as a consequence of further negotiations will include responses to these and other, yet to be defined, questions.

Those of us representing AUA in our meeting last week with the Rector and her colleagues were impressed by their generous hospitality and their enthusiasm of collaborative work. All of us came away with a feeling that the proposal is certainly worthy of continued exploration.

6. Returning to the matter of increased participation of UCLA faculty in the teaching of IEP courses, a suggestion for a change of format for the 10-hour (per week) tutorial assignments was made and vigorously discussed by the EFL faculty. It was suggested that instead of a single teacher taking responsibility for all aspects of academic English as well as instruction in the features of American educational culture, the ten hours would be divided into areas of specialization and different teachers would be responsible for these different areas. Thus, a sub-group of the faculty who are especially well trained, or are prepared to develop the expertise, in teaching academic writing would be responsible for, say, three of the ten hours, reading specialists for another 3 or 4 hours, and, of relevance here, an American teacher would not only provide instruction in one of the skill areas but would assure that students received instruction in expected student behavior in an American academic setting.

The discussion of this suggestion brought out a number of potentially positive benefits as well as a number of potentially negative consequences.

Positive:

- a) Development of higher levels of expertise in areas of specialization among teachers to the ultimate benefit of students.
- b) Greater concentration of efforts in lesson planning and delivery.
- c) Assurance that all students would receive instruction from both local and foreign faculty members.

Negative:

- a) Promotes fragmentation of courses.
- b) Demands a high degree of collaboration among "team" members and this is often difficult given current conditions.
- c) Reduces development of student centered instruction and promotes "lock-step" progress through curriculum.

It is hoped that the goal that all IEP student has an opportunity to receive part of their instruction from "native-speaker" instructors can be attained even if all aspects of the proposed modification of the tutorials can not or should not be implemented. Patricia and members of the English faculty will continue to consider the suggestion.

7. For some obviously good reasons, some non-degree students have been admitted into IEP courses. Some pay a substantial fee (\$600?) and others are there to provide opportunities for staff development. In either case, if these individuals do not meet the same entry criteria for admission they constitute a potentially serious distraction for both students and faculty and should not be admitted.

Again, I want to thank everyone, especially the Armenian English teachers, for their substantial contributions to the current and future success of the English language programs at AUA.

cc: Theony Condos, S. Antounian, Don Fuller, M. Kouchakdjian, M. Conrad, A. Armenian, P. Boyle, and English Program Faculty.