An M. A. Rescinded for Plagiarism

There has been an allegation of plagiarism in a master’s thesis, submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a master’s degree at the University of Pennsylvania. The master’s degree had already been awarded by the Graduate Council of the Faculties. A faculty panel that investigated the allegation found support for the allegation. The holder of the degree in question chose to return the master’s degree to the University. The master’s degree has been rescinded.

— Janice F. Madden, Vice Provost for Graduate Education

OF RECORD

Speaking Out

IAST Letters by October 1

Almanac readers probably know by now that the “Institute for Advanced Science and Technology,” which the University proposes to build on 34th Street, will be paid for in part by the U.S. Air Force.

The Air Force is required by law to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement, in which members of the public participate. The first step in this process is a “scoping” session, at which citizens express their concerns and raise issues they feel should be included in the Environmental Impact Statement. This stage is crucial, because it sets the agenda for the rest of the process.

The Air Force held this “scoping session” on August 19th, when most students and many faculty were out of town. The Air Force neglected to notify local groups or to place notices in local newspapers and newsletters, including Almanac. Members of the University community were thus deprived of their legal right to speak.

You may still participate in setting the agenda of the environmental review process, by writing to the Air Force of your concerns and raising specific issues that you believe should be addressed in the Environmental Impact Statement. Your letter must be postmarked no later than October 1.

Issues relevant to the Environmental Impact Statement include: risk from increased use in the IAST of hazardous chemical and radioactive substances; risk from increased production of toxic wastes; the past safety record of the Penn chemistry department, who would occupy the proposed lab.

Historical and aesthetic issues may also be raised: damage to the campus environment by the demolition of E.F. Smith Hall, an important historic building; damage to the aesthetic value of Smith Walk and 34th Street.

The Air Force is required by law to carry out specific comparisons of the environmental impacts of building on the Smith Hall site and on alternative sites. If you have alternatives to suggest, identify them specifically.

For example: tennis courts at 33rd St., parking lot at 33rd and Walnut, existing buildings, Philadelphia Naval Yard, other institutions.

The Air Force is also required to show that the Pentagon’s purpose in giving money for the IAST — as distinct from the University’s purpose or the department of chemistry’s — is better served by building at the Smith Hall site than at specific alternatives.

The Air Force will address specific issues and make specific comparisons only if they are requested to do so by members of the public. So write: Lt. Col. Gary P. Baumgartel, AFCEE/ESE Building 1155, Brooks Air Force Base, Texas 78235.

Remember: Letters must be postmarked by October 1.

— Robert Kohler, Professor of History and Sociology of Science

Speaking Out welcomes reader contributions: short timely letters on University issues can be accepted Thursday noon for the following Tuesday’s issue, subject to right-of-reply guidelines. Advance notice of intention to submit is appreciated.—Ed.

PEN at Penn: Year Five

Next Tuesday’s reading by Gay Talese (see Update — Special Events, page 7) opens the fifth year of the PEN at Penn lecture series sponsored by the School of Arts and Sciences.

PEN (which stands for Poets, Essayists and Novelists) will later bring to the campus the writer-cartoonist Jules Feiffer (October 5), the novelist Joyce Carol Oates (November 17), Maxine Hong Kingston (January 21) and Philip Roth (March 18); and the poet W.S. Merwin (April 6).

Trustee Saul Steinberg and his wife, Gaylynd, conceived the program and have funded it annually since its inception, bringing Joseph Heller, Allen Ginsberg, Erica Jong, Lawrence Wilcox, Susan Cheever, Toni Morrison and many others for extended visits in which they interact with FAS students in seminars and residence halls, and give at least one public lecture.

“The series is unique in bringing so many luminaries to the University and to the Philadelphia,” said SAS Dean Rosemary Stevens. “The diversity of this year’s group guarantees something to interest everyone.”