

MINUTES OF SPECIAL FACULTY MEETING
April 27, 1988

The Faculty of Arts and Sciences met in Rogers 100 to consider the proposal for a Faculty Assembly submitted by the Ad-Hoc Faculty Assembly Committee. Having determined the presence of a quorum, Dean Lutzer called the meeting to order at 3:30 pm.

Procedural questions dominated the initial discussion. B. Grant asked for a ruling on the validity of absentee ballots. Parliamentarian A. Fuchs stated that only those present may vote.

W. Hausman moved to change the procedures so that ballots would be passed out immediately, and those who must leave early could deposit their vote on the way out. The motion passed by the required 2/3 majority on a voice vote, and the ballots were distributed.

L. Johnson rose on a point of order to object to the non-amendability of the proposal, asserting that not allowing amendments runs counter to Faculty Bylaws. J. Selby countered that any amendment would effectively block the creation of a Faculty Assembly, because the Ad-Hoc Committee will not consider an amended proposal.

H. von Baeyer moved to suspend the rules so that the proposal could not be amended. L. Johnson referred to the fallacy of false dichotomy, which forced the Faculty to accept all of the proposal or nothing. E. Rhyne pointed out that allowing amendments would be inconsistent with the motion just passed, because faculty members leaving early might be voting on a proposal not in its final form.

When the parliamentarian pointed out that a motion to suspend the rules is non-debateable, the motion was immediately brought to a vote by show of hands and failed.

L. Johnson asked whether the proper procedure for adopting bylaws was to discuss and approve them point by point, or to consider them only as a unit. J. Ewell commented that the Faculty had already had ample opportunity for discussion of this proposal, and that there was no need for a point by point consideration now.

J. Livingston said that although Arts and Sciences representation in the Assembly was a major concern, the proposal presented a compromise which would serve the larger goals of a unified deliberative body for developing College policy. In any case, the provision for review of the Assembly after three years meant that it could be dissolved if the Faculty was dissatisfied with its operation.

G. Rublein pointed out that Article 8 of the proposal provides for dissolution of the Assembly by vote of 5 out of the 7 constituencies of the Assembly. Since the Arts and Sciences Faculty members would have only three of those votes, it would not have a veto power over the continuation of the Assembly.

L. Johnson asked for a ruling on his question of whether the proposal was to

be considered point by point. The Chair ruled that these are not bylaws of the Faculty, and therefore they can be considered in toto, rather than item by item.

J. Harris asked whether a vote for the proposal also implies acceptance of the procedure outlined for ratification. Dean Lutzer responded that it does, because the ratification procedure transcends this body. J. Ewell added, however, that the votes of the faculties would be transmitted to the Provost and President, who might nevertheless conclude that an affirmative vote of 5 out of the 7 constituencies was still not a strong enough mandate for creation of the Assembly.

L. Johnson moved to resubmit the proposal to the Ad-Hoc Committee to produce a new proposal with strictly proportional representation. D. Ventis stated that the proposal would fail if the representation formula were changed.

J. Delos drew an analogy with the Constitution, which was presented to the States for a yes or no vote, but with the possibility of amendment after ratification. He also said that we should take into account the fear of the smaller Faculties that they will be trampled by the Arts and Sciences Faculty in a purely proportional representation scheme.

T. Finn took an historical view of the matter by pointing out that a movement toward a Faculty Assembly had faltered 15 years ago because of the insistence of the Arts and Sciences Faculty on proportional representation. Since that time, the influence of the Faculty on College decisions had fallen precipitously because of the lack of such a body.

W. Eger asked what guarantees there were that this Faculty Assembly would reverse that trend. T. Finn replied that we simply would have to put our faith in the political process, as did the framers of the Constitution.

By a voice vote, the motion to resubmit the proposal to the Ad-Hoc Committee failed.

T. Meyers spoke against the proposed Faculty Assembly, asserting it would be essentially a weak entity, which would only dilute the direct expression of the Faculty's desires to the administration. V. Edmonds commented that at other institutions where he had taught which had an all-faculty deliberative body, the individual faculties had difficulty getting items on the agenda.

J. Livingston responded that the definition of the jurisdiction of this Faculty Assembly guarantees that the Faculty would have a voice on issues of importance to the College. In addition, individual faculty members who are not members of the Faculty Assembly could speak before the Assembly as well. D. Finifter pointed out that the proposal strengthens the influence of the Faculty, because the Assembly will also recommend members for College-wide committees.

After a number of other speakers expressed variations on points previously mentioned, the question was called for. Faculty members marked their ballots and deposited them in an envelope for counting by the Ad-Hoc Committee.

The proposal was approved by a vote of 107 in favor, 36 against, with one abstention.