MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE FACULTY SENATE

Wednesday, March 12, 1997

The Speaker, Professor John Pollak, Animal Science, called the meeting to order. He then called on Dean Stein for remarks.

1. REMARKS BY THE DEAN

Peter Stein, Dean of Faculty: "Like Martin Luther King, I had a dream. Mine was less noble than his but my dream seems to be just as unreachable. My dream was to stand here and announce that the long painful search for a Sexual Harassment Policy had finally ended. My dream was not realized. It has become more complicated. I was at a meeting yesterday with the President, the Provost, and members of the Assemblies; we met and talked about it and the Sexual Harassment Policy has links to all these constituencies. A faculty member could harass an employee, a faculty member could harass a student, any of the combinations could harass each other. The policy we wrote only had to do with faculty members as charged individuals. It had very little to do with faculty members as complainants and with the other constituencies as complainants and charged parties. So, they had comments, and the President, in his wisdom, decided to extend the comment period until April 15. I hope that we will finish this process before the semester is over, but I can only hope. That concludes my remarks."

Speaker Pollak called for questions on the Dean's remarks. Hearing none, he called on Provost Randel.

2. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS WITH THE PROVOST

Associate Professor Jeffrey Scott, Entomology: "Last time you were here, you talked about the budget process. You mentioned that one of the places where a lot of the money comes in from was undergraduate tuition. But it didn't seem that you had addressed whether or not an increase in enrollment was being considered as a way to increase income."

Don Randel, Provost: "We have taken the view in recent years that we would not grow undergraduate enrollment. The Trustees spoke about this a few years ago, they didn't actually set an exact number, but they did not support growing enrollment. Over the past few years, enrollment has grown bit by bit to the present 13,000. We do not contemplate growing our way out of our problems simply because we think in terms of physical and staff infrastructure. It could be the case that if we saw opportunities to increase juniors and seniors in key areas, we may do that. It is impossible to increase the number of freshmen without increasing costs, but it is possible that we could take in juniors and seniors in certain places without adding costs, but that would not be easy to manage. If we just took in another 100 transfer students and if all of those students were interested in going into our majors that are already overcrowded, we wouldn't have gained anything. But, if you can get me another 100 Entomology students, you've got yourself a deal (laughter)."

Professor Sally McConnell-Ginet, Linguistics: "Can you tell us what your reaction to the Sexual Harassment Policy was?"

Provost Randel: "There were some respects in which it is an improvement. There are some things about it that represent more nearly views that I had at the beginning than it represented the views of other members of the faculty, and they persuaded me to adopt their view instead. Not everything about it is what I would have written myself, but I have no real resistance to the policy. The problem that we have right now is that students and other employees see themselves as affected by this and they wish to assert their own views and I think I have no choice but to let them do so. If we are able to sit down with the leadership of both assemblies and both assemblies came to an agreement, nobody would be more pleased than I."

Professor Elizabeth Earle, Plant Breeding and Biometry: "I wondered if you had any comments on the remarks about the tenure system that were made by a dean of the University?"

Provost Randel: "I don't think that this University will change its policy on tenure anytime soon. I think that most of the members of this faculty don't really need tenure. But, this is not a field in which one can be a leader very easily. So if we were to abolish tenure, I think that a lot of people who do not need tenure would say 'this is not the type of university I want to teach at,' and then they would leave. I happen to believe that academic freedom is safe from either the right or the left these days. The tenure system was established to protect academic freedom and it still does that today. The
Professor N. David Mermin, Physics, raised a question regarding the protection that tenure affords aging members of the faculty and mandatory retirement.

Provost Randel: "We do need people to retire, there is no way to get around that. I hope that the work that Ron Ehrenberg and his committee are doing will provide us with some means by which we can encourage faculty members to retire, not with golden parachutes I hasten to say, but by other means. It is essential to the quality of the institution that we have young people and that as people get older they step aside in view of that. We do need people to retire, but I don't think that abolishing tenure is the way to do that.

"We certainly know that the abolition of mandatory retirement has led to an increase in the age of the faculty. The number of faculty members over age seventy has climbed steadily. It has gone from zero to thirty in less than three years."

Associate Professor Randy Wayne, Plant Biology: "I calculate that at my current salary I won't be able to retire until about 2050." (laughter)

Provost Randel: "One of the curious things is that many of the members who are at what we once thought to be retirement age, are now millionaires. You ought to shelter as much of your income as you can (laughter) and I hope that the State of New York will provide you with more income to shelter."

Professor Kathleen M. Rasmussen: "On that note, do you think that the State will provide us with more income that we can shelter?"

Provost Randel: "I think, yes, the State will provide you with more income that you can shelter this year. But, I think that the long term picture is murky at best. We have every intention of pursuing alternative means of dealing with this on this campus. If we were left to our own devices, we could find the means within this institution to have salary pools, even when SUNY didn't. But if we are seen to be able to do that, then SUNY will say 'uh-huh, yet another proof that you have too much money.' So, in the current proposal, which includes more autonomy for all the campuses state-wide, we will participate and we will hopefully see our particular autonomy enhanced and we will be able to deal with that problem. On the endowed side, when we create faculty salary pools, what we do is reallocate funds. Certainly in Arts and Sciences a few years ago, when people retired we hired younger people, and captured the difference in salary and put it into a salary pool. We could do that perfectly well on the statutory side as well, but the State hasn't allowed us to do that."

Hearing no more questions, the Speaker called on Professor Moon, Chair of the Financial Policies Committee, for a presentation.

3. RESOLUTION FROM THE FINANCIAL POLICIES COMMITTEE RE: FUTURE FACULTY QUALITY AND UNIVERSITY PRIORITIES

Professor Frank Moon, Joseph C. Ford Professor of Theoretical and Applied Mechanics: "We decided to focus this year on promoting faculty excellence in the next decade. We have looked at several warning signs affecting the quality of the faculty at this University. One of those signs we have already talked about is faculty salaries, but others are the decrease in Ph.D. enrollment and stagnating research support, and also a few star faculty resignations. Although Cornell enjoys a reputation for high scholarly rankings, the faculty's salary has begun to slide. It should be recognized that faculty members provide a substantial portion of the revenue for the University. We recognize that most of it is targeted; it is not general revenue, but a quarter of the total revenue is in the form of research grants. It seems to me that in the future we should have some sort of plan to ensure that we will have the sort of people who will bring in the resources to maintain this standard of excellence at Cornell.

"In the doctoral program there are also some disturbing trends: in the physical sciences there has been a 25% decrease in entering Ph.D. students; social sciences, a 13% decrease; humanities, a 25% decrease; and the biological sciences have been up and down, so we can't track a definite decrease. In all areas there has been an 18% decrease in RAs. The physical sciences alone has had a drop of 28%. The other thing here is the myth that a smaller graduate program would not be so bad. But, compared to other peer institutions we do not have a very large graduate program. The graduate and
professional degree enrollment ratio to undergraduate enrollment at Cornell is 29%, at Columbia it is 60%, Stanford is 53%, and Harvard is 61%. Many of our peer institutions have a much higher ratio of graduate to undergraduate enrollment. We devote a substantial amount of our resources to our undergraduate program, despite that we are able to maintain a standard of excellence in our graduate programs. So, I don't see it as a good thing that graduate enrollment is declining. Some people will say that the reason for the decline is the market. It is tough to get a job, so people aren't going for professional degrees. That is not the case with engineering. In engineering, the opportunities for Ph.D.s are very good and that is where you have the biggest drop, 27%.

"Another serious problem is the stagnation of research funds. Cornell is stagnating in dollars in the last few years. There are 'second-rank' universities that have seen their research dollars grow considerably, so this is not something that is happening everywhere. The Ivy League has been stagnating, and that may be part of a trend in Washington. But if we are going to remain one of the top universities, we are going to have to become more aggressive. We recognize that we can't ask the University to spend more money to solve the graduate problem or the faculty salary problem. We were not in a position to look at the whole budget, but we did look at one area of the budget and that is capital projects.

"It seems that capital projects raise their own money; somebody gives $10 million or $20 million, you've got a new building and who is going to complain? We are all asking our chairs and deans for new facilities, and chairs and deans get credit when they get a new building. But, these projects raise the operating costs of the University through custodial costs, utilities costs, maintenance costs. If you look at this year's budget, you see $66 million in the endowed side and $25 million on the statutory side in Ithaca. That is a lot of money being spent right now. The total plan for capital improvements is over one billion dollars. This is in the future now, it is not just in the nineties. This is an astonishing amount of money and it hasn't even been raised yet. The other astonishing figure is that the expected increase in square footage to the Ithaca facility in the nineties is 1.8 million square feet. If you look at the gross square footage of the University, and you look at the eighties you see the 'Rhodes Revolution'. I thought we were never going to repeat that, but now here, we are going to add more physical plant square footage than we did in the eighties. Yet we are experiencing decreases in staff, and in some colleges we've had a decrease in the number of faculty and we've had a decrease in the number of graduate students. So, it is not a case of saying that we shouldn't spend money on facilities, it's just that we ought to maintain some sort of balance between maintaining the excellence of the faculty, the graduate program, and the facilities. We recognize that there are some things that have to be done, and certain opportunities that we must take advantage of, but we need to strike a balance. In light of all this, I would like to present this resolution from the Financial Policies Committee regarding future faculty quality and University priorities."

**BE IT RESOLVED, that the Faculty Senate recommends the Trustees and Administration adopt the following policies to maintain and advance the reputation of the University:**

1. **i)** The University should commit itself to a course of action to bring Cornell endowed and statutory faculty salaries to a position consistent with its scholarly and professional standing within three to five years.

2. **ii)** In order to maintain excellence in the face of declining external support, the University should support a plan to generate new funding for the graduate program. New funding initiatives, such as an endowment for fellowships, should involve a partnership between the Dean of the Graduate School and the Graduate Fields and should address equitable distribution of new support.

3. **iii)** The University Administration and the Board of Trustees should seek a more appropriate balance between investment in facilities, faculty development, and the graduate research programs.

4. **iv)** The Provost and other administrators should propose measures to create incentives to motivate and encourage new initiatives by the faculty to help support the graduate research mission of the University.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Senate instructs the Dean of the Faculty to report to the Senate annually on Cornell's progress toward meeting these goals.**
Professor Klaus Beyenbach, Physiology: "I am from the statutory college. I would like to compliment Professor Moon and the Committee on an excellent job collecting the data and presenting it in such a convincing manner. The last time I went though a distasteful exercise of comparing my own salary with my colleagues’ salaries in Physiology, I learned that our salaries here at Cornell are 10-20% below the national average of physiologists nationwide. Those salaries have nothing to do with the quality of education and research here at Cornell, in which we are clearly above the national average."

Professor Richard E. Schuler, Economics and Civil and Environmental Engineering: "I was particularly struck by the third item dealing with facilities. My first mission to serve on a committee like this was in 1975. It was the predecessor of this committee and Dean Stein was then the chair of that committee. I remember the one overriding recommendation we made to then President Corson was under no circumstances were there to be any new buildings built on campus. That was at a time when there was truly a monumental override of needed maintenance. So it became clear very quickly to the administration and the faculty, that the maintenance costs were exacting large amounts in daily requirements. A subsequent recommendation that came out of that was that we strongly supported the notion of a space budget to departments and schools that each school would be allocated a certain amount of space for which they could trade salary increases. So our insidious motives there were obviously that we would have salary increases, but also that faculty would notice that we have space coming out of our ears. (laughter) I know that several attempts have been made to implement that recommendation, but twenty years later we still do not have an effective space budget here that is presented to department heads and chairs. I was just wondering whether Vice-President Ehrenberg or Provost Randel might report on the mechanism to bring the budget back into line."

Provost Randel: "It is something that Vice-President Ehrenberg is working on. It is not straightforwardly easy. One of the things that one has to reckon with is that the quality of the space on campus varies considerably from building to building. So, if you were going to give a space budget uniformly across campus, you would have to find some way of taking into account that some colleges own buildings whose average age is one hundred years or seventy-five maybe, and others will have buildings that are much younger. Of course this only works on the margin because the market for space is not altogether free; we cannot export it off-campus. We can look at our balance sheet and see that we are worth zillions of dollars because of our physical plant, but it is a very illiquid asset. If everybody in town wanted to shed space in order to create money, you wouldn't be able to do it because there would have to be buyers."

Professor David Wilson, Biochemistry, Molecular and Cell Biology: "In New York City, some hospitals are selling their buildings to real estate groups and then leasing the buildings from those groups. Has there been any thought given to an arrangement like that?"

Provost Randel: "In Ithaca, New York, I don't see any real possibilities for something like that."

Professor Wilson: "What about the Medical School in New York City?"

Provost Randel: "The Medical School is another problem. But, sure, let's give up academic space and turn it into dormitory space."

Professor Emeritus Donald Holcomb, Physics: "I'm struck by the fact that we are doing yet another study to try and get a grip on the space problem. I have a feeling that that force is whimpish in the face of the inexorable drive for more space which comes from people's appetites, often faculty appetites. There is a tendency to beat the central administration over the head, but I think that the best solution for that is for somebody to say 'no.' It is going to come at a bad time, and you are going to injure somebody, but someone is just going to have to say, 'no.'"

Provost Randel: "I agree. We have met the enemy and it is us. Many administrative costs are located in departments and nobody wants to give up administration in their departments and everybody is opposed to new buildings until it is their building. Another thing to be considered is that we are influenced by outside constituencies; some of our nearest and dearest supporters can sometimes do things that we be might not do if we were left to our own devices and we need to learn to say 'no' to ourselves and even say 'no' to our benefactors. Maybe we need to say, 'no, we don't need another building, what we do need is a generous gift.' This is going to take some doing. I guess I believe that saying 'no' is a readier solution than a study in which we charge people."
Dean Stein: "I'd like to make a comment on this, as I've said here on this floor many times, I'm intrigued by this faculty salary problem. Why is it that we don't have enough money to pay faculty salaries that are comparable to our peers? I've done some analyses that are crude and rough, but it is difficult to do any decent analysis because it is difficult to find any kind of comparable data. One analysis that I did do indicated to me that you can make an argument that we have more space relative to the size of our faculty than other people who do the same jobs and are paid higher salaries. This was not a small effect either. We have 20-30% more space than those other places and I find that quite intriguing. If you think about it, I've yet to see a bad building. What is a bad building? The Theory Center? The Performing Arts Center? Roberts Hall? They all look like fine buildings, there are good arguments for them, people like them, and so they go up. So, it is not so easy to exert brakes on what everybody wants to do. The other thing that I hear all the time about buildings is that they pay for themselves, but in the end, it is my suspicion that neither of those arguments are true. There may be some bad buildings in that bunch, and in the end I think there may be some correlation between the amount of space we have and our inability to pay faculty salaries that are comparable to our peer institutions."

Professor Moon: "I would just like to respond to some of these comments. The Committee did not mean to say that we should have a zero-building policy, it was not anti-facilities. It did mean that at the upper level of the facilities there should be a very strong voice in support of faculty excellence and the graduate program. There is already a very strong voice in support of new facilities and the voice is mostly coming from us. I talked to one dean and asked him if he received complaints about faculty salaries and he said, 'no, but they all want new facilities and bigger and better labs'. So, everybody wants to build something, but the faculty is timid about asking for increases in its compensation packages, and there is virtually no voice for the graduate program, yet the graduate program is one of the hallmarks of this great University. The message that we need to get across is not that we should stop building, but rather that we do not let excellence in faculty and the graduate program slip away because we are building too many new facilities."

Dean Daryl Lund, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences: "I would only throw one caution here for the statutory side; remember, the building funds for the statutory schools are in a separate fund and they are not automatically transferable to other applications such as undergraduate education, such as salaries, etcetera. So whatever the projections are for the statutory colleges, those are based on what the state schools have enjoyed by participating in the SUNY construction fund over the years. There is absolutely no indication that if we did not apply for them that SUNY Buffalo, SUNY Stony Brook, Albany, Binghamton, that all of the other Ag & Techs, and all of the other institutions would say 'we don't want any other buildings and let's get the state to put that money into faculty salaries and undergraduate education'. We on the statutory side will continue to make our cases known and to share in the SUNY construction fund, and unless the state changes its policy with respect to that fund, it will not affect salaries."

Professor Holcomb: "Let me remind you of what Professor Moon was saying, it is not the direct cost of the buildings, but it is the hidden excess cost associated with the administration, maintenance, and cleaning and so forth. It is only that seeping across of costs for utilities, maintenance, and administration that there is a link. Even on the statutory side and even though the state pays for it, five years from now, one finds that the budget goes up."

Dean Lund: "Indeed, the cost of maintenance on these buildings goes up with the increase of space, but the state also gives us a space budget, and it is not a budget that I, as a dean, can control. This is something that comes into the office here simply as a transfer. As some of the faculty know, we have been able to, through good management, save a considerable amount on utilities, and we have managed to convince SUNY to transfer some of that savings into a salary plan that we can apply to our full professors to bring their salaries in line with other professors within the SUNY system."

Professor Schuler: "As a professional economist, I would love to see using space budgets and the price mechanism to ration our demands and our appetites, but as an overall observation, it seems that under the current system, our demands for space are more readily met than our demands for salary increases. Over a sweep of twenty or thirty years, those demands have gotten out of line and we need some mechanism to bring them back in line with each other."

Professor John Silcox, David E. Burr Professor of Engineering: "I'd like to ask the Committee a question. I'd like to ask if they considered certain factors that my colleagues and I consider to be as important in terms of our satisfaction as pay increases. Many of us are competing with the National Science Foundation for equipment grants and lately we have had difficulty getting the University to come up with matching grants for equipment purchases. Our equipment can get quite expensive, sometimes over $800,000, and without University support, we need to seek out another $400,000 grant. Similarly, when we are trying to attract bright young faculty to our departments, we need to find serious and very large
start-up funds. The difficulties that are emerging in trying to find those kinds of sums are a serious factor. I think that salaries are not the only thing. When I look at the departures of the ‘star’ faculty members that I am aware of, I doubt very much whether pay was an issue; it is the ease with which you are able to obtain the things you need to do your job. It is important that there are funds available for seminars and visitors. It is the whole environment that is the big problem, and I'd like to ask the degree to which the Committee explored beyond the issue of salary, which to me is one tiny piece of the whole picture."

Professor Moon: "That's a very good point and that is the reason that this year we did not just look at the issue of salary. We looked at this as an issue of general excellence at this University. If you look at the last item, number 4, we encourage the University to look for incentives to help the faculty with bringing in new resources and that can be matching funds, bridging funds, etc. We didn't try to micro-manage it. The preface says that the University should have some sort of strategic plan, which should not only include a retirement package, but also at the beginning, how do we raise funds for matching funds. For example, faculty in mid-career, the pace of technological change is so fast, that one day you could be the world's greatest whatever and five years later that field is gone. Now you have a very creative and intelligent person for whom it is very difficult to establish credibility in a new field without some extra resources."

Professor Silcox: "The way things are currently, that person has to practically get an offer from another institution for someone to get sufficient funds to do that."

Professor Moon: "Exactly. Item number four on the proposal is to enhance the faculty's ability to bring in resources to the University.

Dean Stein: "First I have a comment and then I have an introduction to make. The comment is to Professor Silcox and that is that another item in that resolution regards graduate student fellowships, which probably gives more leverage dollar for dollar in making this place an attractive place for a faculty member to stay than almost any other way."

Professor Silcox: "But if he doesn't have the instrument. . ."

Dean Stein: "If he doesn't have the instrument. . . there is a threshold, but once one achieves that threshold, the ability to recruit a high quality graduate student, most people report, is very important in their environmental satisfaction."

Professor Silcox: "I would hazard a guess that the only thing that keeps faculty here at Cornell is the high quality of students that we currently attract. I would absolutely endorse that piece of the resolution. What disturbed me was seeing number one listed as number one, because I see it as only a small part of the whole package."

Dean Stein: Now I would like to make my introduction. I'd like to introduce Harold Tanner, the incoming Chairman of the Board of Trustees. Harold would you please stand up? (applause) Harold was interested in meeting us and hearing what we sound like."

Mr. Harold Tanner, Chairmen-elect of the Board of Trustees: "It's nice to be invited. I see a lot of familiar faces here. Some which bring goose bumps to my face (laughter). I take office July 1, I've been involved with the University a long time, and I'm very proud of that association. A faculty is a University's treasure and I hope to work with you in a feeling of mutual respect and great devotion to the institution. Thank you."

Provost Randel: "I'd like to take us back to a few other things that have been said. I think that John Silcox points out something fundamental and it is essential that the faculty, when making suggestions to the administration on University operations, takes into consideration more than just its own compensation. On the subject of graduate enrollments, some fields are intentionally depressing the number of students they have. This is another side of that issue that we have to contend with; physics has undertaken a formal policy of reducing its enrollment, so everything you see about declining enrollment is not necessarily to be seen as bad news. There is now the question that we need more resources to support graduate education as older traditional sources wane. I am currently working with Dean Cohen to introduce a plan that will give him a great deal more flexibility in the way in which he can manage resources in graduate fields."

"On the subject of matching funds, it is a struggle to be sure, but it is not as if we have been timid in this regard exactly. The Materials Science Center has benefited from a quarter of a million dollars per annum in its recent grant; the Theory Center has been the beneficiary of substantial sums. We may be faced with a still greater burden. I have recently made a
substantial commitment to C.H.E.S.S. in association with its recompetition of its agreement. I have myself purchased about a half of an MMR machine in the past year or so and I don't know which end of it to plug in. This is a struggle because we have a great many eggs in a few pretty good size baskets which the federal government is steadily trying to shrink. It is not just a matter of continuing to steadily supply a stream of matching funds. At the moment we do have a program that tries to enable us to carefully target new appointments in areas where it makes sense. This is one of those things when someone talks about strategic plans, one does not want to overestimate the extent to which this can be planned centrally. What I rely on there is the advice of the deans of the colleges jointly and severally, to indicate where they feel we should be making investments. We are working on making investments that will improve the excellence of some departments, and in some cases, maintain the excellence of others."

Seeing that the time limit for discussion had expired, the Speaker asked if there was an objection to calling the question. Hearing none, the question was called and the resolution was adopted.

4. REPORT FROM THE RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITIES STEERING COMMITTEE

Dean Stein: "I'd just like to put this into context. There is a fairly broad discussion going on around campus that we, the Faculty Senate, have not had before us for discussion, and it is not clear to the University Faculty Committee what would be the right way to engage the Senate or have the Senate enter into that discussion. What I'm talking about is the broad area that the President has identified as one of his priorities: how we link residential life and intellectual life, how we bring intellectual content into the twenty-four hour day of students, instead of the absolute separation of academic and residential life. The President, and Vice-President Murphy, have appointed a Residential Life Committee to consider these issues and they involve proposals that will affect us deeply, namely a closer contact of the faculty at-large with residential life. We decided that perhaps the right way to go about this was to invite some of the faculty members on the Committee to come and briefly discuss what it is that they are talking about, and have a free and open discussion to follow. There is no resolution to follow; it will be like a committee of the whole discussion, where anyone can say anything that comes to mind."

The Speaker called on Glenn Altschuler, RCCC member, to begin his presentation.

Professor Glenn Altschuler, American Studies and Dean, Continuing Education and Summer Sessions: The Committee was appointed by various institutions at Cornell and has been meeting for three hours at a time on a bi-weekly basis. The charge of the Committee is very broad: we look at residential life at Cornell, we look at the relationship between the academic side and the residential side, and we look at the issue raised by the President a year ago and that is whether or not we should change the method in which freshman are assigned to housing. As you may know, freshmen right now can choose whether they are going to live in program houses or not. The President has suggested that we make that a random process. That is a difficult process to pursue in light of the controversy surrounding random housing. We will try to come up with a range of recommendations based around greater faculty involvement for Faculty-in-Residence and Faculty Fellows, for a range of activities that may result in a better first year experience for students, one that relates their academic work with life in the residence halls. Hopefully, there will be some greater effort to have more classes in the residence halls and a greater faculty presence in the residence halls. I think people will be looking to the Committee not for those recommendations, but for what it will have to say about random housing.

"One of the problems at Cornell is both the amount and quality of housing available for undergraduates. Perhaps Professor Moon will forgive me if I mention that about 44% of Cornell's undergraduates are housed in dormitories, and our nearest Ivy competitor houses about 80% of their undergraduates in dormitories. Certainly if you want to have a faculty resolution that you will forbear asking for salary increases until there is adequate dormitory space on campus, I will certainly take that to the Committee and we will be able to put that into a greater dormitory project. Absent of such a recommendation, we will muddle through, but one recommendation that is likely to be made is that some attention be paid to the presence of more public space in our dormitories, which is virtually non-existent at this time, to perhaps the construction of new housing, maybe after faculty salaries have reached a par with peer institutions. It is the hope of many that some recommendations will be made by the spring, especially since there is a considerable amount of concern about the random housing issue. I don't think that we can give a timetable around a report, but certainly you should know that in terms of hours served, this is a Committee that is very active, talking about and researching issues that have been neglected for a very long time. I think that it will be important for us to address some profoundly important issues about the residence life and academic life. In my judgment, Cornell's Achilles' heel are its undergraduate residences. We have
not addressed fraternity and sororities effectively, we have not addressed quality of life issues in these residence halls, and we haven't addressed greater faculty presence overall adequately. However important the issue of random housing is, these issues are vital too and it is quite possible that they will be shunned as people focus on the issue of random housing."

The Speaker called on David Delchamps, RCCC member, to give his presentation.

Associate Professor David Delchamps, Electrical Engineering: "Glenn characterized this issue of random housing as something that we may be focusing a lot of attention on at the expense of other things. I think he may be right about that, but I don't think I would call it 'the issue of random housing.' I don't think that I would use those words. I would use the words, 'whether or not freshmen will be allowed to chose their program houses.' Program houses include not only the ethnically and culturally-based program houses like UJAMAA, Ake:won, and Latino Living Center; they also include things like Risley, JAM (Just About Music), Eco House. In any event, program houses represent more than just the ethnically based ones. As you all remember last year we had hunger strikes and traffic blockades by people who were upset about this freshmen choice issue, and I think quite frankly that the reason we have this Committee is because of that. Because the President watered down his general policy statement to the Board of Trustees about residential policies and took out the provision that freshmen should be phased out of program houses over the next few years and he wanted to get some input on the subject. This statement went to the Board of Trustees. I will only read to you a very mellifluous, maybe, motherhoodish type of thing: 'Cornell University will provide supportive residential communities that will contribute to an intellectually engaged and socially responsible campus environment'. Certainly Peter's introduction to this discussion highlighted a lot of very important things that bear on that statement. How are academic life, intellectual life, and residential life going to become better integrated? Those are important issues which bear directly on the title. But, this issue of freshmen choice is one with which I think we should all be concerned. As Peter said at the beginning of the meeting, the faculty are in a very real sense the University and I think the faculty have a lot to say about this. There is a point that was articulated last spring in a letter by Isaac Kramnick to the Cornell Daily Sun. Isaac pointed out that the reason he thought that there was such negative upheaval over the issue of freshmen choice was because the administration did not do a very good job of explaining why this was a good idea. I think that when you circumscribe more closely the kinds of options that any group has, especially in an academic community like this one, there has to be a good reason for it. We do this sort of thing all the time in departments. We change our requirements, we make them take more things, we forbid them from doing other things. We do those things for reasons, and I think the administration last year did not do a very good job of explaining those reasons. The Committee, in these long meetings, has been somewhat steered and facilitated with break-out sessions and flip charts and randomly selected groups which address sub-questions of certain subtexts. In some sense, fishing for reasons why one would want to implement some sort of policy, or why some would not want to implement some sort of policy, and also deciding how to deal with the negative ramifications of choosing which ever side you choose. I hope you followed that (laughter). The point is that we are really trying to cover all the bases. I am trying to be fair. I am trying to be fair about the flip charts and the breakout sessions (laughter), but sometimes I feel that we are not so much on a fishing expedition, but rather on a bobsled run and being funneled in certain directions that I don't think we would have necessarily chosen if we had sat down freely to discuss how to approach this. I want to mention in closing in a little more positive way that we have divided ourselves into three task groups, each of those addressing a subset of the issues surrounding the global residential policy and our goals for enhancing it. I think Glenn is involved in the group that is discussing increased faculty involvement and I am involved in a group called 'beginnings' which is all about the first year experience at Cornell."

The Speaker called on Jane Mt. Pleasant, RCCC member, to make her presentation.

Associate Professor Jane Mt. Pleasant, Soil, Crop, and Atmospheric Sciences, and Director, American Indian Program: "My presence on this particular group is to represent the directors of the four ethnic programs on campus. The Africana Studies and Research Center, the American Indian Program, the Asian American Studies, and the Latino Studies Program. I wouldn't say that I represent everybody in those programs, but I do attempt to represent the directors of those programs. As most of you know, last semester was a pretty intense time, particularly for students involved in the programs who felt very strongly about President Rawlings' ideas regarding program houses. That intensity, although not as visible is still there and that is the major reason why I am willing to put a great deal of time into this group as Glenn mentioned; it takes about three and one half hours every two weeks. A lot has been going on, as was mentioned. The Committee has formed three task forces. I'm on the Residential Options Task Force, which I co-chair with Peggy Lacey who is Director of Campus Life.
There are about 12-15 people on that task force, representatives of students, faculty, and staff. The first thing we did was come to some sort of an agreement about what the common goals of a residential program might be for our undergraduate students. In view of those common goals, we began to look more closely at some important areas, in particular whether or not freshmen would have the choice of selecting a program house or not. As David mentioned, we spent a lot of time trying to determine the pros and cons of that. One of President Rawlings' principles was that students should have something of a uniform freshman experience. Our reaction to that is that that is probably not practical. We recognize that the diversity of students, and the diversity of living units on campus, simply make it impossible, I think, to provide a uniform freshman experience.

"Then we move on to what I think is the real problem. Many people feel that our present residential units are encouraging a segregated campus. Now, I don't want to comment on whether that is true or not, but the one important thing about this issue is that if we do decide that that is a problem, we should not ask students of color on this campus to bear the responsibility for solving those problems. I think that we can come up with a number of viable options that can increase the diversity of the living units across campus and we should not look to the program houses, or to prohibiting freshmen from those program houses in order to solve that problem."

Speaker Pollak: "As Peter mentioned, there is no motion on the floor, this is just a general discussion and I'm sure that our speakers will take comments and questions."

Professor Gordon Teskey, English: "Just a question for the Committee. There has been a solution to this problem of freshmen coming to a university and having an intellectual experience that is integrated with the lives that they live at a university. It is about eight hundred years old, and it is called the 'college system'. I have talked to a lot of undergraduates who feel, either correctly or not, that the undergraduate experience at Cornell is more monolithic and machine-like than at other universities and I think that the reason for that is that other universities have a college system. A number of people in this room I'm sure have experienced the college system, and many would attribute much of the quality of that experience to having been in a college within a university. How much did the Committee consider reducing the university living units into colleges, not necessarily theme colleges, but colleges that encourage more of a social and intellectual interaction between faculty and students?"

Professor Altschuler: "My fate at Cornell is to be appointed to the same committee every ten years. The last time I served on this committee about ten years ago I had the honor of serving with Professor Krammick, who I think is here. This issue was raised then, it has been raised again. This is what I was talking about when I mentioned the housing stock at Cornell, not to mention the culture and traditions. The housing stock at Cornell is not conducive to a college system. One suggestion is to either redesign existing housing stock, or build at least some more housing stock that might provide a house, by another name, as another choice available to undergraduates. Whether that will happen, I cannot say. I think that to convert existing housing stock to be conducive to a college system would be resisted by the students, but would also be impractical."

Professor Wilson: "One thing that I am always curious about when I hear about this desire to increase student faculty interactions is that I have been involved in so many efforts through all my years at Cornell that have always fallen short because of the fact that students do not want to participate in activities dreamed up by the faculty to increase participation. I was wondering if anyone has done any studies about the Faculty Fellows. I know the Faculty-in-Residence seems to work, there is enough interaction to demonstrate that that works. My experience as a Faculty Fellow was a dismal failure and I have heard from Residence Life staff who have said that the last thing students want to know about when they come home is another intellectual thing to do. They were under so much pressure and they refused to schedule anything that I dreamed up. I really think that is an important issue."

Professor Charles Walcott, Neurobiology and Behavior: "I'm actually one of the co-chairs of the committee that considered the problem of Faculty-in-Residence and Faculty Fellows. I think that the general picture all over the University is that the Faculty-in-Residence program is a success and the Faculty Fellows are in a more heterogeneous situation, but all the evidence suggests that many of them have worked exceedingly well in a variety of different forms not always as formal instruction, but as more informal types of things. There have been all sorts of models that have been shared with the Committee and which persuade me that this is something we should increase and try a variety of different types of interactions."
Associate Professor Alan McAdams, JGSM: "I'd like to change the subject slightly by going back to the numbers that Professor Altschuler mentioned. He said that we house 44% of our undergraduate students, while our competitors house 80%, but we have to recognize other numbers and that is two-thirds of our students are undergraduates. So the grand total of that we house is 30%. For those who are housing 80% of their undergraduates, their undergraduates make up 45% of the total, so the grand total that they house is 36% versus our 30%. Those numbers are different from the 44% and 80% when you look at it. You have to look at what portion of our student body is concentrated in undergraduates. We are not really interested in where graduate students live. We are interested in where undergraduates live, and when we think about this we have to look at the large percentage of undergraduate students that make up the bulk of our University."

Professor Altschuler: "Most institutions worry a lot less about providing housing for all graduate students than they do about providing quality housing for undergraduates, so I think we're talking about apples and oranges here quite frankly."

Professor McAdams: "Only there are many more apples than oranges (laughter).

Associate Professor Ellen Gainer, Theatre, Film, and Dance: "I was going to raise a comment much like Professor Teskey's, but then follow up with a question about how much student involvement there is in this. From my experience as an undergraduate, having gone someplace that radically changed its housing structure and got rid of the equivalent of the Risleys and the program houses, I think that there was a lot of revolt from alums because of the impact that they feared it would have on subsequent generations."

Professor Mt. Pleasant: "I think about one-third of the steering group is students and they have been deliberately chosen to represent a wide segment of where people live and there are also resident staff that are students, so I think that we have very good student input."

Professor Donald Barr, Human Service Studies: "I'm a member of the Committee, as well as a member of the Senate. I think that one of the most impressive things about the Committee is the student involvement. They come incredibly well-informed; they are quite verbal and quite persuasive in relation to the decisions and the discussions. We are also going to be going out into the University to conduct surveys and collect data and also have a focus group with students in various parts of the University. I think that it is a very good question, but I think that we have very good student representation."

Associate Professor Risa Lieberwitz, ILR: "One of the things that struck me, and I'm sure that people on the Committee will think about these things, and that is the link between issues that we discuss separately. In particular, the question of how the number of students we have on campus will relate to affordable housing in the community. There has been a lot of discussion about employee wages and the poverty level of employee wages at Cornell. One of the things we found on the Cornell City Relations Study Commission was that a lot of employees cannot afford to live in Ithaca because the housing is so high in terms of rents, etc. One of our recommendations was to increase housing on-campus so that more students could live here and more faculty could live here because housing costs would be cheaper. So I hope that people think about the links between student housing, housing in Ithaca, and employee wages."

Adjourned 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Lucey, Associate Dean and Secretary of the University Faculty