

# MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE FACULTY SENATE

Wednesday, April 8, 1998

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

## 1. REMARKS FROM THE DEAN OF FACULTY

Peter C. Stein, Dean of the Faculty: "With the rain today, it is probably going to be touch and go whether we will have a quorum or not; so if anyone hasn't already signed in, please do so now. I just want to start by saying a little bit about faculty committees. First, I'd like to talk about the Faculty Committee on Tenure Appointments, which, after a long discussion, was approved some five or six months ago and has been meeting regularly since the beginning of March. This is not the official report that you will be receiving a year or nine months from now that my successor will give you at that time; this is an informal report. A lot of people raised a lot of concerns about that committee and I didn't have the experience to know whether those concerns were legitimate or not. They were sort of worrisome, but I feel pleased that those concerns that were raised, I have not seen in this committee. Let me tell you about a couple of them.

"It was felt that the work load would be so much that it would drown people. That has not been the case. Having four people look at a file and seeing if there is any issue to discuss has been working out quite well. There was a concern that this would appreciably delay the files from making their way to the Provost and the Board of Trustees. That I am sure has not been the case. We are averaging turnarounds of a week. The previous system had turnarounds that were appreciably longer than that. The files come in on a regular basis and we have managed to achieve a working schedule whereby a file doesn't sit in the office for more than seven days before it is considered by the committee, and the committee has been unusually prompt in getting a response.

"The last one which was hard to say exactly what it was, but there was a feeling in the room that the diversity of Cornell is so broad that it would be impossible for Jonathan Culler, a Professor of English, to be able to read a file on Applied and Engineering Physics and make any kind of judgment on it. That concern was expressed by a number of different people. I feel considerably relieved that that does not, in fact, work out to be a problem. I'm not sure how to say this, but it turns out that all the files are written in English and Jonathan Culler can read an Engineering file and Sid Liebovich can read a file in Romance Studies. They both use the same words, they describe and compare them to people in the field. The outside letters come from places that you recognize or you don't recognize, and I think that the judgments that people can make are not very field dependent when we are dealing at a level this high, where we are evaluating the evaluations that have been previously made. I frankly do not think that that problem has occurred.

"There was a great deal of concern about how we were going to deal with Extension. None of the nine cases that have been handled so far, has been primarily Extension cases, so that has not been answered so far. I am pleased and optimistic. I think it is a good committee, and I think that it has already added some value to the process by which we make tenure decisions.

"I want to spend just a couple of minutes making a few general observations about faculty committees and where I think they work and where they don't work so well. I work with about half a dozen faculty committees. These are committees composed entirely of faculty; they have a faculty chairman - committees like the Financial Policies Committee, the Academic Freedom Committee, the Academic Programs and Policies Committee, the Educational Policy Committee, FACTA. Those committees in general seem to work quite well, and they have finite tasks, they focus on; they actually seem to be able to come out with proposals, some of which you like, some of which you don't like. But, the basic work of a committee, to analyze a problem and come up with a solution to the problem, seems to work reasonably well. When we set up the Senate, we put into the document another form of interacting with the administration in faculty governance and that was the notion of the joint administration-faculty committee. We have had a mixed record with those committees; some of those have worked well, others have not worked well. One that has been a disappointment to me has been the joint faculty-administration Committee on Admissions and Financial Aid, which replaced the old faculty committee on that. Behind this structure, it is important to get faculty members to focus on issues that administrators think should be a concern. It is a good idea in theory; it has not worked out well all the time. On that committee, we have not figured out how to couple with the administration on these issues. That committee, after a couple of years, has not felt that it has had

the input to help the administration properly on this matter of importance. I think that Bob is going to have to work on this problem in the future to try to figure out how to have the faculty provide its appropriate level of input in various administrative functions that are of interest to it. I think we probably have a quorum by this point."

Speaker Pollak: "We have a quorum, and will now move on to the next item on the agenda which is an opportunity to interact with the Provost. Perhaps he has some opening comments for us."

## **2. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS WITH THE PROVOST**

Don M. Randel, University Provost: "I'd like to say a couple of things. With respect to the task force on the Division of Biological Sciences, it appears that it may have been thought that a decision would be launched to more precipitously than it was going to be. I expect and I hereby warn Professor Howland that I will ask him to convene a group of his colleagues who participated in the discussion that led to his report, to meet with me and perhaps the President (if the schedule can be made appropriate) so as to have the occasion to hear and talk with colleagues on that side of the issue. We continue to invite your views, I would be glad to meet with the task force as well and I think before it is all over, we are certain to seek advice from outside the University.

"I would just like to say a word about the positions in the administration that I am now seeking to fill, particularly the two Vice-Provosts. I have invited everyone to send me their ideas and names, and I have received some number. I have been asked if I would give more detail about the nature of the duties. Let me say that I will try to circulate a letter that better describes those duties. The aim here is to have two people from the faculty who are prepared to roll up their sleeves and work very hard on behalf of all of us to give the faculty a stronger academic voice. There will be a greater pool of people who understand the issues involved and will be centrally involved in what we are about. It is my expectation that each of these Vice-Provosts will have a portfolio of colleges and others of the twenty or so units that report to the Provost's office on very many matters of daily business. One of the things that I hope is that the Provost's office will be able to respond much more speedily and efficiently to questions that come up, a process which right now, I think, takes much too long and for that I apologize. Simply a lot of daily business will come before these people, but there will also be the question of the number of initiatives which occasionally arise and one of these people may be asked to follow-up and pursue something. Some of these things will be initiatives having to do with undergraduate education that bridges the college and many of the other collaborations that the President and I have encouraged that I feel are essential to the University's prosperity. We have increasingly interdisciplinary work before us and I think we need to increasingly bring closer collaboration among the several colleges and units on the campus and I would like these people to be able to work on these projects as they arise and to see them through to some outcome. As we all know, many a report has been written at Cornell to which there has been no follow-up and I would like to see us do better in that regard. There are a number of places that needed to be touched in the selection of these two people in addition to the Vice-Provost for Research. This requires a certain amount of juggling on my part, which makes it very hard for me to say who is going to have precisely which duties. It is clear that we have to have distinguished scientists as a part of this effort, and we have to have some representation from the statutory colleges, and I am committed, and I will say it before you now, to bring in at least one woman into the central administration on the academic side of the house. I will strive for diversity in general. We must have a social scientist, because much of what we are about is in the social sciences. By the time I add up all of the bases that I want to cover, I have many more than three bases and I have only three positions to fill. Finding the right combination of people is not going to be straightforwardly easy, but once I identify those three people, then I can better figure out how the various duties will be divided up. I hope to have a happy outcome within about a month or so. Are there questions about anything?"

Professor William Lesser, Agricultural, Resource, and Managerial Economics: "Provost Randel, I wonder if you could help me, please, to understand the charge to the Social Science Research Task Force. The Senate, of course, approved a slate of appointments to that task force last time. As I compare it to the earlier task force on natural sciences, the goal and charge to that committee was really clear and compelling that you are frequently asked to provide additional funds for research at this University and that you receive requests for more money than you give away. To my knowledge, the University does not put a great deal of money into specific social science research endeavors. Could you further elaborate on this task force then?"

Provost Randel: "There are a number of different ways that I could approach that, many of them, you'll pardon me, are facetious. But I will try to be serious for a moment. By some measures, the University invests much more into social

sciences than it does into physical sciences, if by actual count of people on the faculty who hold degrees in social sciences, if by no other. The fact that we have 100 people on the faculty who hold Ph.D.s in Economics, means that we are spending enough on economics and by any count it dwarfs many other fields on this campus. What I have to believe about that is that we are not getting the good out of that investment that we should. The University of Michigan brings in something like \$200 million a year in sponsored research in the social sciences, and Cornell brings in less than a tenth of that. I think there is every reason why Cornell with its strength and range of faculty investment in the social sciences should be doing a lot better in that domain. Why we are not doing better is a matter one could speculate about. I think one of the things this committee needs to think about is what our strengths are, how we can make more use of those strengths, and in the end, how we can prosper more with the kind of support that there is for the social sciences. We also have substantial infrastructure investments in some social sciences in the form of library materials. We have available very substantial computing resources, which I think have been underused by social scientists. Some of them would say that isn't their fault. They haven't been given access to this resource. I have steadily insisted that the Theory Center and CIT provide much better support for the social scientist so as to enable them to carry out their work that will be distinguished by the highest level of standards. There is every reason to have a task force, not so much about how to spend new money, but about how to make sure that we get the most out of the very substantial amount of money we are already spending. It will be an effort of collaboration and identifying the areas where we will be able to make our mark as well as to identify those areas where we won't be able to for various reasons."

Associate Professor Randy O. Wayne, Plant Biology: "I guess what you are saying is that the value of a social scientist is based on how much money they bring in?"

Provost Randel: "I just spent an hour with a staffer from a Congressman's office and it was not happy, and it was partially not happy because that is the sort of question you are asked. 'When did you last beat your wife?' or 'Do I understand you to mean that you feel that you should beat your wife more often?' That is manifest nonsense. I am a historian of Medieval Music; I do not judge myself based upon how much money I bring in from the outside. We wouldn't have a Music Department, we wouldn't have a Romance Studies Department, a third of the faculty, and perhaps the most distinguished third of the faculty. If you want to look at the polls, Philosophy, English, Comparative Literature, and a number of other Humanities departments bring in hardly a nickel in outside money and they are our very great strength. We do not judge people on how much money they bring in. In some fields, however, we can reasonably expect that they will bring in outside money. That is why some of those fields have lower teaching quotas, etc."

Professor Wayne: "When the president spoke to us last, he responded to a question, I don't remember the question, but I certainly remember the answer. The answer was, 'the University was more than a corporation. . . ' which I interpret to mean that the University is first and foremost a corporation. So I was wondering what your viewpoint is on this issue."

Provost Randel: "I'm don't remember how the corporation got in there. Well, let me give my speech on that too. I get asked this all the time too. I'm the wooly-headed Humanist on the rubber-chicken circuit and people want to say, 'Are you in business or not?' I say, 'Of course, we're in business, but it is important to remember what kind of business we're in.' The businesses that have gotten in trouble in this country are those that didn't remember what kind of business they were. Sure, we are a business in the sense that we have a bottom line, we have to live within our means. But, we exist for academic and intellectual reasons and if you forget that, then you don't know what kind of business we're in. We insist on doing certain things as a matter of principle whether they increase the gross national product or not."

Professor Tob deBoer, Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering: "Could you give us your perspective on the workings of the Faculty Committee on Tenure Appointments?"

Provost Randel: "I had a discussion about this with Dean Stein. My belief, you'll recall, is that I was a defender and advocate of this system early on. I have read the reports that have been sent to me with considerable interest. My only qualification to add to what has happened so far, and we have talked about ways of addressing that is what I get is an accumulation of the e-mails from the committee members and very often they are very short, 'I think this is good, go ahead and recommend it to the Provost.' This doesn't give me any flavor for the debate or the sentiment of the committee and I sort of say, 4 yes, 0 no, it must be a good package, OK. I would like to see a method by which I can exercise my responsibilities, have a sense of what the case is about, what are the strengths, weaknesses and if there are any reservations, without my reading the entire dossier to see if I agree with it. Among the things that we talked about was whether I would meet with the committee, and whether the committee members would be asked to write more than two

sentences."

Dean Stein: "Let me say, Tob, I don't consider that a serious problem. This is the first time we have ever discussed with the Provost his feelings on the reports. Neither of us has any experience in dealing with each other on these matters and it will take a little back and forth before we get it right."

Provost Randel: "And our conversation this afternoon was wholly productive. I shouldn't be taken to be casting any doubt on the prospects for this committee."

Speaker Pollak: "Are there any more questions? If not, we'll move on to our next item on the agenda."

### **3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MARCH 11, 1998 MEETING**

Speaker Pollak: "You should have all had the opportunity to look on the web for the minutes of the last meeting. Are there any comments on these? Seeing none, we will accept them unanimously."

"I will now call on Kathleen to give us the report from the Nominations and Elections Committee."

### **4. REPORT FROM THE COMMITTEE ON NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS**

Professor Kathleen Rasmussen, Nutritional Sciences and Associate Dean and Secretary of the University Faculty: "There are two issues that I would like to bring to your attention before I show you what we have done. The first is that we are working very hard to prepare a slate of candidates for the various elected committees - Nominations and Elections, University Faculty Committee, the At-Large members. We have canvassed the faculty for ideas, and have called a lot of people. We didn't get all the 'yesses' that we needed to present a slate of candidates for your approval today, but I am fairly confident that we will have one for the May meeting and we will proceed to an election at that time."

"Secondly, at the UFC meeting, it was suggested that it might be helpful to see what the Nominations and Elections Committee was going to propose at the meeting in your 'Call to Meeting' packets, since the Nominations and Elections report goes by so quickly. We will be working on that for the next meeting."

"This is what we have been up to most recently: "

#### **CAMPUS PLANNING COMMITTEE**

Jan Jennings, CHE

#### **RESIDENTIAL INITIATIVES**

##### **Long-Term West Campus:**

Eugene Erickson, CALS

##### **Oversight, North Campus:**

Jeff Haugaard, CHE

#### **MINORITY AND THIRD WORLD AFFAIRS**

Lorraine Maxwell, CHE

Professor Howard Howland, Neurobiology and Behavior: "These are, for example, the Residential Initiatives Committees, joint faculty-administrative committees, correct?"

Professor Rasmussen: "These two committees have administrators, students, residents, and faculty."

Professor Howland: "When I remember the original plan for the Senate, there was going to be an even balance between administrative and faculty appointments."

Professor Rasmussen: "That is true for certain committees, and it has been true for the social sciences Research Task Force, the Program Review Committee, and the physical sciences Task Force. This is not that particular kind of committee. It is much more flexible and ad hoc and to have faculty members make up half of this committee, I do not think would be appropriate."

Dean Stein: "The general rule is that we appoint half of the faculty members to the committees. Many of the people on these committees are not faculty, they are *ex officio*, staff and administrators, and also students. So, it is half of the faculty members. In general, our history has been that we more or less adhere to that formula. Sometimes, we may give the Provost ten names as suggestions for a ten-member faculty committee, we tell him to choose five, and he chooses all ten. Who named those members? In that case, it may be said that we appointed 100% of that committee. It is difficult to tell. But, it is of the faculty, not of the whole committee."

Professor Rasmussen: "Indeed there is one other faculty member in each case that was appointed by Vice-President Murphy."

Speaker Pollak: "Are there any comments on the appointments? Seeing none, we will cast the unanimous ballot and move on to the next item on the agenda."

## **5. RESOLUTION TO ESTABLISH NATURAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ADVISORY COUNCILS**

Dean Stein: "I think you already know the context, but I'll set it anyway. The genesis of this proposal was the task force that met last summer on Research Futures in physical and biological sciences and engineering, or some such permutation of those words. This committee came out with its report at the end of the summer and we, on the UFC, felt that this was an important report. It would have an important affect on the future of the natural sciences. I use the term 'natural sciences' to include physical and biological sciences and engineering, so that is the definition of 'natural sciences' for the purpose of this resolution. It would have an important effect on how natural sciences progressed and prospered here at Cornell and we felt that the Senate should have something to say on this matter and we really didn't quite know how. The UFC brought a motion to you which was discussed at one meeting which was our attempt to put that issue on the floor of the Senate. It was discussed at one meeting, voted on at the next meeting, and then it was resoundingly voted down at that meeting.

"We then appointed a committee that was representative of the people in the room and representative of the vote. We appointed a committee of seven people to sit down and see if they could craft and bring a proposal to you that would do two things: 1) that it would be useful and make Cornell a better place in natural sciences; and 2) that it would meet with your approval and address at least most of the objections that were raised at that Senate meeting. That committee has been working very hard and they have come up with a proposal that was duly circulated to you. I would now like to call on Professor Linda Nicholson to present that proposal to you.

"As she is walking down, I would just like to say a little bit more. We have a lot of time to discuss this. I think that this is an important issue and we should discuss it thoroughly. Even when we work hard on these matters, it takes us almost an entire year to bring them to a conclusion. We have to come to a conclusion one way or another on this subject and I think we have plenty of time and we ought to try hard to do that today."

Assistant Professor Linda Nicholson, Biochemistry, Molecular, and Cell Biology: "Thank you, Peter. Before we get started, I would just like to take a moment to recognize the other members of the committee: Barry Carpenter, John Smillie, Brad Anton, Rich Galik, and Milt Zaitlin, in addition to Dean Stein and myself. The resolution ([Appendix A](#), attached) before us is a proposal for establishing natural sciences Research Advisory Councils. In the next ten minutes or so, I would like to address three different questions: 1) Why do we need advisory councils? 2) What is the proposed structure and how will it work? 3) What is the probable impact on Cornell in the areas of natural sciences? As Dean Stein pointed out, we are defining 'natural sciences' as encompassing physical and biological sciences and engineering.

"First, I want to provide some perspective for those of you who are not in natural sciences and are not familiar with the magnitude of the funding that is involved in these areas. I apologize for the bias to biological sciences here. I am a Biological Scientist and I receive the FASEB newsletter. These are more geared towards the Life Sciences, but I am sure that the physical sciences and engineering fields have similar newsletters and have funding levels that are similar to these

levels. The trends we are seeing here are certainly applicable to all of natural sciences and therefore have direct bearing on what we are talking about today. So FASEB stands for the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology. There are 14 such societies representing over 52,000 scientists. Representatives from each of these societies meet once a year to discuss the future in life sciences, and emerging areas in science, and then recommendations to the major funding agencies in the United States. Just to give you some numbers here:

"As you can see ([Appendix B](#), attached), the National Institutes of Health's current budget is over \$13.6 billion, NSF is over \$3.4 billion, and then tens of hundreds of millions of dollars for other funding agencies which include the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Energy, Veterans' Affairs, and NASA. I would also like to bring your attention to the conclusions that this group came up with:

'We have only begun to exploit the vast potential that stands before us. The time is right for substantial increases in our national investment in basic research in biomedical and related life sciences. The dramatic discoveries of the last two decades have given us new tools and insights into mechanisms of animal and plant life and have created exciting new opportunities for progress in our quest for improved health, agriculture, and environmental quality. To acquire the knowledge that will enable us to achieve the goals that Americans so clearly desire, we must build on our recent progress and extend the efforts that have already yielded so many benefits and promise so many more.'

"In accordance with these conclusions, dramatic increases in the budgets of these various different funding institutions have been recommended. They recommend 15% for NIH and 100% for NASA. The two key points that I'd like you to take from this presentation are: 1) research in life sciences is expensive; and 2) a revolution is upon us, we are on the threshold of extraordinary advancements and now is the time to make the investments.

"I think this has direct parallels to the situation that is faced by the central administration here at Cornell. From the perspective of Cornell's central administration, in terms of natural sciences, they are seeing that research in the natural sciences is expensive, and this is both in terms of basic and applied, and there are really direct links between these two. In fact, a revolution is upon us. We are on the threshold of extraordinary advancements that Cornell can make incredible contributions to, and now is the time to make those key investments. The questions that they face and will face are: 1) What will Cornell's key investments be? 2) Who will help make these critical decisions?

"With that perspective, we can now move onto the 'Whereas' clauses of the resolution. The first 'whereas' simply states that the faculty recognizes and accepts their role in providing advice to the central administration on making investments in the natural sciences. The second 'whereas' basically says it is somewhat of an inefficient enterprise in terms of how we invest this money; nothing is ever guaranteed, and we don't know exactly what the future will hold. It is very critical not just to target specific areas, but to maintain a broad base in research so that we will have a launching pad from which to launch off new research programs in emerging areas. The third 'whereas' states that there are different levels of requests that the University has to deal with. These requests include different monetary levels, as well as different levels of impact. If some proposal is going to launch Cornell off in a completely new area, this is going to have a greater impact than something that is just an expansion of an existing program. The fourth 'whereas' basically states that we need to separate advocacy and evaluation roles in whoever is providing advice to the Provost.

"We have proposed two different advisory councils. I have here a schematic of Cornell University ([Appendix C](#), attached), and you recognize it as Cornell because of the pumpkin on top of the tower:

"We have a central administration here that has in its grasp a certain amount of discretionary resources. We are talking here only about those discretionary resources. I would like to clearly distinguish this from the decisions that the deans are making already. This is simply about the discretionary funds that the central administration controls. We are proposing a local advisory council and an external advisory council that will provide a global perspective. This will be expert advice that will aid the central administration in making its decisions. To illustrate its structure, I'll show you this flow chart ([Figure 1](#), attached).

"Let's just start with a proposal. A proposal is submitted to the central administration and there is a sorting function that goes on here. The central administration decides whether those proposals are small, medium, or large and depending upon that decision, different things happen. Small proposals will be dealt with as they have been in the past. Decisions will

be made directly by the central administration. It is their prerogative to obtain additional information and advice.

"Medium proposals would be passed through the Local Advisory Council; these are people who are right here on campus. It will be composed of faculty members. We envision this being a fast kind of process where the Local Advisory Council will evaluate medium proposals. It will also evaluate proposals that may not be appropriate for the External Advisory Council to review due to urgency. Anybody on the Advisory Council that had a direct interest in a proposal would not be allowed to vote on that proposal, so that would hopefully remove any bias.

"Large proposals would be set aside for an annual evaluation. Once a year, the External Advisory Council would meet here at Cornell, to evaluate the proposals that are of larger magnitude in impact and they would provide recommendations on these proposals to central administration in the form of a written report.

"Examples of smaller proposals might be bridging funds to see a researcher through a period between grants. Medium proposals might be start-up costs for rather expensive faculty members that were hired. Large proposals might be new buildings, new institutes or departments that are proposed, or perhaps focusing Cornell's research in science in areas that it has not focused on before.

"So, the External Advisory Council would meet annually and submit a report. This report would be carried by the Local Advisory Council to the Faculty Senate for open discussion. We as a Faculty Senate, representative of the faculty of Cornell, would have an open discussion that the Provost's ears would hear and so in a worst-case scenario, if you thought that various councils had been stacked against an area that you felt strongly about, you could stand up and have just as loud a voice. Of course it is up to the Provost and the central administration in terms of who they listen to the most.

"The Local Advisory Council would be composed of ten Cornell faculty members appointed jointly by the Faculty Senate and the Provost. You would have a say in who these people are. They would play a strictly advisory and organizational role, and if they had a stake in a matter up for discussion, they wouldn't have a vote on that proposal. They would evaluate medium and urgent proposals. They would advise the Provost on the selection of the External Advisory Council. They would organize the annual External Advisory Council meeting, they would host the members, organize the presentation of the materials, and provide a local perspective on science and politics to the External Advisory Council and then they would carry the recommendations to the Faculty Senate.

"The External Advisory Council would be composed of five 'luminaries'. These would be people who have a very broad perspective on science and the impact of science on the world as well as elsewhere. They would be science administrators, science policymakers, and distinguished scientists themselves. They would be appointed by the Provost with advice from the Local Advisory Council. They would provide a broad perspective on science in the world and how Cornell could contribute to that community. They would meet at a specific time each year; you would know that you would need to gear a specific proposal to a specific time of year. They would evaluate proposals at this annual meeting and they would make written recommendations. They would provide outside perspective on questions like: What are the emerging areas in science? Do the proposals represent emerging areas? Would the proposals be likely to raise the eminence of Cornell? Do the proposals make sense for Cornell to pursue? They would also provide unbiased judgment on whether the proposals represent critical areas of science from a global and philosophical perspective.

"The rationale, I apologize, attempts to project the probable impact of this structure on Cornell. The first rationale basically says that these decisions are going to be made anyway. Whether or not we adopt this resolution is going to determine whether or not the Provost has a lot of information at his disposal to make these decisions. The second rationale is stating that there is very little, if any, precedent for this kind of advisory structure at this level in the academic world. We see this as giving Cornell a strategic advantage in launching into emerging areas of science. The External Advisory Council would also give us the opportunity to advertise a little bit and perhaps raise Cornell's eminence through this advertising. The third rationale is building in checks and balances. The External Advisory Council is great because it gives a global perspective. The Local Advisory Council is also great and very important for knowing what makes sense for Cornell and what is the likely impact if we make selected investments, and how those investments will that impact the whole of natural sciences at Cornell. Lastly, the presentation of these recommendations to the Faculty Senate will perhaps give us the opportunity to raise issues that perhaps the other advisory councils haven't thought of, that the broad level of representation here would be very useful in this process.

"We very quickly threw together a list of people who might serve on the External Advisory Council ([Appendix A](#)). I'm sure that you can find many, many ways to point out how biased this list is, and I apologize for that; certainly one is that they are all men. This was just tossing out names that popped into people's heads, people who are Noble Laureates, people who are directors of institutes. But, this is just to point out the level of person that we would be going after for targeting the five members of the External Advisory Council. I also put web pages for some of them so you could look and see what their background is."

Speaker Pollak: "Are there questions or comments regarding the material being presented."

Assistant Professor Tony L. Simons, Hotel Administration: "I am curious about the idea of setting down the limits of various categories or should that just be a discretionary decision of whether this is small, medium or large?"

Professor Nicholson: "We certainly discussed this and the bottom line is that the Provost would have the sorting power and we don't want to tie anybody's hands. We simply want everything to work and we want it to work well. We sort of said, small means less than a million dollars, etc. . . We decided not to put dollar amounts on that in order to give the Provost the largest amount of freedom possible."

Professor Richard Galik, Physics: "There is also a trade-off, you have to balance urgency with dollars. Sometimes there may be amounts of money that seem large, but we need to know very soon if we should spend that money, so that advisory power should be given to the local council instead of the external council. If we have a hot faculty member that we would like to attract and we need half a million dollars in order to set her up in a laboratory, we need to know quick. So, sometimes dollar amounts will not be the sole determining factor in whether these proposals are small, medium or large."

Professor Fred Ahl, Classics: "How will this research council work with already existing research councils at Cornell?"

Professor Nicholson: "Are you talking about the Research Council that Norm Scott has in effect?"

Professor Ahl: "Yes."

Professor Nicholson: "Dean Stein, since you gave us your perspective on what that Research Council does, maybe you could better tell us about what that is and how it wouldn't fill the role that this committee will fill."

Dean Stein: "The Research Council is a rather large group which has not been a decision-making body. It encompasses the natural sciences and the social sciences; it has some humanists, some administrators; the list is probably close to thirty people or so. It really has been a committee of information exchange with the Vice-President for Research and it has really been a creature of the Vice-President for Research, and we are now having a change in that administration."

"It was not clear to us that the people who would want to be on a committee like this would also want to be on that committee. It is clear that if this committee is approved and if the new Vice-President for Research or the new Vice-Provost for Research wants to continue something like the Research Council, it will have to be decided how this committee fits in with that committee. If this committee becomes the nucleus of the natural sciences part of that group, it didn't seem appropriate to build on an existing part of that committee since it wasn't formed for that purpose and since it may not have a lifetime that goes beyond this July."

Assistant Professor Carlo Montemagno, Agricultural and Biological Engineering: "Currently when you have proposals that go to NSF or NIH, the selection of those particular proposals is done in a very ad hoc manner. Would you foresee this committee taking over that role in a more formal way?"

Professor Nicholson: "We did not discuss that issue, but it does seem to me to make good sense to do that. Once a structure like this is in place, it may be able to handle a variety of details like that one you just described. Although this does specifically deal only with natural sciences."

Professor Terrence Fine, Electrical Engineering: "I wonder why I rise so often in opposition. I think part of it is that there is a real philosophical difference between me, and let me take as an avatar, Dean Stein. I'm not sure if he has ever met a problem to which the answer wasn't a standing faculty committee. Whereas to me, I think that standing faculty committees ought to be used quite sparingly. Not only do we have standing faculty committees for everything, but we



have them at the University level and that is a concern for me because it erodes the department and the college. You have heard me speak to this before on a previous and very similar issue, which is University-wide faculty tenure review.

"I would like to say that not everything that the Provost says that he would like advice on means the creation of a University-wide standing committee, which thereby subtracts from the importance of certain existing areas about research management, which we've already mentioned, and of course research management at the level of the college, that little box down there in the corner. Overall, I don't like the idea and I am supposed to believe that this is a particularly good idea. You gave us the motivational material. If I took the information that you gave us on that slide, I could have changed the numbers and put any year on that slide and gave the same presentation. The arguments you make about innovations, about new things happening have been given every year that I have been here; it is always on the horizon. That is how we keep going, we always keep thinking that something important is about to happen in everything that we do. The numbers change, it wouldn't have been \$15 billion twenty years ago, but the arguments would have been the same. I don't think anything has changed in that respect.

"What about the mechanism itself? There is a belief in here that we can achieve a state which I very much doubt we can achieve. You talked about dispassionate evaluation, separating advocacy from dispassionate evaluation. That is wonderful. Is that something that you can do? I very much doubt it. You talk about two committees, a local and an external committee. We'd like to think that they are independent. But I think that in a working matter, their independence is very much compromised. The local committee suggests names of the external committee, they host them, they schmooze them, they explain problems to them. These are not two independent committees, not by any stretch of human interaction. This is very much a matter of one co-opting the other.

"What is this external committee going to do? You mentioned that many people might think that your list is biased&endash;there were no women&endash;I think that any list you come up with will be biased. No matter who you put on this committee, the committee will still be biased. In Part B, you are asking them to provide unbiased judgment. Do you really think that is possible? I don't really mean this directly to you; I am looking at you; I should be looking at the chair. Do we really think we are going to find these five marvels who are going to provide unbiased judgment? I don't think so. We are all really very biased. We are very much conditioned by the work we do. Twice we hear about this committee providing unbiased judgment. Finally, something else that I really take offense at, 'Part D: provide a frank evaluation of the quality of Cornell's programs in natural sciences'. Who asked you? Who asked you to propose this? This is research program review. We now have tenure review and next is research program review? This is a wholly new item, that we put at the bottom. We have A, B, C, . . . oh. . . and now here's D. I think it is a completely different object to evaluate the quality of these programs in natural sciences than it is to make decisions about building a new building over here or not. It is a much broader scope. So for these reasons, I really don't think there is any hope of making this thing unbiased. I strongly oppose this. I know, judging by past history with Dean Stein, that one 'no' vote does not do it. When you vote 'no' against something that he is in favor of, we find it coming back in another form. We find that a roll call vote is used by him to call people up and find out why they didn't vote the way that he thought they should have voted. All of these things I do not think is the role of the Dean of the Faculty."

Professor Barry Carpenter, Chemistry: "I'm not sure I remember all of Terry's points but I will try to address them. I think he is absolutely right that this will not provide an unbiased set of data that the Provost can use. So, the question really is going to be, how biased is the information going to be? What we are looking for is not something which there is going to be no bias, but something for which there is minimum bias. It is in part related to the fact that the two highest offices in the University are held by non-scientists. They are highly admirable people, but they are not scientists. So they will be looking for advice from somewhere and the fact of the matter is that there are a few people of considerable power, with very persuasive voices, who are currently advising the people who in the end are ultimately making the final decision. I find that undesirable. I think we'd want to have as many people giving as unbiased advice as possible. This was set up to provide the best that we could do for that structure. In fact, if you recall, I was the one who raised the conflict of interest issue when the original Research Futures Task Force Proposal was brought before the Senate and I was against that.

"As far as the external committee is concerned, I would like to think that I as a Cornell faculty member by the power of my persuasion could convince the head of the NIH or the head of the NSF of the absolute splendor of my research. If I could do that, I would probably be heading a much larger research group than I am. These are not dumb people. These are people who are exposed to an awfully large amount of material. I think the likelihood that they would be unduly influenced by

what we have to say is not very great. Hopefully, they will be influenced a bit because as Linda mentioned, one of the things that we hope to achieve is a bit of advertising for Cornell. It probably couldn't hurt if on a yearly basis a group of eminent people in the field of natural sciences and in charge of the national funding agencies came to campus to see what we at Cornell are doing."

Professor Galik: "One issue that Terry brought up was the program review aspect. It is important to realize that any group of external advisers will be looking at the big picture and will want to know if we have adequate resources, expertise, or background in order to pursue a critical or emerging area of science, we will have to make some statement about what Cornell is doing presently. I think that at some point, Cornell will have to make some frank judgments as to whether or not Cornell's background or present program will allow it to move into certain areas. I don't think that this committee can make recommendations about Cornell's future without first evaluating Cornell at present."

Professor Nicholson: "One other thing that Professor Fine did bring up is what is the difference between this year and previous years. Of course FASEB would have recommended these increases in science every year because science is moving very rapidly. Whether it is putting someone on the moon or plotting the human genome, science is moving very rapidly and there are some decisions that do need to be made right away. I think it is a very critical time because research is getting very expensive and we have to make these decisions with the best possible information."

"As Barry pointed out, this system will hopefully provide a check on internal political factors so that empire builders won't dominate. There are a variety of different people who go into science, certainly there are some people with very large egos who do it for the sport. There are also some people who just sit on a high mountain and look. Those certainly are people who are very critical for science and they aren't always the people with the loudest voices."

Professor S. Kay Obendorf, Textiles and Apparel: "I'm back at the beginning with the definition of 'natural sciences'. As part of your introduction, you had health and agriculture. I want to know if health relates to nutritional Sciences in the same way as life sciences relates to agriculture in this proposal?"

Dean Stein: "The term, 'natural sciences' is, of course, an ancient term first laid out by the Humboldt brothers as one of the three great divisions of knowledge laid out in German academic circles in the 19th century. But life is getting more complicated and now the faculty committee on program review is trying to assemble an inventory of biological sciences at Cornell and it can't be done by colleges and it can't be done by departments. In the end it has to be done by individuals. In trying to assemble that inventory, faculty seem to have a general sense of who is in the biological sciences and who is not in the biological sciences. Nutritional sciences has people who do basic biological science, people who do applied biological science and people who do social science. My impression is that not everyone who does nutritional science would be in this envelope, but people who do applied and basic biological sciences would be. I don't think that it is possible to draw a map by college or even department that would outline all of this for you. It just has to be done on an individual basis."

Professor Obendorf: "What about agriculture?"

Dean Stein: "The parts of agriculture that deal with biological science are certainly a part of it. But, people who do international agriculture, I'm sure get into things like sociology and various other parts of social science."

Professor Obendorf: "Is John Pollak in this?"

Dean Stein: "I don't know, I think John Pollak will define himself. I think he is in."

Speaker Pollak: "I'm not supposed to comment on the issues."

Professor Richard Baer, Natural Resources: "I'm not a natural scientist and I don't know if I am for or against this, but I would just like to express a little uneasiness. It seems that part of the real strength of Cornell in recent years has been a certain messiness, a certain entrepreneurship, a lack of planning in some areas. It reminds me of a comment that Victor Perkus makes in his book *The Technological Man*. He is referring to Teilard de Chardin, and he is referring to Teilard's impatience with 'the messiness of ordinary human life, the mark of the true totalitarian'. I'm not suggesting totalitarian impulses here, but I think we do have to watch out for a certain bureaucratizing of what is a kind of impulsive genius and unexpected element in science and all academic enterprises, and I think there is some real danger in overrationalizing this. I'm not an economist. I don't much about how the M.I.T.I. (Ministry of International Trade and Industry) functioned in

Japan, but my reading suggests that they made almost all of the wrong decisions with their centrally controlled economy and had industrialists followed what they said, it would have been an unmitigated disaster. I do know enough about urban renewal, and planning; I've read enough Hegel and others and Reinhold Niebuhr who remained skeptical of our ability to grasp the big picture.

"I hope at least that if we move in this direction that we don't squelch something that is very precious and very important to Cornell and to American science in general. It is very much a bottom up affair; its genius and insight often come from people without very much prestige, without much status, but they are just 'dumb' enough to think the wrong thoughts, outside of the orthodoxy of science and the accepted way of doing business. I don't know if I am in favor or against it, but I have a little bit of uneasiness. I think we need to be very careful about something like this. Sometimes provosts and deans and department chairs need a great deal of freedom to move quickly without a great deal of bureaucratized formalized procedures that they have to follow. They have to follow their hunch sometimes, or guess, and I am willing to take that risk at least to a large extent in the way we have done it in the past. I think there is some danger here that we have to be careful about."

Associate Professor Brad Anton, Chemical Engineering: "It is important to remember that the Provost writes the checks and he is going to do what he wants to do. This is a structure for giving him advice, a structure to try to try to be sure that he doesn't make a bad investment based on unfortunate information. We want to try to help him be sure that he writes the right check. But, ultimately he does that, this doesn't tie his hands or stop him from doing anything that he otherwise would have done."

Professor Richard Schuler, Economics and Civil and Environmental Engineering: "One of the concerns that I had about the original natural sciences Research Futures Report was that it seems that many of the exciting opportunities we have at the doorstep really span the natural sciences and the social sciences. Yet, while I agreed with the research priorities identified in that report, they were almost predictable based upon the composition of that initial committee. In fact, the research funding agencies that we have across the country are organized by disciplinary groups and they take care rather well of supporting rather traditional disciplinary organized activities. With the formation of this Research Council, we still haven't resolved this problem. I am well aware that the Provost has put into place a social sciences task force that will undoubtedly lead to recommendations about research policies in the social sciences which will undoubtedly lead to a Senate call for a standing faculty committee to advise the Provost on those activities. That still doesn't get at the fundamental question that I have which is how do we identify those truly new opportunities that cut across disciplines, even the broadly defined disciplines. My response is that would probably call for a standing committee to cut across the disciplines. My hope is that it would not be a hierarchy of standing committees, but rather a common committee, that would encourage a variety of people to talk amongst themselves about this procedure much like the tenure committee seems to be working."

"I'm not sure what that gets to as far as being for or against, but I am concerned about a very limiting nature of the way in which research gets reviewed given what is on the horizon. I would hope we could move to a broader based committee to provide advice on those opportunities which aren't likely to get outside funding, yet achieve positive long range opportunities for Cornell."

Professor Philip Nicholson, Astronomy: "Most of the points I wanted to make have been made very well by several other people. I think this is a vastly improved report. The things I like most are the 'whereas' clauses. You point out that research is a gamble we really don't know where the most important things might come from. Speaking from the viewpoint of one coming from one of the smaller physical science departments, Astronomy, we tend to favor the entrepreneurial view because we feel that it works. I agree with the previous statements that in practice coming up with an unbiased committee that is going to make recommendations within Cornell on this is almost impossible. In summary, my feeling, along with some other people who spoke before me, is that we very much like the idea of an external committee of distinguished people."

Dean Stein: "I'd like to respond to a couple of things, particularly what Terry said and what Richard Baer said, which is an interesting question. Namely, what's different now? Why has this proposal come now? Is it my love for faculty committees or some other nefarious thing that brings this to us? And I think not. I think there is something fundamentally different, and just to put it in my own perspective, when I was a graduate student, I did my first experiment in particle physics, and the number of people who worked on that were two, me and a junior faculty member. We conceived of an experiment and built the equipment, took the data, and published the results. The last experiment I worked on in particle physics had

200 people working on it. It was a factor of 100. That's a fundamental change. Likewise, when I came to Cornell, it didn't cost \$100,000 for start-up costs to bring a faculty member to Cornell. There has been a congealing in the sciences which somehow makes it difficult to carry on the old way that those of us who have been here a long time, have learned to love. Namely, this sort of noisy, disorganized kind of institution that this was. Some flowers would bloom, and some would grow better than others. The fact of the matter is that new efforts in the natural sciences consume ever-increasing proportions of the amount of money that the institution and the amount of resources the institution has to spend on them, which makes each decision more critical than it has ever been in the past. And that, to me, is the fundamental thing that has changed. The stakes have increased on these various decisions, and therefore one wants to have those decisions made by the Provost, in all his wisdom, with the background of the best possible information. And that's what this structure attempts to do. Maybe the local committee may not add too much, but it may. Maybe the committee of worthies will be too high up in the sky to focus on Cornell's problems, but maybe not. The hope is that the combination and interaction of those two committees will produce the best information that the Provost can have when he makes these critical decisions."

Speaker Pollak: "Terry, do you want to respond to that?"

Professor Fine: "A brief response. As I remember Arcibo and Wilson Accelerator were both large projects many years ago. So I'm not sure I agree with you that there's a new seed change here. We've always had big projects like that. I think university-level faculty standing committees are a serious thing to do. I'm thinking about the legal standard. There's 'preponderance of the evidence', 'clear and convincing', and 'beyond a reasonable doubt'. I don't think you have to be convinced 'beyond a reasonable doubt' to create a standing faculty committee. I don't even think 'preponderance of the evidence' is enough. If you feel that you can reach 'clear and convincing' on the need for such a committee, then create it. But I think if you're just on the edge, say 51%, that's not enough to create something as serious as a standing faculty committee at the university level which interposes itself between the Provost, the colleges, the departments, and the Vice President for Research. Before you do that, at least reach 'clear and convincing'."

Professor Elizabeth Earle, Plant Breeding and Biometry: "I wonder if we could hear from the Provost as to whether he would welcome this kind of structure and whether it would help him in his decision making?"

Provost Randel: "There are several things about this proposal that I think Norm cannot object to here, namely the notion of something like a local council. I think the Vice President now has a Research Council, which I'm not sure if it gives advice, but I can perfectly well imagine that such a body could be asked for advice. It is also the case that there is often a sound purpose served by seeking external council. In principle, there again, some kind of body of distinguished people from outside that could give advice from time to time would be perfectly useful. The hesitation that I may have about this derives primarily from the degree to which it covers all possible situations. I think that life is messier than this apparatus might succeed in dealing with. I don't really know what the debate on the floor of this body about whether we should build a new beamline for CHESS would be like, whether that would be a productive debate, whether one could in fact establish a panel of five or six people from the outside who would be able to give advice on a whole range of things. Something in me thinks that often ad hoc committees serve better. I'm also mindful that we can always sack such a committee. It's not a cure-all. I think a Research Council working with the Vice President for Research could be a valuable thing, and that issues of this kind might come before that body. And we will always have the need for external advice. Part of the issue here is that competition among ideas is not only within the sciences. There will be occasions in which what has to be weighed is not a matter between one science and another, but between some scientific and some other kind of solution before us. One would have to reckon with that as a possibility to be worked out within this particular organization. But, to have the faculty participate in some way in advice about these matters, I'm on record as saying that's a good idea. And to be able to seek outside advice when that's appropriate, I'm for that as well."

Speaker Pollak: "We have quite a few hands still up. In the interest of coming to a resolution, if we can, today, I'm going to ask you if you would be prepared to vote on this motion. Are there any strong objections to a vote?"

"Yes".

Dean Stein: "We have a very jammed meeting in May. I'm perfectly happy to come back next week and debate this some more, but it can't be pushed to the May meeting. So if we're not ready to vote now, I think we have to come back next week."

Speaker Pollak: "We did have someone request time during the Good and Welfare section, so we will move on to that at this time."

## 5. GOOD AND WELFARE

Professor Howland: "Thank you very much. I want to give you a little background on the motion that we hope to bring to the floor of the Senate, to explain to you why we, in the Division of Biological Sciences, are so concerned, I have outlined the main points on this handout ([Appendix D](#), attached) . The message that I want to bring to you is that the Division of Biological Sciences is a creature of the entire University and a great deal of thought went into its creation. In a surprising chain of events, due to the report of the task force which was appointed by the Provost, suddenly we find ourselves with a proposal before us that essentially says, 'we're going to disband the division.' It was not met with favor, we had only a couple of days to look at it and two meetings to discuss it. I think that the general reaction was shock, dismay, and fear.

"At the last meeting, I asked the Provost what was going to happen, he said that we would meet with the academic council and decide this spring. That really scared me terribly. I tried to outline in this paper, the great effort that went into creating the division. This is rather like making a railroad, a lot of work goes into it, but if you tear up the track, you have destroyed something that you are not going to put back together again. I think it is extremely important that we proceed with great caution, hence my desire to bring a motion in front of the Senate to recognize that this really is a creature of the whole University. So, we are going to bring a motion before the Senate which I ask for your help in preparing and refining, namely,

Resolved: The Senate urges the University Administration not to disband the Division of Biological Sciences without further and full consultation with the faculty of the Division and the University, with the Faculty Senate and with outside experts, and without the same thorough and careful deliberation used in the creation of the Division in 1964.

"Thank you."

The meeting was adjourned at 6:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Rasmussen, Associate Dean and Secretary of the University Faculty