Fall Plenary Minutes

28 September 2008

Schwartz Gymnasium

Quorum reached for the first time at 11:54 am.

**Aheli Purkayastha, President**: Hello and welcome to Fall Plenary 2008! Thanks for coming. We are going to quickly go over the rules of Plenary, and then move straight into our three resolutions. Quorum,423, is essential, as this will help us move efficiently. Each resolution will be presented, the speakers will have 3 minutes to explain resolution, then we will open up the floor to questions for 15 minutes, and then pro-con statements for 5 minutes, then rebuttal by the presenters for 2 minutes, annd finally we will vote on the resolution. If you have a question, please go to the yellow mic. Pro mic is green, and Con mic is red. Please keep your statements to one minute. Also, when you are going to each line, sign your name and class year to be included the minutes. I will call on the red, green, and yellow mic to speak, but questions will always be privileged. Please be patient and respectful of everyone speaking – listen carefully so as not to repeat anything previously said. All counters, please stand up – please meet your counter – they will be your bffs for the rest of Plenary. Each person in this room should have a green card, which your counters will have extras of, and you should raise your hand (and your card) high for voting. Please vote – you are here, so please vote either for, against, or abstain for each resolution. We have several definitions for speaking at plenary – these will help us move in an efficient manner. All motions and amendments that are made are privileged – you move to the front of the line that you are at. They must be submitted in writing to the Secretary, and read out loud by the amendment writer. There are 4 possible motions (see Plenary packet for outline and definitions).

Vote to approve Robert’s Rules of Order and Agenda: 429 total

In favor: 425; Opposed: 0; Abstentions: 4

Robert’s Rules of Order and the Agenda are approved for use at Fall Plenary 2008.

**Resolution 1:**

**Rachel Goddard and Jillian Barndt, Presenters**: Basically, over the years, we have seen that after priority numbers are released, people don’t have a lot of time to make decisions about how/where they want to live. It’s a stressful time of year anyways, so we want to have more time to make that decision. You would have time to find people to live with for multiple occupancy draw – and it’s really helpful for frosh, too.

Con microphone, **Patricia LeBron, ’09**: Motion to call the question.

Questions microphone,**Kendalyn Brown, ’09:** Seconded.

Vote to call the question: 428 total

In favor: 424; Opposed: 0; Abstentions: 4

Motion approved to vote on resolution.

Vote on Resolution 1: 433 total

In favor: 422; Opposed: 5; Abstentions: 6

Resolution 1 Passes.

**Resolution 2:**

**Paula Hidalgo, Presenter**: I am proposing we cut paper waste through 2 different ways. We should get rid of the telephone directory, as it is easily available on-line, and the on-line sources are more reliable because they are constantly updated. This would be in order to make our campus more eco-friendly, as students don’t use them on a regular basis. Professors put their numbers up on their syllabi, and there is an easier way to find them anyway. It’s a waste of paper for people to have this much paper to find just one or two phone numbers. HA’s have on-line directories, there are on-line ways for everyone to find this information. The second part is to make the undergraduate course catalog optional – via Virtual Bryn Mawr, you would be able to request it in the spring semester – the catalog you get frosh year represents the requirements you have to fulfill, so that’s the one that you should pay attention to, anyways.

Question microphone,**Kati Zaylor, ’11**: Call the question.

**Aheli Purkayastha, President**: We have to go to the people at the pro and con microphones, first.

Con microphone, **Mara Goldberg, ’09**: There are many places on the internet to find this information, but the value of the directory is that they are all on one place. If you have locked yourself out of Virtual Bryn Mawr, it is very nice to have it all in one place.

Question microphone, **Amanda Hittson, ’09**: Sometimes Virtual Bryn Mawr does not allow people to access the student directory? Will this be fixed if this passes?

**Paula Hidalgo**: I spoke with the Registrar, and if this passes, you would have to go to the online Registrar to request a catalog, and we would ensure it would be available.

Question microphone, **Caroline Kenward, ’12**: I just want to make sure the course catalog and everything will still be available to prospective students.

**Paula Hidalgo**: Yes, the admissions office would still have some but reevaluate the number of them that they receive.

Question microphone, **Sara Davidson, ’11**: Would it be possible for us to still have a certain number of catalogs available at libraries so that if you want a hard copy, it is still available?

**Paula Hidalgo**: As I said, you would be able to request it, and you can still request one.

Question microphone, **Eden McQueen, ’09**: If somebody wanted a hard copy of the student directory, could you request one?

**Paula Hidalgo**: You can physically go to the Office of Public Affairs, but she suggested that we not make it part of the resolution so that we don’t have so many copies.

Question microphone, **Olivia Coplan, ’10**: Is there a way to make it possible to request the student directory on-line as well?

**Paula Hidalgo**: I spoke to the Registrar, and she said that we can do it for the catalog, but not for the directory, since it is not under their jurisdiction. I spoke to Information Services, and they are very willing to make an on-line system, but they wanted to try to make it as much as possible to cut the number of copies on paper.

Question microphone, **Mara Goldberg, ’09**: Where is the Office of Public Affairs?

**Paula Hidalgo**: In Benham Gateway building, on the 2nd floor.

Pro microphone, J**illian Davis, ’09**: Given that we are still being allowed to request hard copies, that most of us can go to the Office of Public Affairs, and that these things are all available the majority of time, I support this resolution – it saves a lot of paper.

Con microphone, **Ada Link, ’09**: I’m against it for the student directory – it’s nice to have a printed record of people graduating. Also, people who graduate are no longer in Virtual Bryn Mawr, so it’s nice to have that record.

Pro microphone, **Rodline Louijeune, ’11**: I applaud this resolution, and seeing as how the new email system allows people to look people up on-line, this makes things so much easier.

**Caitlin Schickel, ’11**: Unfriendly amendment:

Be it resolved that hard copies of the course catalog be available for students to acquire in the Dean’s Office and in the libraries.

This amendment asks that hard copies of the course catalog be available instead of signing up for one. At least then we would be able to have a place where people could go to get one or use it.

Amendment seconded.

**Discussion of Amendment to Resolution 2**:

Question microphone,**Jill Barndt, ’10**: Point of information – the course catalogs are already available at the Dean’s Office and the library.

Question microphone, **Allison Elkin, ’10**: Will hard copies be available to take or just to see?

**Caitlin Schickel, ’11**: To take.

**Mary Kathryn Dean, ’10**: Unfriendly amendment to the Amendment:

Be it resolved that also, two copies of both the directory and the catalog be available in each HA box for the whole hall to use.

**Genevieve Anderson-Krengle, ’10**: Seconded.

**Discussion of Amendment to the Amendment of Resolution 2:**

Con microphone, **Patricia LeBron, ’09**: The point of the resolution is to get rid of paper – this is counterintuitive to the amendment and resolution.

Question microphone, **Teresa Palastis, ’10**: Motion to call the question.

Question microphone, **Kendalyn Brown, ’09**: Seconded.

Vote to call the question on the Amendment to the Amendment: 442 total

In favor: 438; Opposed: 0; Abstentions: 4

Motion to vote on the Amendment to the Amendment passes.

Vote on the Amendment to the Amendment to Resolution 2: 424 total

In favor: 204; Opposed: 174; Abstentions: 46

The Amendment to the Amendment fails.

**Discussion on Amendment to Resolution 2 (cont.)**:

Question microphone, **Allison Lee-Villanueva ’10**: By having these extra copies in the library, would it cause the production number to go up?

**Caitlin Schickel, ’11**: Yes, but it would also allow people who didn’t request them to actually see it.

Question microphone, **Kate Kolbell, ’10**: How many copies would we want just for the sake of people who would want them – how many would be in the library?

**Caitlin Schickel, ’11**: The Dean’s Office and Registrar would have to decide that.

Question microphone, **Sadie Marlow, ’11**: Point of information: All of the catalogs are available at the Dean’s Office anyways, so this amendment is sort of redundant.

Question microphone, **Kendalyn Brown, ’09**: What do you mean by “acquire”?

**Caitlin Schickel, ’11**: To take.

Con microphone, **Julia Fahl, ’12**: Basically, I think this amendment is against the spirit of the overall resolution – it’s important for Bryn Mawr women to be involved and get their copies if they want them.

Con microphone, **Abby Higgins, ’10**: We all need to think about reducing waste, and being green takes some sacrifices from all of us. It’s a small sacrifice, and there are still some available in the Dean’s Office and library.

Con microphone, **Rebecca Luberoff, ’12**: I think that the amendment is kind of wrong because there’s a flaw in that if there wasn’t a copy of the catalog in the library, it isn’t available to the student at all.

Con microphone, **Patricia LeBron, ’09**. Motion to call the question.

Question microphone, **Teresa Palasits, ’10**: Second.

Vote to vote on this amendment: 451 total

In favor: 440; Opposed: 2; Abstentions: 9

Motion to call the question passes.

Vote on amendment: 432 total

In favor: 129; Opposed: 245; Abstentions: 58

Amendment fails.

**Discussion on Resolution 2 (cont.)**:

Pro microphone, **Sarah Sherman, ’11**: I just want to make a point that something people use more than the course catalog is the course guide that we used to get. Wouldn’t it make more sense to have the course catalog online, and get a paper copy of the course guide?

**Paula Hidalgo**: That is out of the scope of my resolution at this point.

Question microphone, **Amanda Bowes, ’10**: Point of information: In terms of cost, we now spend $8502 on printing the course catalogs. If we did pass this amendment, we’d spend $6078. So we’d actually be spending about $2000 less, which would go back to the Dean’s Office and back to Admissions. So this is actually very cost-efficient.

Pro microphone, **Ashton Shaffer, ’11**: I’d just like to say that, I’m in favor of this. Being someone who doesn’t really think about this, it’s really great for the default situation to be where we save paper. If you want to make the effort to go get one, you can, but the default is saving the paper.

Con microphone, **Patricia LeBron, ’09**: Motion to call the question.

Con microphone, **Kendalyn Brown, ’09**: Second.

Vote to vote on Resolution 2: 451 total

In favor: 447; Opposed: 2; Abstentions: 2

Motion to call the question passes.

**Paula Hidalgo**: You know these people’s numbers in the phone directory are always available on-line. It’s well worth the extra effort to go to Public Affairs to get a paper copy if necessary. We are going to send emails out to remind you to request a hard copy of the catalog so that you don’t forget. All you have to do is click on a box, it’s not going to be that difficult. Peer Mentor Services has catalogs, and of course, it’s always available as a pdf file on-line. All of the offices involved are on board with this.

Vote on Resolution 2: 452 total

In favor: 418; Opposed: 19; Abstentions: 15

Resolution 2 passes.

**Resolution 3:**

**Dasha Mikic**: This resolution might look familiar. It was passed at Plenary ’06, and received overwhelming student support. If you take a class C/NC, and do well, you should be able to have that grade be seen by grad schools/law schools, jobs, etc., and recognized for that work. I’ve spoken to the head of the Faculty Curriculum Committee and he will bring this to them tomorrow, and also to Dean Tidmarsh and Dean Balthazar about what problems the faculty had last time. I haven’t been able to figure that out quite yet, and haven’t seen the minutes from those meetings. I would like to hear your questions and concerns, and bring this to the faculty tomorrow. I think it’s important that the faculty take seriously the concerns of the student body, and that the second time they will listen to us.

Question microphone, **Caroline Troien, ’09**: What is the current average GPA at graduation?

**Dasha Mikic**: I don’t know, but I’m sure the Registrar knows.

Question microphone, **Adeline Kishbaugh, ’12**: If you take a class C/NC, and uncover it, would it still count as one of the C/NC taken, or would you have 4 left to use?

**Dasha Mikic**: Yes, you wouldn’t be able to re-use that again – it would count.

Question microphone, **Marina Fradera, ’09**: I’m confused when you say “penalize”. How is this different from taking a gamble?

**Dasha Mikic**: I think people are taking a risk when they don’t have all of the information – I think they are being penalized because based on that decision, they are not allowed to benefit from their hard work, and aren’t able to show that to future schools. You took that risk, and to have to endure a lower GPA is a punishment.

Question microphone, **Paula Hidalgo, ’11**: What is the likelihood of this being accepted this year by the faculty if this passes?

**Dasha Mikic**: That is impossible to predict. I know that the Faculty Curriculum Committee heads are no longer the same, and I know that they had strong hesitations about it. I don’t know how strong their influence was. I think that the probability is better if we approve it a second time. I’ve tried as hard as I can so that Ignacio [Gallup-Diaz, current Head of the Faculty Curriculum Committee] knows that I am very willing to help him in researching this proposal for the faculty. In my experience, the Haverford response was overwhelmingly possible.

Con microphone, **Amanda Lee Darby, ’10**: I know that at the beginning of every semester, people have more than a month to decide this. I feel like you should know whether or not you are going to do well or not in this class. It seems like this resolution has the potential to become a problem.

Question microphone, **Elizabeth Bingham, ’10**: Currently, if a Bryn Mawr student takes a class at Haverford, are they able to uncover their grades, or is it under the BMC policy?

**Dasha Mikic**: No.

Question microphone, **Elizabeth Bingham, ’10**: If this passes, would we use that there, too?

**Dasha Mikic**: It would be our policy, not their’s. It creates confusion between the two offices. Lee Watkins expressed that it being the same between the two schools would be nice.

Pro microphone, **Madison Schaeffer, ’11**: I support this resolution, and see it as totally in the spirit of rewarding people for working really hard, and taking that risk. Aligning policies of Haverord and Bryn Mawr would be nice, and would make the Registrar’s job easier.

Pro microphone, **Sofia Nitchie, ’09**: The whole idea of education is that you don’t know what you don’t know – maybe you are really interested in something but you don’t know what you are going to get. We will work hard regardless – it’s not about the grade, it’s about the knowledge.

Pro microphone, **Allison Elkin, ’10**: It is in the spirit of bi-co cooperation and also in our Honor Code. We trust us and each other to make these decisions.

Pro microphone, **Chaya Coppersmith, ’11**: I have taken many classes where there was no material due before fall break, which is the break for C/NC. It’s hard to gauge sometime, so being able to uncover grades would be a positive thing.

Question microphone, **Angela Wang, ’11**: If you did take a course C/NC and uncovered it, would that show up in your transcript that you took it C/NC originally?

**Dasha Mikic**: No.

Pro microphone, **Colleen Haley, ’10**: The whole point of C/NC is to help students out. I think it encourages better academics. If you’re taking a class C/NC and you have a lot of work, that class might take a hit. But if there’s a chance that you’re going to be able to uncover it, you’re really going to put in the work.

Pro microphone, **Eden McQueen, ’09**: I really support this resolution. I’m a chem major, so obviously writing is totally not my thing. But it would be really nice for me to be able to take like an English class C/NC, and then if I do well in it, well great. And I can show that and be proud of that. That is really within the spirit of what we’re trying to do here as an institution.

Con microphone, **Kendalyn Brown, ’09**: While I like the idea of this resolution, the only issue I have is that it would be applied to classes in retrospect. Personally, I’ve never taken a class C/NC because I wanted all my grades to be shown. So if you’ve taken a class C/NC before, with the knowledge that you weren’t going to be able to uncover it, and then you can, that puts me at a disadvantage because I took my classes with the understanding that they wouldn’t be shown if I took them C/NC.

Question microphone, **Lindsay Laborda, ’09**: If you uncover the grade, and it’s bad, can you cover it back up?

**Dasha Mikic**: The grade is sent to your home, so you know what it is. So, I’m assuming that people wouldn’t uncover the grade if it were bad. Also, you can only do it at certain times.

Pro microphone, **Andrea Milne, ’09**: I just want to add that this is really important, and it seems that dialogue seems not to have happened between faculty and students the first time around. If the faculty is having problems with it, we really need to talk about that. We need to use this as a statement that if the faculty thinks something is wrong, they need to talk to us about why. Until the faculty gives me a good reason why not to support this resolution, I’m going to keep supporting it.

**Anna Melton, ’09**: Call the question.

**Teresa Palasits, ’10**: Seconded.

Vote to vote on Resolution 3: 454 total.

In favor: 447; Opposed: 4; Abstentions: 3

Motion to call the question passes.

**Dasha Mikic**:: There are a few hesitations for this resolution, but I think that we need to be able to bring this forward to the faculty to say that this is something that we support as a student body. It’s important for them to realize that this is still important to us – 2.5 years later, after the dialogue was stopped. I think it would only have enormous ramifications for all students here. I think it would have tremendous effects for us.

Vote on Resolution 3: 452 total

In favor: 418; Opposed: 19; Abstentions: 15

Resolution 3 passes.

Plenary adjourned at 3:24 pm.