All elections of representatives to the General Assembly are to be held by this Thursday, April 29 (with the exception of non-resident students). The mechanisms for election of fraternity and dormitory representatives will be determined in-house; people with questions about those elections should contact members of their house government.

Representation of Non-resident Students:
The following is the arrangement worked out for the elections of the 16 GA representatives of non-resident students:
- Since there are roughly 170 dues paying members of the NRSA, the Non-Resident Student Association, NRSA will be treated as a living group, and will elect 4 of the 16 non-resident representatives by any procedure it likes. In the event that there aren’t enough nominees from the rest of the non-resident population to fill the other 12 seats, NRSA will be given the opportunity to elect people to the remaining unfilled seats.
- The following will be the election procedure for non-resident undergraduates who are not members of NRSA:
  1. Any non-resident student interested in running for a seat on the GA should submit his/her name along with a brief informal statement about interests, purposes, or reasons for running to the UA office W20-401 by Thursday, April 29.
  2. An open meeting for all interested non-resident students will be held at 8:30 pm Thursday, April 29 in room 400 in the Student Center, to discuss the purpose of the General Assembly and meet some of the prospective non-resident candidates for non-representative seats. All non-resident candidates (outside NRSA) should plan to attend this meeting if possible.
  3. Balloting will be at a booth in the lobby of building 10 from 9am to 10pm on Friday, April 30. Only non-resident students not affiliated with NRSA are eligible to vote; 12 seats will be filled.

The first meeting of the General Assembly will be at 8pm next Monday in Lobell. All elected representatives are expected to attend this meeting. The meeting will be totally open to any and all other students besides voting representatives who wish to come and observe. This will be followed by a meeting on Monday, May 10 in a room to be announced at 7:30pm. The purpose of both meetings is to get the organization functioning for next fall and perhaps to take care of some important issues that need resolution before the end of the year. Any representatives elected to the GA will receive pertinent information on meetings and procedures before Monday, May 3.

**Writing Program Cutbacks**

As we all know, the writing program presently faces severe cutbacks, which, seemingly, are being made for quite arbitrary reasons. The program has been under intense scrutiny since its inception two years ago. At that time it was decided that the program would be under evaluation by a committee of outside experts, for a period of two years; its confirmation would depend largely on the recommendations of their final report. (The writing program had requested "outside" experts in order to assure at least some degree of objectivity.)

The Sivin Committee, assigned this task, has been conducting an extremely thorough evaluation. Every student in the Writing and Experience course last term had to fill out two questionnaires and take a writing test; in addition, the committee has interviewed many of the students and read the folders of work where individual students have permitted. And more....

If anything, their job has been too good. Originally budgeted at $12,000, the report is expected to cost over $20,000. Although the final version was originally due in January, the first draft is expected to appear early in May. Since the Humanities Department wanted to write a budget on schedule in any case, they arbitrarily decided to cut back the whole program by 50% even though the evaluation was not yet finished. Although cutbacks are occurring in all areas of the Humanities Department, a fifty percent cutback seems totally unwarranted in this case. It is claimed that 1) the program is quite expensive and 2) that a sharp drop in student enrollment in the program is predicted for next year, thus justifying further sections. Over 200 students per term now take the course (for a net cost of about $50 per student), and the enrollment has doubled each year. It is not unlikely that the enrollment will drop off somewhat since Writing Department is expected to no longer be used to fulfill humanities distribution requirements. However, why did the program suddenly lose distribution requirements? Could it be that the Humanities Department wants to remove the courses? Which is causing which?

The nature of the writing courses here may make them subjects of constant dispute within the Humanities Department, due to their absence of emphasis on reading lists or on the "historical development of writing approach." For these reasons the Jones Committee removed their distribution status. This brings up several situations regarding the guidelines for distribution courses. Does the existence of reading lists and emphasis on "historical development of writing" make a course superior? Are these necessary?

Most important of all, what about writing? Is it at the core of the humanities, what is it? Why does the department wish to do away with such a successful program? There are many students concentrating in writing as there are concentrating in literature; and the enrollment has expanded dramatically, despite the fact that the program is so severely understaffed that many students have to be turned away.

A group of people is currently working on trying to preserve the program in its present state, at least until the Sivin Committee recommendations are published and preliminary enrollment figures for next year are tabulated. The group has held two open meetings in the last two weeks; a publicity committee is preparing fact sheets and circulating a petition; other committees are setting up meetings with deans and looking into the distribution requirements. For information (and/or petitions) call Tim Simmons at 646-7891. Other people to contact: Jule Olsen, di173 or Eric Palsen, 547-1420.