

## Minutes of the MLA Delegate Assembly

**T**HE DELEGATE ASSEMBLY MET ON 11 JANUARY 2014 AT THE CHICAGO MARRIOTT HOTEL. First Vice President Margaret W. Ferguson presided. The assembly was called to order at 1:13 p.m. The chair made preliminary announcements about the conduct of the meeting, called for a demonstration of the electronic voting system to be used during the meeting and for an explanation of the light at the podium that would warn speakers when their allotted time was about to expire, and announced the quorum for the meeting, which was 78 delegates, because 155 delegates had signed in for the meeting at the beginning. [Note: Of the 268 delegates, 188 (70%) attended all or part of the meeting (see the list that follows for the names of the delegates in attendance).]

1. On behalf of the Delegate Assembly Organizing Committee (DAOC), Jennifer Wicke moved the adoption of the agenda that had been sent to the assembly, subject to emergency change. Thomas Russell Smith proposed a motion to amend the agenda by reversing the order of item 6, Open Discussion, and item 7, New Business. This motion to amend was seconded, and the chair opened the floor for discussion of the amendment. Smith said that the change in order would allow for more discussion of the items included in the new-business portion of the agenda. On behalf of the DAOC, Wicke spoke against the amendment. She said that holding the open discussion, which would bring to the floor key issues that affected the daily working lives of faculty members, was as important as considering the assembly's new business and added that she was confident the assembly would be able to work through its full agenda. After brief further discussion, the chair stated the question on the amendment and asked the assembly to vote. The assembly rejected the amendment by a vote of 59 yes and 103 no. The chair asked if there was further discussion of the motion to adopt the agenda. Since there was none, the chair asked if there were objections to adopting the agenda that had been sent to the assembly. There were none, so the chair declared the agenda adopted by unanimous consent.

Alicia de la Torre Falzon then offered a motion on behalf of the DAOC that the rules presented to the assembly be adopted. She drew delegates' attention to a new rule establishing time limits and rules for the discussion of reports. The motion occasioned no discussion and no objections. The chair therefore declared the rules adopted by unanimous consent.

On behalf of the DAOC, Mecca Jamilah Sullivan moved that the assembly approve the minutes of the January 2013 meeting as printed in the May 2013 issue of *PMLA*. The chair asked if there were corrections. Since no corrections were offered, the chair declared the minutes approved as published.

2. The assembly elected two of its members, Margaret A. Noodin (English, Univ. of Wisconsin, Milwaukee) and Susan Solomon (comparative literature, Boğaziçi Univ.), to the Delegate Assembly Organizing Committee for three-year terms (from 13 Jan. 2014 through the close of the Jan. 2017 convention). In the election of a delegate to serve on the Executive Council, Gaurav G. Desai (English, Tulane Univ.) was elected for a four-year term (from 13 Jan. 2014 through the close of the Jan. 2018 convention). Voting from a slate of nominees selected by the current officers of the association, the assembly elected Stephen G. Nichols (French, Johns Hopkins Univ.), Ann Marie Rasmussen (German, Duke Univ.), and Dennis Washburn (Japanese, Dartmouth Coll.) to the Nominating Committee for two-year terms (2014–15). Voting from a slate of nominees selected by the DAOC, the assembly elected one person to a one-year replacement term (2014) and four persons to regular two-year terms (2014–15) on the Elections Committee. Leela Gandhi (Univ. of Chicago) was elected to the replacement term; Robin Truth Goodman (Florida State Univ.), Christopher M. Lupke (Washington State Univ., Pullman), Therí Alyce Pickens (Bates Coll.), and Shanté Paradigm Smalls (Univ. of New Mexico, Albuquerque) were elected to regular terms.

The assembly also elected Ottmar Ette to honorary membership in the association. Elected honorary fellows were Maryse Condé, Amitav Ghosh, and Suzan-Lori Parks.

3. The chair called on Jennifer Wicke, chair of the DAOC, to present the DAOC's annual report. Wicke thanked the members of the DAOC for their extraordinary efforts and then asked for questions on the report, which had been sent to delegates before the meeting. The chair thanked Wicke and asked if there were questions or comments on the report. No one came forward.

4. The assembly received a report from the Executive Council on the implementation of Motion 2013-1, which called for increased collection and dissemination of data on the salaries and working conditions of part-time and contingent faculty members by the association, the federal government, and colleges and universities; for the MLA to support an initiative that deals with the eligibility of part-time faculty members for unemployment benefits; and for the MLA to support efforts to improve the professional conditions of labor in higher education. The chair recognized Jonathan Arac, a member of the council and the DAOC, who presented the report. He said that the report gave full details on the work that had been done and that would be undertaken to implement the motion. The chair thanked Arac and asked if there were questions on the report. There were none.

5. The assembly received a report on the reorganization of the MLA's divisions and discussion groups that had been prepared by a working group cochaired by Marianne Hirsch, the MLA's president, and by Margaret Ferguson. The chair reminded the assembly that thirty minutes had been allocated to the discussion of the report and

recognized Hirsch to present the report, which consisted in a revised proposal for the reorganization of the divisions and discussion groups into forums. Hirsch explained that the revised proposal, which had been posted on *MLA Commons* on 3 January, took account of over a thousand comments from members on the original proposal, posted on the *Commons* in September 2013. She said the working group would further revise the proposal in response to additional member comments received at the convention and on the *Commons*. The comment period was scheduled to close on 1 February. The chair opened the floor for discussion of the report on the 3 January proposal. Two speakers commended the working group for the expanded coverage given to East Asian literatures in the proposal. Other speakers had questions about how the working group dealt with the comments received from members, the steps the working group would take once the current comment period closed, the status of the three-year seminars that were mentioned in the original proposal but not in the current one, and the status of single-author societies. Hirsch responded to the first three questions. She described the working group's process for handling members' comments, said that the Executive Council would receive the proposal with final revisions at its February 2014 meeting, and explained that three-year seminars were still part of the proposal but that the Program Committee would be asked to develop policies and procedures governing them. Responding to the last question, Rosemary Feal said that single-author societies were allied organizations, which were not affected by the reorganization proposal. The chair concluded the discussion of the report by thanking Hirsch for her leadership.

6. The assembly received the report of the executive director, the Finance Committee report, and annual reports from the following association committees: *PMLA* Editorial Board, Publications Committee, Committee on Scholarly Editions, Committee on the New Variorum Edition of Shakespeare, Advisory Committee on the *MLA International Bibliography*, Committee on Honors and Awards, Committee on Academic Freedom and Professional Rights and Responsibilities, Committee on the Literatures of People of Color in the United States and Canada, Committee on the Status of Women in the Profession, Committee on Information Technology, Committee on Disability Issues in the Profession, Committee on Community Colleges, Committee on the Status of Graduate Students in the Profession, Committee on Contingent Labor in the Profession, and Steering Committee on New Structures for Languages in Higher Education. The chair recognized Executive Director Rosemary Feal to present the first report. Feal invited delegates to comment on the report or ask questions about it on the floor or at any time during the year. Responding to a question from Jacquilyn Weeks about the next iteration of MLA style, Feal briefly outlined the development process and said that spring 2015 was the target date for the release of the new edition of the *MLA Handbook*. Joya Uraizee asked

Feal if she could explain the reasons for the reported decline in membership. Feal explained that membership associations in general had seen declines in membership and that the drop the MLA was experiencing corresponded to a contraction in the numbers of graduate students and tenure-track positions in the field. Since there were no further questions, the chair asked delegates to turn to the next agenda item, the staff Finance Committee report, and again recognized Feal to present it. Feal said that she welcomed delegates' questions about the priorities reflected in the budget. Mia Chen, who said she had seen specific numbers on Twitter, asked if the budget line covering full-time employee salaries and benefits could be broken down, in the interest of transparency. Feal explained that the line covered about one hundred staff members and that staff salaries represented the largest expense category and a constant proportion of the budget. She noted that the association's tax return, which is available online to the public, provided the requested transparency. Feal said that she would discuss budget details with any member at any time but that social media were not an appropriate venue for such a discussion. The chair provided an explanation of the process the Executive Council uses to set executive compensation and then invited members to direct questions to her. The chair asked if there were other questions or comments; there were none. The chair then recognized Ana-Maria Medina of the DAOC to present the reports from the association's committees. Medina extended thanks from the DAOC to all committee members for their work; she encouraged delegates to read the reports and to provide feedback on them. The chair asked if there were questions or comments; there were none.

7. The assembly held an open discussion of the topic selected by the DAOC, *Strategies for Strengthening Humanities Education as a Public Good: How Do We Respond to Questions of Our Value? What Should the MLA Do?* Delegates had received background information on the topic in advance of the assembly meeting. The chair asked Second Vice President Roland Greene to preside over the open discussion. Greene reminded all present that one hour had been set aside for the open discussion. He also reminded those in attendance of the rules that would govern the open discussion. The chair recognized Stephanie Kirk and Ana-Maria Medina of the DAOC for an introduction to the topic. Kirk said that the status of the humanities in higher education was a continuing concern and that the aim of the discussion was to identify strategies for action that would help the humanities survive and thrive in a hostile climate. Medina reviewed four questions that the committee had formulated to guide the assembly's discussion: How can the MLA itself be a more effective community of innovation for the humanities, and how can we productively mobilize and extend today's dialogue beyond this assembly through *MLA Commons*? How can the MLA and we as MLA members help campuses become public spaces where innovation and

creativity are recognized and rewarded? How can we turn crisis into opportunity on a departmental, institutional, and disciplinary level? What are some SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Timely) goals?

The opening speaker commented on the need to raise the public profile of the humanities by collaborating with other humanities organizations to create opportunities to engage the wider public in discussions of the humanities. The Chicago Humanities Festival was given as an example of this sort of engagement. A subsequent speaker said that professors and departments should develop an outward focus and engage with the local community in which their college or university is situated. Outreach activities that other speakers elaborated on included establishing programs for lifelong learning that open the campus to community members, engaging with local writers and arts organizations, organizing sessions at national or local conferences or colloquiums that will interest the local community, offering workshops for local schoolteachers or collaborating with them on projects, and making use of the network of agricultural extensions connected to land-grant universities. It was noted that students who take advantage of service-learning opportunities can become effective advocates for the humanities in the community. The need to publicize these activities was also mentioned; it was suggested that departments document the ways in which the humanities touch the local community (through internships and service-learning projects, for example) and share this information with school and community leaders. Collaboration and outreach on campus were also discussed. Speakers' suggestions included building alliances with departments that face similar challenges about the value of their work; seeking assignments to faculty committees whose work can enhance the status of the humanities; making use of schools' emphasis on global studies, where the humanities are valued; activating alumni networks; and maintaining and exploiting connections with former students who have pursued nonacademic careers. The problem of the overuse of non-tenure-track teachers in language and literature departments also needed to be addressed, since that overuse was evidence of the undervaluing of the humanities on campus. Curricular change could be used to attract more students and thereby strengthen the standing of a department. The discussion touched on the need to change schools' reward systems so that teachers and departments that engage in outreach activities receive credit for their work.

One speaker suggested that outreach was a second step that could not be taken until members of humanities departments reviewed and renewed their own convictions about the value of their work and the value of majoring in humanities disciplines. Other speakers addressed the question of how to articulate the value of the humanities to students and the wider public now, when students, parents, and legislators often focus narrowly on the job-training aspects of higher education. Some argued that the focus of

the public made it necessary to emphasize the utilitarian value of studying humanities subjects: students gain writing skills and analytic and critical skills and learn to work collaboratively. It was suggested here that the MLA might gather evidence of the transferability of these skills and make this information available to the profession and the public. Others stated their concern that an emphasis on the utilitarian aspects of the humanities might be used to support efforts to reduce departments and programs to a focus on vocational training. Several speakers said that the value of the humanities lies in its ability to challenge fundamental beliefs and that it was necessary to find ways to communicate this value to the public. One speaker called attention to the role the humanities play in social mobility.

Speakers also addressed the situation of teachers in the K–12 system, where the humanities are also undervalued and where the imposition of the Common Core state standards will further marginalize the humanities. Making common cause with K–12 teachers might work to strengthen the humanities across the board. It was suggested that the MLA keep track of the curricular changes that the Common Core standards will bring to education in the schools and document trends in individual states that affect humanities education.

The open discussion came to a close after one hour, at which point First Vice President Margaret Ferguson returned to the chair.

8. In the category of new business, there were two regular resolutions that were received by the 1 October submission deadline for resolutions. The chair explained the two-stage process of consideration for a resolution with a preamble. She would call first for debate and amendment of the *resolved* clause or clauses and then for debate and amendment of the preamble before putting the full text of the resolution to a vote. The first resolution (labeled Resolution 2014-1) was submitted by Richard M. Ohmann and Bruce W. Robbins. It read as follows:

Whereas Israel has arbitrarily denied academics of Palestinian ethnicity entry into the West Bank and Gaza;

Whereas these restrictions violate international conventions on an occupying power's obligation to protect the right to education;

Whereas the U.S. Department of State acknowledges on its Web site that Israel restricts the movements of American citizens of Palestinian descent;

Whereas the denials have disrupted instruction, research, and planning at Palestinian universities;

Whereas the denials have restricted the academic freedom of scholars and teachers who are U. S. citizens;

Be it resolved that the MLA urges the U.S. Department of State to contest Israel's arbitrary denials of entry to Gaza and the West Bank by U. S. academics who have been invited to teach, confer, or do research at Palestinian universities.

The chair then recognized Julie Rak of the DAOC, who presented the resolution to the assembly along with the

DAOC's recommendation that the assembly approve a version of the resolution that incorporated two two-part amendments. Rak said that the DAOC's recommendation was based on a 1937 MLA resolution on the freedom of academics to cross borders and on some of the supporting documentation provided by the proposers, specifically the 2013 MLA Statement on the Importance of Unrestricted Travel for Scholarly Exchange and the travel advisory for Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza from the United States Department of State's Web site. Before opening the floor for discussion of the resolution, the chair asked the assembly to dispose of the amendments offered by the DAOC. These amendments were displayed on the screen in the meeting room.

In its first amendment, the DAOC proposed to strike the references to Gaza in two places, the first *whereas* clause and the *resolved* clause. The chair called for discussion of the amendment. There was none, so the chair asked the assembly to vote on the amendment. The assembly approved the amendment by a vote of 114 yes and 14 no. In its second amendment, the DAOC proposed to strike the word "arbitrarily" in the first *whereas* clause and the word "arbitrary" in the *resolved* clause. The chair opened the floor for discussion of the amendment. No one came forward, so the chair asked the assembly to vote on the amendment. The assembly approved it by a vote of 109 yes and 15 no.

The chair opened the floor for discussion of the *resolved* clause of Resolution 2014-1 and said that one of the proposers of record had the right to speak first. Richard Ohmann asked for and received permission to state a point of personal privilege before commenting on the resolution. He was given one minute for this statement, in which he disputed Cary Nelson's characterization of the resolution as the first step toward the ultimate goal of a boycott resolution. He said that Nelson's accusation that he and Bruce Robbins had concealed their aims and manipulated the assembly was false, insulting, and damaging to his and Robbins's professional reputations; he asked for an apology. Commenting on the *resolved* clause, Ohmann emphasized its narrow focus on a request that the Department of State do more than it has done to contest Israel's denials of entry. The next speaker gave two reasons for supporting the resolution: the importance of increasing freedom of movement for scholarly exchange and the need to criticize counterproductive security policies. The chair then recognized Cary Nelson, who asked whether he had three minutes or one minute to speak. The chair's answer was three minutes. Nelson said that he would not apologize and began to explain his long involvement with the issues addressed in the resolution when the chair interrupted to say that she had been mistaken about the time and that Nelson had one minute to respond to Ohmann. In his subsequent comments, Nelson gave his reasons for opposing the resolution: that the supporting materials provided with the resolution did

not substantiate the resolution's claims about denials of entry and that the resolution was biased because it focused on a single country instead of the many countries that deny entry to Americans. He stated his belief that the resolution was part of longer-term agenda, which was the reason for his refusal to apologize. Responding to one of Nelson's comments, Rak said that the DAOC's recommendation was not based on the individual cases included in the supporting materials, which the committee could not evaluate properly. Discussion continued after the chair responded to a question from the floor about time limits: each speaker had three minutes to comment on the resolution, but the proposer's point of personal privilege and the response to it had been limited to one minute each. Those who spoke against the resolution argued that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict was not an appropriate issue for the MLA, that the single focus of the resolution could not be justified and was impractical, and that the standard of proof required for such a controversial issue had not been met. It was also noted that the resolution could be exploited by supporters of a boycott even if the proposers did not intend this result. Supporters of the resolution cited additional examples of denials of entry and said the focus on Israel was justified by several factors, including the routine and discriminatory nature of the denials by Israel and the large amount of aid that the United States gives annually to Israel. The resolution was also deemed a call for the protection of MLA members' rights.

The chair announced that only one minute remained before the discussion would have to switch from the *resolved* clause to the preamble; the next speaker's time would therefore be abbreviated. The delegate who was recognized was interrupted before she spoke by another delegate. The chair asked the second delegate to go to a microphone to state his business and instructed that the clock on the assembly's discussion be stopped. At the microphone, David Pan said he wished to propose an amendment to the *resolved* clause. The chair told him that a motion to amend did not take precedence over the comment that the recognized speaker was waiting to make and that he would first have to make a motion to extend debate before he could make a motion to amend the resolution. The chair then called for a pause in the assembly's deliberations since a question about time limits had been raised on the podium. When the chair called the assembly back to order, she explained that the entire resolution was subject to the twenty-five-minute limit stated in the assembly's rules and that she had not correctly apportioned the discussion between the *resolved* clause and the preamble. The chair therefore proposed to extend discussion of the resolution for fifteen minutes and asked if there were any objections to extending discussion. There was an objection, so the chair assumed a motion to extend debate and called for a vote on the motion, which was not debatable and required a two-thirds vote for passage. The assembly's vote on the motion was 71 yes

(56%) and 56 no (44%), which was not sufficient to extend debate. Since the time for discussion of the resolution had expired, the chair called for an immediate vote on Resolution 2014-1 as amended. A speaker objected, saying that the mistake about the time limit should not deprive the assembly of the opportunity to discuss the preamble. After a brief pause in the assembly's deliberations, the chair responded to the objection by ruling, in the interest of fairness, that ten minutes be devoted to discussion of the resolution's preamble after the interrupted delegate commented on the *resolved* clause. This delegate gave two reasons for supporting the resolution: it was in keeping with past resolutions on political matters, and it aimed to protect the right of scholars to cross borders.

The chair then called for discussion of the preamble for ten minutes and recognized a speaker who was not a delegate and who criticized the resolution as one-sided and insufficiently documented. After this comment, the chair announced that the time for nondelegates to speak had expired. David Pan was the next recognized speaker. He characterized the resolution as partisan and said that a neutral defense of academic freedom was needed. He then proposed a motion to amend the resolution by substitution and read out the substitute text. The chair said that a substitute could be proposed and voted on. A nondelegate then objected to the lack of speaking time for nondelegates and suggested that those in line at the nondelegates' microphone each be given one minute to speak. The chair addressed this objection by referring all those present to the rules that the assembly adopted at the beginning of the meeting, one of which states, "A maximum of ten minutes during the discussion of each main motion and five minutes during the discussion of each amendment will be allocated to members of the association who are not delegates" (see Delegate Assembly Bylaw 6.D.3). The chair asked Pan to bring the text of his substitute to the podium. Since time was needed to prepare this text for display on the screen in the meeting room, the chair proposed to continue the discussion of the preamble for the six minutes that remained of the ten-minute extension. Trimiko Melancon then raised a point of order; she asked if she could propose a motion to limit speakers to one minute instead of three. The chair informed her that she could make such a motion but that she had to get in line at the microphone and wait her turn. Returning to the amendment that was on the floor, the chair called for a pause so that the complications it raised—it addressed issues that the MLA had spoken on before—could be considered by those on the podium. The chair called the assembly back to order when the substitute text was displayed on the screen; it read as follows:

Whereas boycotts, blacklists, and travel restrictions directed against scholars and academic institutions pose a serious threat to academic freedom and scholarly debate,

Be it resolved that the MLA urge all governments and academic institutions to refrain from endorsing

or otherwise supporting any policies or practices that would impede scholarly travel or discussion or limit international cooperation among colleges, universities, or other institutions of learning.

The chair then read out the text of Resolution 2002-1,<sup>1</sup> which she said was very similar to the substitute. Because of the similarity, the chair ruled that the substitute resolution was not in order.

The chair called for further discussion of the preamble to Resolution 2014-1 and reminded all present of the rules governing the assembly's discussion. Cary Nelson raised a personal point of order. He said he was given one minute to speak earlier in the discussion instead of the three minutes he should have had, and he asked if he would now be denied his full time because the time for discussion by nondelegates and the time for discussion of the *resolved* clause had expired. The chair explained that her earlier ruling was correct since she believed Nelson was responding to the statement made by the resolution's proposer. Someone who was not at a microphone then rose to make a point of order. After saying that she would address the next point of order after disposing of Nelson's, the chair asked Nelson to clarify his point of order. Nelson did so. The chair ruled that Nelson's point was well taken and granted him three minutes to comment on either the *resolved* clause or the preamble. Nelson used his time to counter the arguments put forward by supporters of the resolution. He characterized the resolution as lacking seriousness and said that striking the words "arbitrarily" and "arbitrary" had emptied the resolution of meaning. When he began to criticize the chair and the conduct of the meeting, the chair asked him to be seated.

After a pause, the chair provided a summary of the time spent on discussion. She said that six minutes remained for discussion of the preamble, after which she would ask the assembly to vote on the resolution. When the first speaker began to address Nelson, the chair interrupted and ruled that the comment was not in order. Craig Svonkin then raised a point of order and asked if the assembly could challenge the chair's ruling on the substitute resolution. The chair answered his question in the affirmative and asked him to get in line at a microphone and wait his turn. The next two speakers countered arguments that opponents of the resolution had made. When one began to address other speakers by name, the chair interrupted and ruled that the comment was not in order. She also asked all speakers to focus on the preamble in their comments. The chair then recognized Svonkin, who said that it was inappropriate to consider a narrow resolution on Israel if a broader resolution was needed to address the worldwide problem of abridgments of academic freedom and human rights. He said the substitute resolution should not have been ruled out of order, and he made a motion calling for consideration of the substitute by the assembly. After a pause, the chair ruled that the appeal from the chair's ruling was not in order because

it was not made at the time of the ruling, as required by *Robert's Rules*. Svonkin objected, saying that he did raise a point of order immediately but was blocked from speaking at that time. The chair announced that one minute and fifteen seconds remained for discussion of the preamble. The last speaker was David Pan, who spoke about the goals of his substitute: to broaden the focus of the resolution and avoid a partisan censure of Israel.

The chair announced that the time for discussion of the resolution had ended and asked the assembly to proceed to a vote on the resolution. Svonkin raised a point of order. He said that he was disturbed by the chair's decision to bar a vote on the substitute resolution, and so he wished to challenge the existence of a quorum. After a pause, the chair asked Svonkin to clarify his point of order. Svonkin said he wanted to know why the chair had blocked his motion calling for consideration of the substitute by the assembly, and he called attention to his attempt to raise a point of order immediately after the chair ruled that the substitute was not in order. He added that he also wanted to challenge the existence of a quorum. After a brief pause, the chair asked Svonkin if he wanted the assembly to vote on whether the chair's ruling that the substitute resolution was not in order because it was too close to Resolution 2002-1 was correct. Svonkin responded yes; he said he thought *Robert's Rules* allowed for a vote on parliamentary decisions made by the chair. The chair asked if there were objections to receiving an explanation from the parliamentarian on the rules of an appeal. There were none, so the parliamentarian explained that an appeal from the chair's decision was in order and was debatable. The chair had the right to speak first to explain the reasons for the ruling in question; every member had the right to speak once to address the question of the correctness of the ruling; and the chair could speak one more time before calling for a vote on the appeal. The question to be voted on was whether the assembly wished to sustain the decision of the chair. The vote required was a simple majority, and a tie vote would sustain the chair's decision. In response to a question, the chair said that each speaker would have one minute. She reiterated the reason for her ruling: that the proposed substitute was too close to Resolution 2002-1, which she read out again while the text of the substitute was displayed on the screen in the meeting room. Svonkin, who had the right to speak first, was then recognized by the chair. He argued that the substitute, which was a broad call to avoid impediments to scholars' ability to travel and cooperate and did not enumerate specific groups, was sufficiently different from the 2002 resolution to allow its consideration by the assembly. Before recognizing the next speaker, the chair clarified the rules that would govern the assembly's discussion of the procedural question that was on the floor: only delegates would be recognized, speeches would be limited to one minute, no one would be recognized a second time, and the overall discussion would be

limited to ten minutes. During the ensuing discussion, one speaker agreed with Svonkin while others argued that the substitute was not sufficiently similar to Resolution 2014-1 to be considered an appropriate replacement for the original text. In her concluding comment, the chair said she had nothing to add to her previous explanation. She then asked the assembly to vote on the question of sustaining the decision of the chair and explained the meaning of a yes vote and a no vote. The assembly sustained the decision of the chair by a vote of 88 yes and 25 no.

Turning to Svonkin's quorum challenge, the chair said that the vote just taken showed that a quorum existed. The chair then called for a vote on Resolution 2014-1 as amended. The assembly approved the resolution by a vote of 60 yes and 53 no.

The second resolution received by the 1 October submission deadline for resolutions was labeled Resolution 2014-2. It was submitted by Margaret Hanzimanolis on behalf of the Radical Caucus in English and the Modern Languages. It read as follows:

Whereas foundations such as Lumina, with an agenda of privatization and with corporate funding, are influencing accreditation processes and related state education codes;

Whereas the accreditation process is altering the missions of institutions of higher education, shrinking capacity, paving the way for privatization of sectors of higher education, and driving students into serious long-term debt;

Whereas the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) revoked the accreditation of the Community College of San Francisco (CCSF), effective 2014, despite CCSF's excellent record in student success and access;

Whereas the Department of Education has determined that the ACCJC is out of compliance with several applicable regulations, including failure to avoid conflicts of interest, which raises significant questions about its continued status as a federally recognized accrediting body;

Be it resolved that the MLA condemn the revocation of CCSF's accreditation, corporate influence in institutional accreditation, and the broader privatization efforts that threaten access to public higher education.

The chair recognized Samer Ali of the DAOC, who presented the resolution to the assembly along with the DAOC's recommendation that the assembly approve the resolution. Raising a point of order, Craig Svonkin challenged the existence of a quorum. The chair ordered a count of the house by means of the electronic voting system, as was suggested from the floor. Ninety-one delegates were in attendance, which meant that a quorum existed. The chair asked Ali to reintroduce the resolution on the floor; he did so. The chair then opened the floor for discussion of the resolution and recognized the proposer of record. Hanzimanolis invited questions from

the assembly about the attacks on the accreditation process documented in the supporting materials she had provided with the resolution. The chair reminded those present to address questions to the chair. She also gave a detailed explanation of all the time limits governing the debate of the resolution and noted that discussion would begin with the *resolved* clause and then shift to the preamble. She then called for discussion of the *resolved* clause of Resolution 2014-2. After brief discussion, David Downing made a motion to close debate. This motion was seconded, and the chair called for a vote on the motion, which was not debatable and required a two-thirds vote for passage. The assembly closed debate on Resolution 2014-2 by a vote of 84 yes (91%) and 8 no (9%). Resolution 2014-2 therefore came to an immediate vote. The assembly approved the resolution by a vote of 92 yes and 2 no.

9. Also in the category of new business was one "emergency" resolution—so designated because it was received after the 1 October deadline for submission of regular resolutions. It had been submitted to the DAOC during the Open Hearing on Resolutions the previous day. The text of the emergency resolution, designated Emergency Resolution 2014-3, and supporting materials provided by the proposer were distributed to delegates immediately before the assembly meeting. It was submitted by Grover Furr on behalf of the Radical Caucus in English and the Modern Languages and read as follows:

Whereas members of the American Studies Association voted in December 2013 in favor of an academic boycott of Israeli universities;

Whereas ASA members have been threatened for upholding the vote;

Whereas MLA resolution 2012-1 affirms that academics involved in social justice movements should not fear reprisals,

Be it resolved that the MLA condemns the attacks on the ASA and supports the right of academic organizations and individuals, free from intimidation, to take positions in solidarity with the Palestinian struggle against racism.

Be it further resolved that the MLA encourage robust discussion of issues regarding the academic freedom of Palestinians.

The chair reminded the assembly that it could consider an emergency resolution only if three-fourths of the members agreed to consider it. She then recognized Jennifer Wicke to present the resolution to the assembly. After Wicke presented the resolution, the chair put to the assembly the question of whether it wished to consider the resolution. Since this procedural motion was not debatable, the assembly proceeded immediately to a vote on the motion. The assembly's vote was 38 yes (41%) and 54 no (59%), which was not sufficient to allow the assembly to discuss and take action on the resolution. The chair then made the following statement on behalf of the DAOC: "The DAOC concurs with the proposers of

the emergency resolution that an assault on academic freedom is an important matter. The DAOC will forward the proposers' concerns regarding academic freedom and the case of the ASA to the Executive Council for its consideration. The Executive Council possesses the ability to issue statements on matters that they deem to reflect the concerns of the association and its members."

10. The chair called for the announcement of other items of new business, noting that new proposals could be discussed but could not be voted on until the next assembly meeting. No one came forward.

11. The chair called for announcements; there were none.

12. The chair declared the 2014 meeting of the Delegate Assembly adjourned sine die at 5:53 p.m.

Delegates in attendance:

*Divisional Delegates:* David Arbesu, Candace Barrington, Sandra L. Bermann, Jennifer DeVere Brody, Bruce R. Burningham, Katie Chenoweth, Deborah L. Clarke, Albrecht Classen, Liam Corley, Corry Cropper, Kathleen Davis, Gaurav G. Desai, Kate Flint, Jeanne A. Follansbee, Andrew Franta, Daniel Frost, Deniz Göktürk, Alan Golding, Jessica Greenfield, Laura Heffernan, Gina Ann Herrmann, Paul Hopper, Héctor Hoyos, Tsitsi Jaji, Cilas Kemedjio, Lydia Kerr, Sue J. Kim, Stephen P. Knadler, Jessie M. Labov, Joshua K. Lund, Thomas H. Luxon, Brian McGrath, Natania Meeker, Anna H. More, Carmen Nocentelli, Margaret A. Noodin, Yolanda Padilla, David Pan, Ato Quayson, Patricia Roberts-Miller, Ashley Shelden, Martin B. Shichtman, David R. Shumway, Robert Simon, Thomas Russell Smith, Joanna Stalnaker, Alan Stewart, Timothy Sweet, Nicole Tabor, Shaden M. Tageldin, Jean-Jacques Thomas, Joseph Terry Thomas, Christy Tidwell, Joya F. Uraizee, Aarthi Vadde, Alison Parks Weber, Irene Zanini-Cordi, Lisa Zunshine.

*Special-Interest Delegates:* Emory Reginald Abbott, Patrick S. Bernard, Katherine Biers, Nathan Brown, Donna M. Campbell, David Clemens, Monica Feinberg Cohen, Sheila Marie Contreras, Gabrielle Dean, Basuli Deb, Michael E. Geisler, Cristina Maria Guardiola, Regine I. Heberlein, H. Edward Higginbotham, Dolan Hubbard, Priyanka Jacob, Beth Ellen Jörgensen, Jeongoh Kim, Rachael King, Miles McCrimmon, Trimiko Melancon, Derrick Miller, Debra Ann Modellmog, Tonya Moutray, Laura Mullen, Dory Nason, Steven L. Newman, Clara Rowland, Cathy J. Schlund-Vials, Andrew Schonebaum, Steven H. Shoemaker, Leah Strobel, Laurie Taylor, Robert D. Tobin, Miriam L. Wallace, Patricia Ann Ward, Hertha D. Sweet Wong.

*Regional Delegates:* Chiji Akoma, Sari Altschuler, Gustavo Arango, Sara Armengot, Pascale M. Barthe, Kristin Bergen, Elizabeth Berkebile McManus, Christine Blackshaw, Amy Boylan, Ute T. Brandes, Martin Joseph Camargo, Alexandra Campana, Mark Cantrell, Daniel Frank Chamberlain, Mia Chen, Adam Coon, John E. Davidson,

Eda Dedevas Dundar, Marilynn R. Desmond, Susan C. Dixon, David B. Downing, Irina Dumitrescu, Larnell Dunkley, Jr., Katherine Fama, Benjamin Friedlander, Patrick L. Gallagher, Granville Ganter, Enrique García Santo-Tomás, Margaret Vallone Gardineer, Kevin G. Guerrieri, Emily A. Haddad, Lisa Haegele, Gina Hausknecht, Alex Hernandez, Emily Hind, Andrea Lyn Knutson, James Kyung-Jin Lee, Diana Leong, Margherita R. Long, Christopher M. Lupke, Julia Reinhard Lupton, Juliet Lynd, Margaret McGehee, Emily McGinn, Salvador Mercado, Cathryn M. Mercier, Giovanna Montenegro, William Michael Mudrovic, Allison Muri, Lisa Nalbone, Cheryl Narumi Naruse, Paul W. Peppis, Seth Perlow, Joshua Phillips, Anjali Prabhu, Richard Mark Preiss, Damaris Punales-Alpizar, Daniel Purdy, Uriel Quesada, Lynn Ramey, Karen E. Ramirez, Roopika Risam, Natalia Ruiz-Rubio, Shawn Christopher Salvant, George G. Shuffelton, Jennifer M. P. Solheim, Heather Steffen, Theresa Tinkle, Johannes Türk, Judson D. Watson III, Jacquelyn Weeks, Jennifer Willging, Heather Willis Allen, Victoria Wolff.

*Delegates Representing Regional MLAs:* Kristin A. Le Veness, Craig Svonkin.

*Officers and Members of the Executive Council:* Samer M. Ali, Barbara K. Altmann, Jonathan Arac, Alicia M. de la Torre Falzon, Margaret W. Ferguson, Roland Greene, Donald E. Hall, Dorothea Heitsch, Marianne Hirsch, Lutz Koepnick, Paula M. Krebs, Richard M. Ohmann, Mecca Jamilah Sullivan.

*Members of the Delegate Assembly Organizing Committee:* Stephanie Louise Kirk, Ana-Maria Medina, Julie Rak, Jennifer Wicke.

*Parliamentarian:* Jeanette N. Williams.

*Clerk:* Rosemary G. Feal.

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## NOTE

### 1. Resolution 2002-1 reads as follows:

Whereas the current violence in the Middle East has resulted in deplorable acts of bigotry at North American colleges and universities,

Be it resolved that university administrations and faculties be proactive in promoting productive dialogue and mutual respect among students of different religious, cultural, and political backgrounds; and

Be it further resolved that the MLA condemn anti-Jewish and anti-Arab or anti-Muslim racism as equally abhorrent; and

Be it further resolved that the MLA condemn boycotts and blacklists against scholars or students on the basis of nationality, ethnic origins, and religious background as unfair, divisive, and inconsistent with academic freedom.