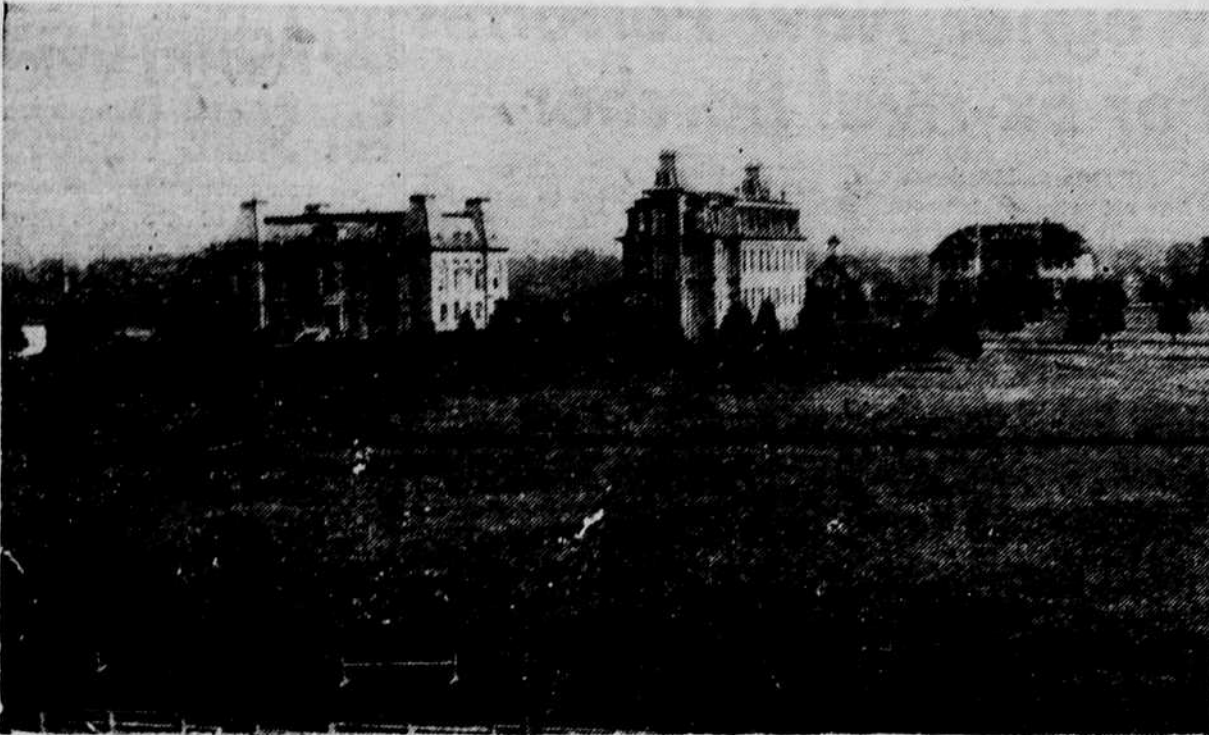


Back in the Good Old Days



THE UNIVERSITY near the turn of the century, was still quite small. Villard hall, on the left, and Deady hall, the first building on the campus, were the main classroom buildings. On the far right is the president's house.

Preferential Voting System Reviewed

(Ed. note: For the past several years, all ASUO elections and class elections have been held under the preferential voting system. In this article, the system is explained.)

By Al Karr

Preferential voting, under ASUO senate investigation after Thursday night's senate action, has a fair measure of complication, important advantages, and—according to recent complaints—certain disadvantages.

Current dissatisfaction with the system, at Oregon since 1937, arose from the fact that preferential candidates garnered all four freshman class positions in the freshman elections last week. All were men. This was the result of the "single transferable vote" principle of preferential voting.

The best way to explain how the system works is to use this year's freshman elections as an example. First, though the preferential and vice-presidential candidates were listed before the candidates for representative, all 25 candidates were in competition for one of the four positions open, under the preferential system variation used by Oregon.

Masked by Preference

Preferential ballots were marked, according to preference, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5—towards 25, for as many candidates as the voter wished.

In determining who is elected, the total ballots are counted. Last week there were 525 valid ballots. Then the "quota"—the total number of votes necessary to elect a candidate—is determined:

1. Take the number of positions open (4).
2. Add 1 (making 5).
3. Divide the ballots cast (525) by the figure (5), (making 105).
4. Add 1. The quota is 106.

Logic of the method is to obtain the smallest number of votes which will elect only four candidates.

The number "1" votes are counted first. If any candidate has the quota on this count, he is elected. The person with the most number "1" votes is president, the second person is vice-president, and the next two are representatives, providing all four have the quota.

More Distributing

If less than four, but at least one, office is filled on the first count, then the re-distributing process begins. The elected persons' extra (above the quota) ballots are distributed according to the number "2" votes. Those candidates then having the quota are elected, and their excess ballots are re-distributed according to the number "3" votes, and the process continues in this fashion.

If, before the four offices are filled, a re-distribution step leaves on new quota for a candidate, re-distribution is handled from the bottom. The ballots of the person with the fewest ballots are re-dis-

tributed according to number "2" votes. If no new quota is obtained, the ballots of the candidate who now has the fewest ballots are re-distributed, and so on.

The process continues until four persons, in this example, have the quota. If all ballots are finally distributed or exhausted (ballots are exhausted when they cannot be distributed to anyone because the voter did not vote for enough people), and one office, for example, is still to be filled, then the only candidate remaining is elected, even though he does not have the quota.

In the actual freshman election, President Bob Glass had more than the quota on the first count; Vice-president John Tonack received the quota on the first re-distribution, Representative Bob Bosworth on a later re-distribution, and Representative Jim Light was the last candidate in the race, having 69 ballots to Neil Mueller's 68.

Used by ASUO

In spring term ASUO elections,

the above system is used for president-vice-president-senate-at-large voting, and separately for each class ballot.

Important advantage of the system, as Donald M. DuShane, director of student affairs, points out, is that it represents the minority according to the strength of the minority, rather than "freezing it out". "If a group gets a majority of the votes," he said, "they should have a majority on the senate (for example), but they don't have to hog it all."

Disadvantages

The disadvantage of the system when the field isn't narrowed down by political parties (as it is in spring elections, and as it wasn't in the freshman election), is that preferential candidates only, may be elected to all positions—which many consider unfair—and, as a corollary, women may be frozen out of any office, DuShane explained.

This situation is reflected in the (Please Turn to Page 16)

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