Brown Approves First College Constitution

By SANDY COYNER
Thresher Editorial Staff

Brown college approved its first constitution February 18 by a vote of 89 to 2.

The college had previously operated under a "Provisional Government" which provided only for the formation of a Cabinet.

The new constitution, based largely on the experience of the first few months of the College's existence, includes several significant departures from College government at Rice.

College Count
Brown College differs from previous women's College government at Rice with the institution of a College court resembling those of the men's Colleges. Disciplinary and judicial matters had previously been handled by a Residence Council which had diverse other duties and powers.

The Brown College Court will handle only judicial matters. The other duties of the former Residence Council will be handled by a Housing and Residence Committee and by the Cabinet.

Cabinet Composition

The structure of the Cabinet itself has been changed. The legislative body no longer consists of elected representatives but will be composed mainly of officers with executive and administrative duties.

The experience of the College has shown that the Cabinet, the coordinating level of the government, tends to waste time attempting to communicate with its own members, and accomplishes little besides rubber-stamping. The elimination of several representatives is intended to make the Cabinet more active and vital.

Active Officers
The Brown Constitution makes the officers the basis of College government since these persons are generally among the most interested college members and the most concerned with College government. They have also had extensive and intimate experience in some areas of college activities outside the Cabinet.

Several new officers are provided for in the Constitution. Traditional administrative offices of president, vice president, secretary and treasurer are retained. In addition, six executive offices were created: program chairman, social chairman, housing and residence chairman, permanent improvements chairman, publicity and communications chairman and director of freshman orientation.

Committee Work
These executive officers will work with College committees to develop areas of College life. Their duties are broadly defined in the Constitution. The Cabinet is responsible for coordinating and supervising these executive activities and is required to analyze and evaluate the work in each area at least once per semester.

All offices except those of secretary and treasurer are open to any member of the College; the secretary and treasurer must be either sophomores or juniors. The College felt that it was not necessary to restrict any offices to seniors. Experience has shown that when persons from different classes ran for the same office, the person from the higher-ranking class usually won. If an underclassman is the best qualified candidate for a top office, the constitution should not prevent him from holding it.

Non-Officers

There are five non-officers on the Cabinet: representatives of the two lower classes, off-campus representative, and a senator. It was felt these cabinet members would be representative of opinions which differed from those of the officers.

The constitution includes extensive guarantees of communication of College activities to the Cabinet and to the membership.