1955
The Board of Trustees transferred the responsibility for non-academic matters to the President of the University. Prior to this time, it had been the responsibility of the faculty to make decisions regarding academic as well as non-academic policies and procedures.
HISTORY OF THE ASSEMBLIES

• Roots in campus events of 1969
• Major overhauls in 1977 and 1981
• EA, SA created in 1981
• GPSA created in 1993
• More prominence for constituent assemblies
• More focused role for UA
STRUCTURE OF SHARED GOVERNANCE

**University Assembly (UA):**
All Constituencies (including Faculty)

**Employee Assembly (EA):**
Non-faculty employees

**Faculty Senate (FS):**
Faculty, supported by Dean of Faculty office

**Student Assembly (SA):** Undergraduate students

**Graduate & Professional Student Assembly (GPSA):**
Graduate and professional students of Geneva and Ithaca, with a liaison at Cornell Tech
Legislative Authority

- Originates by delegation from the President and Board of Trustees.
- Authority is delegated, not transferred.
- Assemblies have advisory authority, subject to approval by President.
- Assemblies make recommendations which are reviewed by the President in consultation with senior staff.
Fundamental Authorities

• All Assemblies have a mandate to represent constituent interests and bring issues of concern to university leadership

• Legislative authority to recommend changes to university policies that affect constituents, subject to approval by the President

• Staffing authority to appoint constituent representatives in assemblies and other committees

• Financial authority to establish an administrative budget and approve expenditures
Specifically:

**University Assembly (UA):**
- Campus Code of Conduct
- University Hearing & Review Boards
- Transportation
- Planning

**Student Assembly (SA):**
- Campus Life
- Student & Academic Services

**Employee Assembly (EA):**
- Human Resources
- Personnel Policy

**Graduate & Professional Student Assembly (GPSA):**
- Graduate School
- Student & Academic Services
• Assembly **Charter**: permanent, basic rules
• Assembly **Bylaws**: permanent, detailed rules
• **Standing rules**: year-to-year procedures
• **Program rules** (EA Grant Funds, SA & GPSA Finance Commissions)
Assembly **Charter**: permanent, basic rules

- Basic rules of the assembly
- Establishes powers and responsibilities
- Specifies officers, qualifications for memberships
- Provides committee structure
- Stringent amendment requirements, UA charter still requires a community referendum for some changes!
Assembly **Bylaws**: permanent, detailed rules

- Detailed procedures and rules for assembly and committee operations
- Usually amended by simple majority
- Persist year-to-year
**Standing rules:** year-to-year procedures

- Same force and effect as Bylaws
- Must be renewed each year by the newly seated Assembly
- Focus on procedures of the Assembly, how meetings are conducted
Robert’s Rules of Order

• Original edition published in 1876 by US Army Brigadier General Henry Martyn Robert after a bad experience leading a church meeting.

• We do not want to waste time with excessive formality, but some of our issues may be contentious and we need to ensure everyone gets their fair opportunity to speak.

• Fallback policy for situations not addressed or ambiguously addressed in other governing documents.
Basic Concepts

- **Quorum**: minimum number of voting members required to do business (half + 1)
- **Motion**: an action considered by the assembly
- **On the floor**: state of being actively considered by the assembly “motion on the floor”
- **Having the floor**: having the exclusive right to address the assembly regarding a motion
- **Executive session**: portion of a meeting open only to members of the assembly (voting & non-voting)
MOTIONS AND RESOLUTIONS

• A motion is a proposal that the assembly take certain action, or that it express itself as holding certain views.

• A resolution is always a main motion.

• Every resolution should be in writing.
Resolutions: from concept to floor

- Develop your initiative/topic that you want to address
  - Search for a legislative history surrounding the issue
  - Review online actions database
  - Solicit feedback from your assembly and your constituents
    (Remember, you represent other people!)
- Draft your initial resolution
- Solicit Assembly member to sponsor your resolution if you are not a voting member
- Solicit feedback on written resolution
  - Administrators
  - Assembly members
  - Assembly Committees
  - Community
- Draft your final resolution
- Submit to EVP for agenda
- Attach any supporting documents or information
- Begin securing support from assembly members
• **Preamble**
  - Contains the “Whereas” clauses

**Whereas,** [Main Problem Definition. Be as specific as possible; unemotional; and factual. Avoid inflated superlatives. If issue is complex, the problem definition can be broken into multiple Whereas Clauses. Facts stated in the Problem Definition must include appropriate citations that substantiate what is asserted.]

**Whereas,** [Followed with additional facts necessary to build the case. Facts should be as specific as possible and “unemotional.” All facts should include citations that give credibility to what is being asserted or advocated.]

**Whereas,** [If not already addressed, the next section should identify what steps have been taken to address the problem and why those results have been unsatisfactory. In other words, we shouldn’t request the President handle an issue that we haven’t first attempted to resolve ourselves. This section also puts into the record what coordination has been attempted or accomplished.]

**Whereas,** [If not already addressed, the final Whereas Clause must confirm the problem comes under the authority of the Assembly. Essentially, this clause should reference an item listed in the Assembly Charter, or must confirm that this issue affects the assembly’s constituent group.]
• **Resolution**
  - Contains the “Be it Resolved” clauses

**Be it therefore resolved,** [state what action you want the President’s Office to take.]
Be as specific as possible. The action should logically follow the facts built into the Whereas Clauses. Can be broken into multiple clauses.]

**Resolved,** [list additional actions, as necessary.]
Ensure all Resolved Clauses are “unemotional” and realistic.

**Be it finally resolved,** [as appropriate, state what follow-on monitoring should be taken.]
For instance, a status update to the assembly each academic semester; or appointment of a liaison, etc. Resolutions may take more than the current assembly session to implement. How do we help future Assembly’s keep track?]
Going through the motions

1. A voting member *makes a motion*

2. Another voting member “seconds” the motion

3. The chair puts the motion on the floor by restating it and allowing for debate

4. The chair *puts the motion to a vote when debate ends* or after a (secondary) motion to call the “previous question”

5. The chair *announces the result of the vote*
   - *Vote* (if informal, not controversial) by: Voice, show of hands/placards, by rising
   - *OR* (if exact count is needed) by: Roll call or ballot
Administrative Budget

University allocates funds for each assembly:

- SA & GPSA: from Student Activity Fee
- UA & EA: from Office of the Assemblies budget
- Leadership develops a budget proposal in consultation with the Office of the Assemblies
- Assembly adopts the budget as regular legislation
- Office manages finances according to the budget adopted by the Assembly
Administrative Expenses

- Expenditures are approved through forms submitted to the office.
- The chair and financial officer of the assembly are responsible for reviewing and signing off on each expenditure.
- The office audits all requests to assure compliance with university policies and the Assembly’s budget.
Payment Methods

• **Direct payment**: University pays directly for the good or service. Most vendors will want you to have your expense pre-approved.

• **Reimbursement**: You pay upfront and are reimbursed. This is more risky, because you might be paying for something that cannot be reimbursed.

• **Best practice**: start early, have the university pay direct.
The Office of the Assemblies

- Provides administrative support and financial oversight to the Student (SA), Graduate and Professional Student (GPSA), Employee (EA) and University (UA) Assemblies, and their respective committees.

- A fundamental mission of the OA is to engage constituencies across campus and increase participation in the shared governance process and voice effectively the interests and concerns of the non-academic members of the campus community.

- Maintains channels and processes for the members’ continuous involvement in the decision-making process of the University, and proactive improvement to the quality of life on campus.
Monthly Leadership Breakfast

- Hosted by the Vice President of University Relations

- An opportunity for the three most senior leaders of each of the Assemblies (4 for UA), the community-elected Trustees and the Dean of Faculty to have a casual, off-the-record meeting with the leadership of the university.

- Those assembled represent the entire campus community.

- Opportunity for coordination and networking.
Website and IT Updates

- Working with vendor to build/identify a new infrastructure that is sustainable.

- New features include the Dashboard, START and the applications for By-line funding.

- We are working on a new “home page” that will direct you to tools, resources, provide information, etc.

- The Elections interface will remain intact.

- During design phase, we will be reaching out to members’ for input and feedback.

- We appreciate your continued patience through this period!
OFFICE OF THE ASSEMBLIES

Be in touch! We need to hear from you.

• Give us your candid feedback: Tell us how we can help you succeed

• Keep us informed: The more we know the more helpful we can be

• Be proactive: The sooner you let us know what you are planning, the more time we have to assist and prepare
THANK YOU!

QUESTIONS?