



**Cornell University**  
**Employee Assembly**

**MINUTES**  
**Employee Assembly**  
**Wednesday, August 19th, 2015**  
**12:15-1:30PM**  
**Memorial Room, Willard Straight Hall**

**I. Call to Order**

BJ Siasoco called the meeting to order at 12:15 p.m.

*Present:* M. de Roos, S. Cowles, T. Grove, S. Jenks, E. Lee, G. Mezey, B. Nicholson, R. Onyejuruwa, M. Pilgrim, B. Siasoco, M. Stefanski Seymour, D. Sun, P. Thompson

*Absent:* N. Bell, W. Esty, A. Kohut,

*Also Present:* B. Patchcoski, U. Smith, N. Doolittle, G. Giambattista, A. O'Donnell, C. Driscoll, A. Neish

**II. Call for Late Additions to the Agenda**

Resolution 1 was moved to Business of the Day.

**III. Approval of the Minutes**

M. Stefanski Seymour made a motion to approve the minutes, the motion was seconded. The minutes were voted on and approved.

**IV. Business of the Day**

**A. R 2 LGBTQ+ Inclusion for Workday and Campus Records by David Sun,  
Ulysses Smith, Brian Patchcoski**

D. Sun introduced Brian Patchcoski and Brian explained the resolution's history and the Federal Regulations behind it. Cornell is a bit behind right now.

U. Smith noted they have been looking at other university's "best practices" and they have noticed some gaps. This applies to Workday, name badges, etc. Referring to someone by the wrong name or the wrong gender is considered harassment and falls under "protected" status.

Brian explained there is currently no plan or process for someone to transition if they work here. Keeping data will track retention of these folks, that is one major step in the right direction. U. Smith explained to the EA the need to spearhead this effort and head the charge to make changes.

G. Mezey thanked them for putting this resolution together, told them they are doing great work, and he is looking forward to the EA continuing with this effort and moving forward. He then asked how the EA could help.

Brian said Cornell's is the oldest center in the country, but also the least staffed and funded. This is a hot issue now in the country and this is a good time to move forward with changes. He says conversations are happening in all directions. We need to provide resources for faculty, staff, and students to be comfortable and to stay at Cornell.

T. Grove asked about names in Workday. U. Smith says he has been working on this since he was a student. Many conversations with Human Resources have been going on to work on this. B. Patchcoski said there hasn't been full education on this, that it's not just "male" and "female" Multiple campuses also contribute to the confusion.

G. Giambattista asked if this resolution is symbolic or are they really trying to engage? Is Human Resources an obstacle to the plan? U. Smith says part of this problem is caused by resistance to change, part is lack of education, part is symbolic, and part is the starting of the process.

U. Smith said this is part of the Toward New Destinations plan for the EA.

M. Stefanski Seymour asked if they could have more specifics. B. Patchcoski said it is everything from names, pronouns, to outright hostility from co-workers and supervisors. He said that religion or spirituality cannot be used as an excuse not to obey the law.

U. Smith says the bias system receives many complaints. They have risen from 39 to 55 this year. Likely there are more who do not report their complaints, in order to avoid any potential backlash. B. Patchcoski said he heard stories of many people who tell him about these complaints only after they leave.

B. Kepner asked if they were bringing this to the Faculty Senate. B. Patchcoski said not yet. He noted they had changed the language to "workforce" in order to include faculty also.

T. Grove asked if they should add a required education piece to the Onboarding process for new employees. B. Patchcoski and U. Smith agreed yes - but not ready or developed enough to include right now. U. Smith noted the Human Resources Academy includes some training, and Brian runs modules on it.

G. Mezey said this is a good step for now, and in the near future we can do more. He also encouraged them to bring this to UA, GPSA and SA then the FS as the last.

G. Mezey made a motion to close debate and vote. The motion was seconded.

M. Stefanski Seymour asked about lines 29 or 31? Some items do not require legal approval. Health insurance is one. This resolution requests changes to anywhere where it is legal to do so.

Resolution passed by a vote of 10 yes, 0 no, and 3 abstained.

BJ Siasoco thanked the sponsors for the resolution.

BJ then asked the guests in the room to introduce themselves.

**B. R1. In Support of Staff Engagement at Inauguration**

T. Grove assumed the role of chair because G. Mezey and BJ Siasoco are the sponsors of the resolution.

G. Mezey apologized for the delay then he explained and read the resolution. He then explained he wants to make a strong statement that staff should be engaged and involved. Some staff may not wish to go, but we should support those who do and allow them every opportunity to participate. This message should go first.

B. Kepner then said if they cancel classes some staff will not be affected. He asked if the resolution can be reworded. T. Grove agreed and said that the resolution's wording should be changed to "non-essential" offices. R. Onyejuruwa said he agreed with the stronger wording. He also suggested contacting DDD's and encouraging them to speak to their staff to attend.

M. Stefanski Seymour disagreed and said her mission is to educate students, and some classes cannot be cancelled. BJ Siasoco agreed and said it is important that staff be a part of the equation. G. Mezey said cancelling classes is not the entire intent, it is more to send a message to ask for equal status with students and faculty.

J. Kruser agreed with the resolution, but explains they will need to be supported and encouraged by managers and supervisors. E. Lee asked to add "paid release time" to the wording. G. Mezey agreed.

G. Mezey motioned to approve the resolution, and it was seconded. The resolution passed with a vote of 10 yes 1 no and 0 abstained.

BJ Siasoco said they met with Mary Opperman recently and went over calendar and other things that have come up. She encouraged the EA to invite DDD's and VP's to meetings to get to know them and share info. She will help with that also. President's address is likely to be held in October and they want to see it continue. BJ Siasoco said they will need someone to help plan it in conjunction with the Office of the Assemblies. Please be in contact with BJ/Greg.

M. Stefanski Seymour said she has encouraged the Union president to attend EA meetings to share more information.

BJ Siasoco announced that President Garrett and Vice President are planning to attend the EA meeting on Wednesday, 9/2, so they will need to send in questions and talking points. B. Kepner asked if they could post this ask on Facebook? G. Giambattista said Qualtrix.

J. Kruser says he has started a yelp for his colleagues. BJ Siasoco asked him to loop in with B. Kepner on this.

N. Doolittle asked about Powerpoint and getting photos. G. Mezey says we can ask to see in order to make the right first impression.

T. Grove offered the following questions; what is her expectation of shared governance? What is her past experience with shared governance? How will this affect staff?

#### **VI. Old Business**

There were no Old Business items discussed.

#### **VI. Adjournment**

E. Lee made the motion to adjourn the meeting, and it was seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 1:30 p.m.