

# Cornell University Employee Assembly

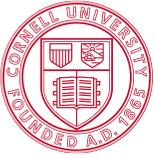
## Cornell Employee Assembly

Minutes of the November 2, 2016 Meeting

12:21 PM – 1:35PM

401 Physical Sciences

- I. Call to Order
  - a. U. Smith called the meeting to order at 12:18
  - b. *Members Present:* I. Allen, S. Vaccaro, K. Fitch, T. Grove, H. Hall, L. Johnson-Kelly, J. Kruser, K. Long, K. Mahoney, L. Majani, R. Morris, B. Nicholson, T. Payne, C. Sanzone, T. Shapiro, K. Shiels, BJ. Siasoco, U. Smith, M. Stefanski Seymour, P. Thompson, S. Willcox
  - c. *Members Absent:* M. Carcella, A. Darko
  - d. *Also Present:* N. Doolittle, G. Giambattista, B. Murphy, A. Robinson, C. Loan
- II. Approval of the October 19, 2016 Employee Assembly Minutes
  - a. The minutes were approved by unanimous consent.
- III. Report from the Chair
  - a. Employee Assembly Retreat
    - i. U. Smith said goals are in the Box for members to review, it is not the cleaned up version yet but all members are welcome to review and will follow up on the next meeting.
  - b. Employee Leadership Meeting
    - i. U. Smith said BJ. Siasoco and U. Smith met with Mary Opperman and discussed the staff survey in terms of solidifying the goals and the way the survey was developed as well as items brought up at the retreat.
      1. U. Smith said that L. Johnson Kelly will be working on getting the roles codified, including conversations from the executive committee and human resources.
      2. If any members are interested in working on this project, reach out to L. Johnson Kelly
  - c. November 16 Meeting
    - i. U. Smith said the November 16<sup>th</sup> meeting will be a transportation forum and location will likely change to accommodate additional attendance.
    - ii. BJ. Siasoco said that in an effort to make the forum productive questions will be solicited in advanced and so actual answers can be given at the forum.
  - d. Update from Board of Trustees Meetings
    - i. U. Smith said that the Board of Trustee approved the change in name of Cornell Plantations to Cornell Botanical Gardens.
    - ii. The Board of Trustees also heard reports on inclusion.
  - e. Announcement from BJ Siasoco

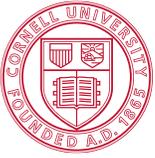


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- i. BJ. Siasoco said that his last day as an official staff member is December 9<sup>th</sup> as he will be a full time student again in the spring.
- ii. BJ. Siasoco said that the floor will be opened for nominations for an election for Vice Chair which will be held on December 7<sup>th</sup> and the official start date for the new vice chair will be in the start of January session.
- iii. BJ. Siasoco said that the communications chair seat should be held earlier than December 7<sup>th</sup>.

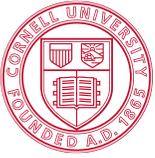
### IV. Business of the Day

- a. Discussion of Reclassifying Representation for Post Docs, Instructors and Lecturers – Dean of Faculty, Charlie Van Loan
  - i. C. Loan said that he came for a preliminary discussion about moving post docs, instructors and lecturers and move them from being represented by the GPSA and EA to being represented by the Faculty Senate.
  - ii. C. Loan asked is members of the Employee Assembly have heard concerns in relation to post docs or instructors?
    1. L. Johnson Kelly: Yes, in terms of benefits.
    2. P. Thompson said that there are overlaps in terms of Human Resources but are we getting their perspective on main issues or coming to us with concerns?
    3. C. Loan asked for a job description of someone who would identify more with the Employee Assembly than the Faculty.
      - a. L. Johnson Kelly said employees that work on publication series and translation but not necessarily working as a professor.
      - b. T. Shapiro said that she has worked as a research associate and felt more like an employee than a member of faculty.
    4. C. Loan said that there is a tremendous amount of variety in this category of people. C. Loan asked if there would be a loss if these individuals were aligned with the Faculty Senate as opposed to the Employee Assembly?
      - a. L. Johnson Kelly said that most people don't know how they are categorized.
      - b. BJ. Siasoco said most individuals will say that the system is fine until something goes wrong. Our concern is that these groups do not fall neatly into an assembly and when there is a concern we do not know how to hear them because it is hard to hear their voice.
      - c. M. Stefanski Seymour said that at the Vet College most revert to Faculty but said that that does not mean if they have an employee issue that they couldn't come to the Employee Assembly and they should know they have a place.



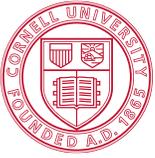
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- d. C. Loan said that no changes are being made yet and that there will be more formal discussion in the spring. C. Loan requested that if anyone has additional thought please contact him so that when formal discussions take place all comments can be brought up.
- b. Discussion of the Academic Calendar – C. Loan
  - i. C. Loan said that there was a calendar committee in 2010-2012 that spent two years coming up with our current academic calendar. C. Loan said that it solved some problems but that we are hearing problems with the spring semester, especially concerning breaks.
  - ii. C. Loan said that no one seems happy with the position of February Break and that its current time is because it is in common with Ithaca school breaks. C. Loan said that this doesn't help stress levels of students.
  - iii. C. Loan said that if we keep the start and finish dates of the semester the same, then we need to rethink the two breaks in the spring as well as adjusting the time between last class and first exam.
  - iv. C. Loan said the primary discussion is whether or not to move the entire spring semester up by two weeks. C. Loan said this helps students with summer employment as they have two extra weeks to work. C. Loan said Cornell ends later than the average and that most schools end the same weekend as Ithaca College.
  - v. C. Loan said that there are twelve issues currently concerning the academic calendar and that all are on the website for anyone to review.
  - vi. C. Loan wants everyone to be part of this conversation and asked the best way to reach all of the employees as there are so many types of employees and everyone will have a different perspective. C. Loan said this is a unique opportunity for the entire campus to come together and discuss as this change affects everyone on campus.
    1. J. Kruser said the mechanism does not exist yet for representatives to contact all employees.
    2. U. Smith said the Employee Assembly itself can reach all staff.
    3. H. Hall said that she works for building care and that the current calendar is hard on residential staff as they have two days to turn around residential halls between when students leave and commencement activities start. They used to have six days.
  - vii. C. Loan asked how we can get comments from everyone all at once. He said that there are two ways for individuals to comment on the website. Anyone can directly comment and we can also reach out to all of the offices as well through email and mailings if needed. C. Loan asked for thoughts about developing a one-page flyer out.



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1. T. Grove said that it would be great to hang at the time clocks.
  2. C. Loan asked where the hard copies should be brought as these can be intentionally distributed.
  3. B. Nicholson asked what is the mechanism to give feedback if individuals do not use the website.
  4. H. Hall said that suggestion boxes could be put out at the time clock locations.
- viii. C. Loan said that the timeline is this fall semester and wanted to know if the next four to five weeks is an adequate window to distribute this information.
1. N. Doolittle said that she is the editor of PawPrint and that it can be used for communication as well. Additionally, when they used to have paper copies of PawPrint they made a list that was distributed to facilities and dining facilities.
  2. K. Mahoney asked if the idea of an open feedback forum where there can be a broad representation of people and they can interact by using post its might help.
  3. C. Loan said an open town hall might help.
  4. T. Grove said to make sure that there are times outside of lunchtimes so that dining staff can also attend.
  5. B. Murphy said it might help if employees are given time to do it as part of their day, not just asked to provide feedback on their own time. He also said that we can identify who does and does not use a punch clock.
    - a. H. Hall said to remember that there are several shifts in the day and that not everyone works 8 AM to 4 PM .
    - b. T. Shapiro said that the town hall fits the objectives to share experiences and connect.
    - c. B. Murphy said that we know from the latest staff data that one fifth of our employees do not work in Ithaca.
    - d. U. Smith said we need to get information from satellite campus.
- ix. C. Loan asked what time would work for the forum.
1. U. Smith said that the Employee Assembly will discuss and get back to C. Loan shortly.
- x. U. Smith said that an employee representative is also needed for the Calendar Committee.
1. H. Hall, G. Giambattista and I. Allen are all volunteered.
  2. U. Smith said we can vote to approve all three and then they can decide amongst themselves which individual is the one who will vote in committee meetings.



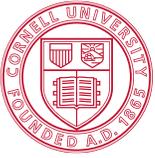
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- a. Motion to approve H. Hall, G. Giambattista and I. Allen as Employee Assembly representatives for the Calendar Committee.
- b. Motion is **approved** 17-0-2.

### V. New Business

#### a. Resolution 4: Cornell Commitment to Web Accessibility – J. Kruser

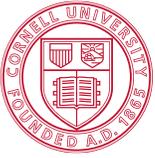
- i. J. Kruser said that this resolution looks at our current web accessibility as we do not currently have a standard and has not been checked. Currently there is low accessibility to websites for people with disabilities and the campus does not have a standard. The federal government set a standard about twenty years ago and decided not have access is discrimination however Cornell is not currently required by law to follow this standard.
- ii. J. Kruser said that Cornell has said that we are committed to equality and said that it is one thing to say this and another to put action to our words.
- iii. L. Johnson Kelly asked if there is an Employee Assembly representative that represents people with disabilities.
  1. U. Smith said no because the concern is that you do not want to out people and that technically all members of the Employee Assembly can represent this group and that the diversity representative is a decent catch all.
  2. BJ. Siasoco said that they tried not to create arbitrary seats but if the body feels strongly about it then it can be considered.
- iv. BJ. Siasoco asked we have already connected with CIT and if so what has already been done.
  1. J. Kruser said that it was brought up as part of a larger effort but was not passed at the time. He said that this gets our foot in the door and that we can develop this standard so that as resources become available we can keep improving.
  2. U. Smith said that the campus welfare committee considered a plan that incorporated accessibility to events, web accessibility and building access.
  3. C. Sanzone asked if starting with just one piece referred to web accessibility.
    - a. J. Kruser said yes to meet the section 508 standards and federal requirements.
    - b. C. Sanzone said she asked because these conversations have happened in the past but the biggest concern is the volume of websites that Cornell has and the lack of staff time and ability to keep tabs on all of these websites.
    - c. C. Sanzone said that over the summer a cross-campus group convened and tried to figure out what can be done in lieu of a possibility. She said the group included CIT, University Relations,



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Student Disability Services and IPP. She said the result was a five-point plan showing this commitment without a policy but the concern is barrier that exist when you run into mandates and compliance issues.

- d. J. Kruser said that one way to mitigate this would be to establish the recommendation for new sites and have old sites only update to follow the recommendation when they are due for major updates, the recommendation would not suggest fixing all of our sites immediately.
  - e. J. Kruser suggested that a method for annual testing and reporting could be a system of automated tools that scans own system reports once a year.
  - f. BJ. Siasoco agreed with C. Sanzone and said that lines 44-45 point out moving forward and not resolving everything at once.
- b. Resolution 5: Ithaca Plan
- i. J. Kruser said that this plan is a move to a system that is focused more on recovery and less criminalization for drug use. He said that this is not a unique plan and it has been used across the country.
  - ii. U. Smith said that the resolution would be an endorsement and it is not legislation. He said that some lines in the resolution were added by Mayor Myrick. He said that this is important because Cornell is larger than the city of Ithaca so our impact is important.
  - iii. Jeramy said that it builds a bridge between Cornell and Ithaca.
  - iv. K. Shiels asked if the resolution is different in the University Assembly or if they are identical.
    - 1. U. Smith said that the spirit of the resolution is the same but the resolutions do not have to identical across all of the assemblies.
  - v. T. Grove said that we should have a forum and get employee voices before holding a vote because this resolution would hold a lot of weight.
  - vi. U. Smith said that this is the time to send this to your constituents and to reach out and that a vote will not be held yet.
- c. Resolution 6: LGBTQ Inclusion in University Benefits
- i. U. Smith said that the Employee Assembly passed a resolution last year to remove legal name and replace it with preferred name in paperwork. Workday has also changed to preferred name which updates all names Workday works with.
  - ii. U. Smith said that the new problem is with the downstream systems that have not changed or purchased codes to use preferred names which is putting people in



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- uncomfortable situations where they are being outed. One example is the legal names appearing in public schedules.
- iii. U. Smith said that there is protection under Title VII this resolution will make it clear that downstream systems need to change unless the legal names being reported are outward facing for federal and finance related documents.
- d. Resolution 7: LGBTQ Inclusion in University Benefits
- i. U. Smith said that last year it was brought to the attention of the Employee Assembly that in benefits packages when you are a same sex couple there are some benefits that are available as a same sex female couple that are not for same sex male couples.
  - ii. U. Smith said that this resolution would call for the thorough examination of benefits and provide a report to the Employee Assembly explaining why these benefits are gendered and what would need to be changed if it can be changed and to make the needed changes.
    - 1. This is not a mandate to dictate a course of action, just to provide a report to understand where we are in terms of benefits. The report would be done in March 2017.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:35PM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Amanda Robinson  
Clerk of the Assembly