

Cornell University
Graduate and Professional
Student Assembly

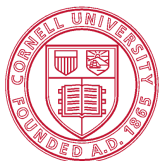
Cornell University Graduate and Professional Student Assembly

Minutes of the November 7, 2016 Meeting

5:30 PM – 7:00 PM

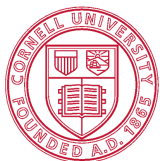
Bache Auditorium, Malott Hall

- I. Call to Order
 - a. N. Rogers called the meeting to order at 5:30pm.
 - b. *Members Present:* J. Bensur, T. Bollu, E. Case, C. Franklin, J. Goldberg (late arrival), S. Hesse, M. Jodlowski, A. Loiben, J. Maynard, E. Michel, M. Milano, M. Munasinghe, L. Munguia, I. Smythe, T. Snider, Y. Tang, A. Waymack (late arrival), E. Winarto.
 - c. *Members Absent:* None
 - d. *Also Present:* C. Van Loan.
- II. Approval of the Minutes of the October 24, 2016 Meeting.
 - a. A motion was made to call the question on the minutes from the October 24, 2016 meeting, there was no dissent, the minutes were approved.
- III. Presentations
 - a. Charles Van Loan, Dean of Faculty and Co-Chair of the Academic Calendar Committee, then made his presentation.
 - i. C. Van Loan called for public comments on the [Academic Calendar Committee's website](#).
 - ii. I. Smythe asked if shifting the spring semester earlier would change thesis deadlines.
 - iii. C. Van Loan did not know.
 - iv. A question was asked as to why there are fewer lab days in the spring semester than the fall semester.
 - v. C. Van Loan responded that the people for whom this issue is important need to make their voices heard. Send the committee comments.
 - vi. A question was asked as to what will be different from the 2012 changes.
 - vii. C. Van Loan did not see the senior week changes being reversed. But everything will be on the table. Maybe fall break will be axed or it will be a full week.



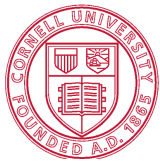
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- viii. C. Van Loan stated that shortening the semester is not in the cards, the committee is just talking about shifting the whole semester earlier. Again, please comment on the website.
- ix. M. Munasinghe asked when does the website launch and how long is the submission period.
- x. C. Van Loan responded it is up now. The goal is to have comments by the end of the semester, by December 2. He stated that the committee will be in everybody's face from start to finish to ensure input in the process.
- xi. M. Munasinghe asked if C. Van Loan wants the GPSA to push this on social media now.
- xii. C. Van Loan responded in the affirmative.
- xiii. T. Bollu asked if there is anyway to gage the effectiveness of these breaks.
- xiv. C. Van Loan responded that looking at Gannett statistics the breaks do not seem to have an impact
- xv. R. Carson stated that the Saturday and Sunday exams seem like a weird oddity.
- xvi. C. Van Loan responded that thoughts should be sent to the committee. The committee wants all the input it can get.
- xvii. C. Stambuk asked who made the fact that prelims are at night.
- xviii. C. Van Loan responded that the University decided which prelims were when.
- xix. It was stated that some are worried about the 5 week break going to 3 weeks, which would make winter travel more of a hassle for international students.
- xx. C. Van Loan responded that the committee will talk with relevant offices.
- xxi. R. Walroth asked has there ever been a thought to separate the graduate and undergraduate exam schedules.
- xxii. C. Van Loan responded that graduate students have a unique vantage point, that they see undergrads and they're experiencing final exams themselves. Asked for responses on the website, not just as graduate students but as observers of other students.
- xxiii. M. Munasinghe stated she will send out an email with the website link.



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- b. N. Stetson then made his presentation on creating a Standing Rules document and on Robert's Rules of Order.
 - i. N. Stetson said the GPSA could create another governing document, it could help make meetings run more smoothly. He would like comments from members. The standing rules could put into writing a rule that when anyone makes a motion the debate would shift into a speech by the person proposing the motion. Points of Inquiry should not be used to answer everyone's questions, the standing rules could put in an automatic Q&A session after the motion maker's speech. Then a speakers' list would open up for comments and such. Speakers should not ask questions during the speakers' list, it is only for statements. In summary the standing rules would clarify the process to be: motion, speech, Q&A, speakers' list. Another standing rule could make conversation automatically go into a speakers' list the first time the chair sees two hands at one time. Could possibly include having limits on speaking time, maybe 30 seconds or 1 minute, which will encourage people to think about what they are going to say. N. Stetson will send out a cheat sheet to Robert's Rules.
 - ii. T. Bollu asked how the Q&A would work.
 - iii. N. Stetson responded that it is flexible and the speakers would run it.
 - iv. R. Walroth asked why is it beneficial to have a new governing document rather than a bylaws amendment.
 - v. N. Stetson replied that he does not have a strong feeling either way, but bylaws are not supposed to be for standing rules. Probably better to have a short document.
 - vi. I. Smythe stated that the bylaws already have an article for procedures.
 - vii. N. Stetson responded that it's just saying the GPSA uses Robert's Rules, which could be specified by a standing rules document.
 - viii. I. Smythe asked how N. Stetson intends on avoiding comments during Q&A.
 - ix. N. Stetson responded that the chair should relentlessly smack down people who abuse the Q&A.
 - x. M. Munasinghe asked for clarification on the Q&A and speakers' list.



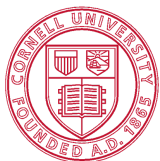
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- xi. N. Stetson responded that the speech is supposed to inform the assembly, Q&A answers questions that were not answered during the speech, and then the speakers' list is for opinions.
- xii. A. Loiben asked if this is the same thing that the US Senate's rules use for cloture/filibuster.
- xiii. N. Stetson replied yes, but they do that all the time not just when they are filibustering.
- xiv. A. Loiben asked if the GPSA could put into the standing rules that you do not have to read resolutions in their entirety.

IV. Breakout Session by Division

V. New Business

- a. Motion to create an ad hoc committee to explore founding Student Legal Services
 - i. N. Stetson motioned to create an ad hoc committee to found Student Legal Services.
 - ii. R. Walroth: over the past couple of years, work has been done on creating SLS. It would be a place where free legal advice could be sought if you come into a problem not related to Cornell University. Primarily a landlord defense thing, dealing with leases. A lawyer you could go to for anything not related to Cornell. They are trying to get the ball rolling to see this implemented. The committee would interface with the administration and the SA to get this going. In the current template there is a \$10 fee or an opt-out.
 - iii. T. Bollu asked what can these lawyers be used for.
 - iv. Because the fee is collected by Cornell, it would be a conflict of interest for SLS to deal with Cornell, which is why they cannot be used in legal action against Cornell.
 - v. N. Rogers: historically these are landlord-tenant issues SLS would take care of.
 - vi. T. Bollu asked what is preventing them from putting 10 dollars aside for a private lawyer.
 - vii. R. Walroth: we would have to go to everyone individually, really this is only meant to address issues with the outside world not Cornell.

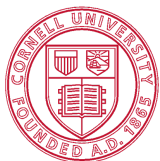


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- viii. I. Smythe asked if issues between students would be covered.
- ix. The answer was no, both students paid the 10 dollar fee, so it would be a conflict of interest. SLS could help people find other lawyers.
- x. J. Goldberg asked could legal services provide informal advice relating to Cornell, or does that mean one cannot even have the conversation.
- xi. N. Stetson: it is a very complicated issue, part of SLS training would be to say “no stop talking to me about this” if there is a conflict of interest.
- xii. M. Srivastava asked will the committee be around in June/July.
- xiii. N. Rogers responded the committee is to explore SLS. SLS itself would be around year-round.
- xiv. I. Smythe asked would this cover a tax attorney.
- xv. R. Walroth responded yes.
- xvi. The issue of faculty landlords was raised, SLS would have to determine if it was a conflict.
- xvii. N. Rogers: the speaker’s list was exhausted, there was no dissent, the motion was approved.

VI. Reports of Officers and Committee Updates

- a. Executive: nothing to report.
- b. Operations: S. Hesse: please apply for internal/external and GPCI committees.
- c. Appropriations: nothing to report.
- d. Communications: M. Munasinghe said the leadership survey has been sent out, she’s still waiting on some responses.
- e. Finance: nothing to report.
- f. Student Advocacy: working on the student resource list, creating an online submission form, and in the middle of possibly doing a graduate student survey.
- g. Diversity and International Students: The Indigenous peoples’ day resolution will be discussed in the committee's next meeting.
- h. Programming: considering redoing the mixers, throwing around a couple of ideas on how they can work better. Please reach out to the committee.
- i. Faculty Awards: nothing to report.
- j. Graduate School: graduate students can have up to 8 semesters of leave, can submit a petition for more semesters, the number of graduate students taking leaves ranges



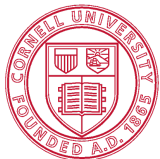
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from 20-40. Students who are considering this can anonymously talk to J. Allen, any questions about funding or process. They never want to know the details of the health issue, you have privacy rights.

- i. M. Munasinghe asked are there any stats on students who are leaving (why they are leaving).
- ii. J. Allen replied no, the graduate school does not keep stats, she'll talk to Gannett to see if they know why.
- iii. C. Franklin asked if students on a health leave of absence can get student health insurance.
- iv. J. Allen said she contacts the field to get the best possible outcome, it is a case by case basis. They might get it through the end of the year. On a health leave of absence you do receive the remaining funding. The only thing that might change is if a faculty grant ended. When on personal leave you are not guaranteed funding, but health leave you are. The graduate school fights for you.

VII. Open Forum

- a. C. Franklin noted the popcorn machine at the BRB is broken, they could use leftover money on that.
- b. It was then stated that the BRB is getting a new popcorn machine.
- c. T. Snider made two points: vote tomorrow, and a motion to adjourn the meeting, there was dissent.
 - i. A. Molitoris: she has been talking with workers at Gannett and you have to pay for parking now, at \$3 and hour. She asked if other people are upset.
 - ii. G. Giambattista: the EA is having a transportation forum at its next meeting, Wednesday, November 16th, in Clark 700.
 - iii. A. Loiben wished to note the email N. Stetson sent out on the housing forum.
 - iv. N. Rogers: the housing master plan does not do much for graduate housing right now, they are mainly working on undergraduate housing.
 - v. I. Smythe: Cornell Cinema is doing a crowdfunding project to get a 3d projector, check it out.



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- vi. M. Munasinghe addressing A. Molitoris: you can bring a resolution about the parking fee to the floor.
- vii. I. Smythe made a motion to close the meeting, there was no dissent.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:53pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Matthew Ferraro
Clerk of the Assembly