



Cornell University
Graduate and Professional
Student Assembly

Cornell University Graduate and Professional Student Assembly

Minutes of the April 9th, 2018 Meeting

5:30 pm – 7:00 pm

Bache Auditorium, Malott Hall

- I. Call to Order
 - a. E. Winarto called the meeting to order at 5:31 pm.
 - b. *Members present:* K. Angierski, C. Cannarozzo, A. Gagnon, J. Goldberg, R. Harrison, M. Jodlowski, M. Kalaji, G. Kanter, C. Little, A. Loiben, T. McCann, E. Michel, A. Schofield, C. Stambuk, A. Viarrael, W. Zhang.
 - c. *Members absent:* S. Hesse.
 - d. Note: S. Durvasula was elected as a Voting Member representing Masters (Engineering) students during the executive committee update.
- II. Approval of the Minutes
 - a. A motion was made to approve the minutes. The minutes were approved with unanimous consent.
- III. Presentations
 - a. Student-Elected Trustee Candidates
 - i. Manisha Munasinghe, Tatiana Padilla, and Rebecca Harrison, the student-elected trustee candidates, gave their opening statements. Voting will be held April 16th-18th.
 - ii. N. Rogers asked if the candidates could describe their opinions on Cornell's divestment policy.
 1. M. Munasinghe: when we make a negative return on investment, the students who are impacted first are the ones on financial aid. We need to strategically divest so we don't hurt students on financial aid.
 2. T. Padilla agreed that we need to have strategic divestment, and that the board really needs to take a look at this along with graduate tuition.
 3. R. Harrison: this has to do a lot with sustainability and carbon neutrality but a lot of this is also about fiduciary duties. How to balance those is tricky but also an important conversation.



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- iii. J. Goldberg asked the candidates what they plan to do if they don't get this position and their visions for the board if they do get it.
 1. T. Padilla: the graduate community is really divided among departments and she would like to foster more community. If we can build a better community it will help us succeed.
 2. B. Harrison: she will look forward to having another year on the General Committee. She'll be able to interact with students through coaching as well.
 3. M. Munasinghe: she is not planning on returning to the GPSA Executive Committee because she wants to make room for other people. She does plan on staying in the GPSA. She's concerned about how the GPSA passes on institutional knowledge and she and several others are working on a document for first and second year graduate students about that.
- iv. A. Natarajan asked if they could change the structure of the election would they change the fact that they have to get undergraduate votes?
 1. R. Harrison stated she sees campaigning for undergraduate votes as more of an opportunity than a hindrance.
 2. M. Munasinghe: part of the reason it's structured that way is because undergraduates outnumber graduates two to one. She would fix that by having two undergraduate trustee seats and encouraging them to be elected by their separate constituencies.
 3. T. Padilla: maybe the problem is that we have low voter turnout. Our efforts need to focus on explaining what the Board does, what this election means, and why this is important.
- v. M. Battaglia asked what do they see as the largest issue facing the professional student community.
 1. M. Munasinghe stated she is particularly concerned about professional student debt. She would encourage more robust financial aid packages. That is also a role we have to play as student leaders on the national level.



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2. T. Padilla: she understands the concern between professional debt as opposed to getting a stipend. She stated we also need to connect students with resources outside of the university.
 3. R. Harrison agreed on debt being a crucial issue. The cost of vet school was a huge factor in her decision to not go. Under the debt issue comes a lot of other problems for Cornell students: mental health issues, affordable housing, etc. Trying to balance starting a family and paying for school when it's this expensive is a huge challenge.
- vi. The three candidates then made their closing remarks.
- b. A. Loiben then made his presentation on the draft misconduct policy for the GPSA.
- i. Resolution 11 was referred to the Operations and Staffing Committee in order to create a policy.
 - ii. This draft policy covers: who hears a complaint, when a review is initiated, how reviews work, when parties are informed, appeal criteria, and an estimated timeline of the process.
 - iii. N. Rogers asked why $\frac{2}{3}$ majority votes are used so often and if it is two thirds of the members of the Operations and Staffing Committee or of the the members that show up for that particular meeting.
 1. A. Loiben: those numbers don't really have a specific reason behind them.
 - iv. E Cecchetti asked why doesn't the GPSA get a professional mediator from the university and asked what happens if the Counsel is one of the parties.
 1. A. Loiben: the first part is an option. It depends on how formal of a process the complainant wants. It could be someone in the assembly or the Office of the Assemblies.
 - v. A. Schofield asked where would the archives be kept.
 1. A. Loiben: that's another question, the most obvious place seems to be the Office of the Assemblies.
 - vi. M. Battaglia: with this you walk right into FERPA. You have a right to see all educational records about you. This is a good process but there's a lot more that needs to be thought through.



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- vii. R. Harrison thanked the Committee for taking this seriously and stated we're making progress.
- viii. M. Munasinghe: a professional mediator is a possibility. It's very rare that something like this actually happens which is why we were so unprepared. It's still a draft, but she would love to see it pass this year.
- ix. A. Natarajan asked a question about the appealing process.
 - 1. A. Loiben: one of the rationales was how can you appeal a recommendation when the Voting Members will vote on it anyway? Operations and Staffing can only remove internal and external appointments and they are the only ones that are appealable. The rationale was if the entire room agrees it doesn't need to be appealed.
- x. J. Anderson asked how will they ensure confidentiality will be enforced.
 - 1. A. Loiben did not have a response at this time.
 - 2. A motion was made to strike a name mentioned by J. Anderson from the record, there was no dissent.
- xi. Email A. Loiben with questions (aml372).

IV. Committee Updates

- a. Executive:
 - i. A motion was made to add the election of a Voting Member representing Engineering Masters students, there was no dissent.
 - 1. M. Munasinghe nominated Samir Durvasula.
 - 2. S. Durvasula was elected by unanimous consent.
 - ii. A motion was made to approve the meeting dates for next year; it passed with no dissent.
- b. Operations and Staffing: look for an email for more discussion of the draft policy.
- c. Communications: nothing to report.
- d. Appropriations: will report during the introduction of Resolution 14.
- e. Finance: the FC is meeting on Thursday (4/12) night to decide budgets submitted in March. The summer funding deadline will be announced soon.
- f. Student Advocacy: come to their meeting next Monday at 2pm. Email B. Kisselstein for information (bmk76).



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- g. Diversity and International Students: the Presidential Task Force on Campus Climate survey is still open, please do it; it's closing this Friday. There will be two more events this semester. A Community Conversation, April 18th, 1:30-2:30pm, in 133 Emerson Hall. The other is "What's Your Story" April 25th, 12-1-:30pm, in the International Room of Willard Straight, food provided. It's a good opportunity for Dean Pendakur to get to know graduate students better.
 - h. Programming: Grad Ball is May 5th, 7-11pm, Museum of the Earth, please RSVP on facebook. Tickets go on sale on April 20th, for \$20. There are 400 tickets available. There will be transportation to and from Cornell.
 - i. Faculty Awards: the deadline for nominations will be extended one week. They have 70 so far and want some more. Please spread the word.
 - j. General Committee: one GC position will be available for election soon.
 - k. Consensual Relationship Policy Committee: the GPSA will be discussing the final draft at our the next meeting.
 - l. Graduate School: on May 4th, from 4-5pm in the Big Red Barn, there will be the first annual recognition ceremony to thank GPSA members.
- V. Open Forum
- a. J. Goldberg asked if anyone was working on a resolution about the Consensual Relationship Draft Policy.
 - b. M. Munasinghe responded that the policy committee said they only need a sense of the body, not a resolution, so we don't have to write a formal resolution.
- VI. New Business
- a. Introduction of **Resolution 13**
 - i. This Resolution is the culmination of a conversation that started last Fall.
 - ii. Graduate Community Advisors try and create a sense of community within Hasbrouck. Because Maplewood is managed by a private company, international students can't be GCAs at Maplewood.
 - iii. M. Munasinghe: international students can work on campus, but Maplewood is now off campus. At our last meeting with administration it was shown that they can't do much about this. This resolution is a call for them to try and find a solution, and, if there is no solution, we don't want any other current on campus housing to be turned into off campus housing because this happens.



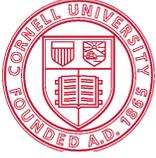
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- iv. J. Kent-Dobias: these jobs are paid worse than other graduate jobs.
 - v. A. Natarajan: the hourly system that EDR wanted to do incentivized the minimum requirements. The new model is poorer than the original Maplewood. Cornell talks about this as the gold standard for shared governance, and in some ways it was in regards to other concerns, but this issue was raised early on and not dealt with correctly.
 - vi. It was asked if the administration provided any solutions to this.
 - vii. M. Munasinghe: the university sort of responded that they'll train domestic students to build community.
 - viii. N. Rogers: he believes there are solutions if the university and EDR would be more creative. The expectation going into this was that this would replace the old Maplewood (provide the same services and employment opportunities).
 - ix. E. Winarto: part of the problem is we want this to be similar to Hasbrouck, but the administration says this is off-campus, so it can't be like Hasbrouck. But it's advertised in the Graduate School announcements, it's not in that sense off-campus. She doesn't know how we'll unify those mismatched expectations.
 - x. M. Munasinghe: we really want to stress we are against this and it happening again in the future.
 - xi. Question and answer ended as there were no more questions.
- b. Introduction of **Resolution 14**
- i. C. Stambuk introduced the Resolution. The big change is that Cornell Cinema will be weaned off by 2 dollars every cycle. There is also an enforcement procedure. Please come ask questions at office hours (listed in Resolution attachments).
 - ii. N. Rogers asked if lodging falls under "travel" because accommodations and conference registration fees are where most of the cost is.
 1. T. McCann: they were trying to respect the thought that people in the political class of the GPSA shouldn't be benefiting, but we need to look at this.



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- iii. M. Munasinghe thanked the Appropriations Committee especially for working with Cornell Cinema. She raised the question of who in the GPSA is responsible for the survey on line 484.
 1. M. Battaglia responded that they do need to determine this and put it in their bylaws, it has to be someone's responsibility.
 - iv. Question and answer ended as there were no more questions.
 - v. C. Stambuk: talk to Krista for Cornell Cinema questions (see office hours).
- c. Introduction of **Resolution 15**
- i. M. Munasinghe introduced the Resolution. It's purpose is to make sure professional students are fairly represented in the GPSA.
 - ii. They got these numbers because the Johnson, Vet and Law Schools are all about a third of the professional student populations.
 - iii. A. Loiben asked why create more Masters Voting Member seats when there's been a historical lack of Masters representatives.
 - iv. M. Battaglia: the GPSA is very graduate student heavy and the goal of this is that the seats will drive the interest.
 - v. It was asked why did they chose these masters seats.
 - vi. M. Munasinghe: these were masters programs that specifically asked for seat and were interested in doing internal elections.
 - vii. M. Battaglia: these are also the largest in terms of students.
 - viii. A. Nataravind: if we do this we need to do it holistically. While DISC chair, one concern was the lack of diverse representation in the GPSA. He asked is apportionment by field/school the best way to decide voting membership.
 - ix. M. Munasinghe: there's a large conversation about how we structure seats in that way. We'd be willing to do that, but this resolution is more of a numbers problem. She is open to having this conversation. She stated we've been ambitious about doing holistic things in the past and they don't get done. This is something they can do right now.
 - x. A. Natarajan stated he is hurt because this seems like a quick fix for a voice that is loud today. He continued that we should ride these coattails to increase representation for underrepresented groups. We always push off this larger conversation.



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- xi. S. Durvasula: it has to be a much larger conversation. Masters students don't always know these seats exist.
- xii. J. Goldberg: the GPCI is up, if people want to see this body change then the GPCI conversation is a structural mechanism that already exists for you.
- d. A motion was made to adjourn, there was no dissent.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:00pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Matthew Ferraro
Clerk of the Assembly