



Cornell University
Graduate and Professional
Student Assembly

Cornell University Graduate and Professional Student Assembly
Minutes of the March 16, 2020 Meeting
Zoom Meeting

- I. Call to Order
 - a. A. Barrientos-Gomez calls meeting to order
- II. Roll Call (5 Minutes)
 - a. Present: R. Maloney, J. Faulk, L. Louis, P. Vinhage, K. Laurent, P. Cole, M. Cantar, M. Sawey, C. Duell, D. Yucalan, A. Bidjarano, M. Schoeffler, N. London, A. Johnson,
 - b. Absent: E. Schoenly, H. Xu, M. Sturgeon, D. (Marvin) Wang, R. Harrison, M. Keefe, M. Daly, M. Gelsing, K. Masters, A.P.D.G. Everett, E. Call
- III. Presentation (20 Minutes)
 - a. Dr. Bark Knuth, Dean of the Graduate School, Campus-Community Liaison and Cornell 2020 Census Liaison
 - i. Dr. Knuth: Thank you to the GPSA for donation of \$50K to Student Access Fund; Graduate School has donated \$52K; query out to professional schools for additional donations if possible – professional schools may be administering funds directly. Initial thoughts are that funding requests may be leaning more toward professional students. Decisions that affect graduate and professional students will be forthcoming and attempt to be as informative as possible
 - ii. K. Krishnan: More requests that funds that have been raised – how are you allocating the requests? International requests – how are those being addressed
 - iii. Dr. Knuth: Donation from Graduate School has helped alleviate the requests. We have no data or information about breakdown of requests.
 - iv. K. Laurent: Have you met with the departments – what’s Cornell providing to people who have been quarantined and what about vacation?
 - v. Dr. Knuth: Cornell Health can be a resource. If you need to self-isolate, it is not vacation – there will be several days of transition – flexibility is understood; however, the expectation is to get work accomplished. We think that this is the “new normal” for the next couple of months.
 - vi. A. Johnson: Sick leave policy for graduate students – what is the defined sick leave policy?
 - vii. Dr. Knuth: Official policy – if you are sick, you should not be around people. Have discussion with your supervisors if you are not able to work. We will follow up to see if it would be helpful if there was a campus wide policy; alternatives need to be worked out
 - viii. D. Yucalan: remote responsibilities – official sick leave – with all closures, what is Cornell thinking of providing during this time to graduate students in order to work remotely?

- ix. Dr. Knuth: Cornell is not shutting down and facilities will still be provided. Guidance is that if you are not conducting essential or critical research, you should not be on campus. If the only way you have reliable WiFi and can conduct your teaching responsibilities, as long as you are practicing appropriate social distancing, it would be acceptable. Access Fund would be applicable for students to purchase WiFi hubs as needed.
- b. J. Pea: Services on campus – impact as to what Graduate Students might need – libraries or physical consulting units.
- c. Dr. Knuth: Library have been closed yesterday and today to give staff an opportunity to regroup and see what they are capable of providing. Understanding is that Cornell Health is planning on staying open. Not sure about Statistical Consulting Unit. Recommended to check appropriate websites for updates. Work should still be getting accomplished remotely
- d. M. Cantar: As an international student, if they have any symptoms, what should they do and what is Cornell Health going to provide? There are many international students who will be staying.
- e. Dr. Knuth: Student Health Insurance Plan includes coverage by Cornell Health. General recommendations are to call a health provider first before going to Cornell Health, any urgent care facility or emergency room.
- f. M. Cantar: Use Cornell services for transportation to Cornell Health if they don't have a vehicle?
- g. Dr. Knuth: Not sure if that is an option
- h. K. Krishnan: New normal to continue working – is this really a normal for students to leave as this is an unprecedented move – same productivity as normal?
- i. Dr. Knuth: We are not suggesting that we would go back to our old ways – just different ways. Conversations with senior leadership and faculty leaders – grading changes (potentially more use of “S/U” grading, etc.)
- j. J. Simon: Any plans for Cornell to do any tele-health options?
- k. Dr. Knuth: We looked into it and we are ready to implement
- l. K. Krishnan: Dining services available?
- m. Dr. Knuth: Dining will be staying open – limited options – check on dining website for updates and what is open and what isn't open
- n. A. Johnson: Undergrads – had to apply to stay on campus – have decisions already been made?
- o. Dr. Knuth: Decisions are underway – not all have been handled. First wave has been relayed to students as of Friday afternoon – more to come as the applications are being processed for exemption.
- p. A. Barrientos-Gomez: Some students on West Campus have already received word that they can stay. GPSA Executive Committee is meeting with Dean Knuth tomorrow – please send any follow up questions to them so they can bring them to meeting with Dean Knuth.
- q. Dr. Knuth: Please wash your hands, cough into sleeve/elbow, practice social distancing, stress to undergrads that the partying/Greek life/bar going is unacceptable behavior – it affects not just Cornell community but local community as well.

IV. New Business (10 Minutes)

- a. Introduction of Resolution 11: In support of our Graduate Student Colleagues Participating in the “Wildcat Strike”: Support by the GPSA for our graduate colleagues striking at UC Santa Cruz, some of whom have been fired by their administration for participating in strike – strike is related to fact that they are not being paid a reasonable amount to provide for their basic needs and/or a cost of living adjustment
 - i. K. Krishnan: In support of Arielle and everything she said, this is imperative for international students as they must be employed to stay in US
 - ii. A representative: in addition to what Kayva stated, it is more difficult for international students to obtain loans that may be necessary to cover the difference between salary and cost of tuition
 - iii. A. Barrientos-Gomez: What would happen if something similar happened at Cornell? A: Stand in solidarity, condemn actions taken by administrators and other ways to support
 - iv. V. Kasonde – I am not comfortable with supporting this resolution –it looks as if we are using students as pawns. Can we add items of what we would recommend if this were to happen here at Cornell.
 - v. A representative: Throughout strike, accommodations made for students who need grades released for funding or scholarships; not necessarily performative – desire to promote this information and be more supportive for these students; actionable item – feel free to provide this information to Arielle
 - vi. K. Krishnan – Students don’t hold much power and this is the most effective way for change

V. Committee Q&A (5 Minutes)

- a. Executive – no updates
- b. Operations – none at this time – be a resource to anyone that may need assistance related to responsibilities they are delegated to do by the charter and bylaws
- c. Communications – working on newsletter
- d. Appropriations – none at this time
- e. Finance – apply to Access Fund if you have needs; Tier 4 needs to send rep to virtual meetings
- f. Student Advocacy – none at this time
- g. Diversity and International Students – none
- h. Programming – activities put on hold
- i. Faculty Awards – a couple of individuals are working with Cody – reach out to Cody re: any other interest in participating with this. Suggestion to send email out to departments
- j. GPCI – no updates
- k. General Committee – no updates
- l. Graduate School – check announcements tonight and more ad-hoc announcements tomorrow – anticipated change in deadline and grading
- m. University Assembly – will be meeting virtually for remaining 3 meetings. Update on Campus Code of Conduct. Mention that TCAT will be offering reduced services – check website for updated information.

VI. Open Forum (5 Minutes)

- a. Discussion regarding remaining GPSA meetings – keep 3 meetings as is or combine into 2 meetings (elections meeting and a wrap up)
 - i. D. Yucalan: reminder that a resolution was skipped last week due to sponsor not being there. Response - Can be resolved in upcoming meetings. If resolutions are left unattended, they would need to be brought back before new GPSA in the fall
 - ii. K. Krishnan: any consideration for individuals who would not be able to attend meeting live due to time differences. Response – poll
 - iii. J. Simon: food budget – what is being done with that money.
 - iv. A representative: Not sure if those funds come from GPSA budget.
 - v. J.Faulk – field rep: events on campus to be cancelled – what happens to those funds that have already been requested/approved. Also, are we allowing any other requests for funds?
 - vi. A representative: no approvals for new events or reallocating funding. Reach out to Arielle if you have any further questions. Tier status will not be affected.
 - vii. A representative: what about virtual events – can funding be reallocated to those types of events?
 - viii. A representative: reach out to Arielle to discuss options. FC rules still apply – submit before actual event occurs
 - ix. A. Johnson: regarding Feliz resolution – possible to table permanently?
 - x. M. Cantar: possible to have a 24 hour window for questions taking into consideration for international students?
 - xi. A representative: Andy to check with OA to see if possible to have comment section open on resolutions? Potential for opening up discussion prior to meeting. Suggestion to utilize Slack for resolutions
 - xii. A. Poon: Forum to discuss resolutions in advance – recant forum before vote to open up for discussion.
 - xiii. A representative: Will look into that.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:15pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Ashlynn Lee

Clerk of the Assembly