Cornell University
Student Assembly

Cornell University Student Assembly
Minutes of the Thursday, March 21, 2019 Meeting
4:52pm-6:20pm in Memorial Room, Willard Straight Hall

I. Call to Order & Roll Call
a. V. Devatha called the meeting to order at 4:52 pm.
b. Roll Call:
  i. *Present*: M. Adeghe [0], D. Barbaria [0],V. Devatha [0], J. Dominguez [0], O. Egharevba [2], S. Harshvardhan [2], C. Huang [0], S. Iruvanti [1], A. Jain [0], K. Kebbeh [1], S. Lim [0.5], N. Matolka [0], U. Mustafa [2], G. Park [1.5], I. Pavlov [0.25], E. Shapiro [0], M. Shovik [2.25], J. Sim [0], M. Smith [0], M. Stefanko [1], F. Uribe-Rheinbolt [0], B. Weintraub [1], K. Wondimu [0], V. Xu [0.75]
  ii. *Absent*: J. Anderson [0], C. Benedict [0], U. Chukwukere [1]
  iii. *Arrived After Roll Call*: O. Din [2.5]

II. Presentations
a. Canvas Migration
  i. The representatives of the Canvas Migration introduced themselves and made their presentation.
  ii. D. Barbaria asked if the presenters could touch more upon what the IDP course would look like, and asked if students involved in the program during orientation would have access to the course files for the semester.
  iii. A Canvas representative said that it is a way to facilitate the first IDP process before the start of the semester, and that it will be on the to-do list for incoming freshmen. He added that freshmen will go there to access the reading and submit the writing for IDP, and that it will allow the facilitator to record attendance for the program. He also said that following the close of the program, it will be removed for participating students.
  iv. J. Sim thanked the presenters for coming in and incorporating student feedback.
  v. E. Shapiro said that he is taking a class in Canvas wherein multiple files must be submitted for assignments when they are due, and that if a student wants to update only one file they've submitted through Canvas, they have to update all files in the same submission. He asked if there is currently a plan to change that.
  vi. A Canvas representative said that he currently does not see any plan to change that, but that anyone with a Cornell ID can log into the Canvas online community and "upvote" features that they think should be added to Canvas.

vii. K. Wondimu said that he currently is not taking any classes through Canvas, and asked if this has already been implemented for some classes. He also asked when the full transition from Blackboard to Canvas would take place.

viii. A Canvas representative said that there are 400 classes at Cornell in Canvas so far, that about half of all classes will be in Canvas in Fall 2019, and that all classes formerly offered through Blackboard will be offered through Canvas by Spring 2020.

ix. S. Iruvanti said that he doesn't like that, in Blackboard, he can't access files from previous semesters, and asked if that would be possible in Canvas.

x. A Canvas representative said that the impossibility is due to FERPA and other concerns of academic records, and such a thing would therefore be impossible.

xi. V. Xu said that the assignment function in Blackboard doesn't show any details such as due dates, and asked if that will be present in Canvas.

xii. A Canvas representative asked V. Xu to clarify the question.

xiii. V. Xu obliged.

xiv. A Canvas representative said that, depending on how the faculty member uses the service, it will be a possibility. He added that Canvas offers a dynamic syllabus where a person could click and access the assignment directly from the syllabus.

xv. M. Shovik said that the presenters said earlier that CS courses would not necessarily be offered through Canvas, and that from her personal view, the CMS system is very different from Canvas or Blackboard. She asked if there was any reason why CS decided not to make the move.

xvi. A Canvas representative said that they reached out to CS and the developers of CMS, and that faculty in CS depend on certain things in CMS that are not available in Canvas. He added that, rather than put their resources into that now, the current plan is to move everyone else first, and then look into developing the necessary tools in Canvas. He also said that Canvas does offer the ability to play with the code and platform in a way that wasn't available in Blackboard.

xvii. S. Lim said that she has friends who use Canvas at other schools and that, because the submission function isn't as robust as they would like, they use a different service for submission called Gradescope. She asked if there are any plans to introduce Gradescope at Cornell. She also said that someone had told her that they can't access their Fall 2018 grades, and asked if that was due to Cornell's regulations.

xviii. A Canvas representative said that that is determined by Cornell, and that Gradescope is a useful tool for grading and creating a rubric, and that it makes grading easier and more equitable for faculty and TAs. He added that they're looking into getting a Gradescope license so that they can integrate it into Canvas.

III. **Open Microphone**
   a. Community member Jillian Shapiro introduced herself, and said that she is incredibly astonished and disappointed with the way that the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (henceforth BDS) campaign is moving forward, and that last night she heard that some of the people who are leading the campaign bombarded a

committee chair to try and have an online vote. She added that these people said that they would not endorse her current campaign in order to send this on an email vote, and that this happened late last night to try and get the resolution ready to either be on today's agenda or on a future agenda without the knowledge of the entire student population. She also said that she is disappointed that this happened through official channels behind closed doors, and that she knows that Cornell Students for Justice in Palestine (henceforth SJP) was disappointed in a closed-door meeting that happened in the past, which she was not part of but that should not have happened, but that she is disappointed that this happened now, as well as with how disrespectful this whole campaign has become both to the student body as a whole as well as to Jewish students on campus. She added that the whole point was to promote dialogue, and that if this conversation happened over email without people knowing, then there was no dialogue, and that she had to opt out of religious services today in order to come to the Assembly meeting to deal with this. She also said that she knows that there was the SA Diversity and Inclusion Committee (henceforth D&I) on Tuesday, and that they had members of their community concerned about this campaign at the meeting. She added that everything that has happened so far has been on the BDS campaign's terms, and that they have gone along with the whims of their schedule which is unfair, and that they demanded the teach-in but told their people not to come, and that they tried to demand a committee vote in a way that is unorthodox, unprecedented, and not done at the proper time. She also said that she is incredibly sorry that this is taking up the Assembly's time, and that this is unfair that this is taking away from schoolwork or productive time, and that lastly this has major undertones of harassment and threats. She added that she personally went to CUPD because she had been tagged in a Facebook post that made her feel threatened, and that members of her community have been compared to the KKK and white supremacists which is unfair. She also said that she is sure that Assembly members have been harassed which is completely unfair, and that this is not dialogue, and that if this is the way things are going to proceed, it needs to stop. She added that Hillel launched a petition which has over 800 signatures at this time to show that many students on this campus are against this. She also said that this is unacceptable, and that she doesn't know what is going to be done, but that something has to happen, and that this is unfair to everyone in this campaign.

b.   O. Din said that he thinks that this is just a confusion of the facts and has no basis in how things are playing out, and that he was not at D&I, but that one of the primary sponsors of the resolution is busy on Tuesdays, so he thought that there would be no productive dialogue. He added that he asked for an email vote so that this could be debated in the public at an Assembly meeting, and that as for threats on Facebook, no cosponsors nor members of SJP or the BDS campaign have ever tagged J. Shapiro or any members of the Jewish community in any post attacking them. He also said that if third-party members engage in such behavior they do not have responsibility for or control over that, and that he doesn't want this conversation to be stifled, but rather to happen on the committee floor.

c.   C. Huang thanked everyone for expressing how they felt, and said that she and O. Din did meet to talk about moving forward with this resolution. She added that she only told the Executive Committee (henceforth Exec) about this, so she apologizes to everyone that this information is coming to the floor in this way, and that they

were debating on how to move forward with this resolution and if an email vote would be the best way. She also said that she felt that convening at a different time was inappropriate because it is not standard procedure and this is a very controversial resolution.

d. M. Adeghe said that she wanted to clarify something about the resolution process. She began to explain the process.

e. J. Shapiro said that they knew that it was going to go through a committee which is why they had people there, and that the point is for them to be open to the public. She added that if the committee meeting gets pushed to a time impromptu, that is not open to the public or accessible which is a problem.

f. D. Barbaria said that Open Microphone is a time for community members to speak, not a time for Assembly members to discuss this issue now.

g. V. Devatha said that they did let community members and Assembly members speak when SJP came a month ago, so they will let this continue.

h. I. Pavlov said that she is not seeing any document that contains a BDS resolution or cosponsors, and asked when they can see this document.

i. O. Din said that the idea of a special meeting after Tuesday to get the resolution on the agenda for that coming Thursday would be impossible because of the Assembly's governing documents, which say that such a resolution must be passed by a committee at the latest on the Tuesday before a meeting. He added that, regarding the document, he did send the resolution to C. Huang yesterday, and that the Vice President of Diversity & Inclusion needs to have a role in this discussion, and that he wanted to make sure she knew what it looked like. He also said that when the committee reviews and passes the resolution, it will be publicly available, and that they wanted everyone to know what was happening in this regard and not surprise anyone.

j. I. Pavlov asked when they are going to see the document.

k. O. Din said that this will happen once the document passes through committee.

l. G. Park said that she just wants to know exactly what O. Din was trying to get voted on in the email.

m. V. Devatha said that, from his understanding, D&I met on Tuesday as it traditionally does, and the resolution was not brought to the floor of the meeting, and then there was a conversation on Wednesday and a request made for an email vote for this resolution in particular, and then from that point there was a request for Exec to say whether it was appropriate for the circumstances. He added that he spoke to O. Din afterward about how this was inappropriate.

n. O. Din said that C. Huang reached out to him to have a conversation about it, and that when he talked with her, he said that many other resolutions passed through email votes so that the resolution could get to the floor and be discussed in public, so it was about the best way to make sure that the conversation was in the open. He added that, regarding V. Devatha's conversation with him, their conversation was about the best way forward, and that V. Devatha told him last night that that would be to put it through Exec. He also said that he feels like people are taking these things and misconstruing them to play politics.

o. J. Shapiro said that if it goes through committee and then gets sent out, today's agenda was posted publicly at 9:00 am, which does not give people enough time to come and voice their opinions.

p. Another community member said that she was one of three students who were anti-BDS who attended the committee meeting, and that he doesn't know what O. Din was talking about when he said that the meeting was bombarded with students, especially since there were two members of SJP there, and that she does not know how that would be stopping discourse.

q. O. Din said that regarding J. Shapiro's point, it is impossible for the resolution to be put on the agenda a day in advance.

r. J. Shapiro said that the problem isn't for it to have been on the resolution today, but that it can be on the agenda anytime within the next month.

s. O. Din said that the resolution must be discussed within a month of being passed.

t. Discussion continued in this regard.

u. D. Barbaria said that, even if the final vote on a resolution ends up happening by email, it should at least be introduced at an actual D&I meeting first, and that he agrees that forcing that vote on people isn't the best way to go about this. He added that the email vote is an escape valve for difficult conversations at small meetings, and that he agrees with O. Din that the time for the difficult conversations and difficult vote is at an Assembly meeting.

v. K. Wondimu asked if there is a timestamp on the resolution, and asked why the Assembly can't wait until the next committee meeting.

w. V. Devatha said that the resolution has no timestamp.

x. J. Dominguez asked a question.

y. O. Din said that he was saying that this discussion needs to be as public as possible, such that everyone is allowed to be at the table.

z. J. Dominguez asked what the reason was, then, for going for the email vote.

aa. O. Din said that they have a process and that he is not trying to circumvent it, and that email votes have happened and that he was discussing with C. Huang if it would be the best way forward, such that it would ensure that the necessary conversations are had and that the public as a whole can talk about it.

bb. J. Dominguez asked what would happen if the committee decides not to put it on the floor.

cc. O. Din said that in such a situation it would have died in an email vote as well.

dd. The other community member asked what O. Din meant about D&I being a closed-door meeting, and that to her knowledge it is a public meeting. She added that when she walked into the meeting, two SJP members saw her, talked to each other, and then left, which is problematic to her.

ee. O. Din asked if she knows who they were, and that if there were third-party people who were there and left, he would not know who they were. He added that there is a huge problem with committee transparency and that members of the committee are not updated on the Assemblies website.

ff. D. Barbaria said that the members are updated.

gg. Discussion continued in regard to the identity of the people who left the D&I meeting.

hh. V. Devatha said that this is a lot of back and forth, and asked if anyone else from the community would like to speak before he closes off this discussion.

ii. A third community member said that she is speaking on her own behalf, and not on behalf of Hillel or any other organization. She asked if O. Din is the president of SJP.

jj. O. Din replied in the negative.

kk. The community member asked if he was on the executive board of one of the organizations directly backing BDS.
ll. O. Din said that he is not at this time.
mm.　The community member asked if he was ever on any of these organizations.
nn. O. Din listed some of his memberships.
oo. The community member said something to O. Din's status as a prominent member of the Palestinian community.
pp. O. Din said that he is not Palestinian.
qq. The community member asked if it would be fair to say that he is a prominent member of the Arab community on campus.
rr. O. Din said that he is Pakistani, which is not part of the Arab world.
ss. The community member said that with O. Din as a prominent representative of the Muslim community, it seems like a conflict of interest to have him as a member of this community and a member of the Student Assembly for this to come to the floor, and that this is concerning to her. She added that this is the second meeting of the SA she has been to, and that she does not know exactly how the process works.
tt. O. Din asked if the community member finds it concerning that he sits on the SA and that he's involved in his religious community.
uu. The other community member said that her understanding of the BDS movement is that it's beyond the religious community.
vv. O. Din said that the fact that people are saying that he shouldn't speak on this topic because he is involved in his community is absurd.
ww.　The community member said that she didn't say that he doesn't have the right to share these opinions. She began to say something regarding O. Din's status as a prominent voice of the BDS issue and a member of the SA.
xx. M. Shovik said that to her knowledge, O. Din isn't even one of the cosponsors of the resolution, and that so far it has been her and another student on the resolution. She added that she is currently cosponsoring the resolution and is not serving on the e-board of any associated organization, and that these attacks on O. Din are unfair.
yy. D. Barbaria said that he thinks that there are a lot of things about the process that need to change, and that this is a heated process, but that they cannot say that SA members shouldn't have a voice on an issue because they feel passionately about that issue. He added that if an SA member is doing things that are out of line, that can be discussed at that time, but that simply having these viewpoints shouldn't preclude them from this discussion.
zz. K. Wondimu said that this has gone on long enough for today, and that he is not a fan of the back and forth, and moved to end the Open Microphone.
aaa. V. Devatha ended Open Microphone.
bbb.　The community member said that she doesn't want to attack anyone's personal character, and that this is just what she's seen, in particular that O. Din was one of the speakers at the teach-in and is today on the Assembly speaking on behalf of BDS. She added that she feels like as a member of the Cornell student body, whether it's something within your right, it might be totally fine and not a conflict of interest, but that it's just something that she's observed.

IV.　**Announcements and Reports**
a. D. Barbaria said that the Appropriations Committee (henceforth AppsCom) received two funding requests.

      i.   A request by an organization for $600 for Criminal Justice Awareness Day posters, approved 8-2-1.

     ii.   A request by the Straight Edge for $1300 for shading, approved 6-4-2.

  b. M. Stefanko asked why people voted against the posters.

  c. D. Barbaria said that one is largely skeptical in general to any amount of funding that they deem too large, and another was due to the lack of reusability of the posters.

  d. M. Stefanko asked some clarifying questions regarding the Straight Edge's request.

  e. D. Barbaria said that the money would go to shading, lighting, and other items associated with the event.

  f. Discussion continued in this regard.

V. Business of the Day I

  a. Resolution 30: Approval of Amendments to the Student Activities Funding Commission (SAFC) Funding Guidelines

      i.   D. Barbaria apologized for his absence during the discussion of this resolution last meeting, and asked if any assembly members had any concerns regarding anything in the guidelines aside from the question of advisor signatures.

     ii.   Tireniolu Onabajo said that a sentence in 3.2.2 of SAFC's rules is ambiguous, and asked what it means.

        1. The clauses in question in totality read: "An applicant may request additional funding for any expenses in its funding request or for entirely new expenses under the following conditions: additional funds are needed because: the applicant has new circumstances which: could not have been reasonably anticipated or mitigated by the organization before it submitted its original request.

    iii. D. Barbaria asked if it would be okay to discuss this after the resolution is passed.

    iv. Michael Jeong said that if it's just parts of the guideline that T. Onabajo is unsure about, then this might not be the place to discuss that.

     v. D. Barbaria said that, with governing documents, the Assembly's only authority is to approve or not approve them, and that if they want to make changes they can only reject the proposal wholesale.

    vi. K. Wondimu asked if the tiers referenced in the guidelines refer to how much funding an organization gets.

    vii. D. Barbaria said that it refers to funding for an organization per semester.

   viii. K. Wondimu asked if there is a tier below Tier 6.

    ix. Daniel Hirsch clarified.

     x. D. Barbaria said that there is a lower tier which is effectively Tier 7, and that this is the New Group Tier.

    xi. V. Devatha asked if O. Din would like to introduce his amendment.

    xii. O. Din said that he is still recovering.

   xiii. V. Devatha asked if O. Din needs some time.

   xiv. O. Din replied in the affirmative, and said that he has the language on his laptop, so the conversation can continue while he pulls up the language.

   xv. M. Jeong said that last week, they ended conversation when they decided that they were not in favor of the veto power for advisors, but did talk about the possibility of extending the deadline for advisors only. He added that they

decided that they would be okay with a maximum of a 24 hours extension just for the advisor's signature, and that they'd be extending the deadline for advisors only to Saturday at 4:00 pm at the absolute latest due to logistical reasons.

    xvi. O. Din and M. Jeong went over the language of the amendment.

        1. The language is as follows: "The signature for the advisor of the organization has a separate deadline of 24 hours after the deadline for the submission of applications".

    xvii. T. Onabajo asked if someone else has oversight on the guidelines and their interpretation aside from students.

    xviii. D. Barbaria said that Terry Ector is involved in the process and there shouldn't be any ambiguity at all. He added that the SA can overrule the SAFC in the appeals process.

    xix. T. Onabajo said that there is ambiguity.

    xx. D. Barbaria said that they can more easily change the guidelines in committee, and that SAFC is usually willing for AppsCom to sit down with them and look over changes.

    xxi. O. Din moved to amend the resolution as detailed above.

    xxii. E. Shapiro asked if the sponsors foresee this causing any financial issues for SAFC.

    xxiii. M. Jeong said that he asked T. Ector how many groups had the advisor problem this semester, and that she said that there were 13 this semester, including Pao Bhangra. He added that they don't foresee this throwing off their numbers, and that this only applies to advisors who signed late rather than not signing at all, and this amendment does nothing for the latter.

    xxiv. D. Barbaria said that they don't know how many of those organizations tried to get their advisor's signature after not getting it in on time, so they'll have to wait and see about that.

    xxv. T. Onabajo asked if, since this is about trying to have options after unresponsive advisors, it would be worth considering moving the deadline to Monday rather than Saturday.

    xxvi. D. Hirsch said that they've decided not to move the deadline that far ahead since they review the budgets on Sunday and so it wouldn't work with their logistics.

    xxvii. M. Jeong said that they talked about this last week and how it wouldn't work with their logistics.

    xxviii. Motion to amend – ==amended==.

    xxix. Motion to vote on Resolution 30 – ==approved== 17-0-1.

b. Resolution 33: Establishing the Student Health Advisory Committee Bylaws

    i. N. Matolka said that nothing's changed about the resolution since its last presentation, and that if anyone has any questions about SHAC, this is the time to ask them.

    ii. D. Barbaria asked if N. Matolka can promise that he will look at how the SA's other documents are formatted if this resolution passes.

    iii. N. Matolka asked D. Barbaria to clarify.

    iv. D. Barbaria said that the document should match their other committee bylaws.

v. N. Matolka said that he'll amend it to match if D. Barbaria can send him the outline.

vi. Motion to vote on Resolution 33 – <mark>approved</mark> 17-0-2.

VI. New Business & Business of the Day II

a. Approval of Amendments to the International Students Union Constitution and Bylaws

    i. D. Barbaria said that he is presenting this on behalf of ISU, and that they didn't seem concerned about any of their changes. He said that they can postpone this until next week if there are major questions, and then went through some of the changes.

    ii. There was a motion to move this resolution to Business of the Day.

    iii. V. Devatha said that he would look unfavorably upon that, and that this shouldn't be the process when resolutions come in as New Business.

    iv. D. Barbaria said that he thinks that in this case, since it's a governing document approval with no controversial amendments, this is an oversight responsibility, and that if V. Devatha blocks a motion to move this to Business of the Day, he will move to overrule the chair.

    v. Motion to move to Business of the Day – <mark>moved</mark>.

    vi. Motion to vote on Resolution 34 – <mark>approved</mark> 17-0-1.

b. V. Devatha said that O. Din and J. Shapiro will make statements before the meeting is adjourned.

c. O. Din said that he is at a loss for words because it's hard, and that it's sad that today they have had people come and accuse him and the pro-Palestine movement of trying to stifle people, and that he shouldn't speak because he is Muslim or because he is Arab, which he is not. He added that he worked to get the vigil for the victims of the Christchurch shootings, and that these Islamophobic attacks are sad and make him feel unwelcome, and that he hopes that when this discussion continues, it continues without attacks on anyone and it's a discussion where everyone feels welcome.

d. J. Shapiro said that she is personally and institutionally very sorry that this happened, and that it wasn't representative of anyone on the anti-BDS campaign, and that she messaged her that she felt very sorry that she didn't say what she meant to, and that she hopes that O. Din understands that. She added that as she's sure he's seen, there will always be people on either side of the discussion who might go too far, like the person who attacked her on social media, and that she is very sorry that this happened to him.

e. C. Huang said that how O. Din is feeling is very valid, and that she is sorry that this is happening, and that she didn't want this to happen at this meeting. She added that she deeply apologizes for everyone who was feeling attacked, and that she also felt attacked and that she did not appreciate how the conversation went down between her and O. Din. She also said that the language that O. Din used felt coercive when he said that he would feel personally furious with her. She told O. Din not to try and invalidate her, and said that she wanted to make it very clear that she felt that this conversation was very inappropriate.

f. V. Devatha said that the meeting will be left there, and that anyone who wants to speak after this meeting with him or anyone else can do so.

VII.   Adjournment
   a.   V. Devatha adjourned the meeting at 6:20 pm.

   Respectfully Submitted,
   John Hannan
   Clerk of the Assembly