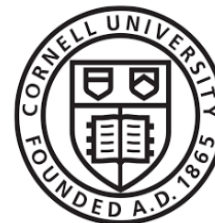


# Graduate and Professional Student Assembly

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## Cornell University Graduate and Professional Student Assembly

Agenda of September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2025 Meeting

5:00 PM – 6:30 PM

401 Physical Sciences Building or via Zoom

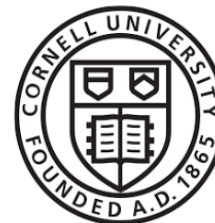
- I. Call to Order
- II. Roll Call
- III. Approval of the **April 28, 2025** Meeting Minutes
- IV. Reports of Officers and Committee Updates
  - a. Executive Committee
  - b. Operations and Staffing Committee
  - c. Appropriations Committee
  - d. Communications Committee
  - e. Finance Commission
  - f. Student Advocacy Committee
  - g. Programming Board
  - h. Faculty Advising, Teaching, and Mentorship Award Committee
  - i. Special Grants Committee
  - j. Graduate School
- V. Presentation
  - a. **Presentation — Cornell Office of Civil Rights**
    - i. Katie King, Associate Vice President
- VI. Appointments and Nominations
  - a. Call for nominations for **Voting Member Vacancies**
    - i. Master of Engineering Representative (*one seat*)
    - ii. Master of Industrial and Labor Relations Representative (*one seat*)
    - iii. Arts and Humanities Representative (*one seat*)
    - iv. Physical Sciences Representative (*three seats*)
    - v. Social Sciences Representative (*one seat*)
    - vi. Samuel Curtis Johnson School of Business Representative (*four seats*)
    - vii. Cornell Law School Representative (*three seats*)
    - viii. College of Veterinary Medicine Representative (*two seats*)
  - b. Call for nominations for **Committee Chair Vacancies**
    - i. Diversity and International Students Committee
    - ii. Special Grants Committee
  - c. Call for nominations for **External Vacancies**
    - i. Faculty Senate Representative

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*If you are in need of special accommodations in order to fully participate, please contact Student Disability Services at (607) 254-4545 or the Office of the Assemblies at (607) 255-3715 or [assembly@cornell.edu](mailto:assembly@cornell.edu) prior to the meeting.*

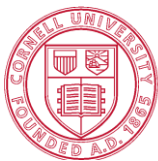
# Graduate and Professional Student Assembly

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- ii. Dining SA Committee Representative
  - iii. Library Student Advisory Representative
- VII. Resolutions
  - a. **Resolution 1: Universal TCAT Access for Cornell Graduate and Professional Students**
    - i. Sponsor:
      - 1. Thien Nguyen, Arts & Humanities Representative
- VIII. New Business
  - a. **Resolution 2: Proposed FY26 Budget** (*Vote scheduled for September 29*)
    - i. Sponsor:
      - 1. Siim Samuel Sepp, Vice President of Finance and Appropriations
- IX. Open Forum
- X. Adjournment

*Prepared by AnaFernanda Cardenas, GPSA Executive Vice President*



**Cornell University**  
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**Student Assembly**

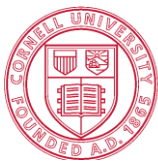
**Cornell Graduate and Professional Student Assembly**

Minutes of the April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2025 Meeting

5:00 PM – 6:30 PM

Room 401, Physical Sciences Building | Zoom

- I. Call to Order
  - a. O. Karim called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m.
    - i. *Members Present:* N. Brennan, D. Browne, D. Ghimire, A. LaGressa, C. Chappel, J. Chobirko, C. Douglas, A. Garcia-Ortiz, I. Gatimi, A. George, M. James, S. Karaikal, O. Karim, A. Lando, Z. Liu, Z. Lynch, S. Matan, T. Nguyen, K. Patel, A. Puder, S. Raimondi, S. Sepp, Y. Wu, J. Xiao, I. Yaya
    - ii. *Members Absent:* A. Basquiat, S. Hampi, A. Koyyada, C. Meffert, C. Wang
    - iii. *Also Present:* P. Caruso, K. Boor, J. Withers
- II. Approval of the April 14<sup>th</sup> Meeting Minutes
  - a. Z. Lynch moved to approve the minutes. The motion passed by unanimous consent.
- III. Reports of Officers and Committee Updates
  - a. Executive Committee
    - i. N. Brennan overviewed the meeting agenda.
  - b. Operations and Staffing
    - i. Z. Lynch encouraged members returning in the fall semester to generate ideas for GPSA socials.
  - c. Appropriations
    - i. None.
  - d. Communications
    - i. A. Garcia-Ortiz encouraged members to read the communique.
  - e. Finance
    - i. None.
  - f. Student Advocacy
    - i. None.
  - g. Diversity and International Students
    - i. A. George promoted the upcoming DISC cultural festival.
  - h. Programming
    - i. A. LaGressa promoted the upcoming gala.
  - i. Faculty Teaching, Advising, and Mentorship Award
    - i. J. Chobirko thanked the GPSA for a successful PhD recognition ceremony.



## Cornell University Graduate and Professional Student Assembly

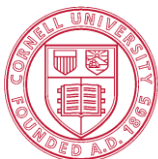
- j. Graduate School
  - i. In her last GPSA meeting before retirement, Dean Boor thanked the GPSA for a great year.

### IV. Presentations

- a. Presentation from Anabel's Grocery
  - i. Elinor Behlman, Trisha Bhujle, Jacob Blizzard, and Teagan Smith gave a presentation on Anabel's Grocery and its need for GPSA's financial support.
  - ii. The presenters fielded questions from members.
- b. GPSA 2025 Elections Results
  - i. As the presenter and sponsor of Resolution 15, O. Karim gave chair powers to N. Brennan.
  - ii. O. Karim presented on the results of the 2025 GPSA election, including positions and ballot question.
  - iii. O. Karim answered members' questions on election format, data, and the ballot question.

### V. Legislation

- a. Resolution 15: Updating Appendix A and Appendix B (Sponsor: Ocean Sowad Karim, President)
  - i. O. Karim introduced proposed amendments to Appendices A and B of the GPSA governing documents.
  - ii. In the question-and-answer period, S. Sepp and D. Browne questioned the sections of Resolution 15 on funding Anabel's Grocery.
  - iii. Pointing to violations of 501(c)(3) rules, fee-setting rules, and Cornell policy on funding non-University-affiliated groups, D. Browne said that the resolution needs to be rewritten. D. Browne motioned to table Resolution 15 for next semester. The motion failed, by a vote of 7-11-0.
  - iv. O. Karim moved to extend the discussion period by five minutes and the meeting by ten minutes. The motion passed by unanimous consent.
  - v. During the discussion period, the GPSA weighed options, considering D. Browne's concerns against a need to make long-overdue updates to the appendices as soon as possible.
  - vi. O. Karim motioned to strike mentions of particular members' attendance from the minutes and to move the GPSA into executive session (limited to GPSA members, invited guests, and members elect). The motion passed, by a vote of 16-0-0. The GPSA entered executive session at 6:28 p.m.



**Cornell University**  
**Graduate and Professional**  
**Student Assembly**

- vii. The body exited executive session at 7:00 p.m. and returned to regular session with significant amendments to Resolution 15, including removal of Section VIII A. on funding Anabel's Grocery.
- viii. N. Brennan returned to the previous question. Resolution 15 passed, by a vote of 16-0-11. (Yeas: N. Brennan, D. Browne, C. Chappel, J. Chobirko, A. Garcia-Ortiz, I. Gatimi, D. Ghimire, M. James, A. LaGressa, A. Lando, Z. Liu, Z. Lynch, T. Nguyen, A. Puder, S. Sepp) (Abstentions: C. Douglas, A. George, S. Karaikal, O. Karim, S. Matan, K. Patel, S. Raimondi, C. Wang, Y. Wu, J. Xiao, I. Yaya. Besides O. Karim, all no longer present).
- ix. N. Brennan returned chair powers to O. Karim.
- b. Meeting Schedule of the GPSA AY 2025-2026 Session
  - i. Seeing no exceptions to proposed schedule, N. Brennan moved to adopt the schedule by unanimous consent. The motion passed by unanimous consent.
- c. Resolution 13: Resolution Advocating for Universal TCAT Access for Cornell Graduate and Professional Students (Sponsor: T. Nguyen, Organization of Cornell Planners, Women's Planning Forum). Tabled from previous GPSA meeting.
  - i. Z. Lynch moved to table Resolution 13 to next semester. The sponsor took the motion as unfriendly. Z. Lynch called for division of house (called back after more discussion).
  - ii. Because everything, including resolutions, resets from one academic year to the next, the sponsor agreed to table the resolution informally and to work with next year's executive committee to pass the resolution at the start of the semester. The motion to table passed by unanimous consent.

**VI. Open Forum**

- a. M. James thanked the GPSA for a great year.
- b. I. Gatimi also thanked the GPSA and promoted a Black Student Empowerment event she will host.
- c. O. Karim thanked the GPSA and congratulated Dean Boor.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:11 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Anthony Wang  
Clerk of the Assembly



# Graduate and Professional Student Assembly

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## Resolution 1: Resolution Advocating for Universal TCAT Access for Cornell Graduate and Professional Students

**Abstract:** This resolution advocates for the inclusion of universal, unlimited TCAT (Tompkins Consolidated Area Transit) access for all Cornell graduate and professional students; calls for collaboration between the GPSA, Cornell administration, and TCAT; and outlines a commitment to student outreach and transparent implementation.

**Sponsored by:** Thien Nguyen, Voting Member – Arts & Humanities Representative, Organization of Cornell Planners, Women’s Planning Forum

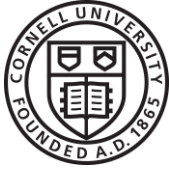
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**Whereas,** public transportation is a crucial service that facilitates accessibility, affordability, and sustainability for graduate and professional students, many of whom rely on TCAT for commuting to campus, housing, and essential services; and

**Whereas,** other peer institutions, including the University of Kansas, the University of Colorado Boulder, and the University of California, Berkeley, successfully fund student access to local transit systems through budget means, allowing for unlimited transit access at a reduced cost per student; and

**Whereas,** negotiating a bulk purchase agreement between Cornell and TCAT would significantly lower transportation costs per student compared to the current semester pass or per-ride costs, making public transit more affordable and equitable for all students; and

**Whereas,** by including universal TCAT access for all professional and graduate students throughout their entirety of enrollment, Cornell would have greater collective bargaining power and a stronger voice in negotiations with TCAT, ensuring that service levels, route planning, and scheduling better reflect the needs of the student population; and



# Graduate and Professional Student Assembly

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**Whereas**, universal transit access supports Cornell University's commitments to sustainability, equity, and affordability by reducing reliance on personal vehicles, alleviating parking demand, and lowering the overall carbon footprint of the student body; and

**Whereas**, many graduate and professional students are financially burdened by transportation costs, particularly international students, students with families, and students residing in areas with limited alternative transportation options; and

**Be it therefore resolved** that the Cornell Graduate and Professional Student Assembly (GPSA) formally advocates for the inclusion of universal TCAT access for all graduate and professional students; and be it further

**Resolved**, that the GPSA calls on Cornell University administration and the TCAT Board of Directors to work collaboratively with graduate and professional students to implement this program in a financially sustainable manner; and be it further

**Resolved**, that the GPSA urges the university to prioritize negotiations with TCAT to establish a discounted bulk rate for graduate and professional students, similar to peer institutions, ensuring equitable and affordable transit access; and be it further

**Resolved**, that the GPSA commits to engaging in outreach and information sessions to ensure transparency and gather student input on the implementation of this initiative; and

**Be it further resolved**, that copies of this resolution be sent to the President of Cornell University, the Dean of the Graduate School, the Vice President for Student and Campus Life, the TCAT Board of Directors, and any other relevant stakeholders.

Respectfully submitted,

*Thien Nguyen*

*Voting Member – Arts & Humanities Representative*

# **Resolution x: GPSA FY26 Internal Budget**

**Abstract:** This resolution approves the Internal GPSA Budget

**Sponsored by:** Siim S. Sepp, VP of Finance and Appropriations

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**Whereas:** The GPSA Bylaws require that the Appropriations Committee recommend an internal budget in the form of a resolution (3.05(D)(vii)).

**Whereas:** GPSA's Activity Fee Income was estimated by the VP of Finance and Appropriations and additional information was collected by Johnathan Hart (JGH27). Activity Fee income is estimated at \$ 1 125 850.

**Whereas:** The amount of funds in the GPSA's reserve \$149 797.26, according to the Office of the Assemblies.

**Whereas:** The amount of funds in the GPSAFC's reserve is \$550 000 , according to the information from Jonathan Hart.

**Whereas:** The recommended GPSA Internal budget is based on the historical use of funds. The last 6 years of internal budgets and expenses were used to estimate our expenses for this coming Academic Year.

**Whereas:** A complete spreadsheet will be attached to this resolution.

**Be it therefore resolved:** Actual Activity Fee income will be determined later in the Fall Term.

Respectfully Submitted,

Siim S. Sepp – VP of Finance and Appropriations



**Table 1. GPSA internal budget FY26.**

**FY 2026**

Expense Categories		2025-2026 Budget
10000	Administrative (food for meetings)	\$15,000.00
		\$20,000.00
10001	Executive (space rental, exec compensation)	
10002	Communications	\$3,000.00
10003	Operations & Staffing	\$3,000.00
10004	Appropriations	\$3,000.00
10005	Finance Commission	\$3,000.00
20001	Student Advocacy	\$3,000.00
30001	Ivy Summit	\$4,000.00
30003	Faculty Awards	\$3,000.00
30004	Diversity Committee	\$5,000.00
20004	Access Initiative Fund	\$10,235.00
TOTAL Allocation		\$72,873.20
TOTAL Expenses		\$72,235.00

**Table 2. Byline allocations FY26.**

Expense Categories	2025-2026 Budget
Athletics and Physical Education	\$71,645
Big Red Barn	\$161,713
<b>Cornell Concert Commission</b>	\$63,559
<b>Cornell Cinema</b>	\$76,353
Cornell University Programming Board	\$32,547
Cornell University Emergency Medical Services	\$25,075
Club Insurance:	\$56,292
GPSA Internal Budget:	\$62,638

GPSAFC	\$527,409
GPSA Programming Board	\$28,146
<b>GPSA Appropriations Initiative Fund</b>	\$10,235
<b>International Student Union</b>	\$10,235
<b>TOTAL Allocaiton</b>	1125850
<b>TOTAL Expenses</b>	1125847