

Cornell University

Graduate and Professional Student Assembly

Cornell Graduate and Professional Student Assembly

Minutes of the September 29th, 2025 Meeting

5:00 PM – 6:30 PM

401 Physical Sciences Building | Zoom

I. Call to Order

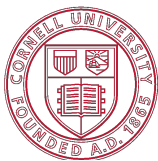
- a. M. Matthews called the meeting to order at 5:03 p.m.
 - i. *Members Present:* V. Baruah, A. Basquiat, N. Brennan, P. Caruso, J. Chobirko, A. Garcia-Ortiz, I. Gatimi, A. George, M. Hassler, Y. Khaled, C. King, A. Koyyada, Z. Liu, Z. Lynch, C. Meffert, T. Nguyen, M. Ortiz, S. Raimondi, K. Rohrbaugh, S. Sepp, I. Smith, Y. Wu
 - ii. *Members Absent:* B. Candelaria, A. Cardenas, C. Chappel, E. Gallant
 - iii. *Also Present:* J. Withers, J. Lamey, O. Hopewell, D. Freeman

II. Approval of the September 8th Meeting Minutes

- a. J. Chobirko moved to amend the minutes to correct typos from “\$70” to “\$750” (IV.e.i) and “Faculty Teaching, Advising, and Mentorship” to “Faculty Advising, Teaching, and Mentorship” (IV.h)
- b. The amendment passed by unanimous consent
- c. J. Chobirko moved to adopt the minutes. Minutes approved as amended by unanimous consent

III. Reports of Officers and Committee Updates

- a. Executive Committee
 - i. N. Brennan reported discussion in the Executive Committee on there being only one graduate representative being on the Code of Conduct Committee. There will be a second one added from the Business School
 - ii. P. Caruso took a point of information to ask on the process by which this representative was chosen
 - iii. N. Brennan replied that he was not informed on the selection process, but that it is probably similar to how other committee members not outlined in the Code of Conduct were selected
- b. Operations and Staffing Committee
 - i. Z. Lynch reported that the membership survey was sent out and initial committee assignments were sent out as well, with follow-up surveys to come to Voting Members who haven’t completed the initial survey
- c. Appropriations Committee

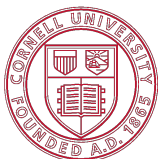


Cornell University Graduate and Professional Student Assembly

- i. S. Sepp announced that an internal GPSA budget will come to a vote in this meeting and that byline funding applications close tomorrow (September 30th, 2025) with continuing outreach to less-responsive organizations
- d. Communications Committee
 - i. A. Garcia-Ortiz announced that the first communique has gone out
 - ii. Notable on the first communique is that applications for the Student Parent Fund are open
- e. Finance Commission
 - i. A. Koyyada shared that virtually all funding tier appeals are processed
- f. Student Advocacy Committee
 - i. I. Gatimi announced that the committee is working on two resolutions: TCAT Access for All and Representation in Student Codes Advisory Boards. She also shared that the committee welcomes feedback and help from anyone interested
- g. Programming Board
 - i. P. Caruso announced that he is applying to book Barton Hall for the Graduate Student Gala, which would increase the event capacity from 500 to 900 if successful
- h. Faculty Teaching, Advising, and Mentorship Award Committee
 - i. J. Chobirko announced that he will contact interested members and encouraged members to continue to nominate potential awardees
- i. Special Grants Committee
 - i. J. Chobirko announced that the committee met last week to see what ideas people had and that relevant information on proposals / applications was sent out in the communique
- j. Diversity and International Students Committee
 - i. A. George announced that the first DISC meeting of the year focused on recruitment and goal setting will be tomorrow. DISC will also meet with the Office of Global Meeting later in the week to discuss potential collaboration
- k. Graduate School
 - i. None

IV. Presentation

- a. Presentation on Office of Graduate Student Life (OGSL)
 - i. Janna Lamey, Associate Dean for Graduate Student Life and Olivia Hopewell, Graduate Student Life gave an overview of their office, its purpose, and its goals for holistic, student-focused advising for graduate students



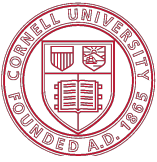
Cornell University Graduate and Professional Student Assembly

- ii. J. Lamey and O. Hopewell fielded questions from members on differences between the OGSL and the Ombuds, recent trends, support for homeless students, and accommodations for parents

V. Appointments and Nominations

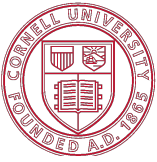
- a. Call for nominations for Voting Member Vacancies
 - i. Master of Engineering Representative (one seat)
 - 1. N. Brennan opened the floor for nominations. Hearing none, N. Brennan closed the floor
 - ii. Master of Industrial and Labor Relations Representative (one seat)
 - 1. N. Brennan opened the floor for nominations. Hearing none, N. Brennan closed the floor
 - iii. Physical Sciences Representative (one seat)
 - 1. N. Brennan opened the floor for nominations. Hearing none, N. Brennan closed the floor
 - 2. N. Brennan announced that at next week's meeting, these positions would be open to anyone regardless of division
 - iv. Campus Codes and Conduct Committee
 - 1. J. Chobirko moved to open the floor for nominations, without objection, the motion passed
 - 2. P. Caruso nominated himself
 - 3. Hearing no other nominations, N. Brennan closed the floor. P. Caruso was elected to the Campus Codes and Conduct Committee
 - v. Campus Welfare Committee
 - 1. A. Garcia Ortiz moved to open the floor for nominations, without objection, the motion passed
 - 2. D. Freeman nominated himself
 - 3. Hearing no other nominations, N. Brennan closed the floor. D. Freeman was elected to the Campus Welfare Committee
 - vi. Campus Committee on Infrastructure, Technology, and Environment
 - 1. A. Garcia-Ortiz moved to open the floor for nominations, without objection, the motion passed
 - 2. I. Smith and T. Nguyen nominated themselves
 - 3. Hearing no other nominations, N. Brennan closed the floor. I Smith and T. Nguyen were elected to the Campus Committee on Infrastructure, Technology, and Environment

VI. Resolutions



Cornell University Graduate and Professional Student Assembly

- a. Resolution 1: GPSA FY26 Internal Budget (Vote scheduled for September 29)
 - i. Sponsor Siim Samuel Sepp, VP of Finance and Appropriations, delivered a presentation on the budget, going over the Student Activity Fee (over \$1mm), the internal allocation, GPSA reserve, and GPSAFC reserve. S. Sepp noted key changes, including increases to the administrative and executive budgets and to take previously under-used discretionary funds and to put them towards committees to boost engagement and enable more programming
 - ii. N. Brennan moved the GPSA into a five-minute question-and-answer period. Members asked S. Sepp about the emergency / discretionary fund for student hardship, the size of the administrative budget, and about potentially increasing funding to Anabel's Grocery
 - iii. N. Brennan moved the assembly into a commenting period.
 - 1. N. Brennan commented in response to calls to lower the budget in a fee-setting year that, given that the GPSA has the money and cannot revert the budget, it makes sense to expand the budget in response to inflation in Ithaca and the growing costs graduate students face
 - 2. M. Ortiz commented that it makes sense to reserve money for a discretionary fund devoted to students in hardship. Z. Lynch replied that the GPSA is student-run and that distributing money in a fair way would potentially require a full-time staff (as exists in other assemblies) and could be outside the power of the GPSA. S. Sepp added that there already exists a University Access Fund
 - 3. S. Sepp moved to extend the commenting period by five minutes. The motion passed by unanimous consent
 - 4. S. Raimondi raised the point of Anabel's funding. N. Brennan responded that he has written a resolution to fund Anabel's using reserve funds
 - 5. D. Freeman asked if money allocated to individual committees could be distributed to students facing hardship. S. Sepp replied that the governing documents prevent committees from giving money to individuals, but that the money could go to organizations or to events supporting students
 - 6. Comments continued on the specific amounts associated with individual reserve or discretionary accounts. Questions also came on the AIF and its purpose and size



Cornell University Graduate and Professional Student Assembly

- iv. Moving into a voting period, M. Ortiz made and then, after clarification, withdrew a motion to amend the resolution. Resolution 1 passed by a vote of 20-0-0

VII. New Business

- a. None

VIII. Open Forum

- a. Z. Lynch announced that more openings to external committee requiring GPSA representation would come soon
- b. A. Garcia-Ortiz announced that there might be a petition to come out in response to changes to NSF Graduate Research Fellowship Program eligibility
- c. K. Rohrbaugh encouraged members to comment against changing international student visa rules
- d. A. Garcia-Ortiz moved to extend the meeting by five minutes, for a new ending time of 6:35. The motion passed by unanimous consent
- e. Y. Wu pointed out recent changes to the Campus Activities site on new student organization registration and asked why this might be the case. N. Brennan responded that Campus Activities would provide an update soon
- f. D. Freeman asked about the number of at-large seats to open next week. N. Brennan responded that it will be the three listed in this meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 6:32 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Anthony Wang
Clerk of the Assembly