

# Cornell University

## Graduate and Professional Student Assembly

### Cornell Graduate and Professional Student Assembly

Minutes of the March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2025 Meeting

5:00 PM – 6:30 PM

Room 401, Physical Sciences Building | Zoom

#### I. Call to Order

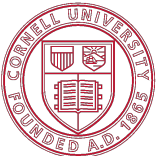
- a. O. Karim called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.
  - i. *Members Present (21)*: N. Brennan, C. Chappel, J. Chobirko, C. Douglas, A. Garcia-Ortiz, I. Gatimi, A. George, M. James, S. Karaikal, O. Karim, A. Koyyada, A. Lando, Z. Liu, Z. Lynch, T. Nguyen, K. Patel, A. Puder, S. Raimondi, S. Sepp, Y. Wu, J. Xiao I. Yaya
  - ii. *Members Absent (8)*: D. Browne, D. Ghimire, S. Hampi, A. LaGressa, S. Matan, C. Meffert, C. Wang
  - iii. *Also Present*: P. Caruso, M. El-Walid, K. Boor, S. Sautu, J. Withers

#### II. Approval of the January 27<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 introduced the special grant funding committee, to be discussed more later.
- b. Operations and Staffing
  - i. Z. Lynch promoted the weekly GPSA socials, now with pizza!
  - ii. Z. Lynch encouraged interested members to sign up for elections.
- c. Appropriations
  - i. None.
- d. Communications
  - i. A. Garcia-Ortiz emphasized the socials and elections.
- e. Finance
  - i. A. Koyyada.
- f. Student Advocacy
  - i. None.
- g. Diversity and International Students
  - i. A. George announced the upcoming DISC cultural festival, with tables, performances, and prizes and featuring diverse and cultural campus groups.
- h. Programming



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- i. A. Puder gave updates on the upcoming gala.
- i. Faculty Teaching, Advising, and Mentorship Award
  - i. J. Chobirko announced that nominations for awards have closed and that nominees have been notified. Communications have also been sent to the speaker for the PhD recognition ceremony.
- j. Graduate School
  - i. Dean Boor thanked and congratulated O. Karim and A. LaGressa for their leadership and performance during a recent Board of Trustees meeting.

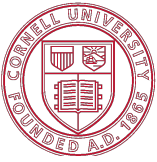
### IV. Presentation

- a. O. Karim gave a brief update on Elections Committee news, with information on information sessions, voting, eligibility and positions, etc.
- b. Presentation on Cornell Cinema by Molly Ryan (Director of Cornell Cinema), A. Koyyada (Finance Commission Chair), and M. James (Voting Member, GPSA Representative to Cornell Cinema)
  - i. M. Ryan, A. Koyyada, and M. James gave the GPSA a primer on the Cornell Cinema, its programming, graduate and professional student engagement, and planned events and series. She also gave the body information on Cornell Cinema's budget and thanked the GPSA for its continued support.
  - ii. M. Ryan answered questions from members.
- c. SAF/GPSAFC Money Explained by A. Koyyada
  - i. A. Koyyada delivered a presentation on how funding works for the GPSAF, GPSAFC, and GPSA, highlighting where money comes from, where money goes, and information on reserves, to be discussed more as a part of Resolution 9.

### V. Late Additions to the Agenda

- a. Addition of Resolution 11, GPSA Recommendations On Cornell University's Statements Towards Graduate Student Worker Momodou Taal, to Meeting Agenda
  - i. M. El-Walid and community members gave a minute-long introduction to the resolution, arguing that the University should rescind statements on Taal's student code of conduct procedures it gave to the Department of Homeland Security.
  - ii. N. Brennan moved to vote for consideration and received a second.
  - iii. The motion **passed** by a 17-1-0 vote, putting Resolution 11 on the agenda.

### VI. Legislation

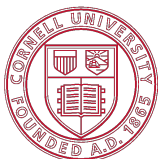


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- a. Resolution 9: Special Committee for the Disbursement of Special Grant Funding (Sponsor: Nicholas J. Brennan, Executive Vice President)
  - i. N. Brennan introduced the proposed special committee to distribute GPSA reserve funds as grants. The committee, composed of 5-9 elected members appointed by the VP of Operations, would determine eligibility, decide on proposals, etc. The grants would improve graduate student facilities, programming, resources, and opportunities.
  - ii. N. Brennan fielded questions from members.
  - iii. O. Karim moved the body onto a discussion period. J. Withers pointed out that current GPSA members might not be by the time the proposed special committee would start.
  - iv. Z. Lynch moved to amend the resolution to remove the need for committee members to be current GPSA voting members. N. Brennan took the amendment as friendly.
  - v. O. Karim moved to the previous question and received a second. Resolution 9 **passed** by a vote of 19-0-0.
- b. Resolution 10: Protecting Immigrant Students (Sponsor: Ocean Karim, President)
  - i. As the sponsor, O. Karim ceded his chair powers to N. Brennan.
  - ii. O. Karim introduced Resolution 10, calling for stronger protections on records, legal resources, and training on rights for immigrant students.
  - iii. In the question-and-answer period, O. Karim pointed to similar action at other universities. He also answered questions from P. Caruso on specifically referencing First Amendment rights in the resolution's language, saying that he would be friendly to such changes. A. George also noted existing free legal advice services on campus.
  - iv. During the discussion period, I. Gatimi voiced support for the resolution.
  - v. Seeing no more discussion points, N. Brennan moved onto a vote. Resolution 10 **passed** by a vote of 19-0-0.
  - vi. N. Brennan returned chair powers to O. Karim.

### VII. New Business

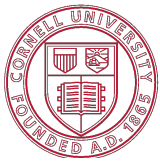
- a. Resolution 11: GPSA Recommendations On Cornell University's Statements Towards Graduate Student Worker Momodou Taal
  - i. M. El-Walid and community members continued to introduce Resolution 11, asking the University to formally rescind their statements used in HSI declaration and Visa revocation actions, to issue a statement "clarifying the factual limitations of any records emanating from ongoing student code of conduct procedures, emphasizing that these are not held to legal evidentiary



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standards,” and finally, as Taal’s employer, to protect Taal from Visa revocation. The speakers also referenced similar legal action on other college campuses and said that there is broad support for Taal, including from Cornell’s Jewish community.

- ii. Z. Lynch moved to extend the meeting by ten minutes. The motion passed by unanimous consent.
- iii. S. Raimondi pushed back on the claim of support from Jewish Cornellians, referencing her experiences as a student active in Cornell’s Jewish community. Members discussed the amount of support here, and S. Sautu said that 80 people have signed the public statement of Jewish Cornellians supporting Taal.
- iv. During the discussion period, members discussed the scope of the resolution and whether or not to write another more general resolution. Members also noted the importance of establishing precedent against graduate student deportations.
- v. A. Lando proposed to amend the resolution by including lines 35-41 of Resolution 10. The amendment was made without dissent.
- vi. N. Brennan moved to extend the meeting by ten minutes. The motion passed by unanimous consent.
- vii. Members continued to comment on the scope, language, and importance of the resolution.
- viii. S. Raimondi pointed out “tokenization of Jewish people” in the resolution’s language and proposed to amend the resolution to include “Whereas, as a coalition of Jewish Cornellians have authored a letter rejecting the claim that Momodou has created a hostile environment for Jewish students on campus, with the signatories of 74 in contrast to the 3,000 Jewish students on campus.” S. Raimondi received a second, but hearing dissent, called for division of house.
- ix. O. Karim sent out a secret ballot on the amendment. The amendment **failed**, by a vote of 4-8-4.
- x. N. Brennan moved to the previous question and received a second. Hearing dissent, N. Brennan called for division of house. The motion **passed** by a vote of 14-1-0, moving the body to the previous question.
- xi. O. Karim sent out another secret ballot for voting on Resolution 11.
- xii. O. Karim moved to extend the meeting by two minutes, for a new end time of 7:02 p.m.
- xiii. Resolution 11 **passed** by a vote of 12-1-3.



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VIII. Open Forum

- a. None.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:02 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Anthony Wang  
Clerk of the Assembly