



# Student Assembly

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## 1     **Resolution 18: Amending the Student Assembly** 2                                   **Code of Ethics**

3     **Abstract:** This resolution updates the Student Assembly Code of Ethics as required by SA 2023-  
4     2024 Resolution 74. This resolution strengthens accountability measures, tailors ethics mediation  
5     capabilities, and provides a structured system for solving Student Assembly conflicts, appeals,  
6     and confusions via an unbiased external arm.

7     **Sponsored by:** Sophia Arnold '26, Yuvraj Tuli '25, Kiera Gill '25, Katelin Wong '27, Cameron  
8     Smith '26, Danielle Iringe-Koko '26, Alhassan Bangura '25

9     **Type of Action:** Internal Policy

10    **Originally Presented:** 01/23/2025

11    **Current Status:** Placed on the Second Readings Calendar, 01/23/2025

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12    **Whereas,** the Student Assembly created the Office of Ethics through Resolution 22 in the 2021-  
13    2022 term to receive and investigate any necessary accountability and ethical concerns;

14    **Whereas,** the Student Assembly passed Resolutions 65 and 66 in the 2021-22 term and  
15    Resolution 13 in the 2022-23 in an attempt to imbue the Office of Ethics with the authority to  
16    ensure accountability, ethical conduct, justice, and growth within the Assembly;

17    **Whereas,** since the passage of these resolutions, the Office of Ethics has been entrusted with,  
18    and successfully adjudicated, a variety of situations, including presidential succession, governing  
19    document conflicts, and officer misconduct allegations and ethics concerns during the 2023-2024  
20    term;

21    **Whereas,** the Code of Ethics has not been updated since its initial passage during the 2022-2023  
22    term and contains now-insufficient language for defining the Office of Ethics' scope, abilities,  
23    and guidelines for ethical concerns in the new landscape of the Student Assembly;

24    **Whereas,** in response to this the Student Assembly, on Sunday, April 14th, 2024, passed  
25    Resolution 74 - *Implementing the Office of Ethics' Recommendations from the Spring '24*  
26    *Report*, which contains a directive for the Assembly to "commit to strengthening rules on its  
27    impartial arms, the Elections Committee, and the Office of Ethics, by October 1st, 2024";

28    **Whereas,** October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024 has passed and a new version of the Code of Ethics is now overdue;

29    **Whereas,** various members of the Student Assembly have expressed a desire to update the Code  
30    of Ethics to better imbue it with the authority and power to accomplish its mission;

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31 **Whereas**, the members of the Office of Ethics, through research, analysis, argument, and  
32 discussion, have written an updated version of the Code of Ethics that allows the voting members  
33 of the Assembly to handle the Assembly’s affairs through the legislative power and, in times of  
34 conflict, delegate ethical concerns and conflicts to be mediated through an unbiased arm of the  
35 Assembly with clearly delineated responsibilities, jurisdiction, and procedures.

36 **Be it therefore resolved**, that the language of the appended document, titled “The Code of  
37 Ethics of the Cornell University Student Assembly” be adopted by the Assembly as its Code of  
38 Ethics.

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40 **Respectfully Submitted,**

41 Sophia Arnold ’26

42 *Director of the Office of Ethics, Student Assembly*

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44 Yuvraj Tuli ’25

45 *Deputy Director of the Office of Ethics, Student Assembly*

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47 Kiera Gill ’25

48 *Member of the Office of Ethics, Student Assembly*

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50 Katelin Wong ’27

51 *Member of the Office of Ethics, Student Assembly*

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53 Cameron Smith ’26

54 *Member of the Office of Ethics, Student Assembly*

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56 Danielle Iringe-Koko ’26

57 *Member of the Office of Ethics, Student Assembly*

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59 Alhassan Bangura ’25

60 *Director Emeritus of the Office of Ethics, Student Assembly*



# Student Assembly

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## The Code of Ethics of the Cornell University Student Assembly

*Adopted by the Student Assembly on  
[MONTH] [DAY], [YEAR]*

### § 100. Purpose and Suspension

- A. This Code of Ethics shall serve as rules governing internal operations and conduct of the Student Assembly Office of Ethics; all members and procedures of the Student Assembly shall adhere to this Code of Ethics.
- B. These rules shall remain in effect immediately upon adoption by the Student Assembly and shall be immutable until the end of the term; it shall be the responsibility at the beginning of each subsequent term for the Office of Ethics to solicit and propose, internally approve, and present amendments to the Student Assembly for adoption.
- C. Should thirty (30) days pass following the first organizational meeting of a subsequent term of the Assembly without amendments to the Code of Ethics, these rules shall automatically be adopted by the Assembly.
- D. In the following order, these rules shall be superseded by the Charter and Bylaws in the event of a conflict.
- E. The Office of Ethics may not suspend these rules, nor may the voting membership of the Student Assembly.

### § 101. Membership and Training

- A. The Office of Ethics shall consist of seven (7) members, who shall be tasked with carefully and fairly deciding all cases and controversies presented to them in the capacity of their roles and disqualifying themselves from participating in proceedings where their impartiality may be compromised.
- B. Members shall begin their term immediately upon confirmation by the Student Assembly and the formal vacancy of the seat they are filling.
- C. Recruitment of Office of Ethics members shall occur per Article VI, Section 6, Subsection B(c) of the Student Assembly Bylaws; Removal shall occur per Subsection B(ii)(3) of the same article and section of the bylaws.
- D. All Office of Ethics members shall undergo a training program consisting of

44 the following elements (a) review of Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised,  
45 (b) review of the Student Assembly Charter, Bylaws, Standing Rules, Election  
46 Rules, and Code of Ethics, (c) review of significant internal policy resolutions  
47 from the past five (5) Assembly terms, and (d) a historical overview of the  
48 Student Assembly; the Director of Ethics shall design this training program.  
49

50 **§ 102. Administration**

- 51
- 52 A. The Office of Ethics shall select from among themselves a member to serve as  
53 its chair (“Director”), who shall serve as the Director of the Office of Ethics of  
54 the Student Assembly upon confirmation from the Assembly.  
55
- 56 B. The Director shall preside over the Office of Ethics, report all orders,  
57 statements, and opinions to the Student Assembly, and hold the office to  
58 adhere to the Student Assembly Code of Ethics in all proceedings.  
59
- 60 C. Additional responsibilities of the Director are as follows:
- 61 (1) Regularly schedule meetings of the Office of Ethics and prepare a  
62 detailed agenda;
- 63 (2) Fairly assign work resulting from and leading to reviews and hearings  
64 amongst members;
- 65 (3) Set and ensure the maintenance of the attendance policy of the Office of  
66 Ethics;
- 67 (4) Establish, implement, and certify an intensive training program for all  
68 newly appointed members;
- 69 (5) Maintain a detailed record of Office of Ethics proceedings and make  
70 accessible to all members any materials delivered to and produced by  
71 the Office;
- 72 (6) Decide upon the retention of members into the following academic  
73 year’s Office of Ethics before the end of the current term.  
74
- 75 D. The Director of the Office shall nominate a Deputy Director from the  
76 membership of the Office, whose appointment shall be subject to confirmation  
77 by a majority vote of the Office; Upon confirmation, the nominated individual  
78 shall assume the role of Deputy Director.
- 79 (1) The Deputy Director’s role shall be solely to assume the  
80 responsibilities and duties of the Director in the event of the Director's  
81 removal, resignation, or absence.  
82
- 83 E. In the event of the absence of both the Director and the Deputy Director, the  
84 members of the Office shall appoint a designee from among the membership  
85 of the Office of Ethics to serve as Acting Director.  
86
- 87 F. The Director shall serve for one term, which may be renewed only with the  
88 simple majority consent of the Office of Ethics.  
89

90 G. The Director may only vote in the event of a tie.

91

92 H. The Student Assembly may, upon a two-thirds (2/3rds) majority vote, remove  
93 the Director of the Office of Ethics; in the event of a removal, the members of  
94 the Student Assembly Office of Ethics shall internally elect from amongst  
95 themselves a different member to serve as Director.

96

97 **§ 103. Meetings and Attendance**

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99 A. All meetings of the Office of Ethics shall be chaired by the Director of Ethics.

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101 B. The Office of Ethics shall hold regular meetings biweekly, with the date, time,  
102 and location of this meeting being determined by all members of the Office  
103 before the second meeting of the Student Assembly's term; These meetings  
104 shall occur while the undergraduate colleges are in session.

105

106 C. Special meetings, including but not limited to appeal reviews, hearings,  
107 preliminaries, and decisions, shall be scheduled at the discretion of the  
108 Director with a three (3) day notice delivered to all Office of Ethics members  
109 and relevant parties.

110

111 D. Attendance is required at scheduled meetings for all members, and the quorum  
112 for Office of Ethics meetings and voting shall be set at four (4) members;  
113 special meetings require the attendance of all 7 members except in the event  
114 of recusal or an excused absence.

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116 E. Members absent from an Office of Ethics meeting or proceeding shall be  
117 marked as an abstained vote; proxy voting is strictly forbidden.

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119 F. Any member who accrues more than three (3) unexcused absences during a  
120 semester shall be in jeopardy of removal from the Office of Ethics.

121

122 **§ 104. Ethical Conduct**

123

124 A. All members of the Office of Ethics shall be subject to this Code of Ethics;  
125 ethical conduct and decorum are expected from all members.

126

127 B. In the event of a conflict of interest, members shall be required to recuse  
128 themselves from the applicable case; failure to recuse shall be an impeachable  
129 offense.

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131 C. The Office of Ethics shall remain impartial on the activities of the Student  
132 Assembly; members may not argue in favor or disapproval of resolutions of  
133 the Student Assembly.

134

135 **§ 105. Reception of Ethical Concerns**

- 136 A. Any member of the Cornell community seeking to report an ethical concern or  
137 controversy regarding any member of the Student Assembly or undergraduate  
138 representative to the University Assembly may convey their intent to the  
139 Office of Ethics through the submission of a concern form electronically via  
140 the Student Assembly website.  
141
- 142 B. An ethical concern or controversy shall comprise, but not be limited to the  
143 following:  
144 (1) Violations of the Student Assembly Oath of Office as written in the  
145 Standing Rules of the Student Assembly;  
146 (2) Usage of Student Assembly name, reputation, governing documents  
147 and resolutions, resources, or channels outside of the bounds of the  
148 individual's described role on the SA;  
149 (3) Improper or unauthorized use of Student Assembly name, reputation,  
150 governing documents and resolutions, resources, or channels for  
151 personal gain or advantage within the bounds of the Student Assembly  
152 to obtain special treatment, access to resources and opportunities, or  
153 favorable treatment;  
154 (4) Unethical behaviors or practices in the Cornell community at large;  
155 (5) Outstanding and ongoing hearings or violation charges from the  
156 undergraduate colleges Academic Integrity Hearing Boards of the  
157 undergraduate colleges;  
158 (6) Outstanding and ongoing hearings or violation charges from the Office  
159 of Student Conduct and Community Standards, the Office of  
160 Institutional Equity and Title IX, or any similar university entity;  
161 (7) Failure to discharge or uphold the duties of a Student Assembly seat or  
162 office or comply with general and committee meeting attendance  
163 policies of the Student Assembly.  
164
- 165 C. Forms must be submitted in full, and all relevant situational context, any  
166 references to Student Assembly governing documents, materials, actions, or  
167 procedures, and evidence must be included; incomplete ORs shall not be  
168 confirmed as received.  
169
- 170 D. Submissions may be filed within a year following the term the alleged ethical  
171 violation occurred in.  
172

173 **§ 106. Investigation of Ethical Concerns**  
174

- 175 A. Ethical concern submissions may only be reviewed when a quorum of  
176 members is present.  
177
- 178 B. Upon reception, all ethical concerns shall be investigated if two (2) members  
179 affirm; the standard to constitute an ethical violation shall be solely  
180 determined by the Office of Ethics.  
181

- 182 C. The Office of Ethics may, upon a majority vote, trigger an investigation into  
183 alleged ethical concerns without the reception of a complaint from the Cornell  
184 community.  
185
- 186 D. Throughout the proceedings of an investigation, the Office may communicate  
187 with the complainant, the respondent, any witnesses, and/or other sources of  
188 information necessary to carry out their functions.  
189 (1) Upon a majority vote of the membership of the Office of Ethics, the  
190 Office may apply any additional procedures it may deem necessary  
191 including, but not limited to, procedures utilized for opinion requests  
192 as outlined in this Code of Ethics.  
193
- 194 E. Following the collection of all required testimony, evidence, reports, and other  
195 applicable items, the Director of Ethics shall convey the Office’s summary of  
196 events to the Executive Committee of the Student Assembly and the Office of  
197 the Assemblies, which shall decide upon the necessity and, subsequently, the  
198 form of mediation, resolution, disciplinary action, or alternative form of  
199 intervention.  
200
- 201 F. In the event that an ethical concern involves an officer of the Student  
202 Assembly, pertains to an individual’s actions within their office, or is of great  
203 interest to the student body, the Office may, by a majority vote, elect to  
204 submit its recommendations for adoption by a majority vote of the Student  
205 Assembly at its next scheduled meeting.  
206 (1) These recommendations include, but are not limited to, the form of  
207 mediation, resolution, disciplinary action, or alternative form of  
208 intervention arising from the Office’s investigation of an ethical  
209 concern.  
210

211 **§ 107. Reception of Requests for Opinion**  
212

- 213 A. Any Cornell University student seeking to (a) challenge the validity of a  
214 Student Assembly resolution, decision, procedure, or action on the grounds of  
215 accordance with the Student Assembly Charter, Bylaws, Standing Rules, and  
216 any rules or regulations established pursuant to these governing documents,  
217 (b) appeal rulings made by the Student Assembly Elections Committee, (c)  
218 challenge the Student Assembly and Executive Committee’s use of its recall  
219 and removal powers, (d) request opinion on a resolution aiming to  
220 fundamentally reform the Assembly, or (e) request opinion on a decision,  
221 action, or issue regarding the Student Assembly may convey their intent to the  
222 Office of Ethics through the submission of an appeal electronically via the  
223 Student Assembly website.  
224
- 225 B. Opinion request (“OR”) forms must be submitted in full, and all relevant  
226 situational context, references to Student Assembly governing documents,

227 materials, actions, or procedures, and evidence must be included; incomplete  
228 ORs shall not be confirmed as received.

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231 C. ORs regarding (a), (c), and (d) must be filed within forty (40) days of the  
232 publication or implementation of the resolution, decision, procedure, or  
233 action; ORs regarding (b) must be filed within three (3) days following a  
234 decision made by the Elections Committee.

235

236 D. The Office of Ethics shall verify the receipt of ORs within six (6) business  
237 days; if confirmation is not received, the individual (hereinafter referred to as  
238 “appellant”) may contact the Director via email to inquire about OR status.

239 (1) Opinion Requests regarding (b) shall be set on an expedited schedule  
240 to be coordinated with the Director of Elections and the appellant.

241

242 **§ 108. Approval of Opinion Requests**

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244 A. Opinion Requests may only be reviewed when a quorum of members is  
245 present.

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247 B. The Office of Ethics may reject without review an OR in circumstances where  
248 (a) the Office has previously upheld the validity of the targeted Student  
249 Assembly resolution, decision, procedure, or action; if rejected, these ORs  
250 shall be rejected via an order dismissing the matter with prejudice.

251

252 C. Upon review and deliberation, an OR shall be accepted upon a simple  
253 majority vote of the Office’s membership.

254

255 D. Following acceptance, the Office shall determine whether the initial subject  
256 (“appellee”) named is the proper individual or group to respond; if the Office  
257 determines the appellee(s) is named improperly, the appellant shall be ordered  
258 to resubmit their OR within a timeframe determined by the Director; if an OR  
259 is not resubmitted by the set deadline, the case shall be dismissed without  
260 prejudice.

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262 E. Proper appellee(s) shall be notified of the OR filing and will be sent all  
263 documents related to the case.

264

265 F. Appellees shall be ordered to submit a pleading electronically via the Student  
266 Assembly website by a deadline set by the Director; pleadings must include  
267 all relevant facts supporting their side and a request for the case to be  
268 considered based on the merits or through oral arguments.

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270 G. Appellants shall be ordered to submit an addendum requesting the case to be  
271 considered in oral arguments or based on the merits by a deadline set by the  
272 Director.



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- H. All members shall be assigned to the case panel of inquiry upon approval of an OR; the Director shall serve as the chair throughout proceedings and shall only be able to vote in the event of a tie.

**§ 109. Appellants and Appellees**

- A. Parties shall be expected to read the Code of Ethics to understand the OR process and be compliant and communicative with the Office; noncompliance may lead to case dismissal or judgment on the merits by default.
- B. Parties shall refrain from filing excessive or frivolous motions or filings intended to cause harm, embarrassment, or annoyance; if filings are deemed vexatious by the Office shall be rejected.
- C. Parties may file motions for summary judgment or dismissal.
- D. Parties are prohibited from contacting members of the Office of Ethics regarding their case via conversations, text, social media, email, or phone outside of official channels; parties may not pressure members to meet regarding their role or decision in deliberation or engage in a threatening manner.

**§ 110. Arguments**

- A. Upon receipt of an OR and corresponding pleading, the Office of Ethics shall identify the primary issues and questions of the case and determine whether the case will proceed as a decision on the merits in oral arguments by a simple majority vote of the whole panel.
- B. If a case is slated for a decision on the merits, the appellant and appellee will cease to have an active role, and an opinion will be issued under panel deliberation and voting.
- C. If a case is slated for oral arguments, the Office will work with the appellant and appellee to schedule a date, time, and location for all subsequent arguments and meetings.
- D. The Office may, on a case-by-case basis, establish preliminary meetings for the purposes of explaining procedures, addressing minor issues, or encouraging settlement between the parties.
- E. Appellees and appellants may, if required for the construction of their arguments, request for the admission of witness or expert testimony, which shall be subject to approval from the Office.

- 319 F. On a case-by-case basis, the Office of Ethics may call upon the Assembly  
320 Parliamentarian, Executive Archivist, and Office of the Assemblies for  
321 research, context, or clarification; this shall be limited to the oral argument  
322 phase except in “decision on the merits” cases, where this may occur during  
323 deliberations.  
324
- 325 G. Oral arguments shall follow the general procedure detailed below:  
326 (1) Call to Order  
327 (2) Introductions and Announcements  
328 (3) Appellant Arguments  
329 (4) Panel Questioning  
330 (5) Appellee Arguments  
331 (6) Panel Questioning  
332 (7) Closing Statements  
333 (8) Adjournment  
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- 335 H. Oral arguments shall be recorded and closed to the public; the Director shall  
336 have the right to deny admission to any party found to be disruptive.  
337
- 338 I. The maximum allotted for arguments shall be equal between both parties and  
339 determined by the Office; appellants and appellees may petition the Office for  
340 more time.  
341
- 342 J. The Office may conduct a hearing where the appellee is not present in cases if  
343 it has satisfied that a reasonable effort was made to notify the appellee of the  
344 charge and of the time and place of the hearing; the sending of a notification  
345 sent to the student's Cornell e-mail account shall satisfy this requirement; in  
346 the absence of the appellant, the Office will hear the available information,  
347 weigh the facts, and render a judgment.  
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- 349 K. Closing statements may be delivered orally or submitted in written form to the  
350 Office of Ethics via email within one (1) hour after adjournment.  
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352 **§ 111. Deliberations and Opinions**  
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- 354 A. Following the adjournment of a hearing or decision to decide on the merits of  
355 a case, the Office will convene within two (2) days to deliberate and vote on  
356 the matter(s) addressed.  
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- 358 B. Multiple filings submitted addressing the same resolutions, decisions,  
359 procedures, actions, and appellants may be deliberated and combined as one  
360 case.  
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- 362 C. All members on the panel of inquiry are eligible to participate in voting and  
363 deliberation except in cases heard in oral arguments, where members not  
364 present in oral arguments must abstain.

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- D. The standard for all cases shall be clear and convincing evidence, and the burden of proof shall rest with the appellant.
  - E. Decision(s) shall be reached by a simple majority vote of the Office and must be supported in the form of an opinion; Office opinions shall reflect the majority opinion of the Office but must accurately represent the vote.
- § 112. Handling of Opinions and Orders**
- A. All orders, opinions, and other publications of the Office of Ethics shall be communicated in writing with the parties, the Student Assembly, the President of Cornell University, and the Office of Assemblies for dissemination.
  - B. Once an opinion is issued, parties are prohibited from further contacting the Office unless substantive new evidence is introduced to initiate a new opinion request or constitute a potential ethical violation.
  - C. Orders and recommendations contained in opinions written by the Office of Ethics shall be considered final upon release and shall be executed by the Officers of the Student Assembly.
    - (1) The Assembly may encourage reconsideration of a case by a two-thirds (2/3rds) vote or a petition containing signatures from ten percent (10%) of the Cornell undergraduate student body on the grounds of (a) availability of new information/testimony, (b) new related resolutions, decisions, procedures, or actions, or (c) allegations of improper conduct by individual Members.
    - (2) In reconsideration, the Office of Ethics may either reaffirm its initial ruling or initiate a new panel of inquiry and case proceeding; reaffirmed opinions may not be encouraged for further reconsideration and shall be re-presented to the Assembly.
  - D. A reconsidered opinion shall be presented to the Student Assembly and must receive simple majority approval; if an order fails to receive simple majority approval from the voting membership of the Student Assembly, it shall be tabled indefinitely.
  - E. Opinions regarding elections shall be final, take immediate effect, and may not be encouraged for reconsideration.
- ###