



Student Assembly

Student Assembly of Cornell University
Minutes of the November 20, 2025 Meeting
4:45 PM – 6:30 PM
Memorial Room (WSH 407), Willard Straight Hall

- I. Call to Order
 - a. Z. deRham called the meeting to order at 4:45 PM.
 - b. *Members Present:* D. Addoquaye, J. Anand, L. Blum, D. Carson, M. Causey, Z. deRham, G. Dorward, M. Ehrlich, A. Fard, C. Flournoy, E. Galperin, I. Gayle, L. Han, V. Kakra, K. Krishtopa, Y. Masoud, J. Mui, E. Porter, J. Purcell, H. Spector, J. Swavy, C. Tarala, T. Waguespack, A. Walters, H. Watkins, J. Wu, Z. Yabut, E. Yao, K. Young
 - c. *Members Absent:* A. Aftab, S. Agarwal, A. Cekic, C. Cook, C. Kim, A. Vallecillo
 - d. *Also Present:* E. Chaudhuri, I. Gilenson

- II. Reading of the Land Acknowledgment
 - a. Z. deRham stated the land acknowledgement.

- III. Approval of the November 13th, 2025 Meeting Minutes
 - a. The motion to approve the minutes passes through unanimous consent.
 - b. C. Flournoy moves to edit the agenda to move the Second Readings Calendar to before Reports of Officers, Committees, and Liaisons by unanimous consent.
Approved by unanimous consent.

- IV. Referendum
 - a. None.

- V. Consent Calendar
 - a. None.

- VI. Announcements
 - a. None.

- VII. Presentations
 - a. None.



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VIII. Open Microphone

- a. None.

IX. Second Readings

- a. Resolution 17: Reinstating the A&S Peer Mentoring Program
 - i. D. Carson notes that last year, the program CAS was put on pause as an attempt to revamp. The recommendation is to set a deadline due to its importance.
 - ii. J. Swavy stresses the need for CAS students to have a support network.
 - iii. J. Purcell shares that advisors wanted more frequent meetings.
 - iv. E. Galperin asks for clarification on why the program was paused.
 1. D. Carson answers that they planned to develop a peer advising program that goes beyond just o-week to support students throughout the semester.
 - v. E. Chaudhuri recommends putting further work to flesh out what they want from the program.
 1. J. Swavy raises concerns about the lack of being able to pay for the advising; questions whether peer advisors need to be paid.
 - vi. H. Watkins motions to move the resolution to the third reading calendar, no dissent.

X. Reports of Officers, Committees, and Liaisons

- a. C. Flournoy announces that the referendum will roll out on Dec 1, the promotional period will run through Dec 7, followed by a 3-day voting period.
- b. I. Gilenson shares that with the end of the fall elections, we will go into spring elections. He asks for the assembly to request suggestions for potential changes to election rules, though the committee will not start seriously considering things until the next semester.
- c. Finance Committee Recommendations
 - i. Presented by H. Watkins and C. Tarala.
 - ii. Class Councils submits a petition, requesting an allocation of \$19.50.
 1. C. Flournoy asks how Class Councils would use or feel about each additional dollar.



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- a. Class Councils explains that their previous byline was \$16.00, but rollover funds from COVID are gone. Without an increase in funding, they will have to decrease events and the quality of senior days.
 - b. H. Watkins notes that the current allocation is \$16.00, but the last byline was \$17.40. He shares that even though the sophomore would be most impacted, they still recommended this amount.
2. K. Young is in favor of this recommendation. Class Councils argued that events like Fall Fest and Spring Fest benefit alumni, parents, and admissions, but these responsibilities should not fall under the student activity fee. It is not their responsibility for students to say yes to Cornell or for parents to enjoy. Even though Class Councils say they're different because they provide a niche aspect to student lives by promoting class pride, only 30% of aid goes towards class pride.
 - a. Class Councils clarify that events like Fall Fest and Spring Fest fell on family weekends because they were planned with Student Campus Life. They emphasize that events serve the undergraduate community and there's no issue if they happen to fall on family weekend because they're serving the overall Cornell community. They add that they hosted a doggy yoga event, inviting the entire Cornell community. Specific events for classes depend on what class wants to do with resources and finances.
 - b. H. Watkins shares that Convocation got a 2.5 increase, resulting in more money going into seniors.
 - c. Class Councils share that Convocation is not doing programming, while Class councils have concrete plans.
3. E. Galperin requests for examples of reduced programming.
 - a. Class Councils explains that by providing less events, current events will become overcrowded and won't be of the same caliber. Class Councils is also not in a surplus, but is operating on a loss. An example is that the food truck roundups (usually 4-5 trucks) would be cut to 2-3, and



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- merchandise giveaways and partnerships (like with Cornell Outdoor Education) would be reduced.
4. E. Chaudhuri suggests pre-COVID versus current state of the club, as it is not fair to set the whole organization to that standard. He asks why Student and Campus Life doesn't directly fund them, given their broad exposure.
 - a. Class councils reiterates that their primary purpose is to serve the undergraduates. They can pick other dates, but if they want undergrads to come out on a Saturday morning, they are more likely to do so when family is with them. It just happens to happen at the same time.
 - b. H. Watkins shares that most of the participants were parents at fall fest. Though they shouldn't shove parents out, Student and Campus Life see these events as worthwhile investments.
 5. C. Flournoy moves to go into executive session, no dissent.
 6. Galperin moves to vote on the recommendation, no dissent.
 7. The Appropriations Committee's original recommendation to decrease allocation for Class Councils to \$14.50 is approved by a vote of 24-0-2.
- iii. Multicultural Greek & Fraternal Council (MGFC) to be decreased to \$1.60.
1. E. Chaudhuri expresses discomfort giving \$1.60 again, considering the lack of financial accountability despite good principles.
 - a. C. Tarala argues against punishing beneficiaries due to poor leadership.
 - b. H. Watkins notes that the programming is active and visible to students. He mentions that with a new finance chair, there may be changes. They want to help MGFC to be more organized.
 2. G. Dorward asks for any information on how the funding is spent.
 - a. C. Tarala shares there are limited documents that show the spending of 30% of the funds (e.g. open houses, bbqs). There were concerns about apparel spending, but MGFC assured this could not occur moving forward.
 - b. H. Watkins confirms that MGFC gave some programming documents directly from the Student Business Office.



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- c. Z. deRham cedes the chair to A. Coleman by unanimous consent.
3. K. Young shares that MGFC is an e-board overseeing 3 councils. Their finances are terrible, they don't report all of its events, and MGFC doesn't reach out to the treasurer regarding finances. Despite leadership issues, MGFC still serves minority groups and communities that benefit should not be harmed.
4. L. Han is favorable if the funding is allocated to those specific organizations, but notes errors and lack of clarity from MGFC. Although organizations shouldn't be punished, the money is given to MGFC and not its subsidiaries.
5. Z. deRham highlights MGFC's small membership (<200) compared to larger fraternities and suggests chapters may have better documents than MGFC itself.
6. M. Causey observes that events are mostly run by these organizations and recommends requiring better financial reporting rather than budget cuts.
7. H. Watkins acknowledges that the assembly seems hesitant about the \$1.60 allocation. He suggests approving it for now, since the byline is already 1 month late, and for members to talk to the Finance Committee about what the total student activity fee distribution should look like and what MGFC's actual allocation needs to look like in that final solution.
8. E. Galperin shares that the purpose of the Finance Committee is to give the assembly a sense of what's going on. He suggests they should take their word for it with so many unanswered questions and asks when they'll have more information.
 - a. H. Watkins plans to get in contact with MGFC's new finance chair and contact orgs under MGFC.
9. G. Dorward proposes approving today and reassessing later with more accurate data.
 - a. H. Watkis notes that they are spending more than allocated.
 - b. C. Tarala mentions that the committee asked MGFC to submit their finances before the start of the semester, so they're not sure if they'll come up with something with



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another week. He is also trying to talk to the admin to see how much information he can get. He suggests mandating audits for more than every 2 years.

- c. H. Watkins adds that the byline process is not transparent and would like to amend the charter to have financial information be public for students to see the information before byline even happens.

10. E. Chaudhuri raises concern about excessive apparel spending and overall poor financial management. He moves to close debate and vote on the recommendation, no dissent.

11. The recommendation has been approved by a vote of 25-1-2.

- iv. Gender Justice Advocacy Coalition (GJAC) to receive a consistent allocation of \$3.50, approved.
- v. Collegiate Readership to be increased to \$5.40, approved.
- vi. Students Helping Students to receive a consistent allocation of \$4.60, approved.

XI. Announcements

- a. Z. deRham announces that with only one more meeting, the assembly will need to hold one more special meeting and it counts towards overall attendance. It will be on Wednesday, December 3rd at 4:45PM at Willard Straight or on Sunday, December 7th at 11AM at Physical Sciences. The meeting will be on Wednesday, but if they don't meet quorum, then it will be on Sunday. She also went to the Ithaca board meeting on Monday and shares that there are talks about adding a westbound flight to Detroit or Chicago and possibly low cost flights to Florida.
- b. G. Dorward shares that infrastructure applications are now open.

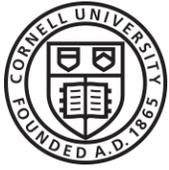
XII. Presentations

- a. None.

XIII. No public comment

XIV. Third Readings

- a. None.



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- XV. Appointments and Vacancies Calendar
a. None.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:25 PM by unanimous consent.

Respectfully Submitted,
Sophia Lin
Clerk of the Assembly