

# Student Assembly

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## Student Assembly of Cornell University

Minutes of the **April 17, 2025** Meeting

4:45 PM

Room 407, Willard-Straight Hall

### I. Call to Order

- a. Chair Z. deRham called the meeting to order at 4:45 PM.
- b. *Members Present:* R. Acharjee; D. Addoquaye; A. Aftab; S. Almosawi; M. Barberis; S. Bartnik; L. Berinde; S. Chan; E. Chaudhuri; Z. deRham; E. Galperin; D. Gekman; G. Gonzalez-Mulattieri; H. Hitchcock; N. Hite; C. Kim; J. Lederman; F. Meng; M. O'Donnell; J. Purcell; S. Razzak; D. Suarez; C. Tarala; A. Vinson; J. Wu; E. Yao
- c. *Members Absent:* C. Flournoy (Excused, Proxied by N. Hite); K. Liu; J. Silverman; T. Waguespack
- d. *Also Present:* S. Arnold, I. Gilenson

### II. Reading of the land acknowledgement

- a. Z. deRham stated the land acknowledgement

### III. Approval of the minutes

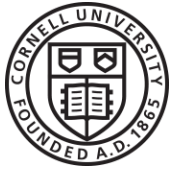
- a. Z. deRham motions to approve the April 10th minutes, this motion passed with unanimous consent.

### IV. Announcements

- a. Z. deRham announced that Resolution 37 has been acknowledged by President Kotlikoff, and Resolutions 18 has been returned without approval.

### V. Reports of Officers, Committees, and Liaisons

- a. Z. deRham reminded members that all byline funding information is publicly available on the Assembly's website.
- b. N. Hite announced a \$500 funding allocation request for the Farmers Market.
- c. E. Galperin wished a happy Passover to those celebrating and shared that the Dining Committee will meet on Monday.
- d. D. Gekman reported that although Resolution 26 was rejected, SHAC will continue working to improve equitable distribution of health resources. He also shared that the Pulse Committee is active and has several open positions.



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- e. E. Chaudhuri noted that the Brooks School is currently frustrated as no one has ran for the Brooks Representative seat.

## VI. Open Microphone

- a. Basil Saif, Executive Director of the Einhorn Center for Community Engagement, spoke in response to Resolution 47, which proposes defunding the Alternative Breaks program. He urged the assembly to reconsider and instead partner to reinvest in the program, rather than eliminate it.
- b. J. Swenson raised broader concerns about the Student Activities Fee and the upcoming byline funding cycle. He criticized the allocation of funds to exclusive organizations, arguing that student money should be directed toward programs that serve the broader public, such as Slope Day, rather than groups that limit access.

## VII. Consent Calendar

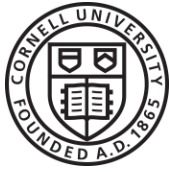
- a. Nothing on the consent calendar.

## VIII. Presentations

- a. President Michael I. Kotlikoff & Dean Marla Love
  - i. President Kotlikoff and Dean Love discussed key issues including expressive activity, the graduate student union agreement, and visa concerns for international students. They addressed the \$1.1 billion in frozen federal grants, stop-work orders, and Cornell's legal response. They also addressed questions about admissions changes, endowment tax increases, the transition to a permanent president, housing, DEI, free speech, and Anabel's Grocery.

## IX. Second Readings

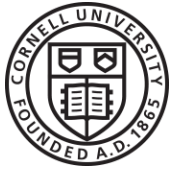
- a. Resolution 51
  - i. E. Chaudhuri proposed reforms to make Student Assembly procedures (Robert's Rules) more inclusive and efficient, including preventing early closure of debate, allowing flexibility in rules, clarifying the consent calendar, conducting annual surveys, and encouraging rule suspension when appropriate.
  - ii. Z. deRham noted that 18 out of 26 members are serving their first term, with the remaining 8 in their second, suggesting the assembly is relatively inexperienced with procedural norms.



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- iii. A. Coleman (parliamentarian) responded with caution, warning that a full overhaul of Robert's Rules could be risky, as it's a trusted and widely used framework. However, she supported allowing motions to suspend rules when necessary and raised concerns about certain lines in the resolution (36–38), which she believed were impractical.
  - iv. A. Vinson, H. Hitchcock, S. Razzak, and S. Almosawi voiced support, with H. Hitchcock suggesting shorter open debate windows and S. Almosawi stressing the need for better education on procedural rules.
  - v. J. Lederman asked whether the resolution would be accepted by the university president; A. Coleman said she did not believe President Kotlikoff would unilaterally reject it but reaffirmed that some parts may need revision.
  - vi. E. Galperin motioned to close debate, and the motion passed unanimously.
- b. Resolution 50
- i. Z. deRham introduced the resolution, explaining it stems from work within SAC and polling of student-athletes at Cornell and peer Ivy institutions. The resolution aims to address the conflict student-athletes face between attending class and practice, advocating for academic accommodations—particularly early selection for classes—noting that such flexibility is more common at other universities.
  - ii. M. Barberis expressed opposition, citing concerns about educational equity. She argued that academic accommodations should be based on need, not entitlement, and worried the resolution could undermine academic standards.
  - iii. Z. deRham responded that she is open to amending the resolution to clarify its intent and ensure fairness in accommodations.
  - iv. H. Hitchcock agreed with M. Barberis, stating discomfort with giving priority to athletes broadly, though he would be more supportive if the resolution focused strictly on graduation requirements.
  - v. Z. deRham clarified that the resolution already centers on required courses, not electives.
  - vi. L. Blum asked for more insight into the student-athlete perspective.
  - vii. D. Gekman motioned to close debate; despite dissent, the motion passed with majority consent.



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## **X. Third Readings**

- a. Resolution 47
  - i. N. Hite clarified that although he recognizes Basil's contributions, the assembly must rescind funding from Alternative Breaks since the money was specifically allocated for a program that did not occur and cannot be repurposed.
  - ii. H. Hitchcock expressed confusion about the explanation, and N. Hite reiterated that the funds are simply being returned because they were allocated towards a program that no longer exists.
  - iii. E. Galperin motioned to adopt the resolution, which passed with unanimous consent.
- b. Resolution 48
  - i. A. Vinson motions to end debate by unanimous consent, motion passes with majority consent.
- c. Resolution 49
  - i. A. Vinson motions to end debate by unanimous consent, motion passes with majority consent.

## **XI. Appointments and Vacancies Calendar**

- a. No appointments or vacancies.

## **XII. Adjournment**

- a. Z. deRham motions to extend meeting time to 7:00 pm, this motion passes with unanimous consent.
- b. The meeting was adjourned at 7:02 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Kennedy Young  
Clerk of the Assembly