

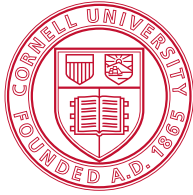
**Cornell University**  
**University Assembly**

**Cornell University Assembly**  
**Campus Welfare Committee**

Agenda of the October 12, 2017 Meeting  
1 PM – 2 PM  
316, Day Hall

- I. Call to Order/Introductions
- II. Business of the Day
  - a. Tobacco Referendum (30 Minutes)
    - i. Timeline
    - ii. Education Components
    - iii. Campus Partners
  - b. University Assembly Resolution 2: Condemning Hate Crimes (25 Minutes)
  - c. Late Additions to the Agenda (5 Minutes)
- III. Adjournment





## U.A. Resolution #2

### Condemning Hate Crimes

September 19, 2017

1 **Sponsored by:** Anna Waymack, Graduate and Professional; Executive Vice Chair of the  
2 **University Assembly**

3  
4 **On Behalf Of:** The 2016 – 2017 UA Executive Committee (G. Kaufman, A. Waymack, J.  
5 **Kruser, R. Howarth)**

6  
7 **Whereas,** over the past year there has been an increase in hate-based incidents on college  
8 campuses across the country; and

9  
10 **Whereas,** on September 6, 2017 one or more students from Zeta Psi, a Cornell University  
11 fraternity, shouted “build a wall” and “let’s build a wall around the LLC” at the Latino Living  
12 Center; and

13  
14 **Whereas,** on September 15, 2017 one or more students from the Chi Chapter of Psi Upsilon, a  
15 fraternity no longer affiliated with Cornell University, allegedly used racial slurs against a Black  
16 Cornell student and violently assaulted him; and

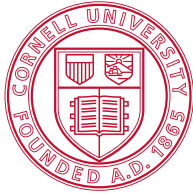
17  
18 **Whereas,** later the same day on September 15, 2017, two or more Cornell students were  
19 captured on video using racial slurs against another student; and

20  
21 **Whereas,** all of these incidents appear to be clear violations of the Campus Code of Conduct,  
22 should the allegations prove true, as it is a violation of the Campus Code of Conduct to:

- 23 • “harass another person...by acting toward that person in a manner that is by objective  
24 measure threatening, abusive, or severely annoying and that is beyond the scope of free  
25 speech,” or
- 26 • “assault or cause any physical injury to another person on the basis of disability,  
27 ethnicity, gender, national origin, race, religion, or sexual orientation or affectional  
28 preference;” and

29  
30 **Whereas,** the Ithaca Police have arrested one student allegedly involved on September 15 and  
31 charged said student with one count of assault in the third degree; and

32  
33 **Whereas,** the Ithaca police are investigating the events of September 15 as a possible hate crime;  
34 and



## Cornell University University Assembly

36 **Whereas**, pursuant to New York State Penal Law Article 485, hate crimes “do more than  
37 threaten the safety and welfare of all citizens” because they “inflict on victims incalculable  
38 physical and emotional damage and tear at the very fabric of free society,” “send a powerful  
39 message of intolerance and discrimination” and “disrupt entire communities and vitiate the  
40 civility that is essential to healthy democratic processes;” and

41  
42 **Whereas**, bias, discrimination, and hate crimes, by their nature, affect the fabric of the Cornell  
43 community, prevent the fulfillment of and are deeply antithetical to Cornell’s motto “I would  
44 found an institution where any person can find instruction in any study;” and

45  
46 **Whereas**, these recent events place the onus on Cornell University to establish and justify its  
47 members’ trust in our community; and

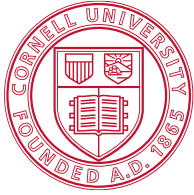
48  
49 **Whereas**, we, the University Assembly, are appalled by these recent attacks and incidents;  
50 therefore

51  
52 **Be it Resolved**, that the University Assembly unequivocally condemns these violent, racist  
53 actions; and

54  
55 **Resolved**, that the University Assembly calls on all members of the Cornell community to join  
56 us in this condemnation; and

57  
58 **Resolved**, that the University Assembly charges all members of the Cornell community to  
59 consider how best to heal these harms, and how best to accord all members of our community the  
60 equal dignity and respect due to them as our peers.

**No signature block is present until the resolution has been disposed of by the Assembly (Passed, Failed, Withdrawn, etc.) Then a block with the certifying member (customarily Chair/Vice-Chair) verifying the authenticity and vote tally of the resolution.**



## U.A. Resolution #2

### Condemning Hate Crimes, Taking Action, and Supporting all of the Cornell Community

September 19, 2017

1 **Sponsored by:** Anna Waymack, Graduate and Professional; Executive Vice Chair of the  
2 University Assembly and Joseph Anderson, Undergraduate; Chair of the Campus Welfare  
3 Committee  
4

5 **On Behalf Of:** The 2016 – 2017 UA Executive Committee (G. Kaufman, A. Waymack, J.  
6 Kruser, R. Howarth)  
7

8 **Whereas,** over the past year there has been an increase in hate-based incidents on college  
9 campuses across the country; and  
10

11 **Whereas,** on September 6, 2017 one or more students from Zeta Psi, a Cornell University  
12 fraternity, shouted “build a wall” and “let’s build a wall around the LLC” at the Latino Living  
13 Center; and  
14

15 **Whereas,** on September 15, 2017 one or more students from the former Chi Chapter of Psi  
16 Upsilon, a fraternity no longer affiliated with Cornell University, allegedly used racial slurs  
17 against a Black Cornell student and violently assaulted him; and  
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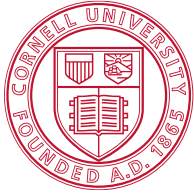
19 **Whereas,** later the same day on September 15, 2017, two or more Cornell students were  
20 captured on video using racial slurs against another student; and  
21

22 **Whereas,** all of these incidents appear to be clear violations of the Campus Code of Conduct,  
23 should the allegations prove true, as it is a violation of the Campus Code of Conduct to:

- 24 • “harass another person...by acting toward that person in a manner that is by objective  
25 measure threatening, abusive, or severely annoying and that is beyond the scope of free  
26 speech,” or
- 27 • “assault or cause any physical injury to another person on the basis of disability,  
28 ethnicity, gender, national origin, race, religion, or sexual orientation or affectional  
29 preference;” and  
30

31 **Whereas,** the Ithaca Police have arrested John P.A. Greenwood ‘20 allegedly involved on  
32 September 15 and charged said student with one count of assault in the third degree; and  
33

34 **Whereas,** the Ithaca police are investigating the events of September 15 as a possible hate crime;  
35 and



## Cornell University University Assembly

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**Whereas**, pursuant to New York State Penal Law Article 485, hate crimes “do more than threaten the safety and welfare of all citizens” because they “inflict on victims incalculable physical and emotional damage and tear at the very fabric of free society,” “send a powerful message of intolerance and discrimination” and “disrupt entire communities and vitiate the civility that is essential to healthy democratic processes;” and

**Whereas**, bias, discrimination, and hate crimes, by their nature, affect the fabric of the Cornell community, prevent the fulfillment of and are deeply antithetical to Cornell’s motto “I would found an institution where any person can find instruction in any study;” and

**Whereas**, these recent events place the onus on Cornell University to establish and justify its members’ trust in our community; and

**Whereas**, we, the University Assembly, are appalled by these recent attacks and incidents; therefore

**Be it Resolved**, that the University Assembly unequivocally condemns these violent, racist actions; and

**Resolved**, that the University Assembly calls on all members of the Cornell Community to join us in this condemnation; and

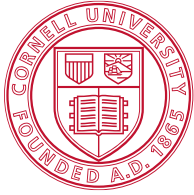
**Resolved**, that the University Assembly formally supports the initiatives enacted by President Martha Pollack, Vice President Ryan Lombardi, and Provost Michael Kotlikoff on September 17<sup>th</sup>, 2017 and September 25<sup>th</sup> 2017; and

**Resolved**, that the University Assembly requests that three members from the University Assembly have the ability to sit on the Presidential Task Force charged with examining and addressing the persistent problems of bigotry and intolerance at Cornell to best support and coordinate efforts; and

**Resolved**, that the University Assembly formally endorses the demands issued by La Asociación Latina, LAL on September 6<sup>th</sup>, 2017 in regards to the incident at LLC; and

**Resolved**, that the University Assembly formally endorses the demands issued by Black Students United on September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2017 in regards to the incident in Collegetown; and

**Resolved**, that the University Assembly calls on Cornell to support its students by never again recognizing a chapter of Psi Upsilon on this campus; and



## Cornell University University Assembly

77 **Resolved**, that the University Assembly calls upon each of the four constituent assemblies to  
78 figure out how to best increase diverse representation to the University Assembly in regards to  
79 one of the demands from Black Students United; and  
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81 **Resolved**, that the University Assembly formally endorses the demands issues by the Graduate  
82 School Office of Inclusion and Student Engagement Student Leadership Council issued on  
83 September 28<sup>th</sup>, 2017; and  
84

85 **Resolved**, that the University administration will review funding and staffing for the various  
86 resource centers, including support services for staff and faculty of varying identities to ensure  
87 that they meet the increasing need of our community; and  
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89 **Resolved**, that the University administration will seek to include staff, in a meaningful way, in  
90 strategic diversity and inclusion planning efforts across the university; and  
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92 **Resolved**, that the University administration will consider the creation of a central office focused  
93 on institutional equity and the hiring of an executive to oversee initiative for all populations; and  
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95 **Resolved**, that the University administration will define the roles of the University Diversity  
96 Officers, and more thorough accountability measures for progress on initiatives under Cornell's  
97 framework; and  
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99 **Resolved**, that the University Diversity Council will grant the ability for one member of each  
100 constituency of the University Assembly to participate in the University Diversity Council; and  
101

102 **Resolved**, that the University Assembly charges all members of the Cornell community to  
103 consider how best to heal these harms, and how best to accord all members of our community the  
104 equal dignity and respect due to them as our peers.

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Attn: President Martha Pollack, Vice President Ryan Lombardi, and other members of the  
Cornell University Administration  
300 Day Hall  
Ithaca, NY 14853

President Martha Pollack and Vice President Ryan Lombardi,

“I would found an institution where any person can find instruction in any study”. With this bold statement, Ezra Cornell declared an idea of a diverse and inclusive school, far ahead of its time. However, 152 years later, that university struggles to uphold this ideal. While Cornell University takes pride in its academic and demographic diversity, the campus environment does not reflect these views.

We attend a university where our professors, who are by all accounts scholars in their various fields, undervalue our intellectual contributions to our coursework; where they teach that communities of color have little or nothing to offer than a brief honorable mention on their syllabus. We attend a university where our peers believe we do not belong here; where they decry the usefulness and necessity of affirmative action; where they claim we segregate ourselves because we lean on each other to survive. We attend a university that is obsessed with the optics of our black and brown faces but is indifferent to the justice we seek. This is not an indictment of white people; this is an indictment of a system that perpetuates white supremacy and shelters our peers under the warm blanket of white privilege - all the while, we are left to freeze in our frigid reality of racist epithets, essentialist curriculum, and apathetic governance. In post-racial America, our classmates call us niggers from their pickup trucks in broad daylight. In post-racial America, we are berated by airborne bottles on our own campus. In post-racial America, we are told we have a chip on our shoulder. We are called everything but our name. Above all else, in post-racial America we are bombarded by the deafening silence that allows the centuries-old hum of white supremacy to grow louder. Silence is violence.

The Interfraternity Council and Panhellenic Council both present a system that not only excludes people of color, but exudes white supremacy. The verbal and physical assault of a young black student, committed by members of the Chi Chapter of Psi Upsilon cannot go unpunished and the Cornell administration can no longer stand silent while we are under attack. The fact that it has taken the administration far too long to realize the extent of the systemic issues that exist at our school is unacceptable.



If this institution truly expects to uphold the values of Ezra Cornell's utopian institution on a hill, it will realize that "any student, any study" should not be an empty quip, but a promise of a full, wholehearted, and steadfast commitment to ensure that every student in every school and college has the resources, the love, and the support to survive and thrive the rigors of our institution and the trials and triumphs of life. It is time for Cornell to be on the right side of history.

In light of the recent events and past events that have occurred on Cornell University's campus, we make the following demands. Our voices will no longer be silenced. We will not stand by while our rights and personal safety are being infringed. We are here and we will be heard.

Our demands are outlined as the following:

*We demand that all students, undergraduate and graduate, to have appropriate, ongoing, and mandatory coursework that deals with issues of identity (such as race, class, religion, ability status, sexual/romantic orientation, gender, citizenship status, etc.). We want this coursework to be explicitly focused on systems of power and privilege in the United States and centering the voices of oppressed people, assembled by professional diversity consultants and student leaders. Every Dean of every college should implement this requirement, and hire faculty to teach this work who are well equipped to do so.*

We believe that our community has a responsibility to learn about the ways in which systems of power and privilege continue to inform the experiences of people of color both on campus and out in the world. We believe mandatory coursework will provide an initial means of challenging and dismantling the white hegemony that pervades the university's present curriculum.

*We demand that all employees of the university, academic and otherwise (including tenured professors), to have appropriate, ongoing training (tied to evaluations and payroll) that deals with issues of identity (such as race, class, religion, ability status, sexual/romantic orientation, gender, citizenship status, etc.). We want this coursework to be explicitly focused on systems of power and privilege in the United States and centering the voices of oppressed people.*

We believe that if the university truly wants to foster an environment of inclusion for all students, we should see this support in the University's commitment to ensuring that those entrusted to guide our academic pursuits possess a meaningful understanding and sincere respect for the cultures, heritages, and backgrounds of their students. We believe this principle holds true across all areas of study, and that this objective is best achieved when educators are, in themselves, reflections of the students they serve. We believe that tenure should not pose a challenge to this commitment, given that these professors should be leaders in the Cornell community.

*We demand that the Chi Chapter of Psi Upsilon Fraternity, Inc. at Cornell University is permanently banned from campus, in addition to their letters being taken off of the fraternity house. We also demand that all students involved in this heinous hate crime be expelled from this University immediately.*

This fraternity has a legacy of racism, discrimination, and disrespect on Cornell's campus dating back almost fifty years. At the Willard Straight Hall Takeover in 1969, members of the Chi Chapter of Psi Upsilon Fraternity broke down the barriers of the building and verbally and physically assaulted black students participating in the takeover. Forty years later, the then President of the Chi Chapter of Psi Upsilon Fraternity, Inc., Wolfgang Ballinger, plead guilty to a misdemeanor after being accused of sexual assault. Following that incident, members of the fraternity were on a probation period for two years, where they could neither be active on campus, nor accept new members; however, the fraternity was still participating in underground pledging, as well as membership intake despite Cornell's discipline. And lastly, their members participating in a racial physical and verbal assault on campus is simply despicable. Their racist legacy does not deserve a space on this campus.

*We demand that the university to provide an adequate and appropriate space for the people of the African diaspora to utilize for programs of any kind, in perpetuity. We propose that this space be the Psi Upsilon house after they are expelled from campus.*

We believe that almost 110 years after the founding of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. on Cornell's campus, it is preposterous that multicultural Greek organizations have to scramble for space and money while majority white organizations have comparatively unbounded resources

and access to space. Often black organizations have to rent space, which causes them to have to hire police security. This is expensive and unfair, as students of color should not find themselves policed when they gather to celebrate. We believe these organizations play a large role in our communities and with more direct support from the university, they will be able to better achieve their primary functions of sister/brotherhood, service, and scholarship.

*We demand that IFC/ Panhellenic and MGLC organizations have required and sustained diversity and inclusion, race-based training prior to entering the fraternity or sorority and every year they are in that fraternity or sorority.*

Time and time again, minority students are subject to racist treatment by members of IFC/Panhellenic organizations. A few years ago, members of Sigma Pi Fraternity threw bottles of beer while yelling “Trayvon” as Black students walked up Libe Slope. Last week, members of Zeta Psi Fraternity shouted in front of the Latino Living Center, “Let’s build a wall around LLC”. And a little over a week later, members of Psi Upsilon beat up a black man and called him the n-word. Clearly there is a lack of education when it comes to the respect of minorities on Cornell’s campus. By having a diversity and inclusion race training prior to entering IFC/Panhellenic organizations, members will be educated about the complexities of race, and the importance of positive race relations not only on campus, but also throughout their lives as they enter the graduate school, the workforce, etc.

*We demand that a Minority-Liaison at-Large position is created for the University Assembly so that the Assembly reflects our marginalized perspectives.*

Whereas the student assembly has two appointed Minority Liaison at-Large positions to emulate the diverse views of Cornell’s marginalized community. We want the University Assembly to add a minority liaison at-large position to make sure that we have more representation in decisions that affect our safety and ability to thrive at Cornell. This should go into effect immediately as part of the upcoming election cycle. A Minority Liaison has proven to be effective on the Student Assembly and we would like the University Assembly to follow in this precedent.

*We demand that Cornell Health to hire at least two more psychologists and psychiatrists of color in the next two years. We also want Cornell Health to hire at least one more physician of color in the next four years.*

We believe, and research shows, that people of color historically have reason to mistrust medical professionals. We believe that there should be qualified psychologist and psychiatrists of color that can sufficiently address the way that racism affects the mental and emotional health and well-being of black students at a predominately white institution. We also believe that hiring more physicians of color could make students of color more comfortable addressing their physical health while at the university.

*We demand that there be a creation of a Student Honor Board or Alternative Justice Board as an alternate method for Cornell's dispute resolution process.*

Currently, only faculty have the power to discipline students at Cornell. In order to increase student power, we are demanding the creation of a Student Honor Board who will oversee various judicial cases. Students should be able to have a direct say in the punishment of their peers. Student Honor Boards allow for the resolutions of student situations on a case by case basis that the university either does not have a mechanism to resolve or is too busy to resolve. Additionally, most honor boards use suspension, academic sanctions, and/or community service hours as a punishment, which allows the individual or party being punished to resolve their issue without leaving the school, and more importantly force them to contribute back to their community. The creation of the Honor Board will work to restore student trust in Cornell's judicial system and ensure justice in these cases.

*We demand that Cornell Admissions to come up with a plan to actively increase the presence of underrepresented Black students on this campus. We define underrepresented Black students as Black Americans who have several generations (more than two) in this country.*

The Black student population at Cornell disproportionately represents international or first-generation African or Caribbean students. While these students have a right to flourish at Cornell, there is a lack of investment in Black students whose families were affected directly by the African Holocaust in America. Cornell must work to actively support students whose families have been impacted for generations by white supremacy and American fascism.

*We want the creation of a permanent Presidential Task Force for student community leaders to have bi-annual meetings with the current President of the university.*

In 2014, the Cornell Administration released the “Hurtado Report,” and in-depth study of Cornell’s campus climate. This report concluded with several requests of the administration, based on the results of the study, to improve campus climate. Cornell has not acknowledged these requests, and the report was forgotten as the students involved in the report graduated. There is a loss of institutional memory as students become leaders in their community, identify issues and come up with appropriate solutions, and then graduate. The permanent creation of this task force will allow for Cornell to stop taking “One step forward, two steps back” when it comes to ending white supremacy on campus.

*We demand the creation of an Anti-Racism Institute where Cornell can centralize its efforts to educate the campus and community about the horrors of white supremacy and political education.*

Cornell has a variety of decentralized efforts to address racial bias on campus. Programs such as the Intergroup Dialogue Program, Engaged Cornell, the Skills for Success program and other are important, but if Cornell is going to commit to changing campus climate they must create a centralized department or program that has the explicit purpose of fighting racism.

*We demand that the University hires a position in Engaged Cornell to ensure Cornell is supporting the local black community in Ithaca.*

Cornell has a history of not giving enough back to Ithaca community. Ithaca is a segregated city, and it is imperative that Cornell puts as much efforts and resources into supporting the African American population in Ithaca that began with the Underground Railroad as it puts into the white community just below our hill.

We appreciate what has been done already but continue to fight for the betterment of this institution. We implore the administration to act swiftly and stand on the right side of history.

Black Students United

“Any person, any study.” That is the motto reiterated to Cornellians time and time again even before one sets foot on campus. However, there is a difference between the rhetoric an institution employs and the actions it takes.

On Wednesday, September 6th, during the early morning hours of 12:30 AM, a resident of the Latino Living Center (LLC) dorm heard chants of “build a wall, build a wall,” coming from the direction of the Zeta Psi Fraternity house.

Upon getting up to clarify what was being chanted, the resident specifically heard the words “Let’s build a wall around the LLC.” Due to the extremely close proximity of the resident’s living area to the actual Zeta Psi building, what was said was unmistakable.

The resident then went down to the main lounge of the Latino Living Center to speak to other students awake at that time about what had just occurred, and numerous bias reports were subsequently filed to report on the incident.

Cornell as an institution cannot truly say, as it has tried in recent days, that it supports students of marginalized communities and backgrounds when this sort of behavior runs rampant. These communities, time and time again, have come up against an innumerable amount of acts rooted in bigotry and discrimination. These incidents are not isolated, but are structural in that individuals hold harmful ideals and larger structures within Cornell, and Cornell itself, allows them to go unchecked.

To be clear, we do not care about the background of said students who engaged in the chant. We also do not care whether or not these comments were made in jest, even setting aside the fact that this is not a joking matter in today’s current political climate. What matters is that Zeta Psi has acknowledged that these comments were said.

To us, simply that is unacceptable.

As the umbrella for Latinx students and student organizations on campus, La Asociación Latina (LAL) completely and utterly condemns this act.

Furthermore, the timing of this incident was not coincidental; this attack against the LLC community came hours after the DACA decision was announced. Our community was already under duress and feeling vulnerable. Then, to be met with such behavior in one of the only safe spaces on campus is infuriating, and LAL firmly denounces discriminatory speech.

Here, LAL shares the words of Cornell Professor Ella Diaz:

“I want to underscore this point in hopes that it does not become diluted with concepts of bias and racism. These are acts of terror because they threaten the lives, from well being to the mental health, of a stressed out and vulnerable community.” These words perfectly encapsulate the sentiments that those in our community hold in regards to this incident. Once again, we would like to reiterate that these incidents are not isolated. This is all too familiar for some in our communities, but in this political climate, we would go so far as to say that this is a threat and a call for violence against our community.

In 1993, several racist incidents on campus prompted Latino students to take over Day Hall to prompt action from Cornell administration. They occupied Day Hall for three days, despite threats of retribution from the Cornell’s president at the time. Numerous demands were made by the students, one of which was the establishment of a Latino Living Center. The Latino Living Center was then officially founded in 1994, only after students and faculty of color fought tooth and nail for it, risking suspension, expulsion, and loss of their livelihoods.

For the Latino Living Center community to still be faced with discriminatory speech 24 years after students protested that very thing is unbelievably appalling.

As of the writing of this statement, no representative from Zeta Psi has reached out to LAL, the LLC, or anyone affected by this incident.

EDIT: Zeta Psi has formally reached out to us as of 11:36pm, and the bulk of our statement was written between 9:37pm and 11:30pm.

To this end, La Asociación Latina officially releases the following demands.

WE, LA ASOCIACIÓN LATINA EXECUTIVE BOARD, HEREBY DEMAND THAT Zeta Psi to hold their members involved in the chant accountable for their actions.

WE, LA ASOCIACIÓN LATINA EXECUTIVE BOARD, HEREBY DEMAND THAT Zeta Psi issue a formal apology, with signatures from the entire executive board of the fraternity as well as the offending members.

WE, LA ASOCIACIÓN LATINA EXECUTIVE BOARD, HEREBY DEMAND THAT Zeta Psi accept sanctions that may be placed against them and adhere to them strictly.

WE, LA ASOCIACIÓN LATINA EXECUTIVE BOARD, HEREBY DEMAND THAT Zeta Psi undergoes greater emphasis on diversity training, with requirements of all current and new members.

WE, LA ASOCIACIÓN LATINA EXECUTIVE BOARD, HEREBY DEMAND THAT all Greek life organizations recognize that this is not an individual fraternity problem, but an issue deeply ingrained within the current culture, and take active steps to ameliorate that.

WE, LA ASOCIACIÓN LATINA EXECUTIVE BOARD, HEREBY DEMAND THAT Cornell administration formally acknowledges that this is absolutely not an isolated incident, but a cyclical one that continues to occur.

WE, LA ASOCIACIÓN LATINA EXECUTIVE BOARD, HEREBY DEMAND THAT Zeta Psi, Cornell Administration (including, but not limited to, President Pollack, Dean Pendakur, and VP Lombardi), and Greek Tri-Council take steps within the next 2 weeks to come up with a plan to address these demands.

The consequences that Cornell does or does not levy on this fraternity is a reflection of Cornell's values and stance on marginalized communities. This is why we believe that any consequences that Zeta Psi may face are well-deserved.

Anything less than this is unacceptable to LAL.

In light of these events, we would like to inform the LLC and Latinx students on campus, that you are not alone. Though this was specifically aimed at the LLC community, we would like to extend support and safe spaces to those adversely affected by the most recent DACA decision or the current political climate. In addition, LAL stands in solidarity with everyone who has been impacted by these remarks, regardless of ethnic, racial, or religious background. We would like the afflicted to know that they are valued and always welcome at the LLC, the Latino Studies Program (LSP) and the Latinx community as a whole. LSP, LLC, OADI, and the 626 Intercultural Dialogue Center will always have someone available, should anyone need mental, emotional, or physical support. Unfortunately, this incident will not be the last of its kind. Still, LAL will always stand to aid and protect marginalized students because at the end of the day, we are a comunidad. We are a familia.

Signed,

La Asociación Latina 2017-2018 Executive Board

September 28, 2017

Dear President Martha Pollack, Provost Michael Kotlikoff, Vice President for Student & Campus Life Ryan Lombardi, Interim Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education & Deputy Provost John Siliciano:

We write to you as representatives of underrepresented graduate student groups regarding several recent social injustices on and off the Cornell campus. We begin first by acknowledging that we stand in agreement and solidarity with the list of demands presented to President Martha Pollack by Black Students United on September 20, 2017. We also recognize and appreciate the commitments from Provost Kotlikoff and Vice President Lombardi outlined in an email to the Ithaca campus on September 25, 2017. While both documents recognize the important role and function of graduate students within our shared campus community, neither sufficiently account for the unique experiences of underrepresented graduate student groups or graduate and professional students more broadly. As a result, we are promptly advocating for resources designed to improve campus climate in the areas of community, research, teaching and learning, safety, and physical and mental health for graduate and professional students.

As graduate and professional student leaders, we value diversity in all forms, not only because of the positive effects diversity has on our community, but because a diverse community is a hallmark of an equitable system. We feel it is our obligation to bring attention to the shortcomings that we have witnessed and experienced while at Cornell University and directly contribute to campus-wide discussion and change. We are wholeheartedly committed to building a better Cornell - one that supports students along all axes of diversity, including but not limited to: race; ethnicity; nationality; religion or creed; sexual orientation; gender identity; age; physical, mental and psychological ability; and socioeconomic status and/or background.

Students who possess marginalized identities face, at times, insurmountable challenges on our campus due to conscious and unconscious manifestations of structural and interpersonal oppression. ***This is not acceptable, and we submit that it will require more than the recommended actions of any one task force to resolve.*** To this end, we wish to publicly communicate our collective commitment to the long, important work that building a better Cornell requires:

We are committed to proactively, consciously, and consistently rejecting and deconstructing systems of oppression. We are committed to pushing Cornell to direct its academic, financial, and political resources toward promoting equity, particularly in the enactment and enforcement of a code of conduct that holds all community members accountable for their words and actions. We are committed to reminding our peers that whether or not they identify as members of marginalized groups, all members of our community suffer when bias, bigotry, and racism are allowed to persist. We are committed to promoting dignity and mutual respect for the intersectionality of multiple social identities. We are committed to demanding your action on behalf of these efforts when we believe you have faltered, and ***this*** is a time when the University has faltered.

True change can only occur in a space of shared, equitable governance and accountability of all members in our campus community. Organized thematically, we present the following demands for immediate implementation that will directly benefit current graduate students and those that will follow:



## GRADUATE COMMUNITY

- **We demand that the University allocate more resources and funding towards programs for recruitment and retention of graduate and professional students from underrepresented backgrounds.** To do so, we request that by March 1, 2018 all departments, including Cornell locations in Geneva and New York City, have a [public action plan](#) documenting their efforts to recruit, *retain*, advance, and protect graduate students from underrepresented backgrounds. This plan must be designed for implementation in the academic year 2018-2019. Departments that do not meet this demand by the March 1, 2018 deadline should be subject to immediate review by President Pollack's proposed University task force to determine how best to support each department's public action plan. We also request a 50% increase in 2017-2018 funding to the Graduate School to directly support and expand pre-admission diversity recruitment initiatives, such as two (2) diversity preview weekends per college, per year. We also request funding for Graduate Student Ambassadors to recruit students marginalized populations, and fellowships in support of diversity [offered through the Office of Inclusion and Student Engagement and Diversity Programs in Engineering].
- **We demand a larger University task force for proper representation of interest groups from across campus to address the issue of structural oppression.** Adequate representation from students from a variety of identity groups is critical for the success of the proposed University task force. We are wary of the proposed "ten to twelve members" mentioned by President Pollack. We believe that it would be impossible to achieve adequate representation while also presumably needing to include: undergraduate students, graduate students, professional students, postdoctoral associates, faculty, staff, and administrators. As such, we request that the task force be expanded to 20 members. In addition, we require an opportunity for the Cornell graduate student community to weigh in and nominate our own representatives rather than allowing the University to make this decision on our behalf. The call for nominations must be issued by October 4, 2017 and the task force should be fully staffed no later than October 16, 2017.
- **We demand a restructuring of the Graduate School grievance process beginning with an increase in protections provided to aggrieved graduate students throughout the process.** The process designed to facilitate resolving student grievances is severely flawed. It does not protect students, and far too many students cannot complete the process of filing grievances due to intimidation and other forms of oppression. There has been one student to make it to the Graduate Grievance Review Board (GGRB) in several decades, though far more students have been aggrieved in their work environments. We request that five (5) graduate students, with two (2) representatives from marginalized graduate groups, be involved in the process of restructuring the grievance process in order to provide a more empathetic perspective to this flawed procedure.
- **We demand action that engages and supports students from all backgrounds and identity groups, and explicitly acknowledges the intersectionality of social identities.** While we recognize that Black and Latinx students were the targets of recent racist acts and emphasizing support for their communities was extremely timely and appropriate, we demand that all task forces should have representation that involves graduate and professional students from organizations supporting the LGBTQ+ community, students with disabilities, gender equity, and other marginalized identities moving forward.

## GRADUATE RESEARCH

- **We demand that the University create a "Research Methods Collective" designed to promote awareness and introductory instruction on a diverse set of interdisciplinary research methods.** We

recognize that each department creates and requires a curriculum that facilitates disciplinary research, and envision this collective serving as an intellectual bridge across Cornell that promotes innovative graduate research. The Collective is not a library of resources or links to interesting research opportunities on campus. Instead, the Collective must be a physical location housed within an expanded OISE office space -- operating as an intellectual hub where graduate students are invited to collaborate across departments, receive introductory training on new research methods by a full-time staff person, and schedule group meetings where projects receive active feedback. A more inclusive, innovative Cornell requires a more collaborative approach to the research we conduct and the methods we employ.

- **We demand that the University permanently increase the number of [Provost's Diversity Fellowship for Continuing Students](#) from 13 to 20 beginning in the 2018-2019 academic year, and that this fellowship be expanded from one-semester of support to up to two semesters of support.** In combination with our efforts to secure increased funding to recruit and retain a more diverse graduate student body that is new to Cornell, we simultaneously require a concerted effort to expand the fellowship opportunities for continuing students that are historically underrepresented and/or first generation in the academy. This funding communicates a public investment in the research goals of current graduate students as they approach the completion of their doctoral program and actively prepare for positive social change post-graduation.

- **We demand that the University permanently increase [Conference Grant](#) funding by doubling both the number of grants funded per student and the amount of each award, beginning in the 2018-2019 academic year.** Though conference travel is a fundamental part of our professional training, it is not properly subsidized by Cornell. This serves as a disadvantage for students who cannot afford to pay for conference travel from their personal finances. Currently, only one award will be considered per student, per year. This requirement must be amended and expanded so that two (2) awards will be considered per year. These changes promote our ongoing support as future leaders within our fields and expands the academic networks and relationships that are key to strengthening our professional development.

## **GRADUATE TEACHING AND LEARNING**

- **We demand representation of diverse graduate and undergraduate students on the proposed faculty task force led by Professor Mark Lewis.** We request that at least two graduate student representatives, selected by the OISE Student Leadership Council, to be appointed to the faculty task force aimed at improving diverse faculty recruitment and retention both on a University level and specific colleges and/or departmental level. We demand that the proposed task force provides updates every semester to the wider Cornell community to ensure this process is transparent and can solicit feedback.

- **We demand each department have their own committee to ensure that faculty, staff, graduate students and undergraduate students in the department are held accountable to the recommendations of the University task force.** We request that all department task forces form by the end of November 2017, and individual departments outline how they will meet the recommendations of the University task force by the end of December 2017.

- **We demand a policy that standardizes and requires all Teaching Assistants, Research Assistants, Graduate Mentors, and Postdoctoral Associates of Cornell University to go through bias**

**and sensitivity training.** It is imperative to build a community where all graduate students who work for Cornell as researchers and educators begin to dismantle their internalized bias towards marginalized groups. This policy should be instituted as soon as possible, but no later than the beginning of the academic year 2018-2019. We recommend that this policy be implemented leveraging tools from the [Intergroup Dialogue Project](#) (IDP) and [My Voice, My Story](#) in diverse, face-to-face group settings. We also advocate for additional resources dedicated to OISE and IDP. Specifically, we demand a 100% increase in funding, in space, and in staff of both offices so that the OISE and IDP teams have the capacity to provide more resources for students in the face of current events. These are the offices that require expansion of resources and space, so they can continue their prolific, supportive programming for marginalized graduate student communities. We demand that **all** of these resources be permanently available at the beginning of the academic 2018-2019 school year.

## **GRADUATE SAFETY AND PHYSICAL/MENTAL HEALTH**

- **We demand a continued commitment to graduate student mental health, specifically to hiring more diverse CAPS counselors, particularly counselors of color and those with multilingual capacity.**

The OISE Student Leadership Council acknowledges the recent report of the addition of three new hires for CAPS which will “bring added diversity to CAPS and Cornell” by the start of the academic year of 2018. Because graduate students from all backgrounds disproportionately suffer from mental illnesses like depression and anxiety, we request that Cornell continues to increase the number of mental health counselors from diverse backgrounds in CAPS. These counselors should be present throughout the campus and easily accessible to students of all colleges. Additionally, we recognize that retention of counselors of color has been a challenge for Cornell Health so any additional hires should yield a net gain in counselors from diverse backgrounds, and not simply replace those who have left the university.

- **We demand that the University uphold the Title IX policy guidance of 2011 and 2014, despite the recent decision by the US Department of Education to rescind the policy guidelines.** Nationally, Cornell University lags in its ability to address sexual assault on campus. The recent decision by the Department of Education to rescind Obama-era Title IX guidelines is a national step backwards in dealing with sexual assault. Cornell must choose to continue to follow these now-rescinded guidelines, and affirm that it will not allow assault to occur with impunity, immediately.

**Finally, we demand there be clear avenue for recourse included in any policies written to address bias, harassment, and oppression on campus.** The University has many unenforced, under-enforced, or unenforceable policies that are not designed to protect graduate students. Instead, these policies seek acquiescence from us while working at Cornell; this is unsatisfactory because there are no consequences for bad actions on campus. We demand that any policies, codes, or rules written in response to on-campus bias, harassment, and discrimination outline crystal clear avenues of enforcement. This includes, but is not limited to, responsive action to incidents reported through the university's Bias Reporting System.

We will continue to advocate for the increase of inclusion, equity, and diversity at this university at all levels. Our demands are aimed at lifting the daily burden of discrimination that all of us shoulder at Cornell. By meeting these demands, the administration of the University will show that it stands in solidarity with us, protects and advocates alongside historically marginalized populations on campus, and is truly leading this community to correct injustices that have already occurred and set an example for universities globally.

We want to recognize all the hard work each organization contributed to make sure our voices were heard considering the oppression and supremacy that is spread throughout this university, our nation, and world. If you have any questions, please reach out to our designated points of contact, Ph.D. candidates Theresa Rocha Beardall ([tyr5@cornell.edu](mailto:tyr5@cornell.edu)) and Monet Roberts ([lmr254@cornell.edu](mailto:lmr254@cornell.edu)).

Sincerely,

The Graduate School Office of Inclusion and Student Engagement (OISE)  
Student Leadership Council:

Black Graduate & Professional Student Association (BGPSA)  
Cornell Latin American Student Society (CLASS)  
Graduate Women in Science (GWIS)  
GPSA Diversity & International Student Committee (DISC)  
Indigenous Graduate Student Association (IGSA)  
Latino/a Graduate Student Coalition (LGSC)  
Society for Asian American Graduate Affairs (SAAGA)  
Multicultural Academic Council (MAC)  
Out in STEM (oSTEM)

Cc: Senior Vice Provost & Dean of the Graduate School Barbara A. Knuth, Vice Provost for Academic Innovation Julia Thom-Levy, Vice President & Chief Human Resources Officer Mary Opperman, Associate Dean for Inclusion & Student Engagement Sara Xayarath Hernandez, Senior Associate Dean for Diversity and Faculty Development Mark Lewis, Graduate & Professional Student Association (GPSA) Executive Leadership, Black Students United (BSU) Executive Leadership, Chairman of the Board of Trustees Robert S. Harrison, Trustee and Chair of Board of Trustees Taskforce on Diversity Laura Wilkinson, Graduate & Professional Student-Elected Trustee Dara Brown, Dean of Students Vijay Pendakur, Associate Vice Provost for Faculty Development & Diversity Yael Levitte, Director of Inclusion & Workforce Diversity Angela Winfield, Director of Diversity Alumni Programs (DAP) Matt Carcella