

**Cornell University**  
Graduate and Professional  
Student Assembly

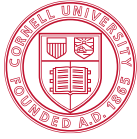
**Cornell University Graduate and Professional Student Assembly**

Minutes of the May 3, 2021 Meeting

5:30 PM – 7:00 PM

Zoom Meeting

- I. Call to Order
  - a. D. Dunham called the meeting to order at 5:32 PM
- II. Announcement of Election Results for Voting Members
  - a. D. Dunham announced the Voting Member results of the online open election for the Graduate School divisions.
    - i. Humanities
      1. S. Lopez
    - ii. Life Sciences
      1. M. Chatterjee
    - iii. Physical Sciences
      1. J. Dotzel
      2. A. Khlyustova
      3. C. O'Connor
    - iv. Social Sciences
      1. M. Welch
      2. H. Williams
  - b. D. Dunham also brought to the assemblies attention that that GPSA R16: Conducting Open Elections for Voting Members for 2021-22 Term was in direct conflict with the GPSA Bylaws since R16 stated that the term for the newly elected voting members would start at the 5/3 GPSA meeting whereas the Bylaws had the terms for all voting members starting on June 1<sup>st</sup>. D. Dunham proposed that the new voting members be inducted during the current meeting and included in the roll call.
- III. Presentations
  - a. Jason Kahabka, Associate Dean for Administration and Kathryn Boor, Dean of the Graduate School and Vice Provost for Graduate Studies (Refer to “Sustaining Graduate Funding & Mitigating COVID Impacts” on Office of the Assemblies website)
    - i. B. Harrison asked if the Graduate School was in a position for every fifth year in need of additional funding opportunities to have those available.
      1. Dean Boor stated that the Graduate School was not in a position to make such a blanket statement, but was in a position to communicate with all fields to ensure that they had a plan for their continuing students to finish their programs.



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2. Dean Kahabka added that most funding plans were not looking at individual students, rather look at total cohort numbers and cohort by the year to piece together resources and funding for the field.
    - ii. B. Harrison asked if given the circumstances of the current year, was there messaging from Dean Kahabka's office on the possibilities of expediting the process of providing certain for funding for advanced students or were there too many unknowns to do so.
      1. Dean Kahabka noted that he and Dean Boor had reached out to DGS to tell them to specifically reach out to students and share their funding plans with students. Dean Kahabka also had urged DGS to finalize Fall appointments as quickly as possible.
    - iii. A member of the assembly asked about what changes could be expected in funding for the Summer and Fall for students with research depending on international field work.
      1. Dean Kahabka stated that funding would be return more towards normalcy, but there would still be challenges in travel depending on the pandemic situation in different parts of the world.
    - iv. D. Dunham asked if the information slides presented by Dean Kahabka would be made available to the GPSA.
      1. Dean Kahabka noted that the slides were already shared with the OA and would be made public on the OA website.
- IV. Elections
- a. D. Dunham proceeded to elections, noting that conducting the elections would not require a quorum because the elections were open to all members of the GPSA. D. Dunham added that all the terms would begin on June 1<sup>st</sup> and end on May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2022.
  - b. N. Danev rose to a point of order, stating that a few present Voting Members may have not been included in the roll.
  - c. There was further discussion on who should be considered a Voting Member for the roll call.
- V. Roll Call
- a. *Present* [14]: C. Anklin, N. Danev, C. Day, C. Duell, N. Gonzalez, I. Harnick, D. Kent, A. Khlyustova, K. Krishnan, K. Laurent, S. López, C. O'Connor, A. Presher, M. Welch
  - b. *Absent* [13]: M. Balch, M. Cantar, M. Chatterjee, A. Cirillo, J. Dotzel, M. Drescher, J. Levin, C. Liu, R. Maloney, C. Ohenewah, A. Pandey, C. Steingard, H. Williams
- VI. Approval of the Meeting Minutes
- a. Monday, April 12<sup>th</sup>, 2021
    - i. The meeting minutes were **approved** unanimously.
- VII. Elections (continued)



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a. Officers

i. President

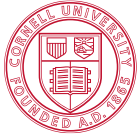
1. D. Dunham stated that the role involves running the meetings and setting the meeting agenda, publicly representing the GPSA, and raise key issues to the Graduate School.
2. L. Kenney nominated J. Rowe for President of the GPSA; the nomination was accepted by J. Rowe.
3. J. Rowe introduced himself noting that he came from a military family and served in the Marine Corps. He added that he had a Political Science degree from George Washington University, a Public Administration degree from Harvard, and was currently working on a JD at Cornell. He stated that he was interested in the GPSA because he wanted to give back to the school and leave Graduate and Professional students better off than when he started.
4. D. Dunham noted that he had spoken with J. Rowe previously and believed J. Rowe would serve as a great President of the GPSA.
5. J. Rowe was **unanimously elected** for the role of GPSA President from June 1<sup>st</sup> to May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2022.

ii. Executive Vice President

1. N. Danev stated that the role of the Executive Vice President included serving as the Chair of the Executive Committee, new membership recruitment, tasks delegated from the President or Executive Committee, and logistical questions related to the GPSA.
2. N. Danev nominated I. Harnick for the role of Executive Vice President; the nomination was accepted.
3. I. Harnick introduced herself stating that she was a fifth year student in the Sloan program and Healthcare Administration. She noted that she had enjoyed her time serving as Co-President on the Dean's Undergraduate Advisory Council in the College of Human Ecology and was excited to be more involved on the Graduate level serving as the EVP.
4. I. Harnick was **unanimously elected** for the role of GPSA Executive Vice President from June 1<sup>st</sup> to May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2022.

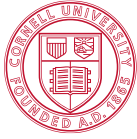
iii. Vice President of Operations

1. D. Dunham stated that the Vice President of Operations was responsible for running the Committee on Operations and Staffing, which brings together all the chairpersons of the different standing committees to make staffing decisions. The role would also involve ensuring that Graduate and Professional students were represented



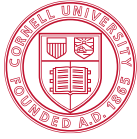
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- on committees external to the GPSA, such as the Public Safety Advisory Committee and all liaison positions in the other assemblies.
2. There were no nominations; the position remained vacant.
- iv. Vice President of Communications
    1. K. Krishnan noted that the role of Vice President of Communications entailed communicating with the broader Cornell Community, managing the social media accounts for the GPSA, reaching out to students via email regarding important information on opportunities, and serving on the Executive Board.
    2. There were no nominations; the position remained vacant.
- b. General Committee of the Graduate School (2-yr term)
    - i. D. Dunham stated that the role of committee was to serve as the administrative, legislative, and judicial board of the Graduate School and approve revisions to the Code of Legislation, approves appointments to the Graduate Faculty, and makes recommendations for new advanced degrees.
    - ii. J. Youngblood nominated N. Danev to serve on the committee; the nomination was accepted.
    - iii. N. Danev noted that he had enjoyed his time on the GPSA and the impactful changes that were made, including changes to the ITAP. He noted that serving on the General Committee of the Graduate School would be an even better fit for him because it dealt specifically with issues and legislation pertaining to the Graduate School.
    - iv. N. Danev was **unanimously elected** to serve on the General Committee of the Graduate School.
  - c. Committee Chairpersons
    - i. Diversity and International Students Committee
      1. There were no nominations.
    - ii. Student Advocacy Committee
      1. D. Kent noted that the committee focused on issues of diversity, finances, stipend levels, mental and physical health accessibility, childcare, and the general well-being of the Graduate and Professional student community.
      2. D. Kent self-nominated to serve as the chair of the Student Advocacy Committee; D. Kent was **unanimously elected**.
    - iii. Programming Board
      1. K. Laurent noted that the Programming Board was responsible for organizing non-academic events such as BRB events, wine tours, and Grad Ball.
      2. There were no nominations; the position remained vacant.
    - iv. Faculty Teaching, Advising, and Mentorship Award Committee



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1. C. Duell noted that the role of the committee was to give out the Faculty Teaching, Advising, and Mentorship Awards. The process included calling for nominations, receiving letters from former students and alumni, deciding who should be receiving the awards, and throwing a celebration at the end of the year to give out the awards.
  2. There were no nominations; the position remained vacant.
- d. University Assembly
- i. D. Dunham noted that the GPSA President served as an ex-officio member of the University Assembly, but the GPSA also needed to elect four representatives to the assembly.
  - ii. L. Kenney that the UA served as a body of all the different constituent groups coming together and worked on policy issues ranging from the Code of Conduct to student, staff, and faculty rights. L. Kenney added that the UA had standing committees as well for members to join or to Chair. She also noted that all assembly chairs, including J. Rowe, would serve as members of the UA.
  - iii. D. Dunham stated that GPSA officers or chairpersons could carry dual roles by serving on the UA.
  - iv. L. Kenney nominated I. Akisoglu to serve on the UA; the nomination was accepted.
    1. I. Akisoglu introduced himself expressing that he would like to serve as a representative on the UA because he believed in the importance of effective advocacy of student interests and university governance. He noted that governance was most effective when done collaboratively. I. Akisoglu stated that he studied History and Economics during his undergrad years at American University and was currently a second year at the Cornell Law School. Between finishing undergrad and starting his second year of Law School at Cornell, he served as an officer in the US Navy for six years where he led a division of approximately 20 sailors. He added that he spent his first year of Law School at Vanderbilt where he served on the Vanderbilt Student Bar Association and as a Law School Representative.
  - v. L. Kenney nominated N. Danev to serve on the UA for two years; the nomination was accepted.
    1. N. Danev stated that he had enjoyed his time serving on the UA and particularly being a member of the Codes and Judicial Committee (CJC) and hoped to continue representing the GPSA in the capacity of UA Representative. He expressed the importance of Graduate



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students having a voice on the General Committee of the Graduate School and the University Assembly, and added that as an international student, he could use these platforms to advocate for international students.

- vi. I. Akisoglu was unanimously elected to the UA.
- vii. N. Danev was elected to the University Assembly for the next two years with a term ending on May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023.

VIII. Division Breakout

a. Voting Members

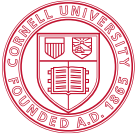
- i. C. Duell stated that Physical Sciences elected S. Bright-Thonney to fill the voting member vacancy.
- ii. A member of the assembly noted that M. Minelli and R. Epstein were elected as voting members for Life Sciences.

IX. Old Business

- a. N. Danev motioned to extend the meeting until 7:10 PM. The motion was seconded and approved.
- b. Resolution 12: University Policy 1.3 and the ITAP
  - i. Returned from Committee Review
    - 1. Signed Memo with Graduate School and Provost
    - 2. N. Danev summarized the agreement that had been reached by the committee, Dean Boor, and Provost Kotlikoff. He noted that the process would now involve clear and timely communication to incoming students informing them that they will be subject to some form of English language assessment if they are going to TA, clear and public guidelines detailing who would need to take the assessment, feedback to students who fail the exam, and the GPSA would appoint students to the ITAP advisory committee along with a few more changes. N. Danev encouraged members to vote on GPSA R12 so there would be a formal resolution recognizing the agreement.
    - 3. N. Danev moved to discard GPSA R12 as initially introduced and substitute it with the new version.
      - a. The motion was seconded by D. Kent and the amendment substitution was approved 9-0-5; GPSA R12 was amended.
    - 4. N. Danev subsequently moved previous question on the new version of GPSA R12.
      - a. The resolution was approved 11-0-4 and adopted.

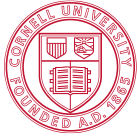
X. New Business

- a. Resolution 18: Adopting Standing Rules



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- i. D. Dunham rescinded the chair position to N. Danev for discussion of the resolution.
  - ii. D. Dunham introduced GPSA R18 noting that when he first took office, there were many unwritten conventions that he was expected to uphold and were not written in the Charter or Bylaws. The Standing Rules would serve as a place to write the administrative and ethical conventions, but the conventions would not supersede the Charter or the Bylaws. D. Dunham added that the Standing Rules would be easily amendable requiring only a simple majority vote. He added that the rules included meeting on the first and third Mondays whenever the assembly was in session, set procedures on conducting electronic meetings, conventions falling under the scope of ethics, and a default method of voting.
  - iii. D. Dunham moved to postpone voting on the resolution until the next regularly scheduled meeting in the Fall; the motion was approved by general consent and the resolution was postponed.
- b. Resolution 19: Committing GPSA Funds to Global Pandemic Efforts
- i. D. Dunham noted that there were several student organizations that had asked about ways in which unused field organization funds could be put towards alleviating the pandemic. D. Dunham noted that the resolution would allow the GPSA to take the surplus funds from the administrative, travel, and Executive budget and donate it to pandemic relief. He added that he was not sure if the University allowed the donation of the funds however, but would like to open the resolution to discussion.
  - ii. D. Dunham moved to extend the meeting by 10 minutes to 7:21 PM; the motion was approved by unanimous consent.
  - iii. S. Bhadane asked for clarification on where the surplus funds were going.
    1. D. Dunham stated that he wanted to donate the surplus funds to the humanitarian organization Direct Relief.
  - iv. K. Krishnan asked if the resolution would also allow groups to donate money and if FC funds were allowed under the circumstances.
    1. D. Dunham stated that the FC guidelines explicitly cited University policy stating that campus groups could not donate directly to charitable organizations, but was not certain if the policy would apply to the Assembly funds.
  - v. R. Epstein asked if there was a charity more connected to the Cornell community that the funds could be donated to.
    1. D. Dunham noted that the charity that had initially come to mind was the Access Fund, but decided to donate the funds elsewhere because the Access Fund did not need as much money since there were few students making relevant request. He added that his



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decision to donate to Direct Relief was because it would help the greatest number of people. D. Dunham encouraged R. Epstein to amend the resolution however, if she had a better or closer charity in mind.

- vi. K. Krishnan moved previous question and the motion was subsequently seconded.
- vii. The resolution was approved 10-0-4.

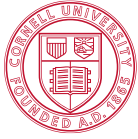
XI. Reports of Officers and Committee Updates

- a. Executive Committee – N. Danev
  - i. No Updates
- b. Communications – K. Krishnan
  - i. No Updates
- c. Operations – M. Chatterjee
  - i. No Updates
- d. Finance – C. Steingard
  - i. No Updates
- e. Appropriations – A. Pandey
  - i. No Updates
- f. DISC – A. Presher
  - i. No Updates
- g. Faculty Teaching – C. Duell
  - i. C. Duell encouraged members to forward nomination calls to their constituents and noted that nominations would be open for the next few weeks.
- h. Programming – K. Laurent
  - i. K. Laurent noted that the committee was hoping to plan an Activity Bingo for Graduate and Professional students and encouraged members to reach out to her if they would like to help with the event.
- i. Student Advocacy – D. Kent
  - i. D. Kent stated that the committee had scheduled a Town Hall for the evening of May 12<sup>th</sup>.

XII. Open Forum

- a. S. Bhadane moved to extend the meeting by 2 minutes; the motion was seconded and approved.
- b. S. Bhadane noted that several Graduate students from India had reached out with concerns about Cornell's vaccination mandate for Fall 2021. S. Bhadane stated that the mandate required students to receive a US approved vaccine before starting classes and expressed concerns about the safety of doubling up on vaccines if students had already taken a non-US approved vaccine. S. Bhadane asked for guidance on how to take the issue further.





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- i. D. Dunham stated that the issue would need to be raised in such a way that the New York vaccination rules were also understood and addressed.
- ii. K. Krishnan raised issues regarding the ethics of double vaccinations, noting that there were countries that were going through vaccine shortages and requiring double vaccination was not taking the ethics into consideration. K. Krishnan also stated that international students might avoid getting vaccinated in their home countries to avoid the health uncertainty of double vaccination and that doing so could be a public health hazard for their country.

XIII. Adjournment

- a. The meeting was adjourned at 7:24 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Auriole C. R. Fassinou  
Clerk of the Assembly