



Cornell University
Graduate and Professional
Student Assembly

Cornell University Graduate and Professional Student Assembly

Minutes of the September 27, 2021 Meeting

5:30 PM – 7:00 PM

Bache Auditorium, Malott Hall

- I. Call to Order
 - a. P. Hanley called the meeting to order at 5:34 PM.
- II. Roll Call
 - a. *Present* [16]: C. Anklin, C. Day, C. Duell, R. Epstein, N. Gonzalez, A. Inayatali, D. Kent, G. Li, C. Liu, C. O'Connor, C. Ohenewah, A. Presher, D. Sharp, W. Wang, M. Welch, H. Williams
 - b. *Absent* [9]: M. Balch, S. Bright-Thonney, J. Dotzel, A. Khlyustova, D. Lanes, J. Levin, S. Lopez, M. Minelli, C. Steingard
- III. Late Additions to the Agenda
 - a. Public Safety Advisory Committee (PSAC) Public Forum
 - i. L. Davis Frost noted that the Public Safety Advisory Committee (PSAC) had been meeting for the past year and a half and discussing campus safety and the role of CUPD among other topics. L. Davis-Frost stated that the committee had conveyed a list of recommendations to President Pollack in August and encouraged members to attend the public forum being held on Wednesday at 4:30 PM.
- IV. Approval of the Meeting Minutes
 - a. September 13, 2021
 - i. The meeting minutes were **approved** unanimously.
- V. Presentations
 - a. Dean of Faculty – Eve DeRosa
 - i. Dean DeRosa introduced herself noting that she had been working at Cornell University for 8 years. She had originally served as a Professor of Psychology at the University of Toronto for over 10 years. She noted the interdisciplinary nature of science at Cornell being something that drew her to the University along with the concept of “Any person, any study”. Dean DeRosa spoke on some of the initiatives that Faculty were involved in to address issues of inequity and bias as well as how to bring change to communities. She also spoke on her talks with the Vice Provost of Academic Affairs about new faculty members that had joined in July with some going into departments with no history of having tenured POC. These initial discussions eventually led to the creation of a system identifying clear guidelines for promotion and tenure so new members would feel welcomed and have an inclusive and supportive environment. Dean DeRosa stated that a big part of what she wanted to achieve as Dean of Faculty was ensuring



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that research, teaching, and extension Faculty were fully integrated in receiving all of the perks, benefits, and clarity about tenure that the tenured-track Faculty were receiving. Additionally, Dean DeRosa noted that she also wanted to make sure that tenured-track Faculty also had clear guidelines so that they could stay with the University and keep their scholarship. She encouraged members of the assembly to reach out to her if there were places that the GPSA and Faculty Senate could collaborate and invited members to come to her with questions.

VI. Breakout Session by Division

- a. Arts & Humanities Division Voting Member (2 seats vacant)
 - i. The 2 seats remained vacant.
 1. Due to the vacancies not being filled by the 2nd meeting, the seats were opened to all members from other divisions or Master's students with no requirement for being in the Arts & Humanities Division.
- b. Life Sciences Division Voting Member (1 vacant seat)
 - i. The division **elected** A. Wunsch.
- c. Social Sciences Division Voting Member (2 seats vacant)
 - i. The division **elected** B. Hayes and G. Smits.
- d. At-Large Master's Student Voting Member (1 seat vacant)
 - i. The division **elected** J. Washington.

VII. New Business

- a. Elections
 - i. Vice President of Operations
 1. K. Carter-Cram nominated themselves for the position; the nomination was seconded.
 - a. K. Carter-Cram introduced themselves stating their interest in working with the GPSA to promote policy in the interest of Graduate and Professional students. K. Carter-Cram expressed their belief that the GPSA should be accessible to all students and work to serve underrepresented communities and minority populations.
 - b. N. Danev asked K. Carter-Cram to state the program they were in and what specific ideas or undertakings they had for the role of VP of Operations.
 - i. K. Carter-Cram stated that they were a First-year Master's student in Dyson's AEM program. K. Carter-Cram stated that they were not familiar enough with the GPSA to fully understand the scope of programs possible, but expressed their interest of



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- working with underrepresented groups to make them feel like the GPSA is accessible to them and representative of their goals and beliefs.
- c. C. Ohenewah asked how K. Carter-Cram would make GPSA more accessible to underrepresented students.
 - i. K. Carter-Cram spoke on giving underrepresented students a platform where they can enact change.
 - ii. C. Ohenewah asked if K. Carter-Cram was familiar with any affinity groups on campus and could start there.
 - iii. K. Carter-Cram stated that they were not familiar with the affinity groups yet.
 - d. K. Carter-Cram was **elected** as Vice President of Operations with a vote of 28 in favor and 7 abstentions.
 - ii. Appropriations Committee Chair
 1. B. Carver nominated themselves for the position; the nomination was seconded.
 - a. B. Carver introduced themselves stating that they were a Master's student in the Public Administration program and noting their experience in writing budgets.
 - b. A member of the assembly asked B. Carver to clarify the role of the Appropriations Committee Chair.
 - i. B. Carver stated that from their understanding, the chair would oversee the committee and its meetings, make recommendations about appropriations, and set the Student Activity Fee.
 - c. A member of the assembly asked what B. Carver would bring to the role.
 - i. B. Carver stated that the primary item they would bring to the role would be their willingness to fulfill the duties of Appropriations Committee Chair and emphasized their 8 years of experience in helping to draft and oversee a roughly \$3 million budget so the broader picture of the role would not be new.
 - d. B. Carver was **elected** as Vice President of Operations with a vote of 30 in favor and 1 abstention.
 - iii. Diversity and International Student Committee (DISC) Chair
 1. P. Mehta nominated themselves for the position; the nomination was seconded.



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- a. P. Mehta introduced themselves, stating that they were a Graduate student in Public Health. P. Mehta had served as a dentist for 1 year back in India and also was a part of a COVID-19 Control Team in their city where they realized that a lot of healthcare practices were inequitable. This led them to wanting to study Public Health so they could provide equitable healthcare to everyone. P. Mehta also expressed their belief that equity should not be only in healthcare and wanted to serve as DISC chair to promote equity.
 - b. P. Mehta was **elected** as the DISC Chair with a vote of 28 in favor and 1 abstention.
- b. Resolution 3: Calling on Cornell University to Provide More Accommodations to Students with COVID-19
- i. Abstract: This resolution calls upon the University to provide more hybrid and online accommodations for Graduate and Professional students who are unable to attend class because of mandatory COVID-19 quarantines.
 - ii. P. Hanley noted that classes were currently strictly in-person and there were no accommodations for quarantined or in isolation. The resolution would serve to support similar resolutions set forth by the SA and the Faculty Senate urging for University-wide accommodations in these situations. P. Hanley mentioned some of the accommodations the resolution asked for including having instructors provide recorded lectures be made available on Canvas, offering additional Zoom office hours, and altering attendance and participation grading requirements to accommodate quarantined or isolated students unable to attend the in-person lectures and discussions.
 - iii. P. Hanley, as one of the sponsors of the resolution, temporarily relinquished the Chair-ship to N. Danev.
 - iv. A member of the assembly asked how likely it was for the University to adopt the accommodations outlined.
 1. P. Hanley stated that his understanding was that the SA and Faculty Senate had already adopted a similar resolution and sent it to President Pollack, but he was not aware of whether or not she had responded. P. Hanley stated that it seemed like President Pollack had approximately a 1-month back-log on acknowledging those resolutions so he did not think the resolution would have a fast response. However, P. Hanley stated that it was important for the GPSA to have this act of solidarity with the other assemblies in asking for these accommodations.



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- assembly-wide support for increasing the Listserv use and then passing the resolution to whomever was in charge of maintaining usage.
- d. A member of the assembly moved to extend the meeting by 10 minutes; the motion was seconded.
 - e. D. Kent noted that last year, most of the mass communication was done through the field representatives and asked if that would still be a communication route for the year and asked what exactly would be sent through the Listserv along with who would write these communications.
 - i. P. Hanley stated that they would follow a similar format as last week with G. Li reaching out to members and committees so everyone could have their input on the content of the emails sent through the Listserv. The field representatives would still be able to communicate with their constituencies, but the use of the Listserv would ease the burden on them.
 - f. C. Duell expressed support for the resolution citing gaps in the communication between field representatives and their constituencies. C. Duell noted that he was worried about the emails not being read, so being concise with the message and sending the emails sparingly would be important.
 - g. A member of the assembly asked about what the content of the emails would be.
 - i. P. Hanley stated that the emails would be written with input from the different committees conveying what announcements they wanted the larger Graduate and Professional student population to be aware of.
 - ii. N. Danev noted that the Communications Committee would be in charge of filtering what gets added and writing the final email, so members that were interested in being involved in that process should join the Communications Committee.
 - h. A member of the assembly echoed C. Duell's points, expressing concern about the lack of communication between field representatives and their constituencies and asked what was being done about the issue.
 - i. P. Hanley stated that for individual field representatives their might be differences in the barriers that had to be crossed and so the use of the GPSA Listserv would serve to provide communication access to all members of the community.
 - ii. C. Duell stated that he believed a contributor of the communication gap was in people not being aware of the GPSA and its goals so having a period of regularly sending emails covering the current goals of the GPSA would be beneficial.
 - iii. A member of the assembly echoed C. Duell's points.
 - i. N. Danev noted that as EVP last year, one thing he noticed was that a lot of fields did not even have GPSA representatives so he had to go through each field and reach out to their DGS to see if they could appoint an individual to serve as field



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representatives with a lot of fields never getting back to him. Even with field representatives for some fields, a large number of fields still did not have representatives and the use of the Listserv would be a good way to reach out to fields without field representatives.

- j. C. Duell moved previous question; the motion was seconded by C. O'Connor.
- k. The resolution was **approved** 16-1-0.

IX. Reports of Officers and Committee Updates

- a. Executive Committee – D. Sharp
 - i. D. Sharp noted that there were currently 78 cases, on Code Green, on campus and that the Executive Committee would evaluate the safety of holding in-person based on the number of cases in the Cornell community and in the surrounding Ithaca areas. D. Sharp also noted that the hope would be to hold the subsequent GPSA meetings in a different location given the difficulty of hearing what was being said for those on Zoom.
- b. Operations – P. Hanley/K. Carter-Cram
 - i. P. Hanley noted that there were several appointments that needed to be made to the University Assembly. P. Hanley stated that in an effort to save time, he would send an email out to the assembly members about the committees that needed appointments and interested members could email him.
 - ii. A member of the assembly asked for the email P. Hanley was planning on sending out to include descriptions of the committees.
- c. Appropriations – B. Carver
 - i. *No Updates*
- d. Communications – G. Li
 - i. G. Li noted that she had collected all of the concerns and meeting materials from the committee chairs for the newsletter.
 - ii. Additionally, G. Li stated that she was currently working on reviving the Instagram page and encouraged members to join the Communications Committee. Lastly, G. Li encouraged members to follow @cornellgpsa on Instagram. G. Li also informed members to join the LinkedIn group.
 - iii. N. Danev asked if G. Li planned on using the GPSA Twitter, stating that it was a popular platform for Graduate students.
 - 1. G. Li stated that she was planning on using the Twitter page as soon as she had more committee members to help her.
 - iv. A member of the assembly moved to extend the meeting by 5 minutes; the motion was seconded.
- e. Finance – C. Steingard
 - i. *No Updates*
- f. Student Advocacy – D. Kent



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- i. D. Kent stated that the committee would be meeting weekly throughout the semester on Thursdays at 1pm. Additionally, the committee was planning on starting to invite field members on an individual basis to the meetings, giving them the opportunity to engage in a smaller setting to express their concerns and feelings.
 - g. Diversity and International Students – P. Mehta
 - i. P. Mehta stated that the most recent meeting was the previous Saturday and the meeting focused on commuting from the Geneva to Ithaca campus. Additionally, P. Mehta asked if anyone knew who had access to the existing Diversity and International Students Facebook group. Lastly, P. Mehta invited members to join the committee.
 - h. Programming
 - i. P. Hanley noted that elections for the position would be done at the following meeting.
 - i. Faculty Awards – C. Duell
 - i. C. Duell stated that the planning was underway to give out awards from the previous Spring semester. C. Duell also encouraged members to join the committee and to run for chair.
 - j. General Committee – N. Danev
 - i. *No Updates*
 - k. Graduate School – Dean Boor
 - i. *No Updates*
- X. Adjournment
 - a. The meeting was adjourned at 7:13 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Auriole C. R. Fassinou
Clerk of the Assembly