



Cornell University
Graduate and Professional
Student Assembly

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MINUTES
Graduate & Professional Student Assembly
March 21st, 2016
Bache Auditorium, Malott Hall
5:30 – 7:00 P.M.

I. Welcome and Introductions

R. Walroth called the meeting to order at 5:30pm.

1. Introduction of voting members, 1 min.

Voting Members Present: N. Rogers, T. Bollu, R. Walroth, A. Molitoris, C. Benson, C. Wong, C. Aurand, C. Yao, I. Band, J. Goldberg, K. Ladha, K. Schlauraff, M. Jodlowski, R. Arbamov, T. Bernard, T. Snider, W. Nicholson

Voting Members Absent: J. Veintimilla, S. Hesse

II. Approval of the Minutes

1. March 7th, 2015, 1 min.

Minutes were approved as printed.

III. Presentations

- 1. Town Hall on Finance Commission Guidelines Changes:** The Appropriation Committee has set up a subcommittee with the goal of reforming Finance Commission guidelines. The subcommittee presented at GPSA in order to get some feedback from the graduate and professional student community on changes they would like to see in the new guidelines. The subcommittee explained the current application process where organizations submit a proposal through OrgSync and once it is approved, they are free to spend the money. GPSAFC's role includes helping organizations during the application process.
- 2. Presentation on Policy 6.4 Appendix C:** Cornell's Policy 6.4 prohibits discrimination, harassment, including sexual harassment, sexual assault and violence. A graduate student, Nathaniel Stetson, said the policy allows a faculty member accused of sexual harassment

or assault to appeal on the grounds of academic freedom or a special relationship. A committee that specialized in such issues hears the faculty member. The complaint requires more evidence than a typical complaint to be proven. Stetson connected Policy 6.4 to larger issues of academic freedom, including issues with triggers, words or phrases that could upset students. He said in his personal opinion, this policy is more likely to be used in the near future than it has been in the past. R. Walroth said Alan Mittman, Direction IX coordinator, will be at the next GPSA meeting to discuss changes to Appendix C.

R. Walroth asked for a motion to extend the meeting by 10 minutes. The Assembly bypassed committee updates and elections.

IV. Reports of Officers and Committee Updates, 10 min.

- 1. Executive Committee:**
- 2. Operations**
- 3. Appropriations**
- 4. Faculty Awards**
- 5. Finance Commission**
- 6. Student Advocacy**
- 7. Diversity and International Students**
- 8. Programming Board**

V. Elections, 10 min.

- 1. Voting Member at Large**

VI. New Business, 40 min.

Resolution 6 was withdrawn by the sponsor and Resolution 7 was tabled following a motion.

1. GPSA Resolution X: Resolution Concerning 2014 Tax Issues for International

Students: The resolution aims to hold Cornell and the IRS (Internal Revenue Service)

responsible for the recent issues experienced by international students concerning

withholding their 2014 Federal Tax Returns. Ian Smythe, GPSA mathematics

representative, said Cornell announced the error was due to a software malfunction. The

resolution holds Cornell responsible and ensures the University addresses the errors. He

said “The purposes of this resolution is to let everyone know that we, as graduate

students, are aware of this, and want Cornell to be vigilant about it and fight for

international students going forward. We want Cornell to do their best to make sure that it

doesn’t happen again. Ultimately, the responsibility is not of the students involved.” R.

Walroth clarified that students nationally are facing a similar problem and it is not

Cornell that’s at fault but there are actions Cornell must take to ensure this does not

happen again. The Resolution was tabled till the next meeting.

VII. Open Forum, 4 min.

T. Snider announced the upcoming election for a graduate and professional student representative to the Board of Trustees. The candidates will be at the next meeting to talk about their platform. GPSA will host a meeting prior to its regularly scheduled meeting for the candidates to share their platform.

R. Walroth adjourned the meeting at 7:10pm.

*Submitted sincerely,
Aastha Wadhwa*