

Cornell University
Graduate and Professional
Student Assembly

1 **GPSA Resolution 4: Endorsement of the Best Practices**
2 **for Faculty Advisers Document**

3
4 **Sponsored by:** Richard Walroth
5

6 **WHEREAS,** the adviser-advisee relationship is often the single most important factor
7 determining a graduate student’s education and overall experience in graduate school;
8

9 **WHEREAS,** an enforceable formal set of guidelines for faculty advisers can only be
10 reasonably expected to address worst case scenarios;
11

12 **WHEREAS,** more informal guidance will be highly beneficial both to new and experienced
13 faculty members;
14

15 **WHEREAS,** such a set of guidelines will allow for assessment of an adviser’s ability to
16 mentor students, as well as serve as a starting point for conversations between advisers and
17 advisees;
18

19 **WHEREAS,** the executive committee of the Graduate and Professional Student Assembly
20 (GPSA) has prepared such a set of guidelines with input from the Office of the Dean of the
21 Graduate School, the voting members of the GPSA, and other stakeholders;
22

23 **BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED,** that the GPSA endorses the attached document called
24 “Best Practices for Faculty Advisers”, as a perspective from students on what may be
25 expected of a faculty adviser;
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27 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** that this document be used to guide future assessment of
28 faculty advisers and graduate students’ experiences at Cornell;
29

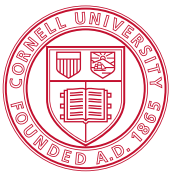
30 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** that this document be widely distributed to faculty
31 members and be incorporated into training for faculty advisers,
32

33 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** that this document be widely distributed to current and
34 incoming graduate students;
35

36 **BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED,** that the GPSA shall update this document going forward
37 to reflect the changing nature of the adviser-advisee relationship over time, and any changes
38 shall require approval by the assembly.
39

40 **RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,**

41 **Richard Walroth,**
42 *GPSA President*



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1 **GPSA Resolution 5: Sense of the Body Concerning the**
2 **Creation of the College of Business**

3
4 Sponsored by: Alex Brown, Jacqueline Frost, Jesse Goldberg, James
5 Ingoldsby, Christine Yao
6

7 **WHEREAS**, Cornell University’s Board of Trustees voted on Saturday, January 30, 2016,
8 to combine the Dyson School of Applied Economics and Management, the School of Hotel
9 Administration and the Johnson Graduate School of Management into a single Cornell
10 College of Business;
11

12 **WHEREAS**, the aforementioned Board meeting took place in New York City, over 200
13 miles away from the Ithaca campus where the faculty, staff, and students of the three
14 concerned colleges live, work, and study;
15

16 **WHEREAS**, we acknowledge President Elizabeth Garrett’s message to the Cornell
17 community which states, “Today’s action by the Board of Trustees marks the beginning of
18 an inclusive and crucial process that will more fully define the details of how the College of
19 Business will be structured” and which promises further inclusion of community voices in
20 the new college’s implementation;
21

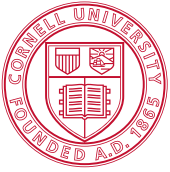
22 **WHEREAS**, we acknowledge that the faculty of the Dyson School of Applied Economics
23 and Management immediately consulted the graduate student association for their input;
24

25 **WHEREAS**, the Graduate and Professional Student Assembly Charter is the sole
26 document granting the GPSA authority in the shared governance system at Cornell
27 University;
28

29 **WHEREAS**, the GPSA Charter, Article II, Section 2.03 states:

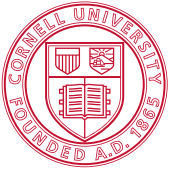
- 30 1. “The GPSA shall have the authority to examine the University policies that impact
31 graduate and professional school students.
32 2. The GPSA shall have the authority to make recommendations to the appropriate
33 bodies and University administrators concerning these matters.
34 3. The GPSA shall be consulted with respect to the modification and development of
35 non-academic policies, which directly affect graduate and professional school
36 students.”;
37

38 **WHEREAS**, the Board’s decision to agglomerate separate academic units that grant
39 graduate degrees (the Johnson Graduate School of Management, the Dyson School of
40 Applied Economics and Management, and the School of Hotel Administration) into a single
41 College of Business will “impact graduate and professional school students” including in the
42 realm of “non-academic policies, which will directly affect graduate and professional school
43 students”;



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44
45 **WHEREAS**, the Board, President Garrett, and Provost Michael Kotlikoff failed to consult
46 the GPSA “to make recommendations to the appropriate bodies and University
47 administrators concerning these matters” and “with respect to the modification and
48 development” of such policies;
49
50 **WHEREAS**, the GPSA passed 2011-2012 Resolution 5 in Fall 2011 to express its
51 dissatisfaction that “From 1971 until 1984, the Cornell Board of Trustees had five student-
52 elected members“ and “In 1984, the Board was contracted from 62 to 42 members, reducing
53 the number of student-elected members from the Ithaca campus to two,” and to call on the
54 Board to work collaboratively with the GPSA on addressing these issues of graduate student
55 representation;
56
57 **WHEREAS**, the GPSA passed 2014-2015 Resolution 7 in Spring 2015, stating, “the
58 Graduate and Professional Student Assembly is opposed to decision making by the Cornell
59 University administration that precludes substantive discussion with the larger body of
60 graduate and professional students, as we believe it violates the principles of shared
61 governance within the University” and “the GPSA recommends that the University consider
62 a policy of public notice and an open public comment period whenever a policy is being
63 considered that would change student support, benefits, tuition rates, or any other changes
64 to academic policy that would constitute a substantive departure from current policy”;
65
66 **WHEREAS**, the GPSA also passed 2014-2015 Resolution 8 in Spring 2015, stating, “the
67 University should involve communities more broadly in decisions that affect them before
68 making unilateral decisions”;
69
70 **WHEREAS**, Article XIII, Section 2, of the Bylaws of Cornell University states: “The
71 functions of the University Faculty shall be to consider questions of educational policy
72 which concern more than one college, school or separate academic unit, or are general in
73 nature; and to recommend to the Board of Trustees, with the approval of the appropriate
74 college or school faculty, the establishment, modification or discontinuance of degrees”;
75
76 **WHEREAS**, the agglomeration of three existing schools into a single new college
77 constitutes a “question[-] of educational policy which concern[s] more than one college,
78 school or separate academic unit”;
79
80 **WHEREAS**, the Faculty Senate Committee to Review Faculty Governance’s “Final Report
81 and Recommendations” of March 7, 2007, outlined multiple instances in which the Faculty
82 Senate had not been consulted for important academic decisions made by the Board of
83 Trustees and administration;
84
85 **WHEREAS**, the Board, President Garrett, and Provost Kotlikoff did not seek input from
86 the University Faculty concerning the creation of the College of Business;
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88 **WHEREAS**, the Board, advised by President Garrett and Provost Kotlikoff, voted for the
89 creation of the Cornell College of Business and thereby ignored: 1., University Assembly
90 Resolution 5, approved 9-0-2, to “table the motion to create a College of Business until their
91 March 24th, 2016 meeting” (lines 43-44) and “to solicit further community feedback and
92 engage shared governance with all University constituencies on the proposal” (lines 46-47);
93 2., the Student Assembly’s recommendation, approved 20-0-3 after an open forum at their
94 meeting on Thursday, January 28, 2016, to “table the proposal for the College of Business to
95 allow more time for community feedback”; and 3., the unanimously passed resolution by
96 The University Faculty that “the University Trustees table consideration of the creation of
97 the College of Business until the Faculty Senate can deliberate on the proposal”;

98
99 **BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED**, that the following statement expresses the Sense of
100 the Body:

101
102 We formally express our severe disapproval of the process by which the Board
103 of Trustees unanimously approved the creation of the College of Business. In the
104 failure to consult any of the university’s shared governance bodies, and in the tacit
105 rejection of three assemblies’ requests for more time to examine the proposal, the
106 Board’s decision was unapologetically undemocratic. While the GPSA expresses
107 neither support nor disagreement with the content of the decision, we condemn the
108 anti-democratic process of making the decision as well as the ad hoc explanations for
109 the decision, which frame it as inclusive and open after the fact. President Garrett’s
110 indication that the Board’s decision was “the beginning of an inclusive and crucial
111 process” demonstrates flagrant disregard for how “inclusive” decision-making works,
112 or what counts as an appropriate “beginning,” as provided by the university’s own
113 governing documents. This decision has both serious academic and non-academic
114 implications for undergraduate students, graduate students, faculty, and employees;
115 therefore, the Board should have consulted all assemblies to seriously consider input
116 from their constituents early in the planning process. To the extent that the power
117 granted to the GPSA and SA is derived solely from the respective assemblies’
118 charters, and that neither the University Bylaws nor the University Charter mentions
119 the student assemblies, we are ultimately dissatisfied that the President and the
120 Board of Trustees have few structural incentives to take seriously advisory policy
121 resolutions passed in the shared governance system.

122
123 **RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,**
124 **Alex Brown,**
125 *GPSA Field Representative, German Studies*