



Cornell University Student Assembly

Originally Presented On	April 30, 2015
Type of Action	Sense-of-the-Body
Status/Result	New Business

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11

S.A. Resolution #72 Enhancing Hearing Impairment Services at the Cornell Commencement Ceremony

12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29

ABSTRACT: The Student Assembly should work with university administration and staff to take a three-pronged approach to enhancing hearing impairment services at the Commencement Ceremony: (1) Increasing publicity of current services, (2) Formation of the Accessibility Accommodations Committee, and (3) Improving services by using feedback surveys and the PULSE student survey.

30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40

Sponsored by: Lisa Liu '15, Shivang Tayal '16, and Lindsay Wershaw '16

Whereas, Cornell University states in its website on Commitment to Inclusion, “Cornell University is committed to diversity and inclusiveness, with the goal of providing an accessible, usable, and welcoming environment for faculty, staff, students, and visitors with disabilities”;

Whereas, since 2004, a team of individuals from various university departments has worked to address disability access;

Whereas, this work has resulted in the “Cornell University Institutional Disability Access Management Strategic Plan” which outlines key goals for disability access and awareness;

Whereas, one of the core initiatives in this report is to “Educate the university community about the responsibility of affording services and benefits for individuals with disabilities”;

Whereas, a 2013-2014 goal included in the report for Technology and Communications is to “Provide the campus community with information on methods to integrate captioning in video production and provide other technological solutions to communication challenges”;

Whereas, a 2012-2013 accomplishment included in the report outlines the University Communications’ continued pursuit to create “a multi-source budget line to support closed captioning for live web streams and CornellCast productions,”

Whereas, live-captioning is displayed on a projection screen at Schoellkopf Stadium during the Sunday Commencement Ceremony;

41
42 **Whereas**, approximately 10,000 students and guests attend the Commencement
43 Ceremony;
44
45 **Whereas**, Cornell University provides sign language interpretation services in which guests
46 who use the services are requested to submit an Accessibility Form to provide special
47 parking and seating arrangements;
48
49 **Whereas**, many students and visitors are unaware of the existence of these extensive
50 services;
51
52 **Whereas**, the Student Assembly members seek to align one vision of our organization with
53 the university mission for commitment to diversity and inclusion;
54
55 **Be it therefore resolved**, that Student Assembly members work with the university to
56 increase the visibility and publicity of the existing services by including a university-
57 approved description of available services in all electronic messages pertaining to the
58 Commencement Ceremony sent to graduating students and their guests;
59
60 **Be it therefore resolved**, that the Student Assembly calls for the creation for an ad hoc
61 committee named the Accessibility Accommodation Committee (AAC) to explore
62 most effective solutions to best accommodate those in need of accessibility services
63 as well as to bridge the student groups, administrators, and other stakeholders in
64 further conversations about accessibility services for the hearing impaired;
65
66 **Be it therefore resolved**, that this Assembly recommends that the composition of this
67 committee consists of at least, but not limited to, the following:
68 • One Student Assembly member
69 • A member of the Cornell Union for Disabilities Awareness
70 • A member of the Cornell University Deaf Awareness Project housed in the Cornell
71 Public Service Center
72 • The Class Councils Commencement Chair and one Class Council member at-large
73 • One representative from the Office of Commencement Events
74 • One representative from the Student Disabilities Services
75 • One representative from the Office of Undergraduate Class Councils;
76
77 **Be it therefore resolved**, that the AAC create feedback surveys for the registered users of
78 the Accessibility Form as well as those who sit in the accessible seating area in
79 Schoellkopf for completion during or after the Commencement Ceremony upon a
80 voluntary basis;
81

82 **Be it therefore resolved**, that the survey inquires about the overall experience with the
83 services provided and possible methods of improvement, if any;
84

85 **Be it therefore resolved**, that in addition to the feedback surveys about the
86 Commencement Ceremony, that the AAC work with individuals from Cornell's
87 Institutional Research and Planning to include questions about hearing impairment
88 services for all university speaking events in PULSE, a survey instrument to learn
89 about the experiences of all currently enrolled undergraduate students (with a 34%
90 response rate in 2015);
91

92 **Be it further resolved**, that the AAC continue to work with student groups and
93 administrative departments to enhance hearing impairment services in the future,
94 which include an American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter in the corner of the
95 projection screen (Figure 1) in addition to closed captioning during Commencement,
96 investments in equalizer and/or audiometric headphones, and other services for
97 events that are not just limited to the Commencement Ceremony;
98

99 **Be it finally resolved**, that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to President David J.
100 Skorton, President-elect Elizabeth Garrett, the ADA Coordinator Team (Associate
101 Vice President of the Office of Workforce Diversity and Inclusion, the Director of
102 Student Disabilities Services, and the ADA Coordinator of Facilities), the Advisor of
103 the Class Councils, and the Director of the Office of Commencement Events.
104

105 **Respectfully Submitted,**
106

107 **Lisa Liu '15**
108 *Undesignated At-Large, Student Assembly*
109

110 **Shivang Tayal '16**
111 *Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion, Student Assembly*
112

113 **Lindsay Wershaw '16**
114 *Vice President for Public Relations, Student Assembly*
115

116 *(Reviewed by: Student Assembly Committee on Inclusion and Diversity Initiatives, 5-0-0,*
117 *4-28-2015)*
118



119
120

Figure 1. Yale University Commencement Speech 2014