

Resolution 37: Making Election Day a Holiday

Abstract: This resolution aims to increase civic engagement in the Cornell population by proposing Election Day to be made a holiday.

Sponsored by: Suraj Parikh, '24, Niles Hite '26, Nicholas Weising '24

Reviewed by: Academic Policy Committee, DD/MM/YYYY

Type of Action: Legislation

Originally Presented: 11/02/2023

Current Status:

Whereas, most Cornell students reside in the City of Ithaca, which has local elections in odd-numbered years and federal and state elections in even-numbered years;

Whereas, Cornell undergraduates comprise a substantial portion of eligible voters in Ithaca's Fourth and Fifth Wards;

Whereas, Cornell is currently in a competitive Congressional district where student votes have the ability to shift election outcomes;

Whereas, the entirety of Cornell University's campus and Collegetown is serviced by only a single polling station on West Campus;

Whereas, New York State does not have universal voting-by-mail;

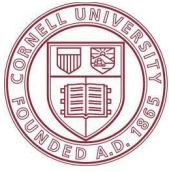
Whereas, having a single polling station in an inconvenient location for the majority of students makes voting a time-consuming process for students;

Whereas, students have difficulty voting because class schedules prevents them from finding the time to do so;

Whereas, the right to vote is the bedrock of free expression in a democracy, and Cornell University ought to be supporting that right in light of the Freedom of Expression Theme Year;

Whereas, canceling classes on Election Day would make it substantially easier for students to perform their civic duty of voting;

Whereas, Article III, Section 5a of the Student Assembly's Charter states: "The Provost will consult with the SA in the formulation of the University Calendar. The SA may review and ask for reconsideration of the calendar before it becomes final. In addition, the SA may propose changes in the calendar to the Provost."



Cornell University
Student Assembly

30 **Whereas**, the SA was not consulted in the formulation of the 2024-25 University Calendar, and
31 the SA, speaking on behalf of Cornell undergraduates, strongly believes that Election Day ought
32 to be a holiday;

33 **Be it therefore resolved**, that the Student Assembly proposes to Provost Michael Kotlikoff that,
34 beginning with the 2024-25 Academic Year, Election Day will be designated a holiday on which
35 classes are not held;

36 **Be it further resolved**, that Election Day is defined as the first Tuesday of November, except
37 when that falls on November 1st, in which case it is the second Tuesday of November, and that
38 Election Day occurs every year.

39

40 **Respectfully Submitted,**

41 Suraj Parikh '24

42 *Vice-President of External Affairs, Student Assembly*

43 *Minority Students at Large Liaison, Student Assembly*

44

45 Niles Hite '26

46 *CALS Representative, Student Assembly*

47 *Director of Philanthropy, Cornell Democrats*

48

49 Nicholas Weising '24

50 *President, Cornell Democrats*