



# Cornell University Student Assembly

Originally Presented on:	2/25/2016
Type of Action:	Recommendation
Status/Result:	New Business

1 S.A. Resolution #42  
2 Calling for Implementation of Open Syllabi

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4 ABSTRACT: This resolution recommends that professors upload a copy or draft of their syllabi  
5 online before the pre-enroll period.

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7 Sponsored by: Gabe Kaufman '18, Jung Won Kim '18

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9 **Whereas**, according to Article II of the Student Assembly Charter, the Student Assembly has “the  
10 authority and the responsibility to examine any matters which involve the interests or concern the  
11 welfare of the student community;” and

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13 **Whereas**, maintaining Cornell’s academic excellence is the primary interest and concern of Cornell  
14 students, professors, and the University Administration; and

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16 **Whereas**, “SA Resolution 29 (AY 2014-2015) Calling for Implementation of Open Course Evaluations”  
17 was returned by President Skorton because of (a) the variance in practice by the different colleges and (b)  
18 the fact that student evaluations of professors/classes are only one element of successful teaching; and

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20 **Whereas**, “UA Resolution 7 (AY 2014-2015) Calling for Implementation of Open Course Evaluations”  
21 was accepted by President Skorton with the following statement in his acknowledgment: “The deans  
22 seemed favorably impressed, especially with the notion of open syllabi, and somewhat sympathetic to  
23 creating an open course evaluation system on a common platform.

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25 **Whereas**, after consultation with professors and deans in the individual colleges, the main concern with  
26 an open course evaluation system is that students would choose classes based off of misleading  
27 information unrepresentative of the quality of the course; and

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29 **Whereas**, the core purpose of implementing an open course evaluation system is simply to give students  
30 more information about courses before they enroll; and

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32 **Whereas**, the Student Assembly acknowledges the difficulties of creating an open course evaluation  
33 system but still affirms the goals of UA Resolution 7 and SA Resolution 29: to give students more  
34 information before they enroll in courses; and

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36 **Whereas**, one of the most important pieces of information students can obtain before enrolling in  
37 courses is a copy of the syllabus; and

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39 **Whereas**, syllabi contain information presented by the professors themselves, and usually contain  
40 information on expected exam dates, workload, and required books and textbooks; and

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42 **Whereas**, all classes at Cornell have syllabi;

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44 **Be it therefore resolved**, that the Student Assembly recommends that where practical and appropriate,  
45 professors upload a digital copy of the syllabus to the information section of the official Class Roster  
46 Website: (classes.cornell.edu) before pre-enroll period begins.

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48 **Be it therefore resolved**, that to protect the privacy of the university and the faculty members, the  
49 syllabi should be uploaded in a location only accessible to Cornell students and faculty.  
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51 **Be it finally resolved**, that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Provost, the Dean of Faculty,  
52 the deans of each of the colleges, and the chairs of each academic department.  
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54 Respectfully Submitted,  
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56 Alexis Pollito '18  
57 *Member, Academic Policy Committee*  
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59 Varun Devatha '19  
60 *Freshmen Representative, Student Assembly*  
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62 Justin Selig '17  
63 *Engineering Representative, Student Assembly*  
64  
65 Dale Barbaria '19  
66 *Engineering Representative, Student Assembly*  
67  
68 Gabe Kaufman '18  
69 *Chair, Academic Policy Committee*  
70  
71 Jung Won Kim '18  
72 *Arts and Science Representative, Student Assembly*  
73  
74 *(Reviewed by: Academic Policy Committee, 2/23/2016)*