



Cornell University Student Assembly

Originally Presented on:	(9/29/16)
Type of Action:	Investigation
Status/Result:	New Business

1 S.A. Resolution #11
2 Charging an Ad-Hoc Committee with Investigating Student Assembly Membership Reform
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4 ABSTRACT: This resolution charges an ad-hoc committee with the responsibility of studying and
5 investigating the SA's current membership and operational structure and issuing a formal set of
6 recommendations to the SA on how to improve representation.
7

8 Sponsored by: Gabe Kaufman '18, Akhilesh Issur '17
9

10 **Whereas**, the Student Assembly desires to evaluate its internal procedures and membership
11 structure to better represent an increasingly diverse student body; and
12

13 **Whereas**, any changes to the fundamental structure of representative institutions should be made
14 with serious, careful, and open public deliberation; and
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16 **Whereas**, the Student Assembly wants to encourage dialogue across all student constituencies about
17 the structure of the SA; and
18

19 **Whereas**, the Student Assembly wants to begin the aforementioned membership and operational
20 self- evaluation process as soon as possible; and
21

22 **Whereas**, both prior experience with the SA and a new perspective on the SA are extremely
23 valuable in studying our representative structure; and
24

25 **Whereas**, the Student Assembly does not represent all students. This was affirmed by the 2015-2016
26 Student Assembly in their discussions surrounding the creation of the First Generation Student
27 Representative. This resolution was adopted **unanimously** by the previous assembly;
28

29 **Whereas**, there are significant barriers for students to gaining membership on the Student Assembly
30 and these barriers need to be removed. Some of these barriers include elitist language, access to
31 accommodation, and more;
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33 **Whereas**, non-members of the Student Assembly are left out of many discussions and decisions
34 that impact the student experience, as a result of ineffective outreach;
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36 **Whereas**, Student Assembly members have a responsibility to represent their constituencies;
37 however, they rarely inform or consult members of their constituencies before voting on resolutions
38 on the floor of the Student Assembly;
39

40 **Whereas**, all students are stakeholders in the representative structure of the Student Assembly;
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42 **Be it therefore resolved**, this resolution empowers and encourages each and every member of the
43 Student Assembly to convene open working groups to discuss restructuring the Student Assembly;
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45 **Be it further resolved,** the Student Assembly empowers and encourages all undergraduate students
46 to participate in the restructuring process and to conduct discussions and convene working groups
47 on the restructuring of the Student Assembly;
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49 **Be it further resolved,** that all undergraduate students may send recommendations to
50 studentassembly@cornell.edu **or any member of the Student Assembly or its Executive Board.**
51 All proposals shall be made publically available and shared with the undergraduate student body at
52 least **one day prior to the forum.** Additionally, a form shall be made available for all students to
53 provide comments electronically if they are unable to attend the forum;
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55 **Be it further resolved,** that all ideas and proposals be discussed at an open forum **held prior to**
56 **Thanksgiving Break at the discretion of the Executive Committee.** The Student Assembly
57 President shall moderate the forum and shall prioritize non-Student Assembly members on the
58 speakers list. At the end of the forum, all participants shall be given a voice and a vote in what the
59 next step forward is. Additionally, notes from the forum shall be made publically available to all
60 members of the student body;
61

62 **Be it further resolved,** that all Student Assembly members shall be required to attend this forum
63 and the attendance policy be in effect;
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65 **Be it further resolved,** that an independent organization such as Cornell Institutional Research and
66 Planning assist in compiling the opinions of the student body toward the structure of the Student
67 Assembly;
68

69 **Be it further resolved,** that the final decision about restructuring should provide a mechanism for
70 all students who choose to participate to have an equal voice and vote;
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72 **Be it further resolved,** that if the restructuring process is completed by the first week in February
73 that the Student Assembly update its internal documents and election rules to echo the will of the
74 student body and to implement the new structure for the Spring 2017 election;
75

76 **Be it therefore resolved,** that an ad-hoc investigatory committee titled “The Student Assembly
77 Investigative Committee on Membership Reform” (hereafter: SAICMR) be established effective
78 immediately; and
79

80 **Be it further resolved,** that SAICMR will be charged with directing restricting outreach effort,
81 compiling research by seeking feedback and data from the student body, and collecting
82 recommendations made both by the committee and other community members; and
83

84 **Be it further resolved,** that all SAICMR meetings will be held at least once every month, will be
85 accessible and open to the public, and will have an agenda and appended documentation forwarded
86 to all SAICMR and Assembly members at least 24 hours before the date when committee meetings
87 are held; and
88

89 **Be it further resolved**, that the nine members of SAICMR will be representative of the whole
90 Assembly, will be undergraduate students, and will be defined as follows:

91
92 SAICMR Chair: Voting member elected by the Student Assembly

93
94 SAICMR Members:

- 95 • One voting member belonging to the executive committee.
- 96 • Two voting members not belonging to the executive committee.
- 97 • Two underclassmen voting members not belonging to the executive committee
- 98 • One non-elected Student Assembly committee member.

99 Non-SA Members:

- 100 • Six community members.
- 101 • Two members who have not run in an election or applied to a committee.

102
103 **Be it finally resolved**, that the Assembly will appoint a slate of community members proposed by
104 the Vice President for Internal Operations and the chair of the committee, and will appoint
105 Assembly members through normal procedures in executive session.

106
107 **Respectfully Submitted,**

108 Gabe Kaufman '18

109 *Ex-Officio Member, Student Assembly*

110
111 Akhilesh Issur '17

112 *International Student Liaison At-Large, Student Assembly*

113
114 Paola Muñoz '17
115 *President, First in Class*

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117 Nicholas Karavolias '18
118 *Member of First in Class Advocacy Team*

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120 *(Reviewed by: SA Signature Petition, Date: valid upon the receipt of the signatures of a majority of SA members)*