

Resolution #3: Office of Ethics Bylaw Amendment

Abstract: This resolution amends and ratifies the Student Assembly Bylaws. These amendments to the Bylaws create an ex-officio position for the Chairperson of the Office of Ethics, permits member of the Office of Ethics to remain during executive session, and establish the format of the Office of Ethics.

Sponsored by: Michelle Song '25

Reviewed by: Office of Ethics, 09/01/2022

Type of Action: Internal Policy

Originally Presented: 5/5/2022

Current Status: New Business

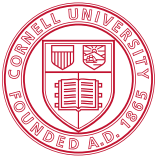
Whereas, the Office of Ethics was established through Student Assembly Resolution 22 as an external executive office to hold the Student Assembly accountable, maintain a high moral standard, and provide necessary ethical guidance and procedure to the Student Assembly;

Whereas, the membership of the Office of Ethics has actively researched, analyzed, coordinated, argued, and discussed ethical philosophies and applications;

Whereas, the members of the Office of Ethics have unanimously agreed that the undergraduate Cornell community, as well as the Student Assembly, is in need of a structured system imbued with the authority to ensure accountability, ethical conduct, justice, and growth;

Whereas, the current language utilized in “Section 2: Ex-officio Executive Committee Positions” of “Article I: Ex-Officio Members,” “Section 5: Executive Session” of “Article IV: Meetings,” and “Section 5: External Committees” of “Article VI: Committees” lines 10-19, 233-238, 562-617 prevent the Office of Ethics from becoming this type of system;

Be it therefore resolved, that “Section 2: Ex-officio Executive Committee Positions” of “Article I: Ex-Officio Members,” “Section 5: Executive Session” of “Article IV: Meetings,” and “Section 5: External Committees” of “Article VI: Committees” lines 10-19, 233-238, 562-617 of the Student Assembly Bylaws be amended as follows:



28 **ARTICLE I: EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS**

29 **Section 2: Ex-Officio Executive Committee Positions**

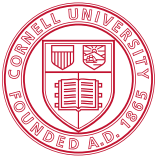
- 30 A. The SA can grant an ex-officio position to any member of the Cornell community to serve
31 as the Executive Archivist.
- 32 B. The SA can grant an ex-officio position to any member of the Cornell community to serve
33 as the Parliamentarian.
- 34 C. The SA can grant an ex-officio position to any member of the Cornell Community to serve
35 as Director of Elections.
- 36 D. The SA can grant an ex-officio position to any member of the Cornell Community to serve
37 as the Student Advocate.
- 38 E. The SA can grant an ex-officio position to any member of the Cornell Community to serve
39 as the Director of Student Government Relations.
- 40 F. The SA must grant an ex-officio position to any member elected by the Office of Ethics to
41 serve as the Chairperson.

42 **ARTICLE IV: MEETINGS**

43 **Section 2: Executive Session**

44 With the concurrence of two-thirds (2/3) of the voting members in attendance, the SA or any of its
45 committees may go into executive session during a regularly scheduled meeting only to discuss
46 confidential matters as defined by this Charter. No policy determinations will be made in executive
47 session. The Student Assembly may also hold executive sessions for internal elections and planning
48 purposes. Executive session shall be closed to non-voting, non-executive members of the assembly
49 **except the Chairperson of the Office of Ethics and all present members of the Office of Ethics.**
50 Community members may be invited by the assembly to participate in an executive session. Secret
51 ballot votes shall be reserved for executive sessions.

52 **ARTICLE VI: COMMITTEES**



53 **Section 5: EXTERNAL COMMITTEES**

54 **C. Office of Ethics**

55 a. ~~Name, Mission, and Affiliation~~

56 i. ~~Name~~—The name of the office shall be the Office of Ethics.

57 b. Mission:

58 i. ~~Mission~~—The mission of the Office of Ethics shall be to pursue any necessary
59 ethics concerns of SA members and directly elected undergraduate
60 representatives to the UA.

61 ii. The Office of Ethics will investigate perceived ethical violations and draft reports
62 to the SA for guidance and potential repercussions.

63 iii. The Office of Ethics will be available for consulting and support on SA ethical
64 issues for both SA members and the student body.

65 c. Affiliation

66 i. ~~Affiliation~~—The Office will review evaluate all concerns submitted by
67 community members the student body that involve are against any SA members,
68 SA committees, SA elections, or directly elected undergraduate representatives of
69 the UA.

70 ii. The Office of Ethics shall be affiliated as an external executive office of the
71 Cornell Student Assembly.

72 iii. The Office of Ethics shall work jointly with the Elections Committee to review
73 any potential election violations or concerns.

74 d. Roles and Responsibilities

75 i. A quorum shall consist of five members of the Office of Ethics.

76 ii. ~~Chairperson Director~~ of the Office of Ethics:

77 1. The ~~Chairperson Director~~ will chair all Office of Ethics meetings.

78 2. The ~~Chairperson Director~~ shall only vote in the event of a tie.

79 3. The Chairperson shall have a term limit of one academic year.

80 4. The Chairperson shall correspond directly with the Student Assembly
81 on matters of ethics and ethical decorum in its meetings and all
82 proceedings.

83 a) In the event of absence, the Chairperson may select any member
84 of the Office of Ethics to serve as an ex-officio member of the
85 Executive Committee of the SA.

86 iii. Review all alleged ethical violations submitted to the Office via:

87 1. Qualtrics,

88 2. Email,

89 3. Personal contact with a committee member of the Office of Ethics.



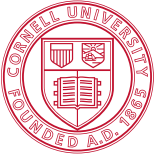
Cornell University Student Assembly

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- iv. Open investigations on perceived ethical violations
 1. The Office of Ethics can open its own investigation on an ethical matter by a simple majority vote.
 - v. Voting Members of the Office of Ethics:
 1. The Office of Ethics shall consist of seven voting members.
 2. All voting members shall serve for the duration of one academic year unless their term is renewed by the incoming Director of the Office of Ethics of their undergraduate academic career.
 3. Office of Ethics Voting members can be removed before their term expires by a unanimous vote of the entire voting membership of the Office of Ethics.
 - a) The subject of the removal vote must abstain from voting.
 4. All voting members shall be non-Student Assembly and non-University Assembly members of the Cornell undergraduate student population.
 5. Voting members may not seek SA or UA office through their for the academic year following their term of service in the Office of Ethics.
 - vi. Update the Student Assembly of its proceedings and its mission on an annual basis at a hearing conducted during one of the first three general assembly meetings of the academic year. This will be formally referred to as the “Office of Ethics’ annual report.”
 - vii. The Office of Ethics will be commissioned with interpreting and applying the guidelines set forth in the SA Code of Ethics.
 1. The Office of Ethics will solely be tasked with the ability to revise the Code of Ethics.
 - e. Recruitment of the Office of Ethics Members
 - i. The first seven voting members shall be appointed individually by any SA member and confirmed by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the entire voting membership of the Student Assembly.
 1. Except for nominations following a failed community vote, all nominations for the Office of Ethics must be unanimously voted on by the Office of Ethics prior to the vote by SA.
 2. A week-long period in between nominations and appointments shall be dedicated to giving SA voting members the opportunity to speak one-on-one with each nominee.



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- 125 ii. ~~The first slate of voting members must select the Director of the Office of~~
126 Ethics internally by a simple majority of the Office before the end of the
127 semester.
- 128 iii. ~~At the beginning~~ Before the conclusion of each academic year, the ~~outgoing~~
129 voting membership of the Office of Ethics must select the ~~Chairperson~~ Director
130 of the Office of Ethics internally by a simple majority vote of the entire voting
131 membership of the Office.
- 132 iv. ~~The Director of the Office of Ethics shall decide upon the voting membership~~
133 of the incoming Office before the conclusion of each academic year.
- 134 f. Vote of Confidence
- 135 i. The Student Assembly will assess the work of the ~~Office of the~~ Office of Ethics
136 during the previous academic year and **must** conduct a vote of confidence on an
137 annual basis during or following ~~by one~~ **any** of the first three general assembly
138 meetings of each SA term.
- 139 1. **Following the Office of Ethics' annual report, as defined in Article VI,**
140 Section 5, Subsection C, Clause D, Paragraph VI, a simple majority
141 vote of the SA will sustain a Vote of Confidence in the Office of
142 Ethics to operate in the present academic year.
- 143 2. **In the event of a failed Vote of Confidence, the SA may commence a**
144 Vote of No Confidence by simple majority vote on the grounds that
145 the Office has failed to uphold and execute its mission, as defined in
146 Article VI, Section 5, Subsection C, Clause B.
- 147 a) **The Chairperson of the Office of Ethics and all present members**
148 of the Office may directly address the concerns brought against
149 the Office prior to the vote of the SA to commence a Vote of No
150 Confidence.
- 151 b) **If the motion to commence a Vote of No Confidence fails, the**
152 SA must return to a Vote of Confidence as defined in Article VI,
153 Section 5, Subsection C, Clause F, Paragraph I.
- 154 3. **A Vote of No Confidence shall be considered sustained in the event**
155 that two-thirds (2/3) of the voting members of the SA votes in favor.
- 156 a) **If the Vote of No Confidence is not sustained, the Assembly**
157 must return to a Vote of Confidence as defined in Article VI,
158 Section 5, Subsection C, Clause F, Paragraph I.
- 159 ii. In the event of a **sustained Vote of No Confidence**, a community vote of the
160 entire undergraduate population shall be taken in order to remove all Office of
161 Ethics members **by two-thirds (2/3) majority**.



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- 162 iii. In the event of a failed community vote, all Office of Ethics members would
163 continue to serve.
- 164 iv. ~~In addition to the annual vote of confidence, an additional vote of confidence~~
165 ~~can be called at any point during the academic year.~~
- 166 g. Office of Ethics Bylaws
- 167 i. All bylaw proposals to Article VI, Section 5, Subsection C, must be approved by
168 the Office of Ethics by a two-thirds (2/3) majority before coming to the SA.
- 169 ii. Changes to the Office of Ethics bylaws may only occur during the first three SA
170 meetings.
- 171 h. ~~The Student Assembly Code of Ethics~~
- 172 i. ~~Before the conclusion of the 2021-2022 academic year, the Office of Ethics will~~
173 ~~be charged with creating a Student Assembly Code of Ethics that must be~~
174 ~~approved by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the entire voting membership of the~~
175 ~~Student Assembly.~~
- 176 ii. ~~The SA Code of Ethics should include, but is not limited to, including:~~
- 177 1. ~~An expansion of the language outlined in the Student Assembly~~
178 ~~Standing Rules, Section 2: Ethical Standards and Attendance Policy,~~
179 ~~Section A;~~
- 180 2. ~~An overview of possible ethical conduct offenses;~~
- 181 3. ~~The process of determining a violation of ethics;~~
- 182 4. ~~The process of recommending the appropriate disciplinary action to a~~
183 ~~third party.~~
- 184 iii. ~~The Office of Ethics will be charged with interpreting and applying the~~
185 ~~guidelines set forth in the SA Code of Ethics.~~

187 **Respectfully Submitted,**

188 Michelle Song '25

189 *Representative at Large, Student Assembly*