

1 **Resolution 57: Suspending the Cornell Interim Expressive Activity Policy to**
2 **Promote Freedom of Expression**

3 **Abstract:** This resolution addresses concerns with Cornell's new Interim Expressive Activity
4 Policy, which imposes significant restrictions on expressive activities without robust student
5 input. It calls for the suspension of policy implementation and urges thorough discussion within
6 the Student Assembly to address contradictions and uphold freedom of speech and expression
7 principles.

8 **Sponsored by:** Jahmal Wallen '24, Cornell Progressives, Jewish Voices for Peace, MECha,
9 HAVEN, Young Democratic Socialists of America

10 **Reviewed by:**

11 **Type of Action:** Recommendation

12 **Originally Presented:** 02/22/2024

13 **Current Status:** New Business

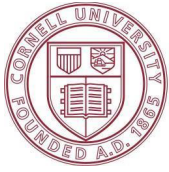
14 **Whereas,** on January 24, 2024, the Cornell Administration announced its new Cornell Interim
15 Expressive Activity Policy, without robust discussion, debate, input or a vote by the Student Assembly.
16 Severely undermining collaborative policymaking and representative participation.

17
18 **Whereas,** the system of shared governance, developed fifty years ago at Cornell University, was
19 established to create a binding social contract during a period of national divisions, charging this body
20 with examining matters concerning the welfare of the student community and effecting involvement in
21 campus governance.

22
23 **Whereas,** the Interim Expressive Activity Policy includes substantial restrictions on expressive activity,
24 including:

- 25 1. Establishing an “expectation” of registration for outdoor demonstrations of 50 or more people;
26 and all indoor demonstrations, tabling, or other expressive activity;
- 27 2. Prohibiting the use of candles or lamps unless approved by health and safety personnel;
- 28 3. Requiring that all posters, signs, flyers and banners must be dated, and must include the name of
29 the sponsoring Cornell organization or unit or individual;
- 30 4. Prohibiting placing posters, signs and banners on trees or any outside structures;
- 31 5. Limiting the use of amplified sound to only in front of Day Hall and Ho Plaza between 12:00
32 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. without prior written approval.
- 33 6. Allowing administration to use their sole discretion in prohibiting protests.

34
35 **Whereas,** the Interim Expressive Activity Policy states that it will be enforced through “the appropriate
36 office for disciplinary action” and does not specify the penalties for breaking the rules;



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38 **Whereas**, these policies stand in stark contrast to the Freedom of Expression theme year, which asks us to
39 “to challenge personal beliefs, to consider new ideas and unfamiliar perspectives, and to foster discussion
40 around core freedoms for democracy and higher education.” which is protected in the Cornell University
41 Policy Statement on Academic Freedom and Freedom of Speech and Expression, the Cornell Faculty
42 Handbook, and the Cornell Student Code of Conduct;

43
44 **Whereas**, the Cornell Campus Code of Conduct states: “Outdoor picketing, marches, rallies, and other
45 demonstrations generally pose no threat of long-lasting exclusive use of University grounds or property.
46 No university permit is required for such outdoor activities. The presence of a counter-protest does not
47 itself constitute a disruption to a University function or authorized event”;

48
49 **Whereas**, there are serious concerns about contradictions between the new restrictions in the “Interim
50 Expressive Activity Policy” and protections of academic freedom and freedom of expression for faculty,
51 student, and staff, as provided in the Cornell Policy Statement on Academic Freedom and Freedom of
52 Speech and Expression, the Faculty Handbook, the Student Code of Conduct, and the prior Campus Code
53 of Conduct;

54
55 **Whereas**, this interim policy appears to be in direct reaction to the rise in protest, rallies, and
56 demonstrations on the Ithaca campus and globally. Which have inspired dissuasion, silencing, and
57 repression;

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59 **Be it resolved**, that the Cornell administration shall suspend any implementation of any new restrictions
60 in the Interim Expressive Activity Policy, including those listed in the third “whereas” clause of this
61 Resolution;

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63 **Be it finally resolved**, that the Student Assembly shall engage our constituents and in full discussion and
64 debate about the Cornell Interim Expressive Activity Policy, including concerns about contradictions
65 between provisions in the Policy and other Cornell Policy protections of academic freedom and freedom
66 of speech and expression.

67
68 **Respectfully Submitted,**

69 Jahmal Wallen ‘24

70 *Undergraduate Representative to the University Assembly, Student Assembly*