



Cornell University
Student Assembly

Originally Presented On	03/05/2020
Type of Action	Legislation
Status/Result	New Business

1 S.A. Resolution #50
2 Requesting the Establishment of the Cornell University Police Department
3 Oversight Committee

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5 ABSTRACT: This resolution is intended to urge the establishment of the Cornell University
6 Police Oversight Committee that will oversee the activities of CUPD and provide
7 recommendations based upon them.

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9 **Sponsored by: Uche Chukwukere '21 , Gavin Martin '20, Tomás Reuning '21**

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11 **Whereas,** Cornell University has a responsibility to ensure the safety and well-being of all its
12 faculty, staff, employees, and students. One of the ways that safety is implemented and ensured
13 is through the Cornell University Police Department.

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15 **Whereas,** The Cornell University Police department is an internationally accredited organization
16 that operates 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, from its headquarters in Barton Hall. The
17 department has 68 members, 43 of them sworn officers who patrol campus on foot, in vehicles,
18 on bicycles, and with explosive detection K-9s. The mission of Cornell Police is to protect lives
19 and property, maintain order, prevent crimes, receive and investigate reports of crimes, and
20 provide other law-enforcement services. The department is responsive to the special needs of
21 Cornell's large and diverse community—a community of people who come from across the
22 United States and the world to study and work at Cornell.¹

23
24 **Whereas,** An oversight committee will be able to give the non-police community a medium to
25 voice concerns and provide criticism of law enforcement operations

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27 **Whereas,** The Police Oversight Committee will be used to provide oversight, guidance,
28 direction, and facilitate communication to create an understanding of expectations and roles
29 between the Community and the University Police.

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31 **Whereas,** This Oversight Committee will create a collaborative partnership between the
32 CUPD and the Cornell Community it is sworn to protect. This committee will also provide

33 insight on the safety and security concerns of the highly diverse Cornell community and aid in
34 monitoring police activities. The committee will make recommendations on the basis of
35 grievances that are submitted directly to the committee or the Cornell University Police
36 Department.

37
38 **Whereas**, institutions have implemented some form of a Police Oversight/Advisory Committee,
39 including but not limited to, Brown University, University of Michigan, Villanova University,
40 Northern Michigan University, and etc.

41
42 **Whereas**, A Police Oversight Committee is a way of providing increased agency and autonomy
43 to marginalized communities and communities of color.

44 **Be it therefore resolved**, The Committee will also do as follows:

- 45 1. Function as an advisory board for issues and concerns involving the Cornell University
46 Police Department
- 47 2. Provide input on initiatives to enhance campus safety
- 48 3. Promote and support public awareness of the University's police services and programs
- 49 4. Advise and make recommendations to the President of the University concerning the
50 provision of police services to the University community
- 51 5. To be briefed on all use of force incidents
- 52 6. Review a summary of police citations issued and criminal charges filed
- 53 7. Serve as a liaison between the University community and police officials
- 54 8. Review the training, practices, and policies implemented by the Cornell University Police
55 department

56 **Be it further resolved**, The Chair of the Police Oversight Committee should be chosen
57 internally by the committee board members and shall hold the position for no longer than (one)
58 academic calendar year. The chair of the committee shall report to relevant university officials,
59 such as the Cornell Student Assembly, Graduate and Professional Student Assembly, University
60 Assembly, Faculty Senate, Employee Assembly, and the Audit, Risk, and Compliance
61 Committee of the Cornell Board of Trustees. This report should come at the beginning of each
62 school semester and/or at the request of the governing body to know the progress of the
63 committee and any recommendations that have been released.

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65 **Be it further resolved,** The committee is not intended to replace existing University processes
66 and will strive to work collaboratively with the Cornell University Police department.

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68 **Be it further resolved,** The committee shall be comprised of seventeen regular members
69 appointed for terms of one academic calendar year. Initial appointments will be made for the first
70 year of the committee. The membership will consist of the following: two faculty members
71 appointed by the Faculty Senate; two members of the Cornell University Police Department
72 appointed by the Chief of Police; nine undergraduate students appointed by the Undergraduate
73 Student Assembly with at least one of them being from the Office of the Student Advocate; two
74 graduate students appointed by the Graduate and Professional Student Assembly; two employee
75 members appointed by the Employee Assembly and two individuals external to the University
76 appointed by the Chair of the committee in tandem with a committee wide-approval of the
77 intended candidates.

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79 **Be it further resolved,** The Committee shall meet when in receipt of a grievance filed directly
80 with the Committee. Business may not be conducted unless a quorum of the members is present.
81 A quorum shall be one more than half of the current membership.

82 **Be it further resolved,** The Committee also shall meet at least two times a year to receive and
83 discuss the regularly scheduled reports made by the Police Chief regarding grievances submitted
84 to the Department.

85 **Be it further resolved,** All grievances and reports made to the Committee pursuant to these
86 procedures shall be treated confidentially by the Committee. Information about a grievance will
87 not be released by committee members, except as specified in these procedures, or as required by
88 law. The Committee as a whole may release written statements to advise the public of the
89 procedural status of an ongoing investigation.

90 **Be it further resolved,** The Committee may refer a grievance to the Police Chief, who shall
91 conduct an investigation in accordance with University policies and procedures. The Committee
92 may supplement the referral with any specific suggestions, recommendations, or concerns it has
93 with regard to the issues to be investigated or reviewed.

94 **Be it further resolved,** At any time, the Committee may request an interim report on the
95 progress of an investigation/review of a grievance. The report may be oral and/or in writing.

96 **Be it further resolved,** Upon completion of the investigation or review, the Police Chief shall
97 report to the Committee. The report shall include a summary of: the steps followed, the findings
98 and conclusion, any actions taken, and an explanation for any unreasonable delays. The report

99 may be oral and/or in writing. The Committee may accept the report as final, or it may ask the
100 Police Chief to investigate further and submit another report

101 **Be it further resolved,** Grievances may also be submitted directly to the Police Department.
102 Grievances submitted to the Department shall be reported within ten business days to the
103 Committee by the Police Chief.

104 **Be it further resolved,** The Police Chief will meet with the Committee on a semi-annual basis to
105 provide a summarized report of all grievances received by the Department during the previous
106 six-month period.

107 **Be it further resolved,** Grievances about a police officer or the Police Department may be
108 submitted to the Committee at the designated and forthcoming reporting system.

109 **Be it further resolved,** If the Police Chief objects to the hearing, the Police Chief may register
110 that objection to the Committee. If, after receiving the Committee's response, the Police Chief
111 continues to object, the Police Chief may appeal directly to the President of the University for a
112 decision.

113 Upon completion of the investigation of a grievance, the Committee may:

- 114 1. Determine that no further action is warranted, and notify all affected persons of that
115 decision.
- 116 2. Report its findings and recommendations - including any recommendations for
117 disciplinary measures against any officer of the Police Department-to the Executive
118 Director, Division of Public Safety and Security. No portion of any such report that
119 contains confidential information provided to the Committee shall be made public unless
120 required by law. The Executive Director shall review the report and advise the
121 Committee of the disposition of the matter.

122 University Human Resources will provide administrative support to the Committee, including
123 receipt of grievances submitted to the Committee, logistical and communications support for the
124 nomination and election processes for faculty and staff representatives, and any other needs
125 identified by the Committee.

126 **Be it further resolved,** These procedures must be reviewed by the University Counsel and
127 approved by the President of the University. If the Committee proposes changes to the
128 procedures, the President may approve them; however, only the President may reject them.

129 **Be it finally resolved,** The implementation of the Cornell University Police Oversight
130 Committee be established and implemented in full with cooperation from administration

131 **Respectfully submitted,**

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133 Uche Chukwukere '21
134 *Undesignated Representative At Large, Student Assembly*

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136 Gavin Martin '20
137 *College of Arts & Sciences, Student Assembly*

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140 *LGBTQIA+ Liaison At-Large, Student Assembly*

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142 *(Reviewed by: Discharge Petition)*