

Cornell University Student Assembly

Student Assembly Meeting

AGENDA

March 23, 2023

4:45 - 6:30pm

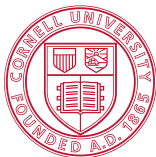
MEMORIAL ROOM, WILLARD STRAIGHT HALL

[ZOOM](#)

Meeting ID: 947 1648 3660 | Passcode: 303164

1. Call to Order and Roll Call
2. Land Acknowledgement of the Gayogohó:nq̓ (Cayuga Nation)
3. Late Additions to the Agenda
4. Consent Agenda: [March 16 Meeting Minutes](#)
5. Open Microphone
6. Announcements and Reports
7. Initiatives
8. Presentations and Forum
9. Business of the Day
10. New Business
 1. [Resolution 31: Content Warning](#)
11. Adjournment

If you are in need of special accommodations, contact the Office of the Assemblies at (607) 255-3715 or Student Disability Services at (607) 254-4545 prior to the meeting.



Cornell University Student Assembly

Cornell University Student Assembly

Minutes of the March 16, 2023 Meeting

4:45 PM – 6:30 PM

407 Willard Straight Hall

I. Call to Order

- a. President V. Valencia called the meeting to order at 4:53pm

II. Roll Call

- a. *Members Present [22]: S. Ali, M. Baker, R. Chatterji, R. DeLorenzo, G. Dong, K. Everett, J. Kalinski, P. Kuehl, A. Lampert, K. Liu, L. Lu, C. Newell, A. Richmond, N. Son, S. Williams, Y. Yuan, V. Valencia, B. Kotb, A. Lewis, J. Mayen, M. Song, J.P. Swenson*
- b. *Members Excused: D. Nachman, C. Ting, S. Bhardwaj, D. Cady, E. D'Angelo, P. Da Silveira, B. Mehretu*

III. Land Acknowledgment of the Gayogohó:nq̓ (Cayuga Nation)

- a. President V. Valencia stated the land acknowledgment

IV. Late Additions to the Agenda

- a. None

V. Consent Agenda

- a. Approval of the March 9, 2023 meeting minutes
 - i. S. Williams motions to approve the meeting minutes, passed by unanimous consent

VI. Open Microphone

- a. None

VII. Announcements and Reports

- a. J. Withers states President Pollack will be coming April 13th to the SA and questions are due a week in advance
- b. J. Withers continues that they are doing user testing on a new Office of the Assemblies website if anyone is interested in helping out
- c. J. Withers states the Office of Student Conduct is seeking student nominations for the hearing and review board if anyone is interested



Cornell University Student Assembly

VIII. Initiatives

- a. R. DeLorenzo states the IFC is hosting a clean-up in Collegetown tomorrow at 6pm if anyone wants to join

IX. Presentation and Forums

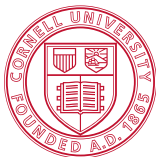
- a. None

X. Business of the Day

- a. None

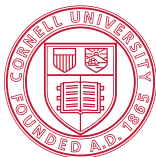
XI. New Business

- a. Resolution 28 is presented by S. Williams and I. Chasen
 - i. I. Chasen summarizes the purpose of the Resolution
 - ii. S. Williams reads the Resolution aloud
 - iii. P. Da Silveira states his support and motions to pass the Resolution, passed by unanimous consent
 - iv. Resolution 28 passes unanimously
- b. R. Verma presents Resolution 29
 - i. R. Verma states the purpose of the Resolution and points out the important changes
 - ii. M. Baker asks if the Elections Committee is meeting together or separately with the Office of Ethics?
 - iii. R. Verma states there are Office of Ethics members on the Elections Committee and they will work together
 - iv. P. Da Silveira asks for thoughts on amending the roles regarding endorsements
 - v. A. Lewis states it would be more honest if people were allowed to work together
 - vi. P. Da Silveira states it is unnecessary obstacle and already happens to some extent
 - vii. M. Song states she agrees with a lot of the points and thinks we should allow slating and ticketing
 - viii. D. Nachman asks how that would work logistically
 - ix. M. Song responds sections 3 and 4 could be amended by adding "without their expressed consent"



Cornell University Student Assembly

- x. R. Verma states this has been discussed and he does agree to some extent, but they have had issues with political organizations creating slates of candidates and this helps prevent that
- xi. R. Verma asks which sections specifically M. Song would like to change?
- xii. M. Song responds she thinking about redacting subsections 1 and 2 and adding “without their expressed consent” to subsections 3 and 4
- xiii. B. Mehretu states by allowing slating it makes it much more difficult for freshmen and transfer students to get involved and this will make it unfair
- xiv. P. Da Silveira responds that we could maybe consider making an exception for freshmen and transfer students, but the SA does not have the popularity for people to be rushing to fill every seat
- xv. J. Kalinski asks about having ticketing in the Spring, but not during the later Fall elections to alleviate some of the concerns
- xvi. N. Sharma states the Office of Ethics looked into this and slating of an entire group of people can lead to cliques of people and political parties and it becomes difficult for others to even run
- xvii. Continues that there is value in looking at each person individually rather than as part of a slate
- xviii. D. Nachman states there could just be a ban of slating by organizations on campus, instead of just no slating at all
- xix. B. Mehretu states slating can create a toxic environment and he’s sure it would happen again
- xx. A. Lampert states she agrees and that there are a lot of loopholes to only banning slating by organizations
- xxi. A. Lampert motions for a straw poll on whether slating is allowed, passed by unanimous consent
- xxii. S. Williams asks if the proposal is to just allow slating for President and VP or the entire ticket?
- xxiii. P. Da Silveria states the original intention was for President and VP to be able to work together
- xxiv. P. Kuehl states he is a fan of transparency and there already informal slating, so putting specific rules and regulations is beneficial
- xxv. M. Song states she sees slating as a lower barrier to entry and way to create a more productive assembly
- xxvi. R. Chatterji states he agrees slating would be good because it wouldn’t just fall into two party system and it would open the door for people to get their voice out there more



Cornell University Student Assembly

- xxvii. B. Mehretu states with slating there will be a group of people controlling it, but if people really think it will be beneficial, he is for it
- xxviii. J. Kalinski states that campaigning can be a very large time commitment and slating can reduce that barrier to entry
- xxix. J.P. Swenson states there are very few students who are actually voting in these elections
- xxx. K. Everett states she didn't know about running for SA until a week before petitions were due, so if there was slating there would've been a disadvantage to getting started
- xxxi. P. Da Silveira states endorsements don't really matter if you aren't out there campaigning
- xxxii. P. Da Silveira motions to strike subsection 1 and 2 of Article 1, section E, and to add to end of subsection 3 "without their explicit consent"
- xxxiii. P. Da Silveira withdraws the motion
- xxxiv. M. Baker states she is concerned with striking section 2 because you could pool money with your slate
- xxxv. P. Da Silveira states an amendment could be added to Campaign Finance
- xxxvi. M. Baker states she was more asking why section 2 was being struck
- xxxvii. V. Valencia states the election rules need to be passed today, so we can have an actual election, so we should pass the rules as they are and amend them later
- xxxviii. R. Verma states he agrees and there is a big time dependency and this can be discussed for next Spring
- xxxix. A. Richmond motions to amend Article 1, Section E, to strike Subsection 1 and add "without expressed consent" to the end of Subsection 3 and 4," M. Baker dissents for a better way to word it, A. Richmond withdraws the motion
 - xl. M. Baker motions to amend Article 1, Section E, Subsection General Rules, Subsection 1 to include "...without their expressed consent," Subsection 3 to include "...without their expressed consent," Subsection 4 to include "...without their expressed consent," passes in a vote of 17-2-4
 - xli. I. Chasen shares words of caution about slating
 - xlii. M. Baker motions to end debate, S. Williams dissents, M. Baker withdraws the motion
 - xliii. I. Chasen motions to reconsider the previous amendment, fails in a vote of 5-13-5
 - xliv. R. De Lorenzo motions to vote, S. Williams dissents, passes in a vote of 19-1-3



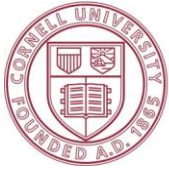
Cornell University Student Assembly

- xliv. In a vote of 21-0-3, Resolution 29 passes
- c. R. De Lorenzo presents Resolution 30
 - i. R. De Lorenzo reads the Resolution aloud
 - ii. V. Valencia states this passes unless there's a 2/3 vote to overturn the decision
 - iii. J.P. Swenson motions to end debate, passed by unanimous consent
 - iv. Resolution 30 is approved

XII. Adjournment

- a. B. Mehretu motions to adjourn, passed by unanimous consent
 - i. The meeting was adjourned at 5:50pm

Respectfully Submitted,
Megan Birmingham
Clerk of the Assembly



Resolution 31: Mandating Content Warnings for Traumatic Content in the Classroom

Abstract: Urging university officials to require instructors who present graphic traumatic content that may trigger the onset of symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) to provide advance notice to students and refrain from penalizing students who opt out of exposure to such content.

Sponsored by: Claire Ting '25, Shelby Williams '25

Reviewed by: Academic Policy Committee, 4-0-2

Type of Action: Recommendation

Originally Presented: 03/23/2023

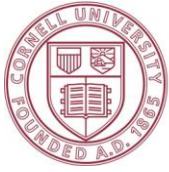
Current Status: New Business

Whereas, exposure to triggering classroom content can negatively affect students with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), resulting in emotional and physical symptoms that can lead to poorer academic performance and increased absenteeism;¹

Whereas, it is not a standard requirement for instructors at Cornell to provide content warnings for triggering classroom content;

Whereas, “triggering classroom content” can refer to a range of topics, including but not limited to: sexual assault, domestic violence, self-harm, suicide, child abuse, racial violence, transphobic violence, homophobic harassment, etc.;

¹ O'Donnell, M. L., Creamer, M., Bryant, R. A., Schnyder, U., Shalev, A., & McFarlane, A. C. (2016). Posttraumatic disorders following injury: an empirical and methodological review. *Clinical psychology review*, 47, 143-154.



Cornell University Student Assembly

Whereas, classrooms that do not provide advance warning for triggering content negatively affect students with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD);

Whereas, exposure to trauma-related information can trigger PTSD symptoms in individuals with a history of trauma, and in a classroom setting, can elicit strong emotional and physical reactions in students with PTSD;²

Whereas, students with PTSD may experience a range of emotional and physical symptoms in response to trauma-related content, including anxiety, fear, irritability, flashbacks, and panic attacks;³

Whereas, scholars at Cornell have discussed how providing advance content warnings can help prepare students to engage with traumatic material in a rational and calm manner, without censoring or restricting academic freedom;⁴

Whereas, including content warnings gives respect and acknowledgment to the effect of triggering content on students with PTSD, both diagnosed and undiagnosed;

Whereas, doing so makes the discussion of sensitive academic topics more predictable, therefore balancing the academic freedom of instructors to teach with the needs of the student body;

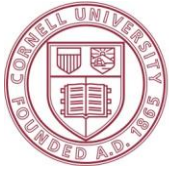
Be it therefore resolved, the University preserve the Cornellian values of “any person, any study” and recognize the importance of supporting students with PTSD and other conditions;

Be it further resolved, Student Assembly implores all instructors to provide content warnings on the syllabus for any traumatic content that may be discussed, including but not limited to:

² Bray, R. M., Hourani, L. L., Rae, K. L., & Dever, J. A. (2000). Trauma-related events in schools: A critical incident study of emotional impact on students and teachers. *Journal of School Health*, 70(7), 305-312.

³ O'Donnell et al., *Id*

⁴ <https://www.wnycstudios.org/podcasts/otm/segments/defense-trigger-warnings-cornell>



Cornell University Student Assembly

sexual assault, domestic violence, self-harm, suicide, child abuse, racial hate crimes, transphobic violence, homophobic harassment, xenophobia;

Be it finally resolved, students who choose to opt-out of exposure to triggering content will not be penalized, contingent on their responsibility to make up any missed content.

Respectfully Submitted,

Claire Ting '25

Representative to the School of Industrial and Labor Relations, Student Assembly

Shelby Williams '25

College of Arts & Sciences Representative, Student Assembly

Academic Policy Committee Chair, Student Assembly