

# Cornell University Student Assembly

## **Cornell University Student Assembly**

Agenda of the Thursday, March 8, 2018 Meeting  
4:45pm-6:30pm in Willard Straight Hall: Memorial Room

- I. Call to Order & Roll Call**
- II. Open Microphone**
- III. Approval of the Minutes:**
  - a. March 8<sup>th</sup> Minutes
- IV. Announcements & Reports**
  - a. Pres. Kim – Inviting PTF to speak next week
- V. Business of the Day:**
  - a. Resolution 37: Improving Communication and Access to the Student Body
  - b. Resolution 38: Reinstating Statement Policy
- VI. New Business**
  - a. Resolution 40: Co-Op Equity
    - i. Resolution 40 Addendum
  - b. Resolution 41: ASL
    - i. Resolution 41 Addendum
- VII. Additional Announcements and Reports**
  - a. GPSA, FS, EA, UA Liaison Reports
- VIII. Adjournment**



# Cornell University Student Assembly

## Cornell University Student Assembly

Minutes of the Thursday, March 8, 2018 Meeting  
4:45pm-6:30pm in Willard Straight Hall: Memorial Room

### I. Call to Order & Roll Call

- a. J. Kim called the meeting to order at 4:48 pm.
- b. Roll Call:
  - i. *Present:*
  - ii. *Absent:*

### II. Open Microphone

- a. No speakers at the open microphone.

### III. Approval of the Minutes:

- a. March 1<sup>st</sup> Minutes
  - i. There was a motion to amend the minutes to correctly reflect Tyler Henry's title as Vice President of Diversity and Inclusion of the Interfraternity Council – **amended**.
  - ii. Motion to approve the minutes – **approved**.

### IV. Announcements & Reports

- a. Academic Policy Committee
  - i. Alexis Pollitto said that the Committee is continuing to collect results on their survey regarding course pre-enrollment, as the response rate is not what they would like it to be at. She urged the Student Assembly to continue sharing the survey with their constituents, and added that a resolution is currently being produced that would address the fact that Cornell is currently a test site for neither the MCAT nor the general GRE.
- b. Mayra Valadez
  - i. M. Valadez wished the Assembly a happy International Women's Day, and commented that this day does not empower all women. She added that she, Joseph Anderson, and N. Hernandez specifically would like to celebrate women such as (but not limited to) minority women, transgender women, differently-abled women, and women who are survivors of sexual assault. She said they would also like to acknowledge the lack of representation of women on the Assembly, at Cornell, and in the United States government, and that everyone must do more to empower women across the world.

### V. Presentations:

- a. Consensual Relationships Policy Committee
  - i. V. Devatha motioned to amend the agenda to move Resolution 39 before Resolution 32 – **amended**.
  - ii. Dean Charles Van Loan and Anna Waymack presenting.

- iii. C. Van Loan said that times are different now than they were decades ago, and that Cornell University's policies regarding relationships between faculty and students have not changed with the times.
- iv. C. Van Loan said that he and A. Waymack will be visiting all five assemblies, and urged the Student Assembly to vote on an edited version of the Consensual Relationships Policy Committee (henceforth CRPC)'s proposed policy. He also said that it is important that there be some sort of consensus regarding this policy when it comes out of the five bodies.
- v. A. Waymack said that this seems to be unprecedented because of the possibility of input from all communities and giving each a say on the Committee. She remarked that multiple Committee representatives are currently on the Assembly at this time.
- vi. A. Waymack said that the current policy in place at Cornell has no specific mention of undergraduate students, and that peer institutions either address undergraduates, or completely ban relationships between faculty and undergraduates based on age. She also said that the proposed policy intends to focus on keeping avenues of study unrestricted for undergraduates and to ensure academic freedom and integrity, and would not consider age as a reason to ban a relationship.
- vii. Zachary Schmetterer asked about the level of discretion given the breadth of possible associations in regard to the "Undergrads as Authorities" clause. He also asked whether this policy would ban relationships between faculty and undergraduates in cases where the faculty member is neither teaching the student nor in the same department.
  - 1. The "Undergrads as Authorities" clause currently reads "Faculty will ask T.A.s for romantic or sexual conflicts of interest at start of semester, and arrange grading, evaluations, etc. accordingly".
- viii. A. Waymack said that that the policy would cover undergraduates regardless of field of study, since the relationship would prevent undergraduates from taking classes in that department, which would violate the principle of "Any Person, Any Study". She also said that it seems to be manageable to have a different TA grade a student's work in case of a conflict of interest.
- ix. C. Van Loan said that this policy would be discussed in every class when the TAs meet with their professors before the beginning of the semester, and that any TA with a potential conflict of interest would talk to the professor and work out a plan in advance under the recusal plan. He added that every Cornell policy has room for thoughtful and well-reasoned exceptions.
- x. V. Devatha asked if this policy is meant to be proactive or reactive (that is, whether faculty-undergraduate relationships have happened in the past or this is meant to prevent them in the future). He also asked how this policy would affect undergraduate-graduate relationships.
- xi. A. Waymack said that undergraduate and graduate student relationships take many forms, and that there is no one single answer for that question.
- xii. C. Van Loan said that this policy is 95% prevention, and that its intention is to preserve the academic environment and to make the rules clear.
- xiii. A. Waymack added that it would not be ideal for there to be scenarios where it's rumored that people got certain grades because they slept with the instructor in charge.
- xiv. N. Hernandez yielded her time to the chair.
- xv. D. Barbaria asked the presenters to discuss where the committee is leaning regarding relationships between graduate students and faculty. He also asked how enforcement of the policy would work.

- xvi. A. Waymack said that the aim is to encourage disclosure and recusal, and that enforcement would take this into account. She added that she cannot give solid answers in this regard due to recently received information that has not yet been incorporated, and that their focus is to remedy academic harm.
- xvii. C. Van Loan said that the goal of the policy is to inspire ethical behavior, and that they must hit a balance in regard to enforcement in accordance with this.
- xviii. A. Waymack said that sanctions would be imposed in cases of prohibited relationships, and that financial sanctions are a probable outcome in this regard (such as impact on salary increases).
- xix. G. Kaufman said that he was initially skeptical about the direction that this presentation would take, but said that C. Van Loan and A. Waymack had done a good job. He asked about the aforementioned new information, and how this would impact enforcement.
- xx. A. Waymack said that another office is currently drafting policy that would move the purview of this policy to that office.
- xxi. C. Van Loan said that the aforementioned office is the Cornell University Title IX Office, and added that the CRPC's policy is a procedure, and that key attributes of the enforcement policy will be in any final policy, regardless of what office it goes through.
- xxii. Z. Schmetterer said that conflicts of interest take on many forms, and that undergraduate relationships that are not sexual in nature could still influence things. He asked where this policy would draw the line, and remarked that the focus should be on actual conflicts of interest, and not on creating a wave of paperwork.
- xxiii. A. Waymack said that as a culture, we single out three different things for conflicts of interest, namely nepotism, financial conflicts, and romantic/sexual conflicts. She said that they only have purview over conflicts of interest regarding the latter.
- xxiv. C. Van Loan said that creating and preserving a certain type of academic climate is paramount.
- xxv. J. Kim said that Shivani Parikh, J. Anderson, and G. Park are on the CRPC.

## **VI. New Business/Business of the Day:**

- a. Resolution 39: Making Cornell's Economics program STEM-certified
  - i. C. Schott said that limiting the opportunities for one group of international students is unfair treatment for both international students and the student body at large. He added that this resolution urges the administration to get the Economics major reclassified as STEM by New York State, as this gives international students who graduate with this major three years of work authorization in the United States.
    - 1. These students would otherwise have only one year of work authorization in this country.
  - ii. C. Schott said that this change carries enormous benefits and is fitting of the current major curriculum, and that the curriculum is more STEM-centered than STEM-certified programs at peer institutions. He also said that the College of Arts & Sciences and the International Students & Scholars Office are working on changes to get certified. He also commented that this is his last semester at Cornell, and urged the Assembly to continue to stand for the rights of international students.
  - iii. S. Lim voiced her support for the work that C. Schott has done, and added that this reclassification will encourage more international students to attend Cornell.
  - iv. O. Din asked whether or not this resolution should be sent to other relevant parties.

- v. C. Schott said that he does not see it as necessary, but that it could help.
- vi. J. Kim said that when a resolution gets conveyed to President Pollack, that it is also sent to any other relevant parties.
- vii. H. Hassan said that he knows many international students who are Economics majors, and that this resolution would be a huge benefit to them.
- viii. G. Kaufman motioned to amend the resolution such that “Chair of Faculty Senate” reads “Dean of Faculty” – **amended**.
- ix. C. Schott motioned to amend the resolution such that the clause “take appropriate action” now reads “apply to the New York State Department of Education” – **amended** 18-0-1.
- x. There was a motion to vote.
- xi. J. Kim said that any resolution under New Business normally waits a week before a vote.
- xii. C. Schott motioned to move the resolution to Business of the Day – **approved** 18-0-1.
- xiii. A representative of The Cornell Daily Sun asked how many international students are Economics majors, and asked whether any other majors could also be certified. He also asked whether any administrators have voiced their support for this endeavor.
- xiv. C. Schott said that there is support, particularly from Dean Van Loan and from the Chair of the Economics Department. He added that, while there is likely a substantial number of international Economics majors, that particular information in this regard is unavailable, and that other majors could be reclassified as STEM.
- xv. Motion to vote on Resolution 39 – **approved** 18-0-1.

## VII. Business of the Day

- a. Resolution 32: Accommodating Muslim Holidays
  - i. O. Din motioned to vote – **approved** 18-0-1.
- b. Resolution 33: Increasing Gender Neutral Bathrooms
  - i. I. Wallace said that this resolution will be one in a series that assures access to gender-neutral facilities to all on campus, and motioned to make a series of amendments – **amended** 18-0-1.
    1. Amend J. Anderson’s name to the sponsors and signatories lists.
    2. Amend line 21 to read “Whereas. Robert Purcell Community Center, Appel Commons, and the Townhouse Community Center, important community centers for freshman, contain no gender neutral bathrooms;”
    3. Amend line 32 to read “...that in buildings where there are no gender neutral or single user restrooms, Cornell University will redesignate a gendered multi-stall bathroom to be gender neutral;”
    4. Amend lines 35 and 36 such that “all-gender inclusive” reads “gender neutral”.
    5. Amend to strike line 41.
    6. Amend to add on line 46 “Be it further resolved, that the Student Assembly supports the Residential Student Congress resolution entitled “Gender-Neutral Bathroom Expansion in Residence Halls and Community Center”.
    7. Amend lines 47 through 49 such that they read “...Dean Vijay Pendakur, and Vice President Lombardi...” and to strike “Shorna Allred” through “Steven Jackson”.
  - ii. J. Anderson said that he passed a resolution in the Residential Student Congress that is relevant to gender-neutral bathrooms in residential areas in parallel to Resolution 33.
    1. This resolution passed in the RSC 25-0-2.

- iii. Motion to vote on Resolution 33 – **approved** 19-0-1.
  - c. Resolution 34: Risley Crosswalk
    - i. I. Wallace motioned to amend such that “Funding Committee” reads “Fund Commission” – **amended**.
    - ii. S. Lim said that this resolution passed 6-0-0 in the Campus Planning Committee.
    - iii. Motion to vote on Resolution 34 – **approved** 18-0-1.
  - d. Resolution 35: Creating an Asian American Living Learning Unit (LLU)
    - i. S. Parikh voiced her shock that some Assembly members have questioned her credentials and ability to speak on this issue authoritatively, and asked anyone who doubts her ability in this regard to examine their bias.
    - ii. J. Kim said that he was not present at the previous meeting, but did hear that there was a tone of disrespect, and urged the Assembly to carry themselves properly, even if their disrespect was unintentional.
    - iii. C. Schott asked whether the LLU is meant for Asians or Asian-Americans, as the term is used interchangeably in the resolution.
    - iv. S. Parikh said that it is more focused on the American diaspora but anyone would be welcome.
    - v. G. Park asked whether the LLU would engage in activities representing the different cultures of Asia, and referenced the similar events that Ujamaa engages in.
    - vi. S. Parikh replied in the affirmative, but said that she could not speak on any specific plans.
    - vii. Z. Schmetterer asked whether this resolution was brought through a reviewing committee, since the resolution does not list a reviewing committee.
    - viii. S. Parikh said that the resolution was passed through the RSC, and that it therefore does not need to.
    - ix. I. Wallace advised the sponsors to have a game plan when they meet with Vice President Lombardi.
    - x. N. Hernandez said that the program houses are very important, and advised that people who do not believe people would live in the LLU to look at the success of other program houses, and that it is a big problem that people would even question the interest or necessity of the LLU.
    - xi. Motion to vote on Resolution 35 – **approved** 18-0-1.
  - e. Resolution 36: Supporting the Activism of Prospective Students
    - i. J. Anderson said that the aim of the resolution is to ask for clarification surrounding Cornell’s statement regarding nonviolent protest, such as what constitutes “nonviolent” and whether prospective students will know about or see this statement.
      - 1. The statement from Cornell was made on Twitter, and reads as follows: “Cornell University values civic discourse as essential to the academic mission and promotes public engagement as critical to inspiring future leaders. Disciplinary action resulting from responsible engagement in non-violent protest will not jeopardize admission to Cornell”.
    - ii. Motion to vote on Resolution 36 – **approved** 18-0-1.

## VIII. New Business

- a. Resolution 37: Improving Communication and Access to the Student Body
  - i. V. Devatha motioned to table the resolution indefinitely.
  - ii. J. Sim said that the registrar would have to be contacted, since this is not an Office of the Assemblies issue, nor is there a single listserv that goes out to every student.
  - iii. V. Devatha said that the Assembly technically is not supposed to be sending out

- newsletters, and that this requires deeper discussion.
  - iv. O. Din asked if there is any harm in passing the resolution regardless.
  - v. V. Devatha said that there was no consultation of relevant bodies.
  - vi. O. Din said that this has come up before and hit various roadblocks each time.
  - vii. V. Devatha said that, in the future, they will have conversations with the registrar and other relevant bodies.
  - viii. G. Kaufman recommended that they keep the resolution on the agenda and table it until the next meeting while these discussions are underway, and advised the sponsors of the resolution to meet with the registrar. He also said that he does not believe that the Office of the Assemblies should be negotiating on behalf of the Assembly.
  - ix. V. Devatha and J. Sim voiced their support for G. Kaufman's recommendation.
  - x. Motion to table – **tabled** 18-0-1.
- b. Resolution 38: Reinstating Statement Policy
  - i. J. Anderson said that this resolution came out of a conversation that he and N. Hernandez had with the Office of Sorority and Fraternity Life. He added that in the past, a statement was issued whenever an organization was put on interim suspension, and there have been no such statements this year despite there having been interim suspensions.
  - ii. N. Hernandez said that this is an issue regarding transparency.
  - iii. V. Devatha said that he has had a conversation in this regard, and advised that the sponsors reach out to Dr. Joseph Burke by next week, when this resolution will be voted on. He also said that he knows that past infractions will be published soon unless there is an upcoming hearing.
    - 1. Joseph Burke is the Executive Director of Campus & Community Engagement.
    - 2. Past infractions involving hazing will be posted on a separate website related to hazing.
  - iv. D. Nyakaru asked what organizations were suspended this semester that prompted this.
  - v. J. Anderson said that he did not know every organization exactly, but there are numerous affected organizations.
  - vi. Z. Schmetterer said that, as a member of Greek life, that he is happy to see this resolution, and that it is a real issue that Greek organizations are not holding themselves accountable.
  - vii. G. Kaufman echoed Z. Schmetterer's sentiments, and added that this resolution should not be passed today, as it needs more time to be discussed. He also asked why the statements need to come from Dr. Burke.
  - viii. J. Anderson said that it is past precedent that it came from his position, and that if it comes from him, then statements will be posted on the University statement website.
  - ix. G. Kaufman asked whether or not interim suspension was only levied on organizations before they are found to be guilty, and asked whether it would be best for this to only be for organizations that are actually found guilty.
  - x. H. Hassan said that, under interim suspension, activity must cease, and that if it is announced that an organization is under interim suspension, then students will know that they cannot associate with the organization.
  - xi. V. Devatha said that interim suspension is based on information at hand, and that it is imposed when there is concern that members of an organization may be of harm to themselves or others.
  - xii. J. Anderson said that in the past, to his knowledge, that when an organization was put on interim suspension and then taken off, that the statement was made.

- xiii. N. Hernandez said that this was the policy in place before, and that the sponsors are just confused as to why it has stopped.
- xiv. C. Schott asked how long interim suspensions typically last.
- xv. H. Hassan said that they usually last far shorter than an actual suspension, and that it is his understanding that interim suspensions must be resolved within the semester that they are levied.
- xvi. Travis Cabbell asked how this policy would affect non-Greek life student organizations.
- xvii. J. Anderson said that such things are under the purview of the Judicial Administrator.
- xviii. T. Cabbell asked a clarifying question.
- xix. J. Anderson said that if a non-Greek organization is placed on interim suspension, then that is levied by the Judicial Administrator. He added that this resolution uses the language “campus organization” since the sponsors did not want to single out Greek life, and that other organizations can be just as bad.
- xx. G. Park yielded her time to the chair.
- xxi. S. Parikh yielded her time to the chair.
- xxii. J. Anderson asked that an executive formally invite Dr. Burke to come to the next Assembly meeting and motioned to table the resolution – **tabled**.

## **IX. Additional Announcements and Reports**

- a. Graduate and Professional Student Assembly
  - i. A member said that D. Barbaria was not present at the time to give his report.
- b. Faculty Senate
  - i. A member said that S. Romero Zavala resigned.
  - ii. C. Schott said that he is on a non-negligible amount of committees for which he is receiving no emails.
- c. Employee Assembly
  - i. C. Schott said that he missed the previous meeting because he had the wrong schedule, but that he is now on schedule and will be at the next meeting.
  - ii. T. Cabbell said that he has yet to be added to the Library Council listserv and that he knows that there are meetings coming up. He added that he had been previously referred to an alumni without a listed email.
- d. University Assembly
  - i. C. Schott said that there was no meeting this week, and that another committee passed two resolutions and discussed the issue regarding divestment from Puerto Rico distress holdings.
    - 1. The two resolutions were in regard to a crosswalk outside Risley Hall and gender-neutral bathrooms.
  - ii. O. Din asked how the University Assembly was feeling regarding divestment.
  - iii. C. Schott said that there is significant concern about aggravating alumni, especially Seth Klarman '79, and advised any Student Assembly member who wants this to pass through the University Assembly to come to the meeting and speak.
- e. Codes and Judicial Committee/Hate Speech Working Group
  - i. T. Cabbell said that the Hate Speech Working Group is holding a forum the next day in Goldwin Smith Hall from 3:00-5:00 pm, and that they are also sending out dates and locations of the rest of the forums.
- f. Diversity and Inclusion
  - i. M. Valadez said that the Diversity and Inclusion Summit is happening, and that the Assembly will be having discussions as to whether attendance is mandatory for members, but asked that all members share the event on Facebook regardless.
  - ii. J. Anderson asked if all byline organizations are going to be invited.

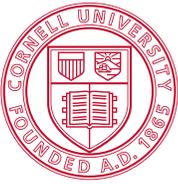
- iii. M. Valadez said that there was trouble getting the invitations out, but they have been sent. She also said that there was discussion on reaching out to other organizations, since too few organizations fit the criteria of the initial plan of the summit.
  - 1. The initial plan was to invite organizations who are not necessarily known for diversity but have incorporated significant diversity initiatives into their operations.
- g. Elections Committee
  - i. T. Cabbell said that many members did not share J. Sim's flyer for the upcoming election and thanked those that did. He also said that today is the last candidate information session.
- h. Other Announcements
  - i. C. Schott said that this week is Africa Week, and said that he went to an event regarding African entrepreneurship, and urged other Assembly members to attend an event.
  - ii. N. Hernandez said that Culturefest is in two weeks.

**X. Adjournment**

- a. J. Kim adjourned the meeting at 6:27 pm.

**XI. Executive Session**

Respectfully Submitted,  
*John Hannan*  
Clerk of the Assembly



# Cornell University Student Assembly

Originally Presented on:	(03/08/2018)
Type of Action:	Internal Policy
Status/Result:	New Business

## S.A. Resolution #37

### Improving Communication and Access to the Student Body

ABSTRACT: This resolution amends the Student Assembly Charter to improve communication and access to the student body via control over the student body listserv.

**Sponsored by: Varun Devatha '19, Dale Barbaria '19, Jaewon Sim '21**

**Whereas**, Article III, Section 5 of the Student Assembly Bylaws refers to a “Student Assembly newsletter...to be sent over email to the entire undergraduate student body *at least* two times / semester,” but does not specify how often the newsletter may or should be sent out,

**Whereas**, the Student Assembly has discussed whether or not it has the right to send undergraduate-wide emails with the Office of Assemblies multiple times, and the Office of Assemblies has been unable to clarify whether there is a limit on the number of emails the Student Assembly may send,

**Whereas**, the Student Assembly has the need to regularly update and obtain information from the student body in regards to the undergraduate student experience,

**Whereas**, the Student Assembly believes there needs to be a clear provision in the Student Assembly Charter concerning mass emails,

**Be it therefore resolved**, the following section be added to the Student Assembly Charter after Article IV, Section 5, Section E as Section F:

**C. The Student Assembly Executive Board may send up to three emails a month to the undergraduate student body at large.**

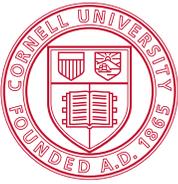
**Respectfully Submitted,**

Varun Devatha '19  
*Executive Vice President, Student Assembly*

Dale Barbaria '19  
*Vice President for Internal Operations, Student Assembly*

Jaewon Sim '21  
*Vice President of External Affairs, Student Assembly*

*(Reviewed by: Executive Committee, 5-0-0, 03/04/2018)*



# Cornell University Student Assembly

Originally Presented on:	(03/08/2018)
Type of Action:	Recommendation
Status/Result:	New Business

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## S.A. Resolution #38 Reinstating the Interim Suspension Statement Policy

ABSTRACT: This resolution intends to reinstitute the policy of providing public statements when a campus organization is placed on interim suspension.

**Sponsored by: Joseph Anderson '20 and Natalia Hernandez '21**

**Whereas**, in the 2016-2017 academic year, individuals of the Cornell community were notified when a campus organization went on interim suspension via a public statement;

**Whereas**, in the 2017-2018 academic year, no public statements have been made about interim suspensions of campus organizations although there have been campus organizations that have been placed on interim suspension;

**Whereas**, by not providing a public statement when a campus organization is placed on interim suspension it causes there to be higher risk for individuals who interact with that campus organization;

**Whereas**, there is the general importance of transparency in a large decentralized university, such as, Cornell University;

**Be it therefore resolved**, that the policy of providing a public statement when a campus organization is placed on interim suspension be reinstated;

**Be it further resolved**, that these statements should be sent from the Executive Director of Campus and Community Engagement, Joseph Burke, as there were in the 2016-2017 academic year;

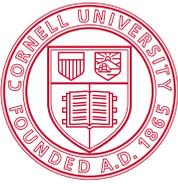
**Be it finally resolved**, that campus organizations that were placed on interim suspension in the 2017-2018 academic year and did not have a public statement written now have a public statement written that notifies the Cornell community when they were placed on interim suspension and of their current status.

**Respectfully Submitted,**

Joseph Anderson '20  
*Undergraduate Representative, University Assembly*

Natalia Hernandez '21  
*Minority Students Liasion at-Large, Student Assembly*

*(Reviewed by: Executive Committee, 4-0-0, 03/06/2018)*



# Cornell University Student Assembly

Originally Presented on:	(03/15/2018)
Type of Action:	Recommendation
Status/Result:	New Business

## S.A. Resolution #40

### Establishing Equitable Governance of Cooperative Houses

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4 ABSTRACT: This resolution seeks to create a system for registering and hosting events in cooperative  
5 living houses that provides the same protections and university support as events in Greek houses.

6  
7 **Sponsored by: TJ Ball '19**

8  
9 **Whereas**, in recent years, the Cornell administration has not allowed social events to be hosted at  
10 cooperative housing, citing fire code,

11  
12 **Whereas**, within, for example, the cooperative house Watermargin, public rooms are clearly marked with  
13 Cornell University Environmental Health and Safety Department signs that authorize an occupancy of up  
14 to 49 people *per room*. These appear to contradict earlier claims by the administration that the *entire house*  
15 has a 49 person capacity,

16  
17 **Whereas**, previously, Watermargin and other cooperative houses, had been able to host large educational,  
18 cultural, and other events. Fraternities still have this means through a mechanism offered by the  
19 administration allowing them to register events with high numbers of occupants, at which alcohol may be  
20 served to people over 21 years old,

21  
22 **Whereas**, cooperative events are almost always open to the general Cornell community and allow valuable  
23 opportunities for cross community discussions and interactions,

24  
25 **Whereas**, cooperative living houses face greater restrictions and risk of prosecution when it comes to  
26 hosting parties,

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28 **Whereas**, undergraduate students are in search of safer spaces to socialize outside of fraternity houses --  
29 which already monopolize social interactions even within Greek Life, evident in sororities being unable to  
30 host events of their own,

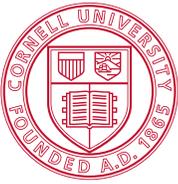
31  
32 **Whereas**, fraternity parties in particular have seen numerous recent incidents of assault and harassment,

33  
34 **Whereas**, the cooperative living community at Cornell, and the parties and events that they host, are  
35 frequently described as among the most inclusive spaces on Cornell's campus,

36  
37 **Be it therefore resolved**, that the current policies which restrict the ability of cooperative living houses to  
38 host events in the same manner as Greek houses be revisited,

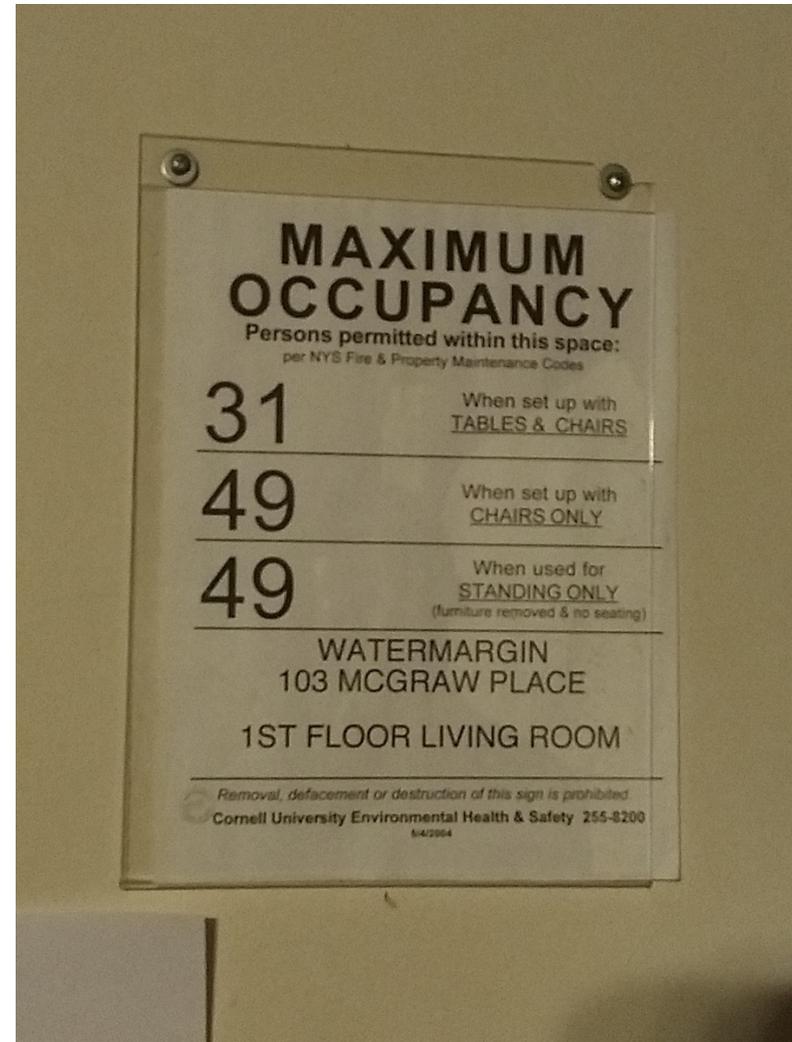
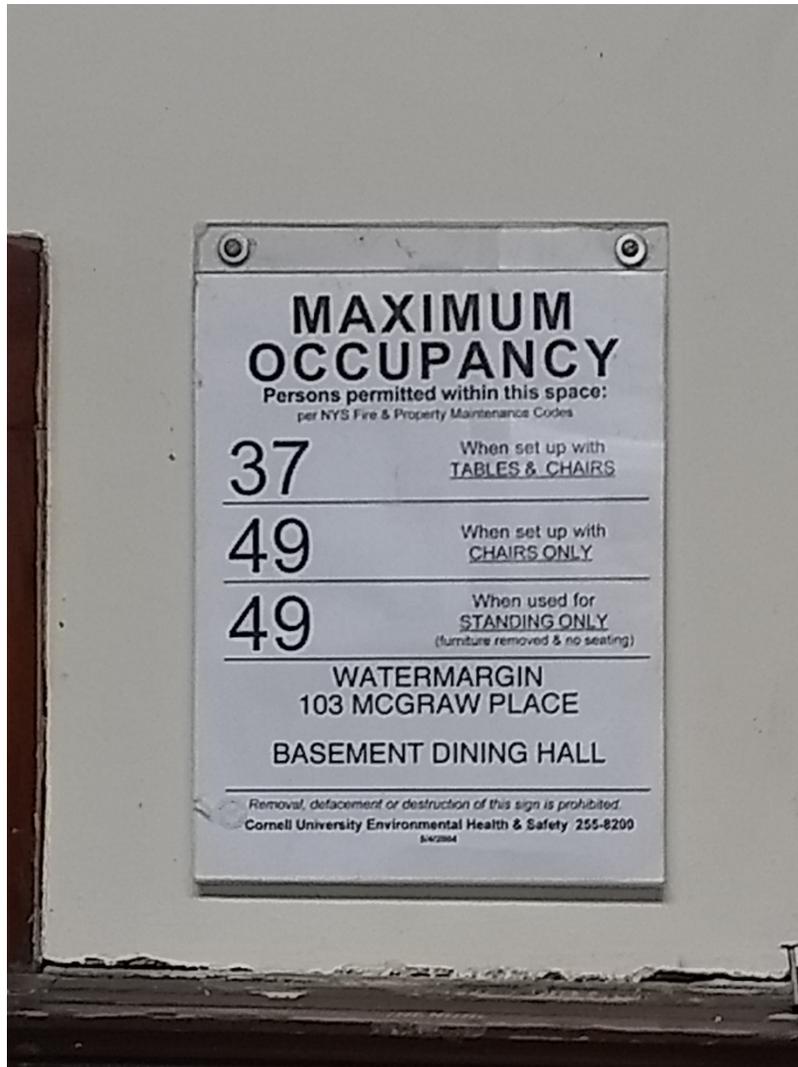
39  
40 **Be it further resolved**, that a system be set up to allow cooperative living houses to register both  
41 educational, academic, and social events, including those where alcohol may be present for individuals 21  
42 and older. Establishing an official system like the system which is already in place for Greek houses would  
43 further enable Cornell University to ensure students are being responsible when hosting events,

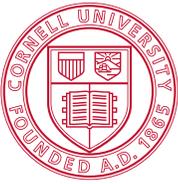
44  
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46 **Respectfully Submitted,**



## Cornell University Student Assembly

- 47
- 48 TJ Ball '19
- 49 *Undesignated Representative, Student Assembly*
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- 51 Lorenzo Benitez '19
- 52 *Former Social Chair of Watermargin*
- 53
- 54 Gabrielle Hammel '18
- 55 *President of Watermargin*
- 56
- 57 Lukas Keel '20
- 58 *Social Chair of Watermargin*
- 59
- 60 *(Reviewed by: Health & Wellness Committee, 8--0, 03/14/2018)*





# Cornell University Student Assembly

Originally Presented on:	(03/15/2018)
Type of Action:	Recommendation
Status/Result:	New Business

1 S.A. Resolution #41  
2 American Sign Language (ASL) Fulfilling a Foreign Language Requirement

3  
4 ABSTRACT: This resolution seeks to have Cornell's College of Arts and Sciences allow American  
5 Sign Language (ASL) to fulfill the foreign language requirement as recommended in the Curriculum  
6 Proposal<sup>1</sup>.

7  
8 **Sponsored by: Natalia Hernandez '21**

9  
10 **Whereas**, Cornell University was founded on the fundamental notion of "any person, any study"  
11 and;

12  
13 **Whereas**, our peer institutions such as Yale University<sup>2</sup>, Brown University<sup>3</sup>, Stanford University<sup>4</sup>,  
14 allow American Sign Language (ASL) to fulfill a foreign language requirement and;

15  
16 **Whereas**, the Student Assembly passed Referendum 35: "Should American Sign Language satisfy  
17 the foreign language requirement at Cornell?" on March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2017 with 3164 yes votes and 674 no  
18 votes<sup>5</sup> and;

19  
20 **Whereas**, culture is a set of learned behaviors of a group of people that share a language, values,  
21 rules for behavior, and traditions and;

22  
23 **Whereas**, deaf culture<sup>6</sup> is the set of social beliefs, behaviors, art, literary traditions, history, values,  
24 and shared institutions of communities that are influenced by deafness and which use sign  
25 languages as the main means of communication and;

26  
27 **Whereas**, American Sign Language does not currently fulfill the foreign language requirement and;

28  
29 **Whereas**, Cornell University only offers LING 1111: American Sign Language I during the summer  
30 Session and;

31  
32 **Whereas**, students who already know the American Sign Language may struggle to take a placement  
33 exam<sup>7</sup> out of it and;

34

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<sup>1</sup> The Curriculum Review Committee (CRC) is currently working on a new draft of the curriculum proposal based on feedback from the initial draft and further discussions with faculty throughout the fall 2017 semester. The next iteration of the draft proposal will be made available for faculty to review by the start of the spring 2018 semester. The CRC will then solicit feedback on this proposal during the spring semester.

<sup>2</sup> <https://ling.yale.edu/news/sign-language-courses-yale>

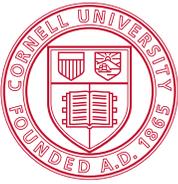
<sup>3</sup> <https://www.brown.edu/academics/language-studies/languages>

<sup>4</sup> <https://language.stanford.edu/programs/slp>

<sup>5</sup> <http://archive.assembly.cornell.edu/Elections/2017SpringSA-Results#toc2>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www3.gallaudet.edu/clerc-center/info-to-go/deaf-culture/american-deaf-culture.html>

<sup>7</sup> <http://as.cornell.edu/placement-exams>



## Cornell University Student Assembly

35 **Be it therefore resolved**, that Cornell University's College of Arts and Sciences offer American  
36 Sign Language during the academic term and;

37  
38 **Be it further resolved**, that Cornell University's College of Arts and Sciences allow students who  
39 are fluent in American Sign Language to take a placement exam out of American Sign Language and;

40  
41 **Be it finally resolved**, that Cornell University's College of Arts and Sciences allows for American  
42 Sign Language to fulfill a foreign language requirement.

43  
44 **Respectfully Submitted,**

45  
46 Natalia Hernandez '21  
47 *Minority Students Liasion-At Large, Student Assembly*

48  
49 Joseph Anderson '20  
50 *Undergraduate Representative, University Assembly*

51  
52 Mary Grace Hager '19  
53 *President, Cornell University Deaf Awareness Project*

54  
55 *(Reviewed by: Academic Policy Committee, 8-0-1, 03/09/2018)*

# **Proposal for Including American Sign Language in the Cornell University Curriculum**

**Created by: The Cornell University Deaf Awareness Project**

**Created on: December 6, 2016**

**Contact Information:**

Mary Grace Hager, [mmh256@cornell.edu](mailto:mmh256@cornell.edu), Co-President of CUDAP Spring 2017

Diana Bartolotta, [db683@cornell.edu](mailto:db683@cornell.edu), Co-President of CUDAP Spring 2017

## Introduction

Although Cornell prides itself as an institution where any student can find instruction in any study, there are currently no avenues to obtain a formal education in American Sign Language at Cornell. The university does not offer formal American Sign Language courses for its students, nor does it accept foreign-language credit for ASL classes taken in high school; doing so, however, would benefit both Cornell students and the Ithaca community as a whole. An increasing number of schools across the country, including Ivy League institutions and local Universities, are choosing to offer American Sign Language courses, while Cornell lags behind. The following report discusses national and regional statistics, ASL programs within the Ivy League, and the potential benefits a Cornell ASL program could have for students and the Ithaca community.

## National Statistics

As of 2014, American Sign Language is taught at 122 K-12 schools<sup>1</sup>, making it the third most commonly taught language in the United States<sup>2</sup>. Additionally, from 2009 to 2013 the number of students studying ASL increased over 19%, while the number of students studying Spanish, French, German, Japanese and Italian all decreased over the same period<sup>3</sup>. Clearly, the demand for ASL instruction is high and rising within the United States.

This trend is further reflected by College statistics. Across the country, nearly 500 colleges and universities offer courses in ASL<sup>4</sup>, and 185 universities accept American Sign Language for foreign language credit, including Stanford University, Brandeis University, Yale University, and the University of Pennsylvania<sup>5</sup>. Going beyond introductory courses, 46 universities offer a degree in American Sign Language<sup>6</sup>, and 119 colleges offer a degree in ASL interpretation.<sup>7</sup>

Unfortunately, Cornell University is not included in these exciting statistics. Cornell does not currently accept ASL credit from high school courses as it does with other languages, nor does it offer an opportunity for

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<sup>1</sup> "The Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition (CARLA): Less Commonly Taught Languages." *The Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition (CARLA): Less Commonly Taught Languages*. N.p., 2014. Web. 06 Dec. 2016.

<sup>2</sup> "Most Studied Foreign Languages in the US." *Infoplease*. Sandbox Network, Inc, 2016. Web. 05 Dec. 2016. <<http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0905275.html>>.

<sup>3</sup> "Most Studied Foreign Languages in the US." *Infoplease*. Sandbox Network, Inc, 2016. Web. 05 Dec. 2016. <<http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0905275.html>>.

<sup>4</sup> "The Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition (CARLA): Less Commonly Taught Languages." *The Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition (CARLA): Less Commonly Taught Languages*. N.p., 2016. Web. 06 Dec. 2016.

<sup>5</sup> Wilcox, Sherman. "Universities That Accept ASL In Fulfillment Of Foreign Language Requirements." *Universities That Accept ASL In Fulfillment Of Foreign Language Requirements*. N.p., 11 Oct. 2016. Web. 06 Dec. 2016.

<sup>6</sup> "Big Future - College Search - Find Colleges and Universities by Major, Location, Type, More." *Big Future - College Search - Find Colleges and Universities by Major, Location, Type, More*. The College Board, 2016. Web. 05 Dec. 2016.

<[https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/college-search?major=662\\_American%2BSign%2BLanguage%2B%28ASL%29](https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/college-search?major=662_American%2BSign%2BLanguage%2B%28ASL%29)>

<sup>7</sup> "Big Future - College Search - Find Colleges and Universities by Major, Location, Type, More." *Big Future - College Search - Find Colleges and Universities by Major, Location, Type, More*. The College Board, 2016. Web. 05 Dec. 2016. <[https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/college-search?major=664\\_Sign%2BLanguage%2BInterpretation](https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/college-search?major=664_Sign%2BLanguage%2BInterpretation)>.

students to continue or begin their ASL education. In this respect, it is clear that Cornell is lagging behind many other institutions.

### **Ivy League ASL Involvement**

With the exception of Cornell, every Ivy League institution offers resources for students to wish to formally learn ASL. Brown University<sup>8</sup> and the University of Pennsylvania<sup>9</sup> maintain thorough ASL curriculums through their language departments, and the University of Pennsylvania<sup>10</sup> also allows students to minor in Sign Language and Deaf Studies. Harvard University<sup>11</sup> offers a sequence of two introductory courses in ASL. Princeton offered an ASL course in 2014, and although it was not for credit, interest in the class led university to offer a course entitled “Linguistics of American Sign Language.”<sup>12</sup> Similarly, Dartmouth College offered a not-for-credit ASL class in 2012, and now offers “American Sign Language Poetry.”<sup>13</sup> At Columbia University, students can enroll in an accredited ASL class through an on-campus group.<sup>14</sup> Additionally, while Yale University does not provide formal ASL instruction, students may take ASL courses elsewhere to fulfill graduation requirements. As with the University of Pennsylvania and Brown University, Yale accepts ASL as a foreign language.<sup>15</sup>

It is clear that most Ivy League institutions acknowledge the importance of ASL and recognize the skills of students who have learned the language. Cornell, however, does not offer an ASL class, nor does it have resources on campus for anyone who wishes to learn the language. Furthermore, Cornell does not accept ASL classes taken at another university for foreign language credit. Compared to other universities in the Ivy League, Cornell provides fewer resources to learn ASL and is less accommodating to students who have already taken ASL courses.

### **Regional ASL Involvement**

American Sign Language is also popular throughout upstate New York. In our own city, for example, Ithaca College offers introductory and intermediate level American Sign Language and Deaf Culture courses, through the Department of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology<sup>16</sup>. Additionally, colleges and

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<sup>8</sup> "Brown University." *Courses for Spring 2017 | Center for Language Studies*. N.p., n.d. Web. 05 Dec. 2016.

<sup>9</sup> "Penn Language Center." *American Sign Language (ASL) | Penn Language Center*. N.p., n.d. Web. 05 Dec. 2016.

<sup>10</sup> "Undergraduate Minor in American Sign Language and Deaf Studies." *UPenn Linguistics: Undergraduate Minor in American Sign Language and Deaf Studies*. N.p., n.d. Web. 05 Dec. 2016.

<sup>11</sup> "Courses." *Courses*. N.p., n.d. Web. 05 Dec. 2016.

<sup>12</sup> "Linguistics of American Sign Language." *Princeton University: Office of Registrar*. Trustees of Princeton University (C) 2006, n.d. Web. 05 Dec. 2016.

<[https://registrar.princeton.edu/course-offerings/course\\_details.xml?courseid=013284&term=1162](https://registrar.princeton.edu/course-offerings/course_details.xml?courseid=013284&term=1162)>.

<sup>13</sup> Polansky, Larry. "American Sign Language Poetry." *Dartmouth.edu*. N.p., 27 Jan. 2015. Web. 05 Dec. 2016. <[http://eamusic.dartmouth.edu/~larry/asl\\_material/index.html](http://eamusic.dartmouth.edu/~larry/asl_material/index.html)>.

<sup>14</sup> "Welcome to CU Sign." *CU Sign - Sign Language Club at Columbia University*. Columbia University, n.d. Web. 05 Dec. 2016. <<http://www.columbia.edu/cu/sign/>>.

<sup>15</sup> Wilcox, Sherman, Phd. "Universities That Accept ASL In Fulfillment Of Foreign Language Requirements." *Universities That Accept ASL In Fulfillment Of Foreign Language Requirements*. University of New Mexico, 11 Oct. 2016. Web. 05 Dec. 2016. <<http://www.unm.edu/~wilcox/UNM/univlist.html>>.

<sup>16</sup> "Ithaca College." *Ithaca College - Deaf Studies Minor*. N.p., n.d. Web. 05 Dec. 2016.

universities across the upstate New York region that offer courses in ASL include, but are not limited to, Elmira College, Broome Community College, Syracuse University, Le Moyne College, SUNY Oneonta, and SUNY Buffalo.

In the city of Rochester alone, two higher education institutions, namely Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) and the University of Rochester, offer majors and minors in ASL. RIT is famously known for its National Technical Institute for the Deaf, which offers technical degree programs that are accommodated to fit the needs of Deaf individuals seeking higher education. RIT provides one of the most accessible campuses in the world for Deaf and hard-of-hearing students, by providing interpreting, captioning, and note-taking in and outside the classroom<sup>17</sup>. RIT's layout is a model in which Cornell can emulate in order to attract more highly-intelligent students who require a more accessible campus to fit their needs.

Courses in American Sign Language in the upstate New York region are found under multiple departments, including the Modern Languages, Linguistics, Speech and Language Disabilities Curriculum, and the Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology. It is evident that these higher education institutions recognize the broad-reaching impacts of ASL, and are working to provide their students with opportunities to learn the language and culture. Cornell has the power and means to begin the process of creating a more accessible and accommodating campus by offering courses in American Sign Language, just like other regional colleges and universities in New York state.

### **ASL for Students with Disabilities**

In addition to helping those who are deaf, hard-of-hearing, or want to get involved in the Deaf community, an American Sign Language course would benefit students with disabilities. For example, people with auditory processing disorders have a difficult time processing auditory inputs, which makes studying foreign languages with new phonological systems particularly challenging.<sup>18</sup> ASL courses for credit would allow these students to fulfill their foreign language requirement in a way that does not disadvantage them, compared to other students. Additionally, many students with dyslexia have found American Sign Language easier to learn than other foreign languages<sup>19</sup>.

### **Local Impact/TIP/LEP**

An American Sign Language course offered at Cornell University would benefit not only the Cornell community but also the greater Ithaca and Tompkins County communities. Having a certified instructor of ASL would give students who are fluent in the language the opportunity to become certified as ASL interpreters and participate in the Translator Interpreter Program (TIP) through Cornell's Public Service Center. As stated on

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<sup>17</sup> "NTID." *NTID: By the Numbers*. N.p., n.d. Web. 05 Dec. 2016.

<sup>18</sup> Delana. "Help for Children with Central Auditory Language Processing Disorders." *The Education Cafe*. N.p., 23 Dec. 2013. Web. 05 Dec. 2016.

<<https://theeducationcafe.wordpress.com/2009/11/18/help-for-children-with-central-auditory-language-processing-disorders/>>.

<sup>19</sup> "One Student's Experience Learning ASL \* The Yale Center for Dyslexia & Creativity." *One Student's Experience Learning ASL \* The Yale Center for Dyslexia & Creativity*. N.p., 2016. Web. 05 Dec. 2016.

<<http://dyslexia.yale.edu/americansignlanguage.html>>.

their website, TIP “trains bilingual and multilingual Cornell students and staff to serve as volunteer translators/interpreters for community agencies in emergency and non-emergency situations.”<sup>20</sup> However, as there is no current Cornell faculty member who is able to certify students fluent in ASL, the TIP program has no ASL interpreters available.

Consequently, Tompkins County also has no resource for ASL interpretation or translation. This presents a clear problem as the need for ASL interpretation available in the immediate vicinity has arisen and will inevitably arise again. Luckily, this issue would be solved by having a faculty member on campus to teach an ASL class. This faculty member could also certify students who are already fluent in ASL and thus allow Cornell to fulfill the need for a local translator.

### **Interest in ASL from Cornell University Students**

A survey was sent out to students and faculty at Cornell to gauge interest in having ASL courses on campus. In less than one month, more than 600 Cornell students responded to the survey with the following response rate:

- 95% of respondents were present undergraduate students.
- Should ASL be offered and be accepted as a general elective, 57.26% would want to take the course and 33.06% may be interested in taking it.
- Should ASL be offered and be accepted to fulfill a school specific requirement, 67.50% would want to take the course and 25.33% may be interest in taking it.
- Should ASL be offered and be accepted as a foreign language, 68.67% would want to take the course and 22.83% may be interested in taking it.

### **Conclusion**

In order to provide a more accessible and extensive education for all students and enable necessary services to the community, Cornell should offer an American Sign Language course. As other universities follow suit in this nation-wide trend, it becomes increasingly apparent that Cornell is falling behind. Hopefully in the future Cornell will take the necessary steps to right this situation.

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<sup>20</sup> "Translator Interpreter Program." *Translator Interpreter Program*. Cornell University, n.d. Web. 05 Dec. 2016. <<http://orgsync.rso.cornell.edu/org/translatorinterpreterprogram72139/home>>.

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3. "Most Studied Foreign Languages in the US." *Infoplease*. Sandbox Network, Inc, 2016. Web. 05 Dec. 2016. <<http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0905275.html>>.
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