

Cornell University Student Assembly

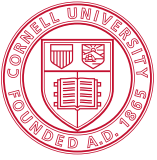
Cornell University's Student Assembly

Minutes of the February 1st, 2023 Meeting

4:45 pm – 6:30 pm

Memorial Room Willard Straight Hall | Zoom

- I. Call to Order
 - a. P. Kuehl called the meeting to order at 4:45pm.
 1. *Members Present (29)*: D. Akkiraju, A. Akpan, L. Balestrieri, L. Barrett, A. Barry, F. Berry, S. Chan, R. DeLorenzo, Z. deRham, D. Diao, K. Everett, C. Flournoy, A. Helkowski, N. Hite, K. Jordan, C. Kim, P. Kuehl, C. Lederman, F. Meng, Y. Moitra, S. Parikh, C. Platkin, I. Rezaka, S. Son, D. Suarez, C. Ting, A. Vinson
 2. *Members Absent (4)*: M. Bakri, E. Ononye, B. Terhaar, A. Wang
 3. *Also Present (11)*: D. Almeida, A. Bangura, A. Coleman, E. Kalweit, N. Maggard, J. Swenson, R. Verma, J. Wallen, S. Williams, J. Zhang
- II. Reading of the Land Acknowledgement
 - a. P. Kuehl stated the SA's acknowledgment of the Cayuga Nation.
- III. Open Microphones
 - a. Community speakers stated speeches.
- IV. Approval of the Minutes
 - a. Approval of the January 25, 2023 meeting minutes
 1. F. Berry motioned to approve the minutes. The motion **passed** through unanimous consent.
- V. Consent Calendar
 - a. Resolution 45: Amending the Previously Adopted Authorization of the Transfer of Reserve Funds to Black Students United (BSU)
 1. The motion **passed** through a vote of unanimous consent.
- VI. Announcements
 - a. Pre-Open Microphone
 1. C. Ting stated acknowledgement and thanks for the many different organizations and communities currently speaking up and engaging in conversation. C. Ting stated hope for open discourse and



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acknowledgement of different privileges and harms different groups might have.

2. A. Bangura echoed C. Ting's thanks and stated ground rules for engaging in Open Microphone, particularly emphasizing decorum.
3. P. Kuehl noted that all meetings are recorded and posted.
4. C. Lederman stated thanks for community participation in principles of shared governance. C. Lederman stated explanation and history on the day's upcoming Resolutions. C. Lederman noted an upcoming Internal Operations meeting.
5. L. Thomas noted the upcoming Spring Elections for the Student Assembly.
6. S. Parikh noted numbers given from the Office of Student Employment that would be evaluated in the future.
7. Y. Moitra stated hopes that regardless of today's outcomes, there should be great pride in the community and that Assembly member safety should be valued. Y. Moitra denounced doxing.

VII. Reports of Officers, Committees, and Liaisons

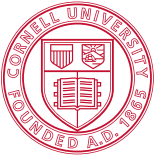
- a. There were no items.

VIII. Presentations

- a. There were no presentations.

IX. Old Business Calendar

- a. Resolution 44: Creating an Ad Hoc Committee to Investigate Student Employment and Wages
 1. S. Parikh noted data released on the amount of wages being paid towards student workers. S. Parikh urged those interested to support student workers and help them get wages they deserve.
 2. The motion **passed** through a vote of unanimous consent.
- b. Resolution 46: Commending Rahul Verma '24 for his Service to the Student Assembly
 1. P. Kuehl introduced the intent of the Resolution to support the previous Director of Elections.
 2. The motion **passed** through a vote of unanimous consent.
- c. Resolution 47: Creating an Ad Hoc Committee to Bolster Community Engagement
 1. J. Swenson introduced the Resolution to bolster engagement between students and the local Ithaca community.



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2. The motion **passed** through a vote of unanimous consent.

X. Resolutions Calendar

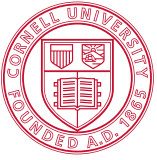
- a. Resolution 48: Supporting the Leadership of President Pollack and Provost Kotlikoff
 1. P. Kuehl introduced the intent of the Resolution to support University leadership during current difficult circumstances.
 2. J. Wallen motioned to table the Resolution to the next agenda. J. Swenson dissented. The motion **passed** 15-9-0.
 3. J. Wallen stated belief that President Pollack should not be supported.
 4. S. Parikh stated that academic freedom on college campuses is under attack by billionaires and wealthy people, and that regardless of politics, it is important to stand with academic freedom and expression and stand in unity.
 5. I. Rezaka stated that the Assembly should focus on Resolutions pertaining to the student body. I. Rezaka motioned to end debate. S. Parikh dissented. The motion **failed**.
 6. C. Lederman stated that language in the Resolution was created alongside the leader of the Faculty Senate and highlighted the importance of unity against attacks on freedom of speech. C. Lederman stated strong support for the Resolution.
 7. J. Swenson echoed C. Lederman's sentiments and noted President Pollack's support of DEI initiatives.
 8. Y. Moitra stated that while personal beliefs are not entirely aligned with President Pollack, diversity, equity, and inclusion is vitally important. Y. Moitra noted that many Presidents across campuses are under attack for their support of DEI. Y. Moitra emphasized the need to reject the wills of billionaires and to acknowledge practicality.
 9. K. Everett motioned to end debate. The motion **passed**.
 10. The motion to approve the Resolution **passed** through a vote of 21-0-7.
- b. Resolution 49: Establishing an Ad-Hoc Committee for Student Engagement
 1. Z. deRham introduced the Resolution with the intention of introducing a speaker series to campus.
 2. The motion **passed** through a vote of unanimous consent.
- c. Resolution 50: Creating an Ad-Hoc Committee on Cornell University's Corporate Social Responsibility and ESG Policies
 1. C. Lederman stated an overview of the dialogue leading to the Resolution considering the voices of multiple different communities. C. Lederman



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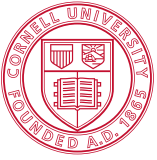
highlighted the importance of reducing tension and bringing the community together. C. Lederman highlighted that the Resolution does not target specific groups and attempt to solve crises largely beyond a Cornell student's control. C. Lederman stated thanks for the many different people who took part in work drafting the Resolution.

2. S. Parikh stated that the Resolution is a non-partisan Resolution that continues divestment in war profiteers without targeting certain communities. S. Parikh emphasized that the Resolution was created alongside multiple communities and noted that a Resolution balancing the interests of multiple student groups is much more viable and pragmatic to be taken seriously by the Board of Trustees.
3. C. Lederman emphasized hopes that students feel security in visibility of their religious faith.
4. S. Parikh stated thanks for sponsors and organizational partners. S. Parikh emphasized that BDS is prohibited in New York, meaning that Resolution 50 is the only viable option to move forward.
5. Y. Moitra motioned to amend the Resolution to strike lines "resolved the President of the Assembly shall appoint the Chair and members of the Committee" to state "members of the Committee from the Student Assembly shall be elected by the Student Assembly. Community members on the Committee shall be elected by the Cornell community to ensure fairness and equity on the Committee".
6. C. Lederman motioned to amend the Resolution to state "members of the Committee from the Student Assembly and community members on the Committee shall be elected by the Student Assembly". A. Barry dissented.
7. A. Barry stated belief that members should be nominated from different communities and stakeholders on campus.
8. C. Lederman motioned to make a secondary amendment to the Resolution to state that "the Student Assembly shall elect a chair and members of the Committee; community members shall only be considered for election if nominated by registered student organizations".
9. Y. Moitra highlighted that there are more than 12 community organizations on campus to correspond to only 12 Committee seats. Y. Moitra stated that allowing clubs to nominate members is not equitable.
10. A. Barry stated that it is important to have nominees who are well connected and part of diverse communities.
11. C. Lederman motioned to close debate on the secondary amendment. The motion **passed** through unanimous consent.



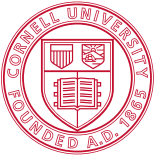
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12. The primary amendment **passed** through unanimous consent.
 13. C. Flournoy motioned to amend the Resolution to increase the count of seats for community members from “12” to “20”. The motion **passed** through unanimous consent.
 14. A. Barry questioned the possibility of including references to 2016 guidelines.
 15. C. Lederman stated hopes that the Committee members themselves be able to spearhead the direction of the Committee.
 16. J. Wallen stated that not acknowledging the 2016 policies reveals that the Resolution is not intended to divest.
 17. A. Barry motioned to amend the Resolution to state “whereas in 2016 the Board of Trustees approved the standard in process for review of divestment requests of which the University must consider divesting from companies who through their action or inaction are taking morally apprehensible activities such as apartheid, genocide, human trafficking, slavery, and systemic cruelty to children, and perpetuate harm so grave that it would be inconsistent with the goals and principles of the University”. The motion **passed** through unanimous consent.
 18. C. Lederman motioned to end debate on the Resolution. The motion **passed** through unanimous consent.
 19. The motion to approve the Resolution **passed** through a vote of 28-0-0.
 20. I. Rezaka motioned to extend meeting time by 30 minutes. Y. Moitra dissented. The motion **passed**.
- d. Resolution 51: Calling for Cornell to Follow its Divestment Guidelines and Divest from Systemic Violence Against Civilians in Gaza
1. K. Everett introduced the Resolution and emphasized that the Resolution is not a BDS Resolution. K. Everett noted the different companies and respective manufactured items intended to be divested from and emphasized Cornell’s own guidelines for divestment. K. Everett highlighted the distinction that Cornell is one-sidedly funding one side of a war. K. Everett emphasized the intention of the Resolution to divest from war and violence and highlighted personal discomfort with paying for weapons of war.
 2. A representative from Cornell Young Democratic Socialists of America stated acknowledgement of anger and fear from the Zionist community and emphasized that the Resolution’s focus on anti-war rather than taking a political stance. The representative noted that over 25 different student



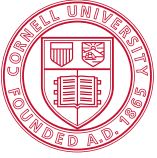
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- organizations are in favor of the Resolution, and that it would be a disservice to constituents to ignore the Resolution.
3. A representative from Jewish Voice for Peace stated condemnation for anti-Semitism and false claims of anti-Semitism used to delegitimize pain. The representative stated belief that moral guidelines must be followed and highlighted that their Jewish identity was not at odds with weapons manufacturing.
 4. A representative from La Asociación Latina highlighted the widespread impact that divestment has on many different communities. The representative emphasized the long history of genocide that the Latino community has faced.
 5. K. Everett motioned to amend the Resolution to strike “used by Israeli armed forces” and state “any armed forces”. F. Berry dissented.
 6. F. Berry stated that the wording of the line is too broad and emphasized the need for continued research and knowledge.
 7. K. Everett highlighted that Cornell should not fund any militant war. K. Everett stated belief that a university should not fund any military.
 8. C. Ting inquired on amending the Resolution to state “technologies” instead of “weapons”.
 9. K. Everett stated amenity to the amendment.
 10. C. Lederman stated belief that there are fundamental problems with the Resolution due to the divisiveness of the Resolution which will not be fixed by small changes.
 11. J. Wallen highlighted that the ICJ designation of genocide cannot be ignored.
 12. K. Everett stated hopes to amend the Resolution to state “should the Resolution be resolved, the Resolution would be presented at the Board of Trustees meeting”.
 13. C. Lederman highlighted that the Charter dictates what can be presented in the meeting with the Board of Trustees.
 14. P. Kuehl stated that regardless of any outcomes, should important findings be gleaned in the Committee, he would be committed to sharing information in his presentation.
 15. K. Everett stated that the amendment does not intend to force President Kuehl into doing anything, but rather to continue research into the issue.
 16. P. Kuehl clarified Student Assembly structure.
 17. F. Meng motioned to refer the Resolution to the Committee. C. Lederman dissented.



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18. The representative from Cornell Young Democratic Socialists of America emphasized that the Resolution only seeks to confirm existing guidelines.
19. S. Parikh stated belief that the previous Resolution already addresses a problem without inflaming conflicts.
20. The representative from Cornell Young Democratic Socialists of America stated intentions to work alongside others. The representative stated that regardless of viability, The Resolution would continue to be pursued.
21. C. Flournoy emphasized hopes that the Resolution be voted on today.
22. I. Rezaka rejected the notion that divestment is hopeless and not plausible. I. Rezaka highlighted that the companies in the Resolution fund war across the world.
23. J. Swenson emphasized that it is important to make attempts to divest without trying to flame tensions or single out singular communities of people. J. Swenson highlighted that the Board of Trustees would not support a movement not fully supported by the entire student body.
24. The representative from Cornell Young Democratic Socialists of America rejected the idea that Resolution 50 is a compromise. The representative stated in response to the notion that the Resolution would flame tensions that the Resolution has brought communities together.
25. P. Kuehl motioned to extend time by 15 minutes. The motion **passed** through unanimous consent.
26. Z. deRham questioned why, should the Resolution not target Israel, the Resolution mentions Israel over 20 times.
27. The representative from Cornell Young Democratic Socialists of America stated that Israel is heavily mentioned because it so clearly conflicts with the 2016 guidelines.
28. Y. Moitra motioned to amend the Resolution to strike all explicit references to Israel.
29. J. Wallen stated confusion over the direction of discourse.
30. Y. Moitra stated belief that divestment across the board is important. Y. Moitra acknowledged the hurt of groups being singled out by the Resolution.
31. C. Lederman highlighted that over 3 hours were spent working with community members on Resolution 50 last night.
32. A. Barry clarified events of the previous DEI meeting and noted that CML was asked to make compromises, while CFI members did not make any compromises.



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33. Y. Moitra stated rejection of a Resolution which would hurt a specific student group.
34. The representative from Cornell Young Democratic Socialists of America stated that groups of people would be hurt on either end.
35. P. Kuehl called the amendment to question. The amendment **failed**.
36. P. Kuehl motioned to extend the meeting by 15 minutes. The motion **passed**.
37. S. Parikh highlighted that Resolution 50 already provides a material path forward towards divestment.
38. S. Parikh motioned to end debate on the Resolution. K. Everett dissented. The motion **passed** with a vote of 14-5-9.
39. The motion to approve the Resolution **failed** through a vote of 4-16-8.

XI. Appointments and Vacancies Calendar

- a. There were no items.

XII. Adjournment

- a. This meeting was adjourned at 7:15pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jenny Zhang

Clerk of the Assembly