



Cornell University
Student Assembly

Cornell University Student Assembly

Minutes of the Thursday, April 22, 2021 Meeting
4:45pm via Zoom

I. Call to Order & Roll Call

- a. C. Huang called the meeting to order at 4:48pm (EST).
- b. Roll Call
 - i. *Members Present:* L. Abd Elmagid, M. Baker, J. Bansah, K. Butler, U. Chukwukere, L. Contreras, A. Gleiberman, S. Kapoor, A. Lampert, A. Miramontes Serrano, E. Perez, T. Reuning, K. Santacruz, M. Shardow, L. Smith, C. Tempelman, V. Valencia, N. Watson, S. Woldai, V. Xu, Y. Yuan, R. Zohar, L. Zumpano, C. Huang
 - ii. *Members Absent:* C. Castillo, S. Zverev

II. Land Acknowledgement of the Gayogohó:nq' (Cayuga Nation)

- a. Cornell University is located on the traditional homelands of the Gayogohó:nq' (the Cayuga Nation). The Gayogohó:nq' are members of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, an alliance of six sovereign Nations with a historic and contemporary presence on this land. The Confederacy precedes the establishment of Cornell University, New York State, and the United States of America. We acknowledge the painful history of Gayogohó:nq' dispossession and honor the ongoing connection of the Gayogohó:nq' people, past and present, to these lands and waters.

III. Announcements and Presentations

- a. Student Advocate Confirmation – A. Ononye '22
 - i. A. Ononye introduced the new board of the Student Advocate and asked for the SA to confirm them.
 - ii. There was a motion to confirm the new board of the Student Advocate.
 1. Motion to confirm – **confirmed** 19-0-4.
- b. Slope Day Media Announcement – E. Perez '21 and C. Atangana '21
 - i. Slope Day concerts will be virtual this year and will not have an in-person component per COVID-19 health guidelines. COVID-19 is still circulating, so Slope Day will be celebrated this year in-person with roommates/housemates and/or virtually with friends. As the Cornell Community continues to get vaccinated, it is still important to wear a mask. For more information about COVID-19 precautions, visit www.covid.cornell.edu. If someone needs medical attention due to alcohol poisoning, call 911 and Good Samaritan laws still apply. The first night of Slope Day will consist of indie-rock performers. The headliner will be Last Dinosaurs and the openers are Prep and Michelle. Night two of Slope Day will have more R&B and Hip-Hop performers. The headliner is Ari Lennox and the openers are Smino and Earthgang. Ari Lennox will be doing a Q&A.



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If there are any questions regarding Slope Day concerts, E. Perez or C. Atangana.

IV. Open Microphone

- a. There were no speakers present at open microphone.

V. Approval of the Minutes

- a. April 15, 2021
 - i. Motion to approve the April 15th minutes – **approved** Unanimous Consent

VI. New Business

- a. SA R44: Petition for Better Lighting on Cornell Owned Student Dormitories
 - i. Abstract: This resolution is a call for action on insufficient dormitory and subsequent poor student academic performance.
 - ii. A. Miramontes Serrano explained this resolution is based on the poor lighting available in North Campus. There have been numerous complaints about the lighting in the dorms, especially as students have had to take classes in their rooms. A. Miramontes Serrano stated they have contacted Housing and have a planned meeting with VP Lombardi to address this issue further.
 - iii. L. Smith asked if it was possible for the SA to contribute funds to this initiative.
 1. A. Miramontes Serrano stated if that were possible that would be great, as Housing has been a little hesitant on when they're going to get the money. If the SA could reallocate funds for proper lightening to dorms, it would be very helpful and a better option than waiting for Housing to do something.
 - iv. V. Xu stated that the Infrastructure Committee might be able to do smaller scale projects like providing more lamps.
 - v. A. Lampert stated that the SAFC is only allowed to distribute funds to something that is going to affect all students. They are in the process of trying to change the bylaws, but in the moment, the bylaws do not allow the SAFC to put money towards just freshmen things.
 - vi. L. Smith stated that the Access Fund might also be appropriate, especially if students state that the awful lighting is affecting their performance. As the SA has the legislative authority over Student Campus Life and its facilitated through them, it may be helpful to emphasize the issue to them rather than funding this through traditional channels.
 1. A. Miramontes Serrano asked how to ask for the Access funds.
 - vii. C. Huang clarified that individual students could request Access funds though the Campus Groups forms or, as the SA technically has authority, in



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- theory one could create a resolution allocate funds for this initiative from the Access Funds.
- viii. A. Miramontes Serrano asked if this would be faster than asking administration itself.
 1. C. Huang stated it may be, it just depends if administration is interested.
 2. K. Butler stated it may be helpful to run these suggestions by VP Lombardi and they might be able to say what is most efficient.
 - ix. L. Abd Elmagid stated the Access Funds may not cover this, as it is usually basic necessities for students. It is up to \$500 per student to cover medical expenses or things that are not covered by financial aid.
 - x. L. Smith explained that this could be covered by the Access Fund, as the list on the website is not exhaustive. A gym membership is included under the Access Fund as an acceptable expense because it supports physical health and mental health, lighting could be applicable as well.
 - xi. There was a motion to table Resolution #44 by unanimous consent.
 1. Motion to table – **tabled** Unanimous Consent
- b. SA R45: Petition to Renew Housing Amenities
- i. Abstract: This resolution is a demand to renew outdated facilities in on-campus residences, specifically targeting communal kitchens and bathrooms.
 - ii. A. Miramontes Serrano stated this was addressed in a previous presentation.
 - iii. Motion to vote on Resolution #45 – **passed** 21-0-1
- c. SA R46: Petition for University Owned Residence Security
- i. Abstract: This resolution calls for action on the growing issue of theft and offence in University-owned residence halls.
 - ii. B. Sherr expressed concern over Resolution #46 and urged the SA to vote against the resolution. This resolution is a massive risk to the safety and wellbeing of the Cornell community, specifically is damaging to classmates of color, LGBTQ+ students, and undocumented students. The SA has rightfully passed resolutions such as disarming CUPD to separate ourselves from a police surveillance state. This is specifically targeting BIPOC students, adding surveillance cameras to dorm common spaces will not only serve as a violation of civil liberties but will pose a risk of putting more students of color in contact with a racist and overreaching police department. If we truly want to stop people from steal food, we would make meal plans free, provide more snacks in dorm areas, and expand the swipe out program. B. Sherr encouraged every member of the SA not to criminalize being hungry on campus and police students for trying to simply survive.
 1. A. Miramontes Serrano stated they wished B. Sherr contacted her prior to the meeting to discuss their concerns. A. Miramontes Serrano agreed that food security is an on-going issue and asked what B. Sherr believes should happen to address that.
 2. B. Sherr stated that if they were actually looking at addressing the source of student steal food in dormitories, the source comes from



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- hunger not an absence of policing. B. Sherr explained if they wanted to address that issue, they would look into things like free snacks in dorms, expanding swipe out hunger program, automatically enrolling unused BRBS into a public fund that any low-income student could access.
- iii. C. Huang stated that A. Miramontes Serrano had really good intentions coming from their community and the feedback they are receiving from other perspectives from different communities is important.
 - iv. L. Smith shared that during their freshmen year, they had a discussion regarding cameras on campus with the Judicial Administrator, who was very intrigued by the fact that Cornell compared to other campuses does not have a lot of cameras and was proud of the fact that as a student body, the student population was generally trusting.
 - v. S. Woldai reaffirmed B. Sherr's points and asked where the funding for this would come from.
 1. A. Miramontes Serrano stated that it would come from similar avenues as the security on West, as their pantries are locked.
 2. C. Huang stated that there are many options for funding and West Campus does have its own specific system of security that was just implemented the past summer and fall with new security cameras. That money is coming from an institutional budget, which are decisions made by administration.
 - vi. T. Reuning stated they should not be chastising community members for coming to the SA during meetings to criticize resolutions that are being discussed. Additionally, T. Reuning stated they did bring up these concerns when A. Miramontes Serrano first introduced the idea of this resolution.
 1. A. Miramontes Serrano stated they messaged T. Reuning on Slack and they did not respond and agreed there should be more private fridges.
 2. T. Reuning stated that they were not privately messaged about this specifically, but regardless, it is not their responsibility to do research on A. Miramontes Serrano's resolutions.
 - vii. D. Hernandez agreed with earlier sentiments and stated that we should keep in mind that funding can be a little bit restricting. But it is important to make it much more accessible for students to know their rights regarding eligibility for SNAP benefits, which comes from the government.
 - viii. There was a motion to table Resolution #46
 1. Motion to table Resolution #46 – **tabled** 17-0-6.

VII. Adjournment

- a. C. Huang adjourned the meeting at 5:30pm (EST).

Respectfully Submitted,

Ciara Shanahan

Clerk of the Student Assembly