



# Cornell University Student Assembly

## Cornell University Student Assembly Minutes of the October 20, 2022 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]: M. Baker, S. Bhardwaj, D. Cady, K. Chan, P. Da Silveira, G. Dong, A. Lampert, J. Lee, A. Lewis, R. DeLorenzo L. Lu, J. Mayen, D. Nachman, J. Kolinski, M. Song, V. Valencia, S. Williams, R. Chatterji, K. Liu, B. Mehretu, A. Richmond, Y. Yuan*
- b. *Members Excused: S. Ali, E. D'Angelo, D. Edelman, B. Kotb, B. Luckow, N. Son, C. Ting, JP. Swenson*

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

- a. President V. Valencia stated the land acknowledgment

### IV. Late Additions to the Agenda

- a. P. Da Silveira motions to add resolution 9, passed 12-0-2
  - i. P. Da Silveira motions to add resolution 9 above resolution 8, passed by unanimous consent
- b. P. Da Silveira motions to add SAIFC Manual report, passed 15-0-1

### V. Consent Agenda

- a. Approval of the October 13, 2022 meeting minutes
  - i. S. Bhardwaj motions to approve meeting minutes, passed by unanimous consent

### VI. Open Microphone

- a. None

### VII. Announcements and Reports

- a. New Freshmen and Transfer Representatives are announced
  - i. New representatives are sworn-in

### VIII. Business of the Day

- a. Maggie Peng from OSGR came to talk about their budget



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- i. Budget is divided into lobby trip, voting education initiative, and miscellaneous
- ii. The most cost intensive is the DC lobby trip, 3 night stay in an Airbnb is \$2,500, transportation by car is \$200 and transportation by Ourbus and car is \$1,800, office-wide dinner is \$250
- iii. Based on the assumption that 10 people will be going on the trip
- iv. On the DC trip, they'll be meeting with elected officials about issues that students care about
- v. S. Bhardwaj asks what they'd do about fluctuating gas prices
- vi. Maggie states that they can't control that, but there's a cushion for that and the trip isn't too far in the future
- vii. J. Kolinski asks to expand on what exactly they're doing on the trip
- viii. Maggie responds that they're going to set up meeting with elected representatives to talk about issues that Cornell students are passionate about (ex: increased financial aid) and what policies these representatives are working on
- ix. M. Song asks how they got to 10 people going on this trip and the cost breakdown of the Airbnb
- x. Maggie states that 10 was a good estimate based on an interest form that they sent out to the OSGR general body and know for sure that at least half want to go
- xi. Maggie states that the lobby trip is the majority of the budget because trips are going to be more expensive than other initiatives, which aren't very costly
- xii. The lodging was based on the average cost for lodging that allows 10 people on Airbnb that was both in the area and safe
- xiii. Maggie talks about their voting education initiative and states that its goal is to help make students less confused about the voting process
- xiv. They're going to partner with Cornell Votes to print out voting education quarter cards, which will only cost \$30
- xv. Maggie talks about their miscellaneous expenses, which is \$150
- xvi. This includes recruitment materials such as poster boards and table clothes, and social costs, which includes 2-3 dinners or an ice cream social
- xvii. Maggie states that they're spending most of their budget in the fall
- xviii. J. Kolinski asks why the budget for voting education is 10% that of social costs
- xix. Maggie responds that voting education just doesn't have to be expensive. For \$30 they can get over 300 quarter cards



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- xx. Expands that the social costs are important to prevent large turnover, which they have had issues with. It's only \$100 per social, which is only a little more than 5% of the budget
- xxi. R. DeLorenzo asks if they think the social events will really help retain members
- xxii. Maggie states she's been on OSGR for 2 years and she's 1 of 2 members who've stayed that long. Before last semester, there was an almost 100% turnover rate
- xxiii. The majority of the members are from the last and current semester. It's extremely difficult to keep members and an element that draws people is a sense of community with social events brings
- xxiv. S. Bhardwaj asks why OSGR is prioritizing the DC trip over maybe Tompkins County or other local governments where they could make more of a difference
- xxv. Maggie states that a draw of OSGR is that people want to interact with different levels of government and people find worth with speaking with representatives
- xxvi. D. Cady states that OSGR is going to spend more money than Anabel's is spending the entire year, which is \$8,000
- xxvii. Maggie states that a lobby trip is an invaluable experience for students to speak to elected representatives and it would help with membership and their advocacy
- xxviii. They would also not be spending this amount of money next semester
- xxix. B. Mehretu asks how they're going to get opinions of the Cornell student body
- xxx. Maggie states that they've linked a survey in their bio and have collected over 100 responses about issues that students care about and their plan over next semester is to speak directly with student groups to collect testimony about their experiences
- xxxi. M. Baker states that she used a listserv from the Office of Assemblies and was able to get a lot more than 100 responses and it's a free resource, so she recommends reaching out to Erik
- xxxii. Maggie says she'll reach out to him
- xxxiii. S. Bhardwaj says they should start asking students about issues they care about sooner and asks for an itinerary to be shared for the lobby trip
- xxxiv. Maggie responds they're working on it this semester, but talking to student groups about issues they care about is always a yearlong thing that they do



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- b. P. Da Silveira and A. Lampert state that they got Manual passed by SAIFC and they're going to fund it as a pilot program at-cost and hopefully the administration will pick it up later on
  - i. P. Da Silveira states that the cost that came out of the budget is \$10,000 and \$50-60,000 left in the SAIFC budget
  - ii. A. Lampert states that in the beginning of the March they're going to talk to VP Lombardi and show him the data and hopefully get the administration to take it on
  - iii. D. Cady thanks them for their work
  - iv. A. Lampert thanks him for the comment
  - v. M. Baker recommends that they ask Erik to send an email to all Cornell students about it
  - vi. A. Lampert says they'll ask him about it
  - vii. JP Swenson asks about what the \$3,500 social media cost
  - viii. A. Lampert states that the amount is set by the company and they halved it for us because they really want to work with Cornell
  - ix. They'll do targeted ads on Tik Tok, Instagram, and other social media platforms
  - x. P. Da Silveira states that this involves them hiring Cornell students as representatives to go out and advertise
  - xi. M. Song reminds us that they're offering it to us at a break-even cost, so this is the most cost effective it'll get
  - xii. V. Valencia asks if there's a vote breakdown
  - xiii. A. Lampert states that it was 7-0-1
  - xiv. A. Lampert motions to add vote count and account number, passed by unanimous consent
- c. V. Valencia states that there's a makeup orientation for representatives this Sunday at 11:45am and attendance is mandatory
- d. R. DeLorenzo motions to move up Approbations Committee discussion before resolution 8 because they're trying to make a survey that they need SA members voices on and it would be good to get it done this week and R. DeLorenzo has a time conflict
  - i. M. Baker dissents that they should hear from the Office of Ethics if they have any conflicts and they state they have a prelim
  - ii. D. Cady asks if the VP of Finance has to be here for the discussion
  - iii. V. Valencia responds that they don't have to be, but it would be nice



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- iv. In a vote of 7-8-5 the motion fails and the order stays the same
- e. S. Bhardwaj states she's co-chair of the student health advisory committee and she sent out an email today to all members
  - i. Please email her if you're interested in joining the committee or working on the resolutions
- f. A. Lampert states they're doing a SA social on October 30<sup>th</sup>

### **IX. Initiatives**

- a. D. Cady states that they're working on a project on renting bikes in Ithaca and invites new members to reach out if they're interested in learning more

### **X. Presentation and Forums**

- a. None

### **XI. New Business**

- a. P. Da Silveira, JP Swenson, A. Lewis propose Resolution 9, the establishment of a new hotel committee
  - i. They go over their goals and the main one is to facilitate cohesion and increase sense of belonging through more schoolwide events
  - ii. P. Da Silveira states that this is a way for them to be guarantying that they can plan events and engage with the student body
  - iii. V. Valencia asks them to state the lines when they reference a document
  - iv. P. Da Silveira motions to amend the first and second "where as" clauses to include lines 62-64 of the Special Rules of Order and 12-15 of the Charter, passed with unanimous consent
  - v. J. Kolinski asks about what budget they'd need to provide the committee
  - vi. A. Lewis responds that they're still working on it, but it'll be cost-effective and not a burden on the SA
  - vii. P. Da Silveira states that money will come from special projects fund
  - viii. S. Bhardwaj asks for examples of the kinds of programming
  - ix. A. Lewis responds that they'll create wellness events that will be open to the whole student body
  - x. D. Cady points out the similarities with Class Council and recommends that work done here is done in collaboration with them
  - xi. P. Da Silveira states that collaboration is a big aspect and they plan on working a lot with the Communication and Outreach Committee



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- xii. K. Chan states that all of these events also a good way to advertise resolutions that the SA is working on
  - xiii. A. Lewis responds that one of the goals is definitely to increase awareness about the SA
  - xiv. S. Bhardwaj asks for more specific event examples. Would the puppy palazzo and all other events fall under this?
  - xv. JP Swenson responds that an idea is having puppies come in and have food and music to help de-stress students and provide food as well
  - xvi. S. Bhardwaj clarifies will all outreach events be under this committee?
  - xvii. A. Lewis states that all the events will be executed by the Hotel committee
  - xviii. P. Da Silveira clarifies that it's meant to facilitate the outreach and events, but will not plan all events and it's not responsible for individual outreach
  - xix. K. Chan clarifies that communicating an event is under the Communications committee and event planning logistics is under the Hotel committee
  - xx. M. Song states that her chief concern is redundancy because there are so many student organizations already doing this type of work and that she would be more on board if the resolution had more of an SA focus
  - xxi. P. Da Silveira states that they're very open to change, but that the SA is a very powerful body and we have a significant amount more funding so this is another application of our outreach and way to get more involved
  - xxii. V. Valencia states that she agrees with M. Song because this committee would be funded through special projects and she fears they're taking those funds away from other orgs who apply for this funding. We can connect with constitutes without another ad hoc committee
  - xxiii. P. Da Silveira states he agrees, but the SA has been slow to get resolutions and events out there, so this is a way spur some action and get more representatives involved. There is also a significant number of special projects funds available for rollover
  - xxiv. M. Baker motions to change the format from resolution to internal policy resolution, passed by unanimous consent
  - xxv. D. Caddy motions to postpone the internal policy resolution until next week so that the details can be ironed out, passed by unanimous consent
- b. The Office of Ethics proposes Resolution number 8, amending the bylaws of the Office of Ethics
- i. Ethics committee goes over the changes they would like to see: ex-officio position for Office of Ethics, ex-officio position present at Executive Session



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- ii. States that the Ethics committee is an external committee and they get complaints about representatives, committees, and resolutions. They don't have executive power. They can only make recommendations
- iii. They have a chairperson limit of 1 year and they would like to see other committees adopt this same policy
- iv. They'll be starting an Instagram page where they have recommendations and a Qualtrics form to submit recommendations and complaints. They'll also have an email
- v. They also have the ability to talk with the University Administration about ethical concerns
- vi. They have also passed a code of ethics, which states what is considered unethical and how the committee operates
- vii. It's important to remember that what is unethical is up to interpretation by the committee and this alongside with the committee not having executive power allows them to involve and show how what is ethical involves
- viii. They have a clause that Ethics members cannot run for SA, while in the office
- ix. The Office of Ethics was created by resolution 20 last year to replace the Research and Accountability Committee, which was a system that did not work well
- x. The Office of Ethics is a resource and the bylaws is not the first thing they've tried to pass. They passed an amendment to the standing rules that details all ethical violations and the Code of Ethics which covers how the committee is governed
- xi. The bylaws serve as a basket to hold all these things in and updates the language that already exists in the bylaws
- xii. C. Taylor states that they have a vote of confidence that requires a blank pass and all that does is trigger a vote of no confidence that requires 2/3 to pass. This could create an endless loop.
- xiii. Responds that the only thing disrupting the vote of confidence would be someone going back and forth
- xiv. C. Taylor states there's a vote of confidence that requires a simple majority to pass. The only thing that does is trigger a vote of no confidence, which then requires a 2/3 vote to pass. This could create a loop where if there is a set number of people greater than a majority, but lower than 2/3, there's essentially endless debate. Wonders if it's just possible to mandate that a vote of no confidence occurs once a year?



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- xv. Office of Ethics responds that if a vote of confidence fails it goes to a vote of no confidence. If not everybody is not confident in a vote of confidence, then those people who are not confident should then vote for a vote of actual confidence, so if someone is going back and forth that would be the only thing disrupting the vote of confidence
- xvi. C. Taylor states that it's a vote that does not allow for anything between a majority and 2/3 to exist without forcing them to change it. Thinks if the only purpose of a vote of confidence is to trigger a second vote, then avoiding that might be helpful and it might be helpful to know that's the case for anyone voting.
- xvii. Office of Ethics responds that the vote of confidence is the SA giving a check to the Office of Ethics. The Office of Ethics cannot continue until they describe what they've done and the SA checks off on it.
- xviii. A sustained vote of no confidence removes the entire Office of Ethics and reappoints everyone, which is a very big measure, so the vote of no confidence is a confirmation that there's really enough of a grievance for this to occur.
- xix. Since it could be a loop, we could change 2/3 to a simple majority or remove the vote of confidence and just have it be a vote of no confidence, but we think that having the vote of confidence is an important step.
- xx. S. Bhardwaj motions to extend time by 10min, passed by unanimous consent
- xxi. M. Baker asks if the Office of Ethics is externally electing to serve as the ex-officio member or if it's a chairperson
- xxii. Office of Ethics responds that it's a chairperson and that they elect the chair
- xxiii. M. Baker recommends removing "solely" from 118 and asks about what the "failed community vote" in line 126 means
- xxiv. Office of Ethics responds that "failed community vote" is an extra step to keep the Office of Ethics as a working body. It's a kind of checks and balances. The whole community would have to find a distrust for the Office of Ethics to go away entirely.
- xxv. M. Baker asks if that's outlined anywhere that the student body would vote
- xxvi. Office of Ethics responds it's on line 169
- xxvii. M. Baker motions to amend line 118 to read "The Student Assembly Office of Ethics, alone, will be tasked with the ability to revise the Code of Ethics," passed by unanimous consent
- xxviii. D. Caddy asks if this resolution requires 2/3 of the whole SA or 2/3 of those present





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- xxix. V. Valencia responds that its 2/3 of those present
- xxx. D. Cady states they should remove any mention of the Elections committee because it seems repetitive and not in line with the request to not take action because the Elections committee does take action. That's line 68, 72, and 73. Also states that the concern C. Taylor brought up needs to be more seriously addressed because this redundancy was also an issue with the byline last year.
- xxxi. Office of Ethics responds that three of their members are on the Office of Elections. It's no executive power, it's just a guide. If there's a decision being made on elections it should be reviewed by us, but it's not one sole decision.
- xxxii. If someone has a better way to do the vote of confidence and no confidence let us know and we can revise it.
- xxxiii. S. Bhardwaj asks what the intention is with working with Elections Committee
- xxxiv. Office of Ethics responds that they're just check and balances for elections. They just do review and have no executive power
- xxxv. J. Kolinski says that line 180 says that new members can't make changes to the Office of Ethics bylaws. Asks if they would be willing to amend that to include a timeframe for them to add their perspective
- xxxvi. Office of Ethics responds that it could be during the first 3 SA meetings of each semester
- xxxvii. J. Kolinski motions to amend line 180 to say that "changes to the Office of Ethics bylaws may only occur during the first 3 SA meetings of each semester," passed 15-0-3
- xxxviii. R. Lorenzo asks how this is different from the Cornell Code of Conduct
- xxxix. Office of Ethics responds that's more of a Cornell Administrative thing. The Office of Ethics is more ethical concerns in general and concerning SA conduct specifically
  - xl. M. Song states that she fully believes the chair of the Office of Ethics should be there during Executive Session
  - xli. Office of Ethics thanks her for her comment
  - xlii. R. De Lorenzo asks if there's an exact code of what you can and can't stay
  - xliii. Office of Ethics responds that there's no strict this is an ethical violation and this is not because they want to leave room for all of them to discuss. The discussions will be had and be in-depth and they're important.
  - xliv. The Office of Ethics also takes after the Code of Conduct, but it's not just about what's ethically as a student, but what's ethical as a student



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- xliv. S. Bhardwaj motions to extend time by 10min, P. Da Silveira dissents, passes by 10-5-3
- xlvi. M. Baker motions to amend line 143 to say “vote of no confidence,” line 146 to say “vote of no confidence,” line 150-152 delete, and line 153 delete “in the event of a failed vote of confidence,” line 154 to say “2/3 vote,” line 161 to 163 to say “if the motion to commence a vote of no confidence fails the SA Office of Ethics will continue to operate in the present academic year,” line 164-168 delete, passed by unanimous consent
- xlvii. K. Chan asks why it was changed to say “serve for the duration of their academic career” in line 99-101. How would this ensure diversity of opinion?
- xlviii. Office of Ethics responds that duration of academic career is because there’s a benefit of having longevity of opinion and experience within student government.
- xlix. P. Da Silveira asks about line 49-50 where it says that Office of Ethics is mandated to be in executive session. Believes the SA does need checks and balances, but that this is the only venue SA has for deliberation of internal policies.
  - 1. The Office of Ethics responds that ethics doesn’t end as a concept in executive session. They’re there to be a check on members and if the Office of Ethics isn’t there nothing could be done because they wouldn’t know about it.
  - li.

### **XII. Adjournment**

- a. V. Valencia adjourns because there’s not enough members to hold quorum

The meeting was adjourned at 6:42pm

Respectfully Submitted,  
*Megan Birmingham*  
Clerk of the Assembly