



Cornell University Student Assembly

Cornell University Student Assembly

Minutes of the Thursday, December 10, 2020 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. Bentley, K. Butler, C. Castillo, U. Chuckwukere, L. Contreras, A. Gleiberman, S. Kapoor, A. Lampert, S. Lim, A. Miramontes Serrano, E. Moy, 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, S. Zverev, C. Huang
 - ii. *Members Absent:* All members present.

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. C. Huang shared updates on initiatives from the past semester. Several SA members have been working on mental health and tele-health care for international students. Currently, New York state licensing restricts any mental health or tele health care to be provided to students outside the U.S. The SA has been working with the Office of Student Government Relations, which includes SA member L. Smith, to see what can be done on the state level to advocate for increased access. In the interim, SA members V. Xu and Y. Yuan have been working with international student organizations to see what is needed right now.
- b. M. Adeghe clarified the removal of the Vice President of Research and Accountability that occur the previous Tuesday. M. Adeghe motioned to remove the Vice President of Research and Accountability for two main reasons. One being the physical and emotional violence M. Adeghe received from them at a hockey game, which prevents them from being an unbiased and impartial chair of a committee that is focused on research and accountability. Furthermore, the nature of the position is that all members of the SA should feel comfortable going to this person with any type of internal conflict. M. Adeghe stated that even though this event took place

before the start of the SA term, past actions are not exempt from accountability. This rhetoric is used to silence victims.

- c. U. Chukwukere provided clarification for the removal of D. Anadkat from the SA. On Wednesday, December 9, the Executive Committee voted to remove D. Anadkat for dereliction of duty to the Cornell community and high crimes against the SA. D. Anadkat failed to maintain active membership in at least one SA committee. There was consultation with the Vice President of External Affairs M. Baker who informed the Executive Committee that the former representative failed to accept the invitation to join the communications committee and never attended a single meeting. The Vice President of Internal Affairs substantiated these claims and further informed the Committee that D. Anadkat was never an active member. The Executive Committee found the former representative to be in violation of their senior roles.
- d. Calling for the Disarmament of the Cornell University Police Department: Updates and Changes Presentation led by U. Chukwukere, M. Adeghe, K. Restrepo, and S. Woldai
 - i. U. Chukwukere stated that many co-sponsors of Resolution 11 received intense harassment for the direct result of speaking out and advocating for themselves in their communities. Malicious emails were sent to the New York Times, President Pollack, Vice President Lombardi, scholarship providers, professors, employers, and other parties relevant to co-sponsors. Personally, U. Chukwukere received blatantly racist and homophobic posts on platforms such as Reddit and GreekRank. Other organizers received hateful private messages during SA meetings as they tried to speak on Resolution 11.
 - ii. M. Adeghe stated that in the face of all of, many members of the SA remained quiet as they witnessed their black peers be harassed and ridiculed. It is especially concerning, as there was unanimous support for the Black Lives Matter resolution last week. At the virtual town hall, many members of the community shared traumatic experiences with the police. Several members of the SA did not attend this town hall. Furthermore, members against Resolution 11 took the time to write an op ed condemning the SA and their actions, while still remaining quiet as they witnessed their black peers be harassed and ridiculed. Over 200 students came to the town hall and there were 51 unique speakers, where only 7 speakers spoke against Resolution 11.
 - iii. K. Restrepo shared several testimonies from members of the community. These testimonials show there was an overwhelming response for the disarmament resolution that's been trying to get passed for over a month now.
 - iv. S. Woldai explained that opponents of Resolution 11 on the SA created their own watered-down version of Resolution 11 calling for reform, rather than disarmament. This resolution is piggybacking off the hours and extensive work by organizers. Further, instead of trying to get the resolution through the appropriate committee, they attempted to pass their resolution through the communication committee. As Vice President of the Diversity Inclusion

Committee, S. Woldai stated no member reached out to them to discuss this resolution and was extremely disappointed about that.

- v. K. Restrepo reaffirmed that C. Huang is allowed to chair the discussion on Resolution, as C. Huang has no financial stake in the resolution, and therefore it is not a conflict of interest. Additionally, the removal of both A. Gleiberman and D. Anadkat were done completely legitimately and would have occurred regardless of how they voted on the resolution.
- e. C. Huang wished every who celebrates a Happy Hanukkah and apologized for not adjusting the time of the meeting.
- f. C. Huang shared the spring semester SA calendar and asked for those with questions to please reach out.
 - i. One committee member asked in spring finals were taken into consideration.
 - 1. C. Huang answered that spring finals were taken into consideration.
- g. C. Huang shared a statement on Recognizing and Condemning Racist Attacks Against Assemblyman Chukwukere.

IV. Open Microphone

- a. S. Kelly asked why it is SA members responsibility to be addressing and calling out anonymous statements on GreekRank. SA members are trying to defend themselves against backdoor moves trying to remove them.
 - i. U. Chukwukere expressed his disappointment in this question. U. Chukwukere shared this harassment they experienced to highlight the cost of being black at Cornell.
- b. A. Hu shared the work of HEAL, an organization at Cornell that provides mental health chatting support in Mandarin Chinese. A. Hu stated they believe that a lot of unique mental health issues of international students are often overlooked by universities. Not only does New York state have restrictions, but it is also hard for international students to express intimate issues in a foreign language and there are huge cultural stigmas with professional mental health. Due to the pandemic, many students have not been able to go home for over a year and do not have that family support. HEAL is a service in Mandarin that is informally structure as peer chats which students can book a time to chat. A. Hu asked for people to spread the word about this initiative and more awareness around international student mental health in general.
- c. G. Altaras expressed his disgust with the harassment that members have experienced on both sides, but also stated that members should be cognizant of quickly jumping into bad faith assumptions.
- d. C. Duncan expressed concern with the recall petitions that seemed to have been launched by other members of the SA. It should be the constituents of those members as opposed to other members doing it in secret.
- e. D. Anadkat explained that they ran for SA in March and applied for the Communications Committee, since then a lot has happened, and it has been an extremely busy semester. About a month ago, D. Anadkat received an email asking if this still wanted to be on the committee and D. Anadkat admitted to missing that email. D. Anadkat stated they were not notified of any meetings and was not informed they were breaking any rules. The only crime they committed was missing an email.
- f. J. Reed refuted the idea that people in mental health crisis will comply because of a baton at their face of a gun at the hip of the person next to them. From personal

experience, J. Reed shared that being threatened or having violence against you will not help in a mental health crisis. The idea that a gun needs to be there is false and increases the probability of violence.

- g. N. Nocturna asked why one person exemplifying the issues of homophobia and racism at Cornell not enough for members to stand against it. N. Nocturna expressed concern when people asked questions to someone who specifically said they are not taking questions and comments on their own trauma. It is extremely disrespectful.
- h. A. Loretdemola asked what the situation is with free printing.
 - i. M. Adeghe answered that students get \$15 worth of free printing each semester, which is about 250 pages.
- i. W. Brody stated that members who were removed from the SA because of violating bylaws were only removed after their votes against the resolution and the petitions failed to recall them.
- j. S. Chessler stated that Cornell Dining is changing their meal plan policies for the spring semester, where students will not be able to alter it. S. Chessler asked if the SA could exert some pressure on Cornell Dining to prevent that from happening.
 - i. A. Miramontes asked for S. Chessler to email them for more information.

V. Business of the Day

- a. E. Moy motioned to amend the Standing Rules of SA per Section 1 Rule 2, specifically E. Moy moved to amend Section 6 Rule 9 to read "Any voting SA member may attempt to overrule a decision by the Executive Committee by submitting their challenge in the format of a resolution or in the form of a motion at the next regularly scheduled meeting. A simple majority of the voting membership must be reached to overrule the Executive Committee at any time".
 - i. C. Huang asked the parliamentarian if you can motion to amend the Standing Rules on the floor or if it has to be in the form of a resolution.
 - ii. E. Moy stated that Section 1 Rule 2 of the Standing Rules states that the Standing Rules may be edited at any time by a majority vote by membership of the SA, so it does not appear to require a resolution.
 - iii. E. Moy made a motion to amend.
 - 1. L. Abd Elmagid dissented and that stated that it should require two thirds of the SA to overrule in order to represent a majority of the SA.
 - 2. E. Moy stated that the Executive Committee is made up of only 7 members and a majority vote would be more representative than just those 7 members.
 - 3. M. Adeghe stated that it is more powerful to have a two-third majority than a simple majority and the Executive Committee members were voted on and approved by the whole SA.
 - 4. U. Chukwukere stated there is absolutely no reason to change the Standing Rules.
 - 5. M. Baker stated that if the Standing Rules are not amended, this is inconsistent with previous actions. Only four members of the Executive Committee voted to remove D. Anadkat and five members voted to remove Representative A. Gleiberman. M. Baker

stated they believed there should be a unified response to these situations.

6. L. Abd Elmagid stated that the Executive Committee has been following all rules and has been completely consistent with their actions. The whole SA voted to approve the Standing Rules at the beginning of the semester.
7. Vote to vote – **failed** 15-12-2
8. M. Baker stated that the importance of following rules has recently come up and that during the removal of Vice President of Research and Accountability, M. Baker was not allowed to vote. By definition of the Vice President of External Affairs, M. Baker would need to be removed from the vote by two thirds majority vote of the whole voting body of the SA and that did not occur. M. Baker stated that the rules were not followed then. M. Baker reaffirmed that this motion should be passed because it is not right for four or five people on the Executive Committee to be not following the bylaws and be making decisions unilaterally.
9. S. Woldai stated that M. Baker was not allowed to vote because of a conflict of interest, as M. Baker had served on the Research and Accountability Committee for the entire semester.
10. U. Chukwukere supported S. Woldai's statement and agreed that M. Baker had a conflict of interest.
11. M. Baker explained that nowhere in Robert's Rules does it say that conflict of interest constitutes committee membership. There is no precedent that M. Baker's committee membership constitutes a conflict of interest.
12. E. Moy agreed with M. Baker's statement and stated that they will be passing a resolution in the future to change the Charter and other aspects of the executive decisions.
13. S. Kapoor stated she believed that a conflict of interest is only when someone has a financial stake in the decision.
14. M. Adeghe stated that it is financial state and a personal relationship with the question on the table.
15. Z. Sherin stated that when they mentioned that C. Huang chairing during a discussion of a resolution, they co-sponsored was a conflict of interest, Z. Sherin was called sexist. Z. Sherin asked for an apology from those that stated that M. Baker had a conflict of interest.
16. L. Davis-Frost stated that this debate is making a mockery of shared governance, there is not a single other assembly that spends 30 to 45

minutes going through bureaucratic stalling when there is 290 people attending this meeting.

17. C. Huang stated that this debate is disrespectful to community members who have attended this meeting for specific resolutions

iv. Motion to table – **tabled** 14-12-3

b. C. Huang asked for SA members to amend the agenda to begin discussion Resolution #23, as it is time sensitive.

i. Motion to amend – **amended**

VI. New Business

a. SA R23: Demanding Cornell Allows Anabel's Grocery to Reopen for the Spring 2021 Semester

i. Abstract: Due to the coronavirus pandemic, Cornell prohibited Anabel's Grocery, Due to the coronavirus pandemic, Cornell prohibited Anabel's Grocery, a student-run and non-profit grocery store on campus, from operating in its facilities in Anabel Taylor Hall this fall. A wide spectrum of students experience food insecurity on Cornell's campus; however, first generation, low-income, and BIPOC students are affected at a higher rate. Rates of food insecurity have worsened in the face of the pandemic. The University cited the existence of the Cornell Food Pantry as the reason Anabel's Grocery is a non-essential activity during the pandemic, but the two entities serve different purposes. While the Food Pantry serves an immediate need for students in crisis on campus, Anabel's Grocery sells fresh, affordable food at subsidized prices to Cornell undergraduate and Graduate students that wish to shop in our store, with no qualifications needed. Anabel's closure has limited students' options for accessing affordable groceries without along, often risky, commute to area grocery stores. Anabel's Grocery is prepared to operate safely in the Spring semester, resuming what has actually become an essential service to the Cornell community, particularly students with limited food budgets and modes of transportation who seek fresh, affordable food.

ii. D. Gonzales explained that they are proposing to have Anabel's groceries to be redeemed for the Spring 2021 semester. Cornell has deemed it has not essential, as the Food Pantry would serve to replace Anabel's Grocery. However, Anabel's Grocery is essential.

iii. M. Feely stated that Anabel's Grocery's mission is to provide fresh, healthy, and affordable food to all students on campus and receives many of its supplies from local farms and producers. Anabel's Grocery is able to provide affordable food through its subsidy fund, which is actually generously given by the Student Assembly Students Helping Students Endowment fund. Anabel Grocery's shoppers save 30% compared to Wegmans. Due to the being closed this semester, 76% of Anabel Grocery's shoppers are now going to Wegmans instead. It was found that approximately 30% of Cornell's

- undergraduate students do not eat as often as they think they should and they numbers are higher for communities of color.
- iv. C. Lee shared that students indicated increased Covid-related stress on being worried they would contract Covid-19 off campus. There are also several issues with transportation.
 - v. Motion to vote on Resolution #23 – **passed** 26-0-3
 - b. E. Moy motioned to untable the discussion on amending Section 6 Rule 9 of the Standing Rules.
 - i. L. Abd Elmagid dissented, stating that as this is the last meeting of the semester and there are 257 participants for the items on the agenda.
 - ii. M. Stefanko explained it would be highly irregular to bring this debate back in a session that it was tabled in.
 - iii. Motion to untable – **failed** 12-14-3
 - c. C. Castillo motioned to amend the agenda to add Resolution #30 to the beginning of New Business.
 - i. Z. Sherin stated that resolutions with co-sponsors that are Jewish should be prioritized.
 - ii. N. Watson stated that they are Jewish and are supportive of moving this resolution forward.
 - iii. C. Huang explained that change in time to any regularly scheduled meeting must be requested two weeks in advance of the regularly scheduled meeting.
 - iv. N. Watson stated they did not appreciate having to expose one's identity so that resolutions are prioritized.
 - v. Motion to amend the agenda – **amended** 18-0-2
 - d. SA R30: Calling For the Disarmament of the Cornell University Police Department
 - i. Abstract: This resolution is calling for the disarmament of the Cornell University Police Department.
 - ii. Motion to vote on Resolution #30 – **passed** 15-1-1
 - 1. L. Abd Elmagid – yes.
 - 2. J. Bansah – yes.
 - 3. K. Bentley – yes.
 - 4. Carlo Castillo -yes.
 - 5. U. Chukwukere – yes.
 - 6. L. Contreras – yes.
 - 7. A. Lampert – yes.
 - 8. S. Lim – yes.
 - 9. E. Perez – yes.
 - 10. T. Reuning – yes.
 - 11. M. Shardow – yes.
 - 12. L. Smith – no.
 - 13. V. Valencia -yes.
 - 14. N. Watson – yes.
 - 15. S. Woldai – yes.
 - 16. S. Zverev – yes.
 - e. There was a motion to amend the agenda to begin discussion on Resolution #29.
 - i. Motion to amend the agenda – amended
 - f. SA R29: Extension to Good Samaritan Laws
 - i. Abstract: This motion seeks that Cornell extends Good Samaritan Laws.

- ii. Z. Sherin explained that in New York State that are Good Samaritan laws that allow individuals to seek help for other individuals without fear that they themselves will face legal consequences. At Cornell, Good Samaritan Laws are narrow, whereas if 3 individuals were underage drinking and one individual had a medical emergency, only the individual that called authorities would be protected from legal consequences. Z. Sherin stated that they hope the SA would urge Cornell to extend their Good Samaritan Laws to highlight they prioritize student safety above everything else.
- iii. T. Reuning asked for clarification for how Cornell would extend their Good Samaritan Laws.
 - 1. Z. Sherin answered that this resolution is to highlight student support for extending Good Samaritan Laws.
- iv. S. Woldai agreed with the sentiments of the resolution but expressed concern that it would protect fraternities from facing repercussions for their misconduct.
 - 1. Z. Sherin stated this resolution's purpose to help all students, regardless of their stance on Greek Life.
- v. K. Cardona asked for clarification if this resolution protects fraternities.
 - 1. Z. Sherin explained that in some senses it does protect fraternities, as if a person is overdrinking at a fraternity and needs support from authorities, the fraternity will be protected. However, right now, individuals will drink too much and they'll need support, but would be unable to do so. Getting support shouldn't be something that one has to decide between protecting their friends from getting some sort of reprimand and student safety.
- vi. R. Horrigan expressed concern that Greek Life will be protected for doing something wrong in terms of hazing. From R. Horrigan's understanding, no one will get in trouble for partaking in drinking or drugs are the student receives medical attention. If a student then files a hazing report, would the fraternity or sorority still be liable.
 - 1. Z. Sherin stated that, if hazing is concerned, they wouldn't necessarily get in trouble with the direct use of alcohol, but Cornell has a fairly strict policy on hazing that would not be affected by extending Good Samaritan Laws.
- vii. W. Henderson asked why fraternities shouldn't be reprimanded for causing students to drink excessively.
 - 1. Z. Sherin stated that students should not have to think twice about having to get medical assistance for their peers.
- viii. M. Adeghe expressed her distaste with the Greek Life system but reminded members that people in Greek Life are human beings and they are fellow

students. Regardless of the fact that they are in a frat, students should not mean that they let their friend die because they are too scared to call for hell.

- ix. Motion to vote on Resolution #29 – **passed** 16-0-3
- g. There was a motion to table Resolution #28 until the first meeting of next semester, as many of the co-sponsors of this resolution are no longer present at this meeting.
 - i. U. Chukwukere dissented.
 - ii. Vote to vote – **failed** 8-9-1
 - iii. The motion to table Resolution #28 was withdrawn.
- h. U. Chukwukere motioned to remove Resolution #28 from the agenda.
 - i. A. Miramontes Serrano dissented, stating that co-sponsors of the resolution are not present.
 - ii. M. Adeghe stated that this resolution should be discussed at the beginning of next semester but explained that the co-sponsors of this resolution are not in attendance by their own volition.
 - iii. T. Reuning echoed M. Adeghe's sentiment, but stated that this resolution should be tabled indefinitely, not removed.
 - iv. L. Smith looked favorably on tabling the resolution indefinitely.
 - v. U. Chukwukere withdrew their motion.
- i. SA R21: Requiring a Community Chair the Research and Accountability Committee to Increase Constituent Accountability
 - i. Abstract: This resolution seeks to provide more opportunities for the community to hold the Student Assembly accountable by changing the Committee of Research & Accountability to be chaired by a non-Student Assembly member of the Cornell undergraduate community.
 - ii. M. Adeghe explained that the Cornell community has recently been dissatisfied with the SA. The main purpose of the Committee of Research & Accountability is to remain unbiased and a neutral arm of the SA that would keep SA members accountable. This resolution is calling for the Chair of the Research and Accountability Committee to be a regular community member and not a SA member.
 - iii. L. Abd Elmagid stated that this resolution seeks to increase community input and it makes more sense to have an outsider person holding SA members accountable.
 - iv. Motion to vote on Resolution #21 – **passed** 13-0-2
- j. The attendance of SA members dipped below quorum and the meeting ended at 7:32pm (EST).

Respectfully Submitted,
Ciara Shanahan
Clerk of the Student Assembly