



Cornell University
Student Assembly

Cornell University Student Assembly

Minutes of the Thursday, February 11, 2021 Meeting
4:45pm via Zoom

I. Call to Order & Roll Call

- a. C. Huang called the meeting to order at 4:47pm (EST).
- b. Roll Call
 - i. *Members Present:* L. Abd Elmagid, M. Baker, J. Bansah, K. Butler, C. Castillo, U. Chuckwukere, L. Contreras, A. Gleiberman, S. Kapoor, A. Lampert, A. Miramontes Serrano, 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:* E. Moy, E. Perez, T. Reuning

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

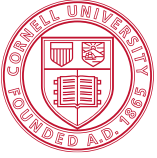
- a. C. Huang provided positional updates for Spring 2021. F. Lexa was appointed chair of the Research and Accountability Committee. P. Mehler is the new Director of Elections. There will be special elections coming up to fill the AAP Rep, Womxn's Rep, and Undesignated Rep positions. The Office of the Student Advocate (OSA) is a branch of the SA specifically working on student advocacy led by A. Ononye. In Fall 2020, C. Huang tasked the OSA to work on a Basic Needs project, following the success of the Basic Needs Coalition at Stanford University. The Basic Needs project focuses on provided resources and a centralized resource guide for any student. The OSA, for the last semester, has been working diligently to create a Cornell specific Basic Needs resource guide and are in the final stages of preparing it. The Office of Student Government Relations (OSGR) is another branch of the SA and the new director of the OSGR is E. Rubin. The OSGR has worked on the College Transparency Act which focuses on improved the accessibility and transparency of data with UA Rep. Sherr and SA Rep. Santacruz. Last semester, C. Huang stated she focused on mental health in collaboration with Graduate Student-Elected Trustee Davis-Frost. They created and released an Academic Experience Survey on December 15, 2020. By the end of the semester, they received 370+ responses. C. Huang and L. Davis-Frost presented the survey data to Assembly Leadership and Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education Lisa Nishii. C. Huang shared data from the survey most applicable with the SA. Additionally, C. Huang explained the work they completed on Mental Health Counseling. In regard to telehealth, throughout the



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last semester, C. Huang consistently communicated with the Dean of Students and the OSGR on the importance of Mental Health Telecare. There is a commitment to providing telehealth and ensuring flexibility in New York State's licensure restrictions. Unfortunately, there are still restrictions on offering telehealth internationally, but SA Reps Y. Yuan and V. Xu have been working on this the past semester. With Rep. Baker, C. Huang is meeting with EARS to learn more about how the SA can support them, as they are not offering their services this semester. C. Huang consulted with the Dean of Students on healthcare options for Cornell students and increasing affordability of healthcare plans. Rep. Zverev, as Chair of the Student Health Advisory Committee (SHAC) has been looking into support for low-income students and students without health increase. Last semester, C. Huang worked with Womxn's Rep and the Dean of Students to identify sites for improvement for the Title IX Reporting. Recommendations for improving Title IX Reporting include offering peer training for Title IX Disclosures, the necessity of student survivor support networks, and accountability and transparency through the Title IX process. Another issue C. Huang has been working on is Bias Reporting. Currently, the BART can only act on cases if they are frequent or persistent and pervasive. Offensive language does not trigger code because it is free speech. With the BART Team, C. Huang has been looking into recommendations and reevaluating the threshold of frequent or persistent and pervasive. C. Huang thanked Rep. Shardow and Rep. Baker for their work on facilities and spiritual support for students. C. Huang thanked Rep. Miramontes Serrano for their work with Cornell Dining and Rep. Smith for their work with local governments. C. Huang shared their appreciation for Rep. Reuning, Rep. Woldai and the Diversity and Inclusion Committee for the multiple resolutions initiatives they have brought to the SA. C. Huang credited Rep. Abd Elmagid and Rep. Castillo with meeting the CALS dean over break and thanked Rep. Yuan and Rep. Xu for their work on mental health care counseling advocacy.

- b. C. Huang stated that all members of the SA are required to deliver positional updates for the semester. If your name was not listened throughout the presentation, you are expected to deliver in the first round of reports. C. Huang stated they are happy to offer any guidance for anyone struggling on how to get started with their initiatives.
- c. U. Chukwukere stated that the Public Safety Advisory Committee, which is charged with creating recommendations on different reforms to the CUPD, just recently launched a survey for Cornell community members for feedback in order to start formulating recommendations. U. Chukwukere encouraged all members to complete



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the survey and share the survey with their constituents to have feedback as representative as possible.

IV. Open Microphone

- a. V. Xu wished those who celebrate a Happy Lunar New Year.
- b. Y. Yuan asked if there was a place students could donate excessive BRBs.
 - i. C. Huang stated that currently there is not, but it would be a great initiative to begin work on.
 - ii. A. Miramontes Serrano stated they have been working alongside Cornell Dining the past semester and asked Y. Yuan and any other SA member to reach out to discuss this.

V. Approval of the Minutes

- a. November 19, 2020
 - i. Motion to approve the November 19th minutes – approved Unanimous Consent
- b. December 3, 2020
 - i. Motion to approve the December 3rd minutes - approved Unanimous Consent
- c. December 10, 2020
 - i. Motion to approve the December 10th minutes - approved Unanimous Consent

VI. Business of the Day

- a. SA R17: Reduction of Convocation Committee's Student Activity Fee Allocation
 - i. Abstract: This resolution is putting a temporary reduction of Convocation Committee's SAF allocation due to their violation of Appendix B of the Student Assembly Charter.
 - ii. Motion to table Resolution #17 indefinitely – tabled 22-0-1

VII. New Business

- a. SA R22: Creating an ad-hoc Taskforce on Harassment, Bias, and Discrimination
 - i. This resolution creates an ad-hoc Taskforce that will be an extension of the Student Assembly but housed within the Office of the Student Advocate. The charge of this taskforce is twofold: 1. To support students and provide resources for students experiencing harassment, bias, and discrimination and 2. To gatherer feedback and concerns for the Student Assembly and the student body on how current policies for reporting harassment and bias can be improved and propose those recommendations to the Student Assembly and the Cornell administration.
 - ii. C. Huang explained that last semester there was many discussions on how the bias reporting process could be improved. This resolution creates a



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- taskforce to focus on identifying specific places where the BART team or bias reporting can be improved.
- iii. A. Ononye explained that the BART team has seen the resolution and are very excited about the idea about the taskforce.
 - iv. K. Butler asked how this will change from the current systems that are in place.
 - 1. C. Huang stated that currently there is not many systems in place that focus specifically on examining bias reporting procedure.
 - 2. A. Ononye explained that this taskforce will focus on policy changes that can be made to better support students.
 - v. Motion to vote on Resolution #22 – passed 22-0-1
 - b. SA R24: Creating a Diversity and Inclusion Scholarship
 - i. Abstract: The purpose of this resolution is to allow for the Diversity and Inclusion Committee to distribute their funds amongst minority organizations in the form of a scholarship.
 - ii. S. Woldai explained that the D&I Committee has excess funds due to the pandemic and would like to distribute the funds to minority organizations on campus. The D&I Committee would like to divide their excess \$2,000 amongst four different organizations in the form of \$500 scholarships.
 - iii. L. Abd Elmagid asked if organizations apply for general funding or for a specific project.
 - 1. S. Woldai answered that organizations would apply for general funding, as minority organizations are funded the least on campus.
 - iv. J. Bansah asked how the D&I Committee will select scholarship recipients and if it was based on need or other criteria.
 - 1. S. Woldai stated it would most likely be based off need and based off of the best well-written responses.
 - v. Y. Yuan asked where the scholarship money is coming from.
 - 1. S. Woldai explained that the money comes straight from the D&I Committee's funding, not the SA as a whole.
 - vi. L. Abd Elmagid asked if it was possible to add the Internal Operations' funding to the scholarship.
 - 1. S. Woldai stated the D&I would be more than happy for that.
 - vii. There was a motion to amend line 16 and 17 to state "The Diversity and Inclusion committee was granted \$2,000 and the Internal Operations Budget



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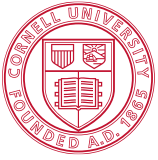
was granted \$1,000 for the 2020-2021 school year under the Appropriations Committee;”.

1. Motion to amend – **amended** 22-0-1
- viii. There was a motion to amend line 21 to state “six \$500 scholarships”.
 1. Motion to amend – **amended** 23-0-1
- ix. V. Xu asked if the scholarship would exist every year or just this year.
 1. S. Woldai stated that the scholarships are only for this year, as the excess funding is due to restrictions from the pandemic.
- x. Motion to vote on Resolution #24 – **passed** 22-0-2
- c. SA R25: Including Pronouns and Phonetic Name Pronunciations in Class Rosters
 - i. Abstract: This resolution is calling for the incorporation of students’ phonetic name pronunciations and pronouns in all professors’ class rosters.
 - ii. S. Woldai explained that this resolution would incorporate students’ phonetic name pronunciations and their pronouns on professors’ class rosters, as it is very frustrating conversation to have with your professor.
 - iii. C. Huang stated that someone messaged them yesterday stating they believed this resolution is fantastic.
 - iv. Motion to vote on Resolution #25 – **passed** 23-0-1
- d. SA R26: Encouraging Diversity in Professional Organizations
 - i. Abstract: The purpose of this resolution is to get the Student Assembly and the University to encourage professional organizations to admit more diverse applicants in future application cycles.
 - ii. S. Woldai stated this resolution seeks to encourage the professional organizations on campus to admit more diverse applicants, as many minority students are not being recognized in professional organizations due to systemic barriers.
 - iii. L. Smith asked if the Appropriations Committee had done something similar last year.
 1. U. Chukwukere stated that this semester when they go through off-year reporting for all organizations, there will be a discussion with PFC on the progress that they’ve made on making their organizations more inclusion. If need, Appendix B is another measure that can be used.
 - iv. Motion to vote on Resolution #26 – **passed** 22-0-2
- e. SA R27: Final Exam Policy Extension to Thirty Hours
 - i. Abstract: The Student Assembly recommends that the Faculty Senate consider changing final exam policy from 24 hours to 30 hours and propose that the Senate begin simulation testing of this policy.
 - ii. A. Slyman stated that students can have more than two exams within a 30-hour period. Current policy states that if you have more exams within a 24-hour person, you can ask for one of those exams to be moved. However, if students have a 9am exam, a 2pm exam, and a 9am exam the next day, it would not be covered under that policy. It is important to be able to space out exams for the mental health of students. A survey was conducted with



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- 172 response, which found that 97% of the responses supported the resolution.
- iii. V. Xu asked if this resolution would apply when students are given 24 hours to complete an exam.
 - 1. Y. Yuan stated that is a good point, but this resolution is focusing more on non-pandemic era of final exam schedules where things are not as flexible.
 - iv. C. Huang asked if this resolution was introduced at the end of last year and if there was a response to that.
 - 1. A. Slyman explained that last year's initiative was more of an informal proposal to see what people's opinion was on it. It was well-received then.
 - v. There was a motion to amend Resolution #27 to include S. Kapoor and A. Gleiberman as co-sponsors.
 - 1. Motion to amend Resolution #27 – **amended** 20-0-4
 - vi. Motion to vote on Resolution #27 – **passed** 23-0-1
 - f. SA R28: Campus Policing Reform
 - i. Abstract: The Student Assembly calls for Cornell University to adopt the following university's policing system.
 - ii. Motion to table Resolution #28 indefinitely – **tabled** 19-0-5
 - g. M. Baker motioned to amend lines 222 to 225 the Standing Rules of the Student Assembly to read "Rule 9. Any voting SA member may attempt to overrule the decision by the Executive Committee by submitting their challenge in the format of a resolution or as a motion at the next two regularly scheduled meetings. A simple majority of the voting membership must be reached to overrule the Executive Committee at any time.", which is allowed by Standing Rules line 16 to 17 which reads "The Standing Rules can also be edited at any time by a majority vote of the membership of the SA."
 - i. L. Abd Elmagid and U. Chukwukere dissented
 - ii. Vote to vote – passed 12-8-3
 - iii. Motion to amend the Standing Rules – **amended** 11-8-4
 - h. L. Abd Elmagid asked for clarification if this amendment was actually approved, as lines 16 to 17 of the Standing Rules state that it must be done by a majority vote of the membership of the SA, as 11 members is not a majority of the membership of



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the SA. L. Abd Elmagid asked for clarification as it states, “majority vote of the membership of the SA” not “majority vote by all members present”.

- i. M. Stefanko agreed with this reasoning.
- ii. L. Abd Elmagid explained that this vote needs to occur at a meeting with all 27 members present.
- iii. C. Huang stated that a majority of the membership of the SA would be 14, as there is currently 27 members.

VIII. Adjournment

- a. C. Huang adjourned the meeting at 6:09pm (EST)/

Respectfully Submitted,

Ciara Shanahan

Clerk of the Student Assembly