



Cornell University Student Assembly

Minutes of the Thursday, August 25, 2022 Meeting

4:45 PM – 6:30 PM

IN PERSON | WILLARD STRAIGHT MEMORIAL ROOM

- I. Call to Order & Roll Call**
 - a. V. Valencia called the meeting to order at 4:51 PM (EST).
 - b. Roll Call
 - i. *Members Present: S. Ali, S. Bhardwaj, D. Cady, K. Chan, E. D'Angelo, P. da Silveira, G. Dong, D. Edelman, J. Kalinski, A. Lampert, J. Lee, L. Lu, B. Luckow, J. Mayen, D. Nachman, N. Son, M. Song, V. Valencia*
 - ii. *Members Absent: J. Berman, S. Gavin, B. Kotb, J. Swenson*
 - iii. *Also Present: Amisha Chowdbury, Delilah Hernandez, Mitchell Hoy, Shabad Salman, Naveen Sharma*
- II. Land Acknowledgement of the Gayogoho:no (Cayuga Nation)**
 - a. President Valencia delivered the Land Acknowledgement.
- III. Late Additions to the Agenda**
 - a. V. Valencia proposed that the SAIFC election (Originally item 10- "New Business" be moved forward in the agenda and the Office of the Student Advocate presentation entitled *Basic Needs at Cornell* (originally item 8) be moved back due to the technological issues in the meeting space. Unanimously **approved**
- IV. Consent Agenda**
 - a. Approval of May 5th, 2022 Minutes
 - i. Minutes were **approved** by unanimous consent.
- V. Open Microphone**
 - a. There were no speakers present at open microphone.
- VI. Announcements and Reports**
 - a. V. Valencia welcomed the Student Assembly members to the 2022-2023 term and presented information regarding the Sunday, August 28, orientation program.
- VII. New Business**
 - a. SAIFC Chair Election
 1. Call for Nominations
 - i. Mitchell Hoy is nominated.
 - ii. Pedro da Silveira is nominated.

2. M. Hoy and P. da Silveira each individually address the Assembly, and are excused from the room as Assembly members formulate questions. M. Hoy returns to the meeting room to address members' questions.
3. J. Kalisnki asks M. Hoy to describe a specific infrastructure project M. Hoy has been involved in. M. Hoy states that he was involved with a U.S. Navy ship's Engineering Department on a Sanitation Project while serving as an enlisted sailor.
4. M. Song asks M. Hoy to describe one current problem with the SAIFC. M. Hoy states that he will emphasize sanitation projects and hear the concerns of the community.
5. S. Bhardwaj asks M. Hoy to describe his plans for community outreach. M. Hoy states that he will prioritize door-to-door canvassing to reach the student community at Cornell.
6. M. Hoy is excused and P. da Silveira returns.
7. P. da Silveira asks whether an executive session is necessary to elect the SAIFC Chair. C. Taylor states that an executive session is not necessary due to the position not being listed in the SA bylaws.
8. J. Kalisnki asks P. da Silveira to describe a specific infrastructure project P. da Silveira has been involved in. P. da Silveira states that he worked with Logan Smith to bring bike-share back to campus.
9. M. Song asks P. da Silveira to describe one current problem with the SAIFC. P. da Silveira states that an operational hierarchy will produce more efficient results within the SAIFC.
10. S. Bhardwaj asks P. da Silveira to describe his plans for community outreach. P. da Silveira states that he will emphasize funding project teams and disseminating information to project teams. P. da Silveira is excused from the room for membership deliberation.
11. Membership deliberates and A. Lampert distributes digital poll for secret ballot. **P. da Silveira is elected** Chair of SAIFC.
12. P. Da Silveira and M. Hoy are informed of result.

VII. Presentations and Forums

- a. D. Cady moves to hear OSA presentation, seconded, unanimously **approved**.
- b. Office of the Student Advocate members A. Chowdhury, D. Hernandez, and S. Salman present *Basic Needs at Cornell* (this presentation is available to SA Members via Box under August 25, 2022.)
- c. A. Chowdhury defines Basic needs as food security, access to housing, financial literacy initiatives (i.e. tax preparation), access to health insurance, mental health care, and access to employment.
- d. D. Hernandez stated the following information regarding OSA initiatives in 2021-2022:
 1. OSA outreach events received 313 attendees, 80.5 % of whom are undergraduates, having the greatest engagement in the SNAP/Medicaid and Title IX workshops.

2. Created paid student worker positions through the Center for Transformative Action.
3. Created a Cornell SNAP information page and updated other Cornell sites to include SNAP information.
4. Connected with other Basic Needs Coalitions across the country such as Temple University, UC Berkeley, and the National basic Needs Coalition.
- e. A. Chowdhury states that OSA received over 550 responses to Basic Needs survey. Over 50% of the students polled identify as first generation and/or low-income.
- f. D. Hernandez states that the most common challenges faced were financial resources, housing assistance, and food resources.
- g. S. Salman states that data shows that many resources are underutilized due to students' unawareness of their existence.
- h. A. Chowdhury states that the largest obstacle to students' access to Cornell food pantry is not knowing its location.
- i. S. Salman presents data on Centralizing Resources. 345 out of 394 respondents answered "Yes" to the question "Would establishing a space on campus encapsulating essential need resources and providing informed support from students in collaboration with field experts be helpful to you?"
- j. A. Chowdhury presents the OSA vision for a Basic Needs Center.
 1. A centrally located physical space to address student basic needs.
 2. A one-stop-center to help students navigate on and off campus resources.
 3. Peer-to-peer support center run by student leaders-paid through federal work study.
 4. Similar vision to Wellness Center proposed by SA Wellness Committee to VP Lombardi.
- k. S. Salman presents the OSA asks to Administration:
 1. House and Grow Basic Needs efforts under Dean of Students
 2. Host Basic Needs Workshops under Dean of Students
 3. Provide administrative staff support to student leaders working on basic needs.
 4. Create more student worker paid positions through federal work study.
 5. Establish a budget for basic need efforts.
- l. S. Salman presents OSA asks to Student Assembly:
 1. Create a basic needs working committee within SA.
 2. Fund OSA to continue doing basic needs workshops
 3. Pass a resolution to ask for a basic needs center.
 4. Expand the emergency fund eligibility criteria to include basic needs emergencies
 5. Codify the Sa bylaws to connect basic needs efforts to Student Assembly
- m. V. Valeria thanked OSA for the presentation, expressed appreciation for OSA's efforts, and invited questions.

- n. D. Nachman asked how much OSA funding comes from Student Assembly. D. Hernandez states that OSA received 1,500-2,000 dollars in 2021-22.
- o. S. Bhardwaj asked if a regular meeting date has been established. D. Hernandez stated that the OSA meets every Thursday at 8pm.
- p. S. Ali sked about initiatives to ensure students will be referred to basic needs center. A. Chowdhury stated that OSA plans to develop peer navigators in cooperation with the office of the Dean of Students.
- q. J. Lee asked if OSA staff had heard concerns about potential stigmatization of students experiencing basic needs shortfalls. S. Salman stated that OSA is focusing on normalizing the use of services and presenting resources as positive opportunities for students rather than “last-resort” programs. A. Chowdhury stated that OSDA is aware of potential stigmatization and actively chose to identify the “Basic Needs” center as such for maximum clarity in communicating with the student body.

VIII. Adjournment

- a. V. Valencia adjourned the meeting at 6:17 PM

Respectfully Submitted,
Erik Kalweit
Acting Clerk of the Student Assembly

