

Cornell University Student Assembly

Originally Presented on:	(08/31/2021)
Type of Action:	Internal Policy
Status/Result:	New Business

S.A. Resolution #13

Dissolving the Research and Accountability Committee

ABSTRACT: This resolution is intended to dissolve the Research & Accountability Committee.

Sponsored by: Morgan Baker '23

Whereas, the Vice President of Research and Accountability position and its respective committee were created in January 2020 in an effort to increase accountability amongst members of the Student Assembly and its committees;

Whereas, the Vice President of Research and Accountability and the Research and Accountability Committee served necessary and important roles at the time of their creation, as they created an unbiased arm of the Student Assembly tasked with handling matters of internal Student Assembly affairs and general representative accountability;

Whereas, the Vice President of Research and Accountability position was dissolved in December 2020, and the Research and Accountability Chair position was thereafter reserved for a community member;

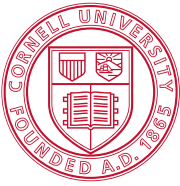
Whereas, the Research and Accountability Committee fulfilled its purpose of holding Student Assembly members accountable during its first few months of existence, directly preceding the onslaught of the pandemic;

Whereas, though the Research and Accountability Committee had its purpose in time, its recent dysfunction should not be overlooked;

Whereas, the Research and Accountability Committee represents another level of bureaucracy that impedes meaningful Student Assembly work;

Whereas, there is no longer a shared sense amongst current Student Assembly members that this committee must continue to exist, as the culture and membership of the Student Assembly has undoubtedly changed from the committee's creation to the present day;

Whereas, current Student Assembly members have largely adopted a new guided philosophy to refrain from outsourcing research to a committee;



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38 **Whereas**, Student Assembly members have the Executive Archivist as a resource to research
39 historic Student Assembly legislation to support current legislative efforts;

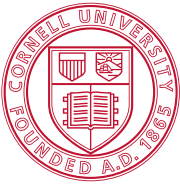
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41 **Whereas**, each committee and Student Assembly member practices research and accountability
42 individually or in collective ways;

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44 **Be it therefore resolved**, that the Research and Accountability Committee will be dissolved
45 effective immediately;

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47 **Be it further resolved**, that the Research and Accountability Committee will be reinstated in full
48 if the Student Assembly deems it necessary to formalize a research and accountability process in
49 the future;

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51 **Be it finally resolved**, that “Section 3: Operational Committees” of “Article VI: Committees”
52 lines 435-459 of the Student Assembly Bylaws be amended as follows:

53
54 ~~H. Research & Accountability Committee—The committee will pursue any necessary~~
55 ~~accountability and research concerns of SA members and directly elected undergraduate~~
56 ~~representatives to the UA. Research and accountability concerns consist of, but are not~~
57 ~~limited to: general body attendance, resolution voting, liaison role accountability,~~
58 ~~committee attendance, committee conduct, and general representative accountability. The~~
59 ~~committee will also evaluate all requests submitted by community members that are~~
60 ~~against any SA member, SA committees, or directly elected undergraduate~~
61 ~~representatives to the UA. The Chair position can be held by any non-Student Assembly~~
62 ~~member of the Cornell undergraduate student population and the committee will be under~~
63 ~~the supervision of Executive Vice President. The committee shall consist of ten voting~~
64 ~~members, two of which are current SA members and/or directly elected undergraduate~~
65 ~~representatives to the UA and eight undergraduate community members. The chair shall~~
66 ~~only vote in the event of a tie. The composition of the committee can change for specific~~
67 ~~meeting types in which members of the SA Executive Committee or other student~~
68 ~~representatives can be given an ex-officio status—this is to be voted on by the RE~~
69 ~~committee as a whole and only when initially decided on by the Chair. The committee~~
70 ~~has the obligation, if decided upon, to conference any SA member, directly elected~~
71 ~~undergraduate representative to the UA, SA-affiliated committees, or Committee Chair if~~
72 ~~they have received a notice from any member of the Cornell Community. The committee~~
73 ~~is restricted from passing resolutions due to the necessary impartial nature of the~~
74 ~~committee. However, after a full inquiry or fact finding action—a written report may be~~
75 ~~presented to the SA, which will include a brief summary of the situation being~~
76 ~~investigated and any necessary actions the committee recommends. The requester’s name~~



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77 ~~and others who are not SA members or directly elected undergraduate representatives to~~
78 ~~the UA shall be redacted from the report if permission from any of the individual(s) is not~~
79 ~~given. Adoption of the (possible) recommendation(s) requires a three quarters majority~~
80 ~~vote of SA voting members. Rejection of the (possible) recommendation(s) require three~~
81 ~~quarters of SA voting members. If recommendation or report are not approved or~~
82 ~~rejected, it will be tabled indefinitely. The committee chair shall present reports to the SA~~
83 ~~at both the requestor(s), RA Committee's, and Chair's discretion.~~

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85 **Respectfully Submitted,**

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87 Morgan Baker '23

88 *Vice President for Finance, Student Assembly*

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90 *(Reviewed by: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, PASSED, 08/31/2021)*