

Resolution 38: Establishing the Public Health and Safety Committee

Abstract: This resolution calls for the creation of the Student Public Health and Safety Committee by working and students across the university.

Sponsored by: Duncan Cady '23, Delilah Hernandez '22, Joseph Mullen '22, Conor Hodges '21

Reviewed by: Student Assembly

Type of Action: Legislation

Originally Presented: 01/27/2022

Current Status: New Business

Whereas, The Student Assembly occupies the uniquely influential and significant role of representing the undergraduate student population at Cornell University and taking on the responsibilities associated with wellness and quality-of-life issues, making sure that students are heard, and our issues are addressed,

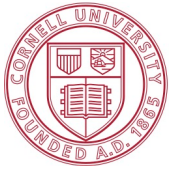
Whereas, The Student Assembly Charter directs the Student Assembly to “effect more extensive involvement in campus governance in the undergraduate student body,” Including examining “any matters which involve the interests or concern the welfare of the student community”¹

Whereas, in performing these responsibilities, the Student Assembly must be committed to public safety and community health as these core principles of wellness and quality-of-life cannot be forgotten in constantly evolving duties and processes of the SA; and as always, elevating undergraduate student’s voices and perspectives to improve communication and visibility must stay vitally central on our mission of wellness,

Whereas, The Office of Student Advocate is an unbiased, non-partisan, community-driven organization of student caseworkers that serves and assists Cornell undergraduates in navigating any problem or concern on and off-campus²; OSA is available as a point of contact to help students in navigating Cornell's bureaucracy in collaboration with University Administration,

¹ Student Assembly Charter https://assembly.cornell.edu/sites/default/files/sa-charter_2021-11-04.pdf

² <https://www.cornellstudentadvocate.com/about>



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student leaders, and Cornell departments to make the community aware of a particular problem and initiate steps to discover and develop tangible solutions,³

Whereas, The Office of Student Advocate is tasked with helping students in crisis, including student issues concerning public safety, health, and overall well-being,

Whereas, OSA like many other student cohorts, communities, and organizations has no direct representation within PSAC⁴; the Office of Student Advocate's participation and institutionalized relationship within public safety would enable more students and communities to participate in co-producing improvements to campus health and safety institutions and operations,

Whereas, The Student Assembly, currently appoints two (2) students to Public Safety Advisory Committee⁵, but only (2) two full-time students cannot adequately represent all communities nor bear the responsibilities of speaking for so many voices;

Whereas, Two (2) undergraduate students cannot take on the same amount of responsibility as administrators on PSAC who have university employed staff and teams collaborating with them thereby creating an imbalance in capability between students and staff in ideating and implementing health and safety reforms,

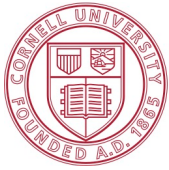
Whereas, an underrepresentation of undergraduate students to PSAC produces circumstances such that many student identities, organizations, communities, analytic lenses, and lived experiences are underrepresented in public health and safety discussions,

Whereas, The Student Assembly must recognize the heavy bandwidth expectations of PSAC while maintaining the heavier responsibilities of academic, professional, and individual pursuits PSAC currently expects of students, and The Student Assembly must reaffirm our institutional

³ Student Assembly Bylaws https://assembly.cornell.edu/sites/default/files/sa_bylaws_11.04.2021_0.pdf

⁴ <https://www.cupolice.cornell.edu/campus-safety-security/public-safety-advisory-committee-psac/>

⁵ <https://www.cupolice.cornell.edu/campus-safety-security/public-safety-advisory-committee-psac/>



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commitments to all students in expanding opportunities of involvement and outlets of communication on issues of public health and public safety.

Be it therefore resolved, The Student Assembly establishes a Public Health and Safety Committee, to relieve workload expectations on student PSAC members, to redress the limited representation of valued undergraduate student voices and perspectives, to facilitate inclusion of more diverse identities, abilities statuses, experiences, socioeconomic perspectives, and other forms of difference and diversity.

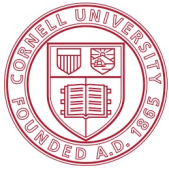
Be it therefore resolved, that “Section 2” of “Article VI” after line 361 of 651 of the Student Assembly Bylaws be amended as follows⁶:

P. Student Public Health and Safety Committee – The committee will serve as a confidential advocacy link for students to the Cornell University Police Department, Community Response Team, Cornell University EMS, and the Public Safety Advisory Committee on issues of campus public health and safety. The committee will facilitate student participation in university reviews of critical public safety incidents, receive student complaints regarding public health and safety institutions (CRT, CUEMS, CUPD, etc) and advocate for resolutions, advocate for student participation in the recruitment and selection processes of university public health and safety workers, enable student participation in the design and implementation of an alternative public safety models at Cornell, collaborate with the Student Assembly appointed undergraduate members of the Public Safety Advisory Committee to ensure student health and safety interests are comprehensively represented, liaise regularly with the Student Health Advisory Committee in recognition of the fact that public health and public safety are closely interrelated, and regularly communicate with relevant administrators and staff on incentives and student concerns relating to matters of public health and safety. The committee will consist of but is not limited to the following positions that are to practice and operate in association with the Office of Student Advocate:

a. Alternative Crisis Response Chair

- i. Appointed by the Office of the Student Advocate and approved by the Student Assembly to lead student participation in Cornell’s Alternative Public Safety efforts and coordinate committee efforts with existing Cornell public health and safety institutions.
- ii. The chair will perform and delegate all commonly necessary and procedural committee functions and will maintain and oversee all orders of procedural and tasked business.

⁶ https://assembly.cornell.edu/sites/default/files/sa_bylaws_11.04.2021_0.pdf



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- iii. The chair will report directly to the Student Assembly and the Office of the Student Advocate at least once (1) per semester, this will include but is not limited to speaking directly to the Student Assembly General Body and sharing committee progress.
- iv. The Chair of the committee will be reviewed semesterly by the current SA President in consultation with the Student Advocate and can be removed at their discretion.

- b. Alternative Crisis Response Research Coordinator

- i. Appointed by the Office of the Student Advocate and approved by the Student Assembly to identify promising alternative crisis response programs across the country that could inform improvements at Cornell and to advocate for their adoption.

- c. Alternative Crisis Response Outreach Coordinator

- i. Appointed by the Office of the Student Advocate and approved by the Student Assembly to generate and direct efforts to include students in the work of the Public Health and Safety committee.

- a. All Student Assembly Representatives to the Public Safety Advisory Committee (PSAC) will sit on this committee.

- b. One additional committee chair position, which can be held by any member of the Cornell undergraduate student population.

- c. At least five additional undergraduate students, representing both Student Assembly members and community members.

Be it finally resolved, that the Student Public Health and Safety Committee is committed to strengthening connections between the undergraduate student population, campus health and safety institutions, and the Public Safety Advisory Committee in recognition of the crucial role students must play in co-producing wellness and safety at Cornell.

Respectfully Submitted,

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