



Cornell University Student Assembly

Originally Presented on:	(04/01/2021)
Type of Action:	Recommendation
Status/Result:	New Business

1 S.A. Resolution #44
2 Petition for Better Lighting on Cornell Owned Student Dormitories
3
4 ABSTRACT: Call for action on insufficient dormitory light and subsequent poor student academic
5 performance.
6
7 **Sponsored by: Andrea Miramontes Serrano '24**
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9 **Whereas**, currently some of the Cornell provided on campus housing has insufficient lighting for
10 students to perform optimally in their studies, and
11
12 **Whereas**, Cornell University sets high academic standards for its students, demanding excellence
13 inside and outside of the classroom, and whereas Cornell University's number one priority is
14 to facilitate the learning and scholastic thriving of its students,
15
16 **Whereas**, the significant coursework delivered requires high concentration, which in itself demands
17 set of work conditions that enable such concentration. Without the proper lighting, however,
18 some students find themselves incapable of focusing,
19
20 **Whereas**, with the novel Coronavirus pandemic, online instruction has further confined students to
21 their personal dormitories, thus increasing students' susceptibility to cabin fever, frustration,
22 or subsequent poor academic performance, and hence augmented the need for an optimal,
23 private work environment,
24
25 **Whereas**, the places on campus can qualify as well-lit private rooms, and whereas the few that do
26 have limited time access or are often unavailable because 1) their success, 2) the high student
27 population in need of such study spaces,
28
29 **Whereas**, most communal and quiet, on-campus study spaces – such as libraries – have closing
30 hours and limited time availability. When students are asked to leave a study space without
31 having planned ahead, they are likely to find no near options available, and thus lose
32 significant amounts of time looking for an alternative study space. If in the end they do not
33 find an area to concentrate, they will return to their dormitories, where they may be even
34 more incapable of concentrating and hence be prone to even more frustration,
35
36 **Whereas**, the Mental Health Review Committee concluded in their April 2020 Final Report that
37 there is a need to increase student autonomy to satisfy the University's high academic
38 standards, and whereas the dependency on outside study spaces directly contradicts such
39 ambitions,



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41 **Whereas**, students living on insufficiently lit dormitories pay the same housing bill as their luckier
42 peers in well-lit rooms, yet must allocate extra resources on purchasing their own personal
43 lighting, and
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- 45 **Whereas**, oftentimes these purchases include but are not limited to string lights, spider lamps or
46 light bulbs that exceed the recommended wattage for lamps, which violate the Fire Safety
47 Guidelines¹ yet are still used by students for their effective lighting, or
48
- 49 **Whereas**, the extra cost of acquiring lamps is not covered by Financial Aid and can signify enough
50 of a financial impediment for students to avoid acquiring the needed lighting, and thus
51 making these students study under lower conditions than their luckier or more resourceful
52 peers,
53
- 54 **Whereas**, if Cornell University provided dormitories lacking sufficient lighting with a previously
55 approved, effective lamps, then 1) fire security related threats would decrease, 2) students
56 would feel more productive fulfilling academic work in their rooms and would have less
57 concerns to distract them from performing well in their classes.
58
- 59 **Whereas**, these changes need not be exceedingly laborious, as the university has already succeeding
60 in installing effective lighting systems and hence knows which ones are proper for
61 concentration. The university can thus purchase additional, secure and luminous lamps and
62 place those in dormitories alongside the pre-incorporated ones.
63
- 64 **Whereas**, the most imminent, specific complaints have been placed on the Dormitory of Clara
65 Dickson Hall, where students are only given one desk lamp and the light incorporated in
66 their desk shelves,
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- 68 **Be it therefore resolved**, that Cornell University Housing will begin supplying its dormitories with
69 the necessary lighting for student academic success, starting with the older, less lit residences
70 but aiming for simultaneity among all Cornell owned housing if possible.
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- 72 **Be it further resolved**, that additionally Cornell University will revise its library closing hours,
73 allowing some to open 24h before the Final Exam season of this Spring 2021 semester.
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- 75 **Be it further resolved**, that the action taken should be sufficient for the issue of insufficient lighting
76 not to be brought up again, as Cornell University's predominant goal is ensure student

¹ Information about Cornell University's Fire Security Guidelines can be found [here](#).



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77 success, and a prestigious, resourceful institution such as Cornell University should not have
78 to have its Student Assembly petition for such a thing.

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80 **Respectfully Submitted,**

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82 Andrea Miramontes Serrano '24

83 *Freshman Representative, Student Assembly*

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85 *(Reviewed by: Executive Committee, 3-1-2, 04/21/2021)*