



1 **Resolution 4: Amendments to the Empathy,**
2 **Assistance, and Referral Service’s Governing**
3 **Documents**

4 ***Abstract:*** This resolution affirms the changes that were made to Empathy, Assistance, and
5 Referral Service’s constitution to add the following new services/roles: EARS Peer Mentors,
6 EARS Liaisons, and Empathy Chairs.

7 ***Sponsored by:*** Morgan Baker ‘23

8 ***Reviewed by:*** Executive Committee, 08/25/2021

9 ***Type of Action:*** Byline Report

10 ***Originally Presented:*** 08/26/2021

11 ***Current Status:*** New Business

12 **Whereas,** the Empathy, Assistance, and Referral Service (EARS) has requested to change their
13 constitution;

14 **Whereas,** amendments to the governing documents of byline funded organizations must be
15 approved by the Student Assembly;

16 **Whereas,** lines 645-646 under “Section 3: General Guidelines” of the Student Assembly
17 Charter’s Appendix B read as follows:

18 **K. Governing Document Approval:** All organizations must submit any changes in the
19 organizations’ bylaws, constitution, or other governing documents to the SA for its
20 approval.

21 **Be it therefore resolved,** that the Student Assembly approve the attached changes.

22 Respectfully Submitted,

23 Morgan Baker ‘23

24 *Vice President for Finance, Student Assembly*

CONSTITUTION FOR EMPATHY, ASSISTANCE, & REFERRAL SERVICE

Article I. — The name of the organization

The name of this organization is Empathy, Assistance, and Referral Service (EARS).

Article II. — Affiliation with other groups

EARS is affiliated with the Skorton Center for Health Initiatives.

Article III. — Purpose, aims, functions of the organization

The purpose of EARS is to support members of the Cornell community through its peer mentoring, training, outreach, and leadership-development services.

- A. EARS provides free, informal, drop-in peer mentoring for any Cornell student (undergraduate, graduate, or professional) at various times throughout the week in select locations across campus.
- B. EARS offers semester-long training programs designed to improve one's listening, empathy, and communication skills.
 - a. Trainees who have met specific training requirements are eligible to serve as EARS Peer Mentors, EARS Liaisons, or Empathy Chairs.
 - b. While EARS Peer Mentoring services are open to the whole Cornell student body, EARS Liaisons and Empathy Chairs concentrate on supporting students in their respective social circles and/or student organizations.
 - c. EARS Liaisons are internal to EARS, whereas Empathy Chairs may or may not be affiliated with the organization.
- C. EARS focuses on outreach by teaching empathy and communication-based skills to Cornell organizations or groups through one- or two-part workshop events.
- D. EARS will present leadership-development events to members hoping to develop their skills professionally and personally for specific careers in healthcare, law, higher education, public service, etc.

Article IV. — Membership requirements/limitations/eligibility

- A. Any Cornell student (undergraduate, graduate, or professional) or Cornell-affiliated person (staff, faculty, spouse, etc.) is eligible to participate in the EARS training or an EARS workshop. However, only currently enrolled Cornell students are eligible to join EARS staff after (a) attending at minimum two semesters of training and (b) successfully passing the appropriate training assessments to demonstrate competence in listening, communication skills, use of empathy, mental health topics, and resources for well-being. Assessments will be evaluated by active EARS staff members.
- B. All active staff members are required to attend staff meetings and fulfill a "core contribution" every academic semester. This "core contribution" is defined as a minimum

of about three hours of service per week in self-elected roles arranged by EARS leadership.

- C. As an organization, EARS does not discriminate on the basis of actual or perceived age, color, disability, ethnicity, gender identity or expression, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, veteran status, or any combination of these factors when determining its membership and when determining the equal rights of all general members and Executive Board members, respectively, which shall include, but are not limited to selecting, seeking, and holding positions within the organization.

Article V. — Officers

- A. EARS operates with formal leadership organized into an Executive Board, which is led by two Co-Presidents. Leadership tasks for peer mentoring, training, outreach, internal relations, finances, diversity & inclusion, and public relations are divided amongst the other Executive Board members, based on their appointed role, to cover administrative responsibilities for each academic year.
- B. New Co-Presidents are appointed by the majority of the Executive Board (excluding any members seeking the position) and must further be approved by the consensus of the EARS Advisor and current Co-President. In order to be considered by the Executive Board for appointment, an active staff member must receive a nomination, complete an application, and meet with the Advisor and current Co-Presidents to discuss the role.
- C. Outside of the position of Co-President, any active staff member may seek appointment to the Executive Board by completing an application for the position(s) of interest. Appointments to the Board (including re-appointments or appointments to a new position on the Board) shall be approved by the consensus of the Executive Board, excluding any members seeking the position in question.

Article VI. Advisor

The Advisor to EARS is the Mental Health Promotion Program Coordinator at the Skorton Center for Health Initiatives at Cornell Health. Duties of the Advisor include providing direct supervision to the two EARS Co-Presidents and supporting the other EARS staff members in coordinating the organization's peer mentoring, training, outreach, and leadership-development services.

Article VII — Quorum and referenda

- A. No quorum is required to host staff or Executive Board meetings. However, any formal votes must be held with a quorum of at least half of active staff members at staff meetings and at least half of Executive Board members at Executive Board meetings. Individual teams within the organization are free to establish their own quorum rules.
- B. Votes related to constitutional amendments, the addition or removal of core EARS services, or significant public statements must be held at staff meetings.

- C. Votes related to major organizational decisions must be held at Executive Board meetings but may be opened up to all of staff, by decision of the Board. Major organizational decisions include, but are not limited to, approval of new Executive Board members, changes in staff roles/core requirements, alterations to the training manuals, use of funding, and release of organizational information to the public.
- D. All other decisions may be made at any level, so long as they are approved by consensus of the Advisor and Co-Presidents.

Article VIII. — Recall of officers

Any petition to remove a member of the Executive Board garnering the signatures of at least $\frac{1}{3}$ of active staff members will proceed to a formal discussion and vote at the next staff meeting. Should $\frac{2}{3}$ of present members (excluding the member in question) vote to remove the member, that member will be removed and the Executive Board will seek a new candidate to fill the position. The Executive Board may also vote to remove one of its own members. $\frac{2}{3}$ of the Executive Board (excluding the member in question) must vote for a member's removal for the measure to pass. Co-Presidents are subject to the same process, but the measure must further be approved by the Advisor (should it pass), as Co-Presidents are considered to be University employees.

Article IX. — Amendments

Amendments to this constitution can be proposed by any EARS staff member or the Advisor and will be discussed and decided on at the next staff meeting by all present staff members. A minimum of $\frac{2}{3}$ of present members must vote to approve of the amendment for it to be ratified.

Article X. — Ratification

This constitution is adopted by the 2021-2022 staff of EARS, on behalf of all past, present, and future members of EARS.