

Cornell University Student Assembly

Originally Presented on:	3/31/2020
Type of Action:	Legislation
Status/Result:	New Business

S.A. Resolution #59

Support of the Universal S/U Grading System for the Remainder of the Spring 2020 Semester

ABSTRACT: This resolution supports the Universal S/U Grading System for the remainder of the Spring 2020 semester, due to unprecedented burdens that come with being home during the COVID-19 worldwide pandemic.

**Sponsored by: Natalia Hernandez '21, Liel Sterling '21, Moriah Adeghe '21, Gavin Martin '20
Ahmed Elsammak '21**

Whereas, the unprecedented circumstances of COVID-19, students have been left without food security, internet access, and/or reliable housing are expected to perform at the same level as students who have stable situations at home;

Whereas, international students who have been abruptly relocated into time zones that do not align with regular EST class times will have severe difficulty attending classes that require live participation, such as seminars and sections;

Whereas, many students also have to care for siblings whose K-12 education has been suspended and are expected to provide childcare at home;

Whereas, some students may be caring for family members who are at grave risk during this time, or may be immunocompromised themselves;

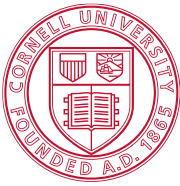
Whereas, when the lives of yourself and your loved ones are in jeopardy, academics should not be your primary concern;

Whereas, other universities have already begun to recognize the impact that a global pandemic has on students' abilities to participate in academia. An increasing number of them -- including MIT, Stanford, Columbia, Dartmouth, and Harvard-- have moved forward in implementing changes in their grading systems to lessen the burden of these drastic life shifts on our peers. We ask that Cornell follow suit;

Whereas, there is broad-based support for a Universal Pass system among students, alumni, parents and faculty members. In only five days, we have garnered over 1,800 signatures on our petition;

Whereas, on March 16, 2020 the Cornell Law School adopted a Universal pass/fail system to be used for the semester, acknowledging the various burdens on students during this time;

Whereas, Cornell's commitment to ensuring equality is met with equity can only be achieved in the form of a universal grading system;



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45 **Be it therefore resolved**, the Cornell Student Assembly supports the ‘Universal S/U’ and
46 strongly encourages the University as a whole to adopt the grading model in that an “S”
47 represents any grade from A+ through D- and “U” represents an F grade;
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49 **Be it finally resolved**, this resolution is to be immediately conveyed to not only President Pollack,
50 as dictated in our Charter, but also;

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52 The Cornell Faculty Senate, Executive Committee
53 Cornell University Provost, Michael Kotlikoff
54 Cornell College of Arts & Sciences, Dean Ray Jayawardhana
55 Cornell College of Art, Architecture and Planning, Dean Meejin Yoon
56 Cornell College of Engineering, Dean Lance R. Collins
57 Cornell College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Dean Kathryn Boor
58 Cornell College of Human Ecology, Interim Dean Rachel Elizabeth Dunifon
59 Cornell School of Industrial and Labor Relations, Dean Alexander J. S. Colvin
60 Cornell SC Johnson College of Business, Dean Kevin F. Hallock
61 Office of the Dean of Students, Vijay Pendakur

62 **Respectfully Submitted,**

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64 Moriah Adeghe ‘21
65 *Vice President for Finance, Student Assembly*
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67 Gavin Martin ‘20
68 *Vice President of Research and Accountability, Student Assembly*
69
70 Liel Sterling ‘21
71 *Student Advocate, Office of the Student Advocate*
72
73 Natalia Hernandez ‘21
74 *Director of Student and Campus Life, Office of the Student Advocate*
75
76 Ahmed Elsammak ‘21
77 *Organizer, Big Red Pass*
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79 *(Reviewed by: Executive Committee, 5-0-2, 3/31/2020)*
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