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S.A. Resolution #21

**Requiring a Community Member Chair the Research and Accountability
Committee to Increase Constituent Accountability**

ABSTRACT: The resolution seeks to provide more opportunities for the community to hold the Student Assembly accountable by changing the Committee of Research & Accountability so that it is chaired by a non-Student Assembly member of the Cornell undergraduate community.

Sponsored by: Moriah Adgehe '21, Laila Abd Elmagid '21, Uche Chukwukere '21, Michael Stefanko '21, Maria Silaban '21, Tomás Reuning '21, Selam Woldai '23, Noah Watson '22, Estefania Perez '21, Morgan Baker '23, Lucy Contreras '21, Mardiya Shardow '23, Jenniviv Bansah '23, Katarina Bentley '23, Amari Lampert '24, Bennett Sherr '21, Savanna Lim '21, Lucas Smith '22, Valeria Valencia '23, Anuli Ononye '22

Whereas, the creation of the Vice President of Research & Accountability (VP of RA) position and its respective committee were adopted and implemented by the Student Assembly on 1/23/2020;

Whereas, the VP of RA and its respective committee were created in an effort to increase accountability amongst members of the Student Assembly and its committees;

Whereas, the ethos of the VP of RA and Committee of RA was to create an unbiased arm of the Student Assembly tasked with handling matters of internal Student Assembly affairs, general body attendance, resolution voting, liaison role accountability, committee attendance, committee conduct, and general representative accountability, among other things;

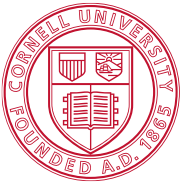
Whereas, there cannot exist an unbiased member of the Student Assembly in regards to internal affairs, as the nature of the Student Assembly lends itself to internal politics;

Whereas, due to internal politics within the Student Assembly, some members cannot currently turn to the VP of RA, leaving a gap in who can seek accountability measures and who cannot;

Whereas, due to internal politics within the Student Assembly, the VP of RA is not always a neutral party regarding the matters that can be brought to the Committee of RA;

Whereas, there is general discontent among the student community with how the Student Assembly operates;

Whereas, we believe that our constituents should have the power to hold us accountable;



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43 **Whereas**, the Student Assembly wants to provide the community with more opportunities to hold
44 their student government accountable;

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46 **Therefore be it resolved**, the Cornell Student Assembly remove the executive position of Vice
47 President of Research & Accountability and amend the Research & Accountability committee to
48 be chaired by a non-Student Assembly member of the the Cornell undergraduate community;

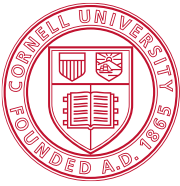
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50 **Be it further resolved**, that the Student Assembly Bylaws, Article II, Section 1 be amended to
51 read:

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53 The officers of the SA shall be a President, an Executive Vice President, a Vice President of
54 Internal Operations, a Vice President for Finance, a Vice President of External Affairs, a Vice
55 President of Diversity and Inclusion, ~~a Vice President of Research & Accountability~~; a Director
56 of Elections, a Parliamentarian, and an Executive Archivist. These officers shall perform the duties
57 prescribed by this Charter and by the parliamentary authority adopted by the SA.

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59 **Be it further resolved**, that the Student Assembly Bylaws, Article III, Section 7 be amended to
60 remove:

61 ~~Article 7: Vice President of Research & Accountability;~~

- 62 ~~1. The responsibilities of the Vice President of Research & Accountability are as follows:~~
- 63 ~~2. Chair the Research & Accountability Committee;~~
- 64 ~~3. Establish the working rules of the Research & Accountability Committee that are~~
65 ~~distributed to the entire Student Assembly (including committee members) and~~
66 ~~undergraduate students elected directly to the University Assembly to ensure~~
67 ~~transparency;~~
- 68 ~~4. To lead the inquiries, and/or fact finding actions at the behest of the Research &~~
69 ~~Accountability Committee with as much discretion and anonymity as possible and used~~
70 ~~when needed;~~
- 71 ~~5. To, when necessary, report finding and recommendations for actions to be made to the~~
72 ~~Student Assembly;~~
- 73 ~~6. Work in conjunction with the Vice President of Internal Operation to oversee all~~
74 ~~attendance and outreach requirements;~~
- 75 ~~7. Work with the Parliamentary and Executive Archivist to annually evaluate the~~
76 ~~appropriation of college seats, the creation of positions, and the overall composition of~~
77 ~~the Student Assembly;~~
- 78 ~~8. Work in conjunction with the Vice President of Finance to assist, if needed, with~~
79 ~~accountability of Byline funded organizations including: funding/ spending research and~~
80 ~~Appendix B recommendations;~~
- 81 ~~9. Work with the Vice President of External to coordinate any public release of reports, if~~
82 ~~deemed necessary and in the most appropriate way possible.~~



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83 **Be it further resolved**, that the Student Assembly Standing Rules, Section 2, Subsection B, Rule
84 10 be amended to remove:

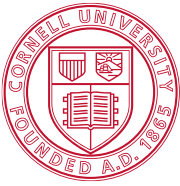
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86 ~~10. At the discretion of the Vice President of Research & Accountability—requests can be issued~~
87 ~~in-ordered to appear before the Committee to any and all Student Assembly members or directly~~
88 ~~elected undergraduate representatives to the UA in efforts to futher a fact finding action or~~
89 ~~inquiry as seen needed by the Research & Accountability Committee.~~

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92 **Be it further resolved**, that the Student Assembly Bylaws, Article V, Section 3 be amended to
93 remove and read:

94 The Executive Board shall hold meetings at least once a week during the academic year. Special
95 meetings of the Board may be called by the Executive Vice President and shall be called upon
96 the written request of ~~five~~ four members of the board.

97 **Be it further resolved**, that the Committee of Research & Accountability be amended by
98 removing from the Student Assembly Bylaws, Article VI, Section 3, Subsection F to be:
99

100 **Research & Accountability Committee** - The committee will pursue any necessary
101 accountability and research concerns of SA members and directly elected undergraduate
102 representatives to the UA. Research and accountability concerns consist of, but are not limited
103 to: general body attendance, resolution voting, liaison role accountability, committee attendance,
104 committee conduct, and general representative accountability. The committee will also evaluate
105 all requests submitted by community members that are against any SA member, SA committees,
106 or directly elected undergraduate representatives to the UA. ~~The Vice President of Research and~~
107 ~~Accountability shall serve as chair with a vote only in the event of a tie.~~ The chair position can
108 be held by any non-Student Assembly member of the Cornell undergraduate student population
109 and the committee will be under the supervision of Executive Vice President. The committee
110 shall consist of ten voting members, ~~four~~ two of which are current SA members and/or directly
111 elected undergraduate representatives to the UA and ~~six~~ eight undergraduate community
112 members. The chair shall only vote in the event of a tie. The composition of the committee can
113 change for specific meeting types, in which members of the SA Executive Committee or other
114 student representatives can be given an ex-offio status—this is to be voted on by the RA
115 committee as a whole and only when initially decided on by the Chair. The committee has the
116 obligation, if decided upon, to conference any SA member, directly elected undergraduate
117 representative to the UA, S.A. affiliated committee, or Committee Chair if they have received a
118 notice from any member of the Cornell Community. The committee is restricted from passing
119 resolutions due to the necessary impartial nature of the committee. However, after a full inquiry
120 or fact finding action—a written report may be presented to the SA, which will include a brief
121 summary of the situation being investigated and any necessary actions the committee
122 recommends. The requester's name and others that are not SA members or directly elected
123 undergraduate representatives to the UA shall be redacted from the report if permission from



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124 any the individual(s) is not given. Adoption of the (possible) recommendation(s) requires a three
125 quarters majority vote of SA voting members. Rejection of the (possible) recommendation(s)
126 requires three quarters of SA voting members. If recommendation or report are not approved or
127 rejected, it will be tabled indefinitely. The ~~Vice President of Research and Accountability~~
128 ~~committee chair~~ shall present reports to the SA at both the requester (s), RA Committee's, and
129 Chair's discretion.

130

131 **Be it further resolved**, that the Student Assembly Election Rules, Article 1, Section B,
132 Subsection 6 be amended to remove:

133 ~~10. No previous or current holder(s) of the Cornell Student Assembly Vice President of~~
134 ~~Research and Accountability are eligible to run for President of the Student Assembly.~~

135

136 **Be it further resolved**, that the Student Assembly Bylaws, Article II, Section 2 be amended to
137 remove and read:

138 The SA will, as soon as possible after the spring election, hold an organizational and planning
139 meeting in executive session. At this meeting, the voting members will elect from among
140 themselves the offices of Vice President of Internal Operations, Vice President for Finance, a
141 Vice President of External Affairs, a Vice President of Diversity and Inclusion, ~~and a Vice~~
142 ~~President of Research and Accountability~~. At this meeting or a meeting soon after, the voting
143 members will elect from the Cornell community (student, employee, faculty, alumnus living in
144 Ithaca) the office of Director of Elections. Self-nomination will be in order in each of the elected
145 offices. Elected officers should be approved by a majority vote of SA members present at
146 organizational meeting. Additionally, at this meeting or a meeting soon after the members will
147 affirm the appointments of Parliamentarian and Executive Archivist. The offices of
148 Parliamentarian and Executive Archivist will be appointed by the SA President. Each nominee
149 for the respective offices shall be subject to majority approval of the SA voting members. The
150 newly elected officers will undertake the responsibilities of their position at the start of their term
151 on the SA. Elections for officers shall be by secret ballots. SA voting members may have one
152 vote for each position to be filled but may not vote for any one individual twice on any ballot.

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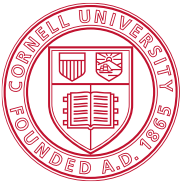
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156 **Be it further resolved**, that any numbering or lettering changed by these above amendments in
157 the Student Assembly Bylaws, Student Assembly Standing Rules, and/or the Student Assembly
158 Election Rules be amended to allow for correct sequential order and aestheticism;

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161 **Be it finally resolved**, that the election process for the Research and Accountability Committee
162 Chair position, will take effect after the elections in the Spring of 2021 for the 2021-2022



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163 academic year, similar to a timeline of electing all other committee chairs. That being said, the
164 next holder of the Research & Accountability Committee Chair position will be elected in a
165 special election to be held during the first week of the Spring 2021 semester based on a majority
166 vote of the entire Student Assembly for the duration of the Spring 2021 semester. Further, the
167 new Research & Accountability Committee Chair appointed in the first week of Spring 2021 will
168 have full discretion in staffing their committee for the semester.

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171 **Respectfully Submitted,**

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173 Moriah Adeghe '21

174 *Director of Elections, Student Assembly*

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176 Laila Abd Elmagid '21

177 *Vice President of Internal Operations, Student Assembly*

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179 Uche Chukwukere '21

180 *Vice President of Finance, Student Assembly*

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182 Michael Stefanko '21

183 *Parliamentarian, Student Assembly*

184

185 Maria Silaban '21

186 *Executive Archivist, Student Assembly*

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188 Tomás Reuning '21

189 *LGBTQIA+ Representative At-Large, Student Assembly*

190

191 Selam Woldai '23

192 *Vice President of Diversity and Inclusion, Student Assembly*

193

194 Noah Watson '22

195 *Executive Vice President, Student Assembly*

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197 Estefania Perez '21

198 *Arts and Sciences Representative, Student Assembly*

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200 Morgan Baker '23

201 *Vice President of External Affairs, Student Assembly*

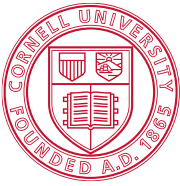
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203 Lucy Contreras '21

204 *First Generation Students Liaison At-Large, Student Assembly*

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206 Mardiya Shardow '23



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- 207 *Dyson School of Business Representative At-Large, Student Assembly*
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209 Jenniviv Bansah '23
210 *School of Hotel Administration Representative, Student Assembly*
211
212 Katarina Bentley '23
213 *Womxn's Issues Liaison At-Large, Student Assembly*
214
215 Amari Lampert '24
216 *Freshman Representative, Student Assembly*
217
218 Bennett Sherr '21
219 *Undergraduate Representative to the University Assembly, University Assembly*
220
221 Savanna Lim '21
222 *College of Architecture, Art & Planning Representative, Student Assembly*
223
224 Lucas Smith '22
225 *Undesignated At-Large Representative, Student Assembly*
226
227 Valeria Valencia '23
228 *Minority Students Liaison At-Large, Student Assembly*
229
230 Anuli Ononye '22
231 *Student Advocate, Office of the Student Advocate*
232
233 *(Reviewed by: Executive Committee, 5-0-2, 12/04/2020)*
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