



# Cornell University Student Assembly

## Cornell University Student Assembly

Minutes of the Thursday, March 10th, 2016 Meeting  
4:45pm-6:30pm in Willard Straight Hall Memorial Room

### I. Call to Order (J. Batista)

- M. McBride called the meeting to order at 4:48pm
- *Present at the Roll Call:* B. Bacharach [4.5]; D. Barbaria [0]; N. Billington [0]; S. Chadhaury [2.5]; J. Chessin [1.5]; V. Devatha [4.5]; R. Dunbar [4.5]; M. Ghandour [4.5]; M. Indimine [0]; E. Johnston [2]; S. Karnavat [5]; M. Kasher [0]; G. Kaufman [0]; J. Kim [0]; C. Li [5.5]; D. Li [4.5]; D. Liu [1.5]; M. McBride [0]; V. Michel [3]; P. Russell [2.5]; J. Selig [4]; M. Stefanko [6]
- *Not Present at the Roll Call:* J. Batista [2]; M. Chak (Resigned); R. Gupta (Resigned); S. Tayal (Unexcused) [5.5]; K. Zhu (Resigned)

### II. Oath of Office

- Samari Gilbert '17 read the Oath of Office.

### III. Open Microphone

### IV. Approval of the Meeting Minutes

- The minutes of March 3<sup>rd</sup> were approved by unanimous consent.

### V. Announcements and Reports

- Elections Update – Director of Elections Henderson announced a candidate forum would be held following the meeting. He stated voting in the Spring Elections would begin Monday March 14th, and that there would be voting booths around campus. He finally stated that M. Chak was voted off the Assembly by the Executive Board due to six absences, and that Samari Gilbert would be filling the position of Minority Representative. There was also a vacancy for Outreach Representative, which would be voted on at a future time.
- University Assembly, Codes and Judicial Committee, Faculty Elections – G. Kaufman stated the UA met on Tuesday March 8<sup>th</sup>, where they discussed Resolution 7, requesting an investigation into Cornell's Carbon Neutrality plan. He additionally mentioned that the CJC met Tuesday to discuss Good Samaritan policies and allowing for protests outside of Ho Plaza without permits during specific time periods. He communicated that the University Hearing and Review Board's applications were open. G. Kaufman finally announced that elections for the Faculty Trustee, The Associate Dean, and the Dean of Faculty would all be voted on this year through the Faculty Senate.
- Appendix B Report – VP of Finance Stefanko stated that Appendix B was under the review of the Appropriations Committee. He requested that By-Line organizations reach

out at this point with recommendations, as the committee would vote on the issue in two weeks.

- Diversity Innovation Fund – VP of Diversity and Inclusion Chaudhary announced that the deadline for funding applications was March 18<sup>th</sup>.
- SA Restructuring Moving Forward – EVP Johnston stated the Executive Board met on Tuesday, and would meet on additional dates to ask representatives about their opinions in reshaping the Assembly.

## VI. Initiatives

- E-Cigarette Posters - Peter Biedenweg / Health and Wellness Committee
  - P. Biedenweg presented anti-e-cigarette posters and requested members of the community and the Assembly provide advice for finalizing the designs.
- Home Plate Update – City & Local Affairs Committee
  - Millicent Kastenbaum '17 stated that for a pilot run 15 students met with 15 families at their homes around Ithaca to share a dinner. She stated the experience was well received, and they would be having a broader second run.

## VII. Business of the Day

- Resolution 44: Creation of the First Generation Student Representative
  - S. Chaudhary communicated that First in Class was continuing to work on creating a First Generation Student At-Large position on the Assembly. He asserted that this created position was a good start to restructuring the Student Assembly.
  - M. Ghandour believed minority positions needed to be better represented on the Assembly. She urged others to support the resolution.
  - B. Bacharach favored the creation of the position. He stated that he had concerns about the restructuring of the SA at the previous meeting, but these concerns were only focused on the low number of candidates, not the creation of a new position.
  - J. Berger believed a vote for this would be a help to other minority groups around campus as well.
  - There was a motion to **Call the Question**.
  - By unanimous consent the motion to hold a roll call vote was **adopted**.
  - By a vote of 22-0-0 Resolution 44 was **adopted**.
- B. Bacharach, Yes; D. Barbaria, Yes; J. Batista, Absent; N. Billington, Yes; S. Chaudhary, Yes; J. Chessin, Yes; V. Devatha, Yes; R. Dunbar, Yes; M. Ghandour, Yes; S. Gilbert, Yes; M. Indimine, Yes; E. Johnston, Abstain; S. Karnavat, Yes; M. Kasher, Yes; G. Kaufman, Yes; J. Kim, Yes; C. Li, Yes; D. Li, Yes; D. Liu, Yes; M. McBride, Yes; V. Michel, Yes; P. Russell, Yes; J. Selig, Yes; M. Stefanko, Yes; S. Tayal, Absent

## VIII. New Business

- Resolution 45: Call for an Asian American Studies Major at Cornell
  - The sponsors presented on the creation of an Asian American Studies major. They saw increases in the number of students enrolled in the Asian American minor and in class attendance as reasons to favor the resolution. They were hopeful the major would foster diversity and inclusion around Cornell's campus. The Black Students United in its general list of grievances last year demanded the creation of Latino Studies, American Indian Studies, and Asian-American Studies majors, which this Resolution would push for in one respect.
  - Emily Dong '18 stated the major would provide for an underfunded program created in 1987. She expressed concerns over the department's decline after being named the top of its kind at its founding. She additionally hoped the major would

- provide for the voices of South East Asians, South Asians, and Pacific Islanders.
  - R. Dunbar asked about the implementation of a university wide major, and also if the sponsors knew about the details as to why the Slavic Studies major failed and how this major would be different.
  - E. Dong stated that the sponsors were unaware of the Slavic program. She stated that they were looking to increase representation across campus, and this major would help begin the process.
  - D. Li stated the idea of a university wide major, came from S. Tayal's past resolution.
  - James Gan '18 supported the resolution because the Asian American department helped him participate in discussions about his identity. He wanted to reiterate that departments were a great way to make connections, and that an Asian American major would provide for the greater community. He saw classes as important to expanding vocabulary and increasing the Asian American voice.
  - M. Battaglia asked about the implementation of the major. He asked if the sponsors had reached out to the Faculty Senate Academic Policy Committee. As well, he was interested on the number of students in Asian American classes.
  - D. Li answered that the resolution went through the Diversity Committee because the creation of an Asian American major was at its core an issue of Diversity.
  - The sponsors believed they would be giving students a greater choice of courses even if they did not register in the major. In 1998, 150 students were enrolled in Asian American studies, there were 250 in 2016.
  - There was a motion to move Resolution 45 to Business of the Day.
  - By unanimous consent the motion was adopted.
  - Julia asked why the question of what committee it went through mattered. She saw the fact that a majority of undocumented students at Cornell were Asian American meant this issue should be addressed head on.
  - M. Battaglia requested a Point of Order for Julia Montejo's personal attacks and for questioning his motives.
  - M. Stefanko believed that logistics related to the creation of a university wide major was the only reason to oppose the resolution. He asserted that the sponsors would understand the next steps needed to be accomplished regardless of what committees they worked with.
  - There was a motion to Call the Question.
  - There was dissent.
  - J. Chessin voiced that he wished to hear more about the financial and academic logistics of the major.
  - By a vote of 13-5-0 the motion to Call the Question was approved.
  - By unanimous consent the motion to hold a roll call vote was approved.
  - By a vote of 21-1-1 with two community votes in the affirmative Resolution 45 was adopted.
- B. Bacharach, Yes; D. Barbaria, Yes; J. Batista, Absent; N. Billington, Yes; S. Chaudhary, Yes; J. Chessin, Yes; V. Devatha, Yes; R. Dunbar, Yes; M. Ghandour, Yes; S. Gilbert, Yes; M. Indimine, Yes; E. Johnston, Abstain; S. Karnavat, Yes; M. Kasher, Yes; G. Kaufman, No; J. Kim, Yes; C. Li, Abstain; D. Li, Yes; D. Liu, Yes; M. McBride, Yes; V. Michel, Yes; P. Russell, Yes; J. Selig, Absent; M. Stefanko, Yes; S. Tayal, Absent
- There was a motion to adjourn.

M. McBride adjourned the meeting at 5:30pm.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Peter F. Biedenweg  
Assembly Clerk, Office of the Assemblies