



Cornell University Student Assembly

Cornell University Student Assembly

Minutes of the Thursday, November 17th, 2016 Meeting

4:45pm-6:30pm in WSH Memorial Room

I. Call to Order

- J. Berger called the meeting to order at 4:46pm.
- *Present at the Roll Call:* J. Berger [0]; N. Chovanec [0]; D. Cox [0]; V. Devatha [0]; E. Dzodzomenyo [0]; R. Herz [1]; A. Iglesias [0]; M. Indimine [0]; A. Issur [0]; J. Kim [1]; D. Li [1]; L. Lipschultz [0]; D. Liu [0.25]; H. MacDiarmid [0]; T. Magloire [0]; M. McBride [1]; J. Montejo [0]; R. Musto [0]; H. Reichel [0.5]; W. Rong [1]; J. Selig [0]; M. Valadez [0]; E. Vargas [1]; A. Viswanathan [0]; Y. Wang [1];
- *Absent at the Roll Call:* T. Celestin (Excused) [0]; N. Jaisinghani (Unexcused) [1]; M. Kasher (Unexcused) [1];

II. Approval of the Meeting Minutes

- The minutes from the November 10th, 2016 meeting were approved by unanimous consent.

III. Open Microphone

IV. Announcements and Reports

- President Berger thanked everyone who attended the restructuring forum and noted the restructuring committee applications would be extended to Friday, November 18th.
- Parliamentarian Barbaria stated that the Charter needed to be updated in regards to new *New York Times* membership.
- Rep. Reichel stated that the AAP Dean Forum went well. She also said that on December 6th the Dining Committee would hold their last meeting of the semester at Cook House.
- Rep. Li stated the Appropriation Committee saw ECO, Class Councils, and the WSH Union. The committee decided that in a by-line year they would maintain ECO's funding level. Class Councils would also maintain the same level, although there were concerns about the cost per student at events. For the WSH Union, the committee spoke about making sure the organization granted all student groups room access.
- Rep. Issur stated that there would be a free Thanksgiving dinner in Anabel Taylor Hall on Wednesday, November 23rd at 5:00pm. Additionally the Calendar Committee was continuing to take suggestions.
- Rep. Montejo stated that in light of the election, the Mayor of Ithaca announced undocumented immigrants would not be required to disclose information within the city. She wished to inform students that if students are pulled over in the Ithaca community they would not be required to show proof of citizenship.
- Rep. Devatha stated that after Annabel's Grocery pop-up shop, Annabel's saw a seven percent increase of followers on Facebook. Regarding outreach requirements, he would be setting up a system where representatives would be requested to attend events on a rotational basis. Rep

Devatha also reminded members that they were required to attend three outreach events per month.

- Rep Viswanathan was looking to create better means of getting information out to students on a regular basis as he believed that the Assembly's actions were not well understood by the community. On this note he set up a new website for freshman: Cornellfreshmen.weebly.com containing updates pertaining to the Assembly, contact information, and an online forum.

Conversation with Michelle Horvath, Judicial Administrator

- Michelle Horvath introduced herself and said that she began serving as the JA in June. She oversaw faculty, staff, and student judicial cases. She believed that judicial action should be an educational process, and informed the assembly that her office did not work under a three-strike suspension model, but addressed each instance individually. She hoped to hear feedback from students about different ways her office could help, such as the what information to place on the JA website. She hoped to soon introduce a dialogue program working on student mitigation.
- M. Ghandour hoped that if new MGLC houses were created on campus that they would be given the same level of oversight as other Greek houses.
- J. Montejo stated that some students saw the JA system as punitive rather than rehabilitative, and asked JA Horvath how she sought to reduce anxiety.
- JA Horvath stated that the office was moving towards a more educational process. Under her direction they now send out notice letters, which include campus resources, before cases are heard. They also now encouraged offenders to bring peers with them to their hearings.
- M. Indimine saw cost barriers in BASICS, the alcohol rehabilitation program, and asked if there were any steps being taken to address this concern.
- JA Horvath saw equity issues in Campus Code of Conduct, and said she was looking to do an overhaul in the near future. However, she also saw BASICS as a necessary program.
- Y. Bhandari asked about the office's response to post-election bias incidences.
- JA Horvath stated that the bias reporting site looked for first amendment violations. Even without punitive action, she saw education as an important tool that the office needed provide the campus.
- Rep. Valadez asked about the Campus Code of Conduct, and if JA Horvath was working on ways to make it more comprehensible.
- M. Horvath agreed that the code was difficult to understand, especially because it has been put together piece by piece. She hoped in the future to do an overhaul.
- JA Horvath thanked the Assembly and stated that students could email her confidentially at MRH263, or request a personal meeting.
- By unanimous consent Resolution 21 was moved to the top of the agenda.

VIII. New Business

- Resolution 21: Approving the Spring 2017 Election Rules (M. Ghandour)
 - The Election Committee made changes to the rules. They hoped to increase reimbursements from twenty to thirty-five dollars, and allow election committee members to endorse candidates by requiring any by-line organizations on which they serve to be required to inform the Election Committee of endorsements. On that point, members who endorsed candidates would be absent during challenges.
 - G. Kaufman believed that it would be a step in the right direction to have by-line organizations fund candidates.

- Rep. Rong asked how exactly organizations would disclose their endorsements to the Election Committee.
 - M. Ghandour stated that the committee saw the 35-dollar reimbursement as removing a substantial cost barrier. She also stated that the language on disclosures was left ambiguous to allow each election committee discretion over how it would collect endorsement information.
 - There was a motion to amend line 149 from “\$35” to “\$50”.
 - There was a **Point of Information** asking where reimbursements came from.
 - D. Li stated that the reimbursements came from the Student Activity Fee.
 - D. Li stated that \$50 was an excessive amount, and if too many people ran the Assembly would not have the money to fund all candidates.
 - G. Kaufman stated that there was a surplus of money in the Assembly’s special projects funding which could fund the elections.
 - There was a motion to extend G. Kaufman’s time by thirty seconds.
 - There was dissent.
 - By a vote of 21-3-1 G. Kaufman was granted an additional thirty seconds.
 - G. Kaufman believed additional funding for elections would allow for increased publicity for the Assembly in general, and would foster greater campus engagement.
 - The amendment was **withdrawn**.
 - There was a motion to table Resolution 21.
 - By unanimous consent Resolution 21 was **tabled**.
- Resolution 20 Student Assembly’s Support for and Input on “Options for Achieving a Carbon Neutral Campus by 2035 (Rep. Kasher, Cynthia Bensburg)
 - Rep. Rong asked if the Assembly’s Environmental Committee or Technology Committee had the resources to create this platform.
 - Cynthia Bensburg stated that as a member of the Environmental Committee she had reached out to the Technology Committee, and both were open to creating a platform for outreach.
 - Rep. Devatha asked if the sponsors had thought about including this information on Facebook or elsewhere.
 - C. Bensburg stated they were looking for a more formal website, as the decisions being made affected the entire Ithaca community.
 - M. McBride motioned to amend line 61 to read, “Be it finally resolved the Student Assembly requests the administration to minimize budgetary impacts to limit tuition increases in order to preserve financial aid in its current form.”
 - There was a motion to amend.
 - By unanimous consent the resolution was **amended**.
 - There was a motion to table the resolution.
 - By unanimous consent Resolution 20 was **tabled**.
- Resolution 19: Recommending Uniformity in Faculty Laptop Policies (D. Barbaria)
 - The sponsors stated that they were recommending the faculty to allow students to use laptops in lectures and discussion sections that required note taking.
 - D. Li saw the resolution as unnecessary because it would not require any changes.
 - D. Barbaria stated the primary effect of this resolution was to create a discussion about learning styles.
 - Rep. Chovanec spoke about how requiring students to sit in the back of the room caused stigma in regards to students who had disabilities.
 - Rep. Reichel believed there was a difference between requesting and recommending.

- There was a motion to amend lines 4 and 42 to change “requests” to “recommends” and “request” to “recommend”.
- By unanimous consent the resolution was amended.
- Rep. Devatha stated that laptop usage often causes distractions, but saw benefits in this resolution by creating a discussion with faculty.
- There was a motion to recommit Resolution 19 to the Academic Planning Committee.
- By a vote of 21-0-0 the resolution was recommitted.

J. Berger adjourned the meeting at 6:30pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Peter F. Biedenweg

Assembly Clerk, Office of the Assemblies