



Cornell University Student Assembly

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Minutes of the Thursday, April 20th, 2017 Meeting

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

I. Call to Order

- J. Berger called the meeting to order at 4:47pm.
- *Present at Roll Call:* J. Anderson [0]; J. Berger [0.25]; T. Celestin [3.25]; D. Cox [1]; V. Devatha [2.5]; E. Dzodzomenyo [1.25]; A. Iglesias [1]; M. Indimine [0]; A. Issur [2.5]; N. Jaisinghani [1.75]; D. Li [0]; L. Lipschutz [2.75]; D. Liu [2.5]; T. Magloire [2.75]; M. McBride [1]; J. Montejo [0.25]; H. Reichel [0.5]; E. Reppy [2.25]; W. Rong [2.25]; J. Selig [3]; M. Valadez [0.5]; A. Viswanathan [0];
- *Not Present at Roll Call:* N. Chovanec (Excused) [1.5]; R. Herz (Excused) [2.5]; J. Kim (Unexcused) [2.25]; C. Lee (Excused) [4.5]; R. Musto (Excused) [2]; Y. Wang (Unexcused) [3];

II. Approval of the Meeting Minutes

- The minutes from the March 23rd and April 13th meetings were approved by unanimous consent.

III. Announcement and Reports

- Lift Your Spirits Day Updates (April 28th). Each representative shared who they would table with and/or what activity they were planning for the event.
 - J. Anderson was collaborating with the Lending Library.
 - J. Berger was working with Hillel.
 - M. Indimine was working with Cornell Minds Matter.
 - A. Issur was arranging a table with the International Students Union.
 - N. Jaisinghani was organizing alongside the Society for India.
 - J. Kim was planning to work with the Korean Student Association.
 - D. Li invited Kappa Alpha Pi.
 - L. Lipschutz was coordinating with the Hotel School Ambassadors program.
 - D. Liu said he would create a suggestions box for the Assembly.
 - J. Montejo said the Diversity Committee would have a table with a photo campaign.
 - H Reichel was working with the Dining Committee.
 - W. Rong was speaking with CUNews.
 - J. Selig would be supporting CornellMake.
 - D. Li stated that in order to be reimbursed for general Assembly expenses, representatives would need to speak with her or J. Berger before spending any money. Regarding the Appropriations Committee, the Committee met with the Women's Resource Center which requested additional money for the Big Red Shuttle program. The Committee also saw the Multicultural Greek Letter Council, which was planning to have more events targeted at all of their constituencies. D. Li finally suggested that anyone interested in attending SAFC tier appeals speak with her.
 - G. Kaufman said that the University Assembly was looking to review the process of public hearings, and recommended that anyone with new procedural ideas reach out to him.
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- M. Valadez announced that she was starting a first-generation student mentorship program and would be in contact with representatives about advertising.

IV. Open Microphone

- Samir Durvasula announced that Holi would be on May 6th.

V. Discussion with President Pollack

- President Pollack stated that she was thrilled to take up her new position. She believed in integrity and trust, and found that when people trusted each other they could go far. The students she had already met around campus impressed her. She valued the idea of learning about what people on campus support and what gives them passion. She was firmly committed to free speech, and wanted Cornell to be a model university for the twenty-first-century.
- J. Selig asked about Cornell Tech and how President Pollack would balance her time between New York City and the Ithaca Campus.
- President Pollack stated that she would be spending some time in New York City, but that Cornell was centered and grounded in Ithaca. She wanted to look into video conferencing as a possible solution to save travelling time.
- M. Valadez asked about the possibility of a first-generation resource center.
- President Pollack stated that space was often a larger issue than funding, and that she was open to the idea of reallocating rooms around campus.
- V. Devatha asked about the role of the administration and the Campus Code of Conduct during contentious speaker events.
- President Pollack stated that as an educational institution, free speech was an important aspect of learning. She wanted to allow contentious speakers to address students, but also sought to provide opportunities for dissent.
- D. Li asked about rising costs and how President Pollack would balance student's needs with rising tuition. She also asked about expanding the Ethnic Studies Program.
- President Pollack stated that as the Provost of Michigan, she worked on budgeting and access for students. The challenge rested in driving down costs while maintaining the same quality of education. Regarding curricula, she believed Cornell had a strong history of balancing the liberal arts while also maintaining a degree of professionalism.
- E. Reppy asked about student health and campus services.
- President Pollack said that she could outline the issues at the University of Michigan, but would need time to learn about Cornell. She believed that services were necessary, and by trying to save too much money in health and services you could harm students' experiences.
- P. Biedenweg asked about the role of universities in regards to environmental and political stances, specifically if Cornell should condemn pipeline usage.
- President Pollack believed that when a university wanted to promote good citizenship it should take a role in promoting sustainable practices, but there were also cost issues. She thought that the university could itself serve as a laboratory for trying new environmental ideas. The other side, relating to whether the University should take political stances, needed to be answered on a more individualized basis.
- Elizabeth Shi '18 asked if President Pollack had a stance on Fossil Fuel Divestment.
- President Pollack said that she needed time to read more about the decisions of the Board of Trustees before she could take a stance.
- J. Montejo wanted to hear about President Pollack's plan to address ethnic and racial diversity.
- President Pollack wanted to meet with lots of students to hear not only about diversity of thought, but also address issues relating to ethnic and racial diversity. She clarified that these

meetings would not happen in the next week, but would occur over the following months.

- A. Iglesias asked what role shared governance should play in the decisions of the University.
- President Pollack said that she was a firm-believer in taking into account all stakeholders before making any decision. Although there could never be a single student voice, she hoped to meet with student leaders for help.
- D. Barbaria asked how President Pollack planned to promote the liberal arts curricula.
- President Pollack stated that she planned to leverage her position to talk about the importance of humanities, yet, nonetheless, she would never tell a student what to major in. She believed that it was important to create opportunities for students to have exposure to a wide range of disciplines.
- T. Celestin asked how she planned to be accessible to students.
- President Pollack and Lombardi stated that until August it would be very ad-hoc, but students should reach out to talk.
- President Pollack said in closing that she recognized that students' desires were not always the same as hers, but nonetheless, all that the Student Assembly had accomplished impressed her.

VI. Discussion with Title IX Coordinator Sarah Affel

- Sarah Affel presented on Title IX and Cornell's Policy 6.4. While Title IX was federally mandated, Cornell's Policy 6.4 predated Title IX. The Policy reflected state and federal laws, but also took into account Cornell's values.

VII. Restructuring Update

- J. Berger announced that following a Restructuring Committee meeting on April 25th, on May 2nd the Committee would vote on a recommendation. On May 4th they would bring this recommendation to the Assembly. J. Berger requested that the Assembly accept this recommendation.
- There was a motion to appoint Lavanya Aprameya, Sarah Park, and Samir Durvasula as community members on the Restructuring Committee.
- By unanimous consent the motion was approved.

VIII. Business of the Day

- Resolution 34: Accessibility & Affordability of Cornell's Fitness Centers
 - There was a motion to table the resolution.
 - By unanimous consent Resolution 34 was tabled.
- Resolution 39: Creation of the Vice President of External Affairs
 - There was a motion to amend the resolution to reflect its current form.
 - By unanimous consent Resolution 39 was amended.
 - There was a motion to Call the Question.
 - By a vote of 16-0-1 Resolution 39 was adopted.
- Resolution 40: A Comprehensive Investigation into Cornell Exam Scheduling
 - J. Selig stated that this resolution addressed the lack of coordination between faculty regarding exam scheduling. The sponsors hoped to find ways of stopping students from taking an excessive number of exams in too short an amount of time.
 - V. Devatha wondered if there was any software available to schedule tests.
 - J. Selig stated that faculty wanted autonomy and would have difficulty adapting to an online database.

- A. Issur stated that the Academic Calendar Committee was looking at exam schedules, and that final exams would likely be published with the course roster in the future.
- G. Kaufman was disappointed in the Faculty Senate's Educational Policy Committee. He recommended that the resolution request they meet more than twice a year to discuss these issues.
- There was a motion to refer the resolution to the Academic Policy Committee.
- By unanimous consent Resolution 40 was referred to the Academic Policy Committee.

J. Berger adjourned the meeting at 6:32pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Peter F. Biedenweg

Assembly Clerk, Office of the Assemblies