



# Cornell University University Assembly

## U.A. Resolution #7

### In Support of an Independent Review of Cornell Admissions Practices

[12/8/2020]

1 **Sponsors: Bennett Sherr, Undergraduate Student Representative**

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3 **Abstract:** This resolution calls for the University to create a committee to look at and  
4 admission's practices and make recommendations as to how the University can increase  
5 economic diversity on campus.

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7 **Whereas,** in 1868, Cornell University founder Ezra Cornell sought to, "found an institution  
8 where any person can find instruction in any study";

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10 **Whereas,** through the class of 2013 only 3.8% of Cornell students come from the bottom 20% of  
11 family incomes as opposed to the 64% who come from the top 20% of family income<sup>1</sup>;

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13 **Whereas,** only 16% of Cornell graduates moved up two or more income quintiles, amongst the  
14 lowest in the state of New York<sup>2</sup>;

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16 **Whereas,** in 2020, Cornell University ranked 1303rd in terms of social mobility out of all  
17 colleges and universities in the United States<sup>3</sup>, an increase from the 2019 ranking putting Cornell  
18 at 1336th<sup>4</sup>;

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20 **Whereas,** the 2020 percent of low-income students at Cornell University is 8.5%, this is the 5th  
21 lowest in the state of New York<sup>5</sup>;

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<sup>1</sup>Economic Diversity and Student Outcomes at Cornell University:

<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/projects/college-mobility/cornell-university#:~:text=Cornell%20University&text=The%20median%20family%20income%20of,but%20became%20a%20rich%20adult.>

<sup>2</sup> ibid

<sup>3</sup>2020 Social Mobility Index:

<https://www.socialmobilityindex.org/>

<sup>4</sup>Social Mobility Index 2019:

<https://socialmobilityindex.org/Social%20Mobility%20Index%202019%20-%20College%20Rankings%20by%20CollegeNET.pdf>

<sup>5</sup>2020 Social Mobility Index:

<https://www.socialmobilityindex.org/>



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**Whereas**, in 2020, the average amount of debt amongst Cornell graduates at the time of graduation is \$14,000<sup>6</sup>;

**Whereas**, Cornell’s 2020 Freshman class ranks in the top 10 lowest by percentage of freshman with Pell Grants<sup>7</sup>;

**Whereas**, despite the COVID-19 pandemic’s far reaching ramifications on the economy, Cornell University chose to raise the cost of tuition by 3.6%, this was \$6 less than the tuition increase the year prior during good economic conditions and has climbed every year for at least a decade<sup>8</sup>;

**Whereas**, during a February 2019 interview acknowledged that the undergraduate population is “not socioeconomically diverse”<sup>9</sup>;

**Be it therefore resolved**, the University should create a committee to look at our admission’s practices;

**Be it further resolved**, the committee shall consist of equal members of undergraduate students, graduate and professional students, faculty, and staff members;

**Be it further resolved**, the committee’s charter should grant the committee the authority to perform a full audit of Cornell University’s admissions practices as well as task the committee with drafting a formal report on the state of Cornell’s admissions process and provide recommendations for increasing economic diversity amongst the student body;

**Be it further resolved**, members of the committee should be selected from the Cornell community and should not be restricted to members of the University Assembly, Employee Assembly, Student Assembly, Graduate and Professional Student Assembly, and Faculty Senate;

**Be it finally resolved**, the committee should strive to be economically diverse in its membership.

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid  
<sup>7</sup> Ibid  
<sup>8</sup> Cornell Introduces Smallest Recent Tuition Increase--\$6 Less than Last Year’s Hike:  
<https://cornellsun.com/2019/02/11/cornell-introduces-smallest-recent-tuition-increase-6-less-than-last-years-hike/>  
<sup>9</sup> Ibid