

Cornell University
University Assembly

Cornell University's University Assembly
Agenda of the September 14th, 2021 Meeting
4:30 PM – 6:00 PM
700 Clark Hall | [Zoom](#)

- I. Call to Order
 - a. Roll Call
 - b. Land Acknowledgment of the Gayogohono (Cayuga Nation)
 - c. Call for Late Additions to the Agenda
- II. Approval of the Minutes
 - a. [August 31, 2021](#)
- III. Open Forum
 - a. President Pollack's Appointment of Ms. Liang to the role of Interim Judicial Administrator During the Transition Period of Pending Judicial Cases.
 - b. Inquiring about Potential Invitees and Guest Speakers
 - i. Cornell University Police Department
 - ii. Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards
- IV. Business of the Day
 - a. [Resolution 1: Calling Upon Cornell University to Require COVID-19 Vaccination for All Faculty, Staff, and Students](#)
- V. New Business
 - a. Late Additions to the Agenda (if applicable)
- VI. Assembly Reports
 - a. Student Assembly
 - b. Graduate and Professional Student Assembly
 - c. Employee Assembly
 - d. Faculty Senate
- VII. Committee Reports (if applicable)
 - a. Executive Committee
 - b. Codes and Judicial Committee
 - c. Campus Welfare Committee
 - d. Campus Committee on Infrastructure, Technology and the Environment
- VIII. Liaison Reports
- IX. Adjournment

If you are in need of special accommodations in order to fully participate, please contact Student Disability Services at (607) 254-4545 or the Office of the Assemblies at (607) 255-3715 or assembly@cornell.edu prior to the meeting.



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Cornell University Assembly

Minutes of the August 31st, 2021 Meeting

4:33 PM – 6:15 PM

401 Physical Sciences Building and Zoom

- I. Call to Order
 - a. B. Fortenberry called the meeting to order at 4:35pm.
 - b. *Members Present:* A. Ononye, B. Fortenberry, D. Hiner, D. Howell, D. Cady, I. Akisoglu, J. Feit, J. Withers, L. Zhicay, M. Benda, N. Danev, P. Hanley, R. Bensel, S. Tanis, T. Fox.
 - c. *Members Absent:* M. Louis, V. Aymer, J. Richards, E. DeRosa, C. Levine.
 - d. *Also Present:*
- II. Land Acknowledgment of the Gayogohó:nq (Cayuga Nation)
- III. Welcome and Introduction
 - a. B. Fortenberry spoke to the expectations and goals within the UA and their own ability to support both the UA and their constituents. They set the expectations surrounding resolutions, namely the presenters should describe the ideas behind the resolution rather than reading from the text verbatim and the resolution should be presented two weeks before being voted upon for the constituent groups to review.
 - b. The University Assembly introduced themselves.
- IV. Call for New Business
- V. Approval of the Minutes (May 11, 2021)
 - a. N. Danev motioned to add Debra Howell and Marcy Benda to the “Others” list.
 - i. D. Cady seconded the motion.
 - ii. The motion was passed with unanimous consent.
 - b. J. Feit motioned to approve the minutes.
 - i. N. Danev seconded the motion.
 - ii. The motion was passed with unanimous consent.
- VI. Business of the Day
 - a. Proposed 2021-2022 meeting schedule
 - i. N. Danev motioned to pass the meeting schedule.
 1. D. Cady seconded the motion.
 2. The motion passed with unanimous Consent.
 - b. University Assembly Committee Vacancies (internal and external)
 - i. W. Treat stated the two meetings on the meeting schedule without locations are located in 700 Clark Hall.



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- ii. G. Giambattista noted that the need to fill seats are most urgent in the CJC and the Standing Committees. G. Giambattista stated that there was a nomenclature change from JA to OSCCS and there is some overlap between the old code and new code.
- iii. N. Danev strongly advised students to apply for this position as it pertains exclusively to them.
- iv. B. Fortenberry reminded the body it is a requirement to fill these positions.
- v. J. Feit asked for a list of all the vacancies to see which committee or constituencies are represented.
- vi. The Campus Committee on Infrastructure, Technology and the Environment (CCITE)
 1. I. Akisoglu introduced the committee.
 2. The body came to the consensus that one could be from any assortment of bodies or constituencies but should choose the seat of the constituency or assembly they would represent in that body.
 3. I. Akisoglu nominated D. Hiner
 - a. J. Withers seconded the motion.
 - b. The nomination was accepted by D. Hiner.
 - c. The nomination was passed with unanimous consent.
- vii. Campus Welfare Committee
 1. D. Howell introduced the committee.
 2. R. Benseal asked if their scope would extend to the pandemic.
 3. D. Howell stated that it could involve bringing forward recommendations or resolutions.
 4. B. Fortenberry stated the Chair does not count towards the two UA members necessary as it counts towards the Chair position. Additionally, D. Howell, although being a part of the EA, would not count towards the EA member seats needing to be filled as they are in the Chair position.
- viii. Campus Planning Committee
 1. G. Giambattista and W. Treat introduced the committee.
 2. I. Akisoglu nominated themselves.
 - a. R. Benseal seconded the motion.
 - b. The body both nominated and determined V. Aymer was a general member and even without being appointed to the UA liaison position, would stay on the committee.



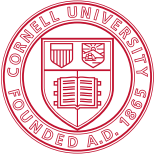
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- c. The motion for I. Akisoglu's nomination **passed** with unanimous consent.
 - ix. Transportation, Hearing, and Appeals Board
 - 1. W. Treat introduced the committee.
 - x. B. Fortenberry suggested putting together descriptions of liaison positions to review next meeting.
 - xi. N. Danev nominated himself as the Student Insurance Advisor Liaison.
 - 1. J. Feit seconded the motion.
 - 2. The nomination **passed** with unanimous consent.
 - xii. R. Bensel asked if every member of the University Assembly is required to fill one of these positions.
 - 1. B. Fortenberry affirmed.
 - xiii. G. Giambattista restated that they will draft out the vacancies and committee definitions to disseminate throughout the constituencies.
 - c. Review of Summer University Hearing and Review Board appointments and next steps.
 - i. B. Fortenberry thanked the Executive and CJC Committees for aiding in filling emergency appointments to the UHRB. They also talked to the cases still being processed under the old Code of Conduct.
 - ii. B. Fortenberry stated the UA needs to solicit applications for the Student Code of Conduct UHRB. One cannot be both the Campus Code of Conduct UHRB and Student Code of Conduct UHRB.
 - iii. A. Ononye nominated themselves for the Codes and Judicial Committee.
 - 1. N. Danev seconded the nomination.
 - 2. The nominated **passed** with unanimous consent.
 - d. Resolution #1: Calling Upon Cornell University to Require COVID-19 Vaccination for All Faculty, Staff, and Students.
 - i. N. Danev presented a Resolution urging the requirement vaccination of employees. They cite examples of vaccination mandates from other schools and state the FDA's approval of Pfizer gives a legal basis to instate this requirement with certain medical or religious exemptions. Concluding the resolution is a clause asking for an explanation in the event of rejection.
 - ii. T. Fox commented pushing essential workers to adhere to this resolution could force these workers to leave and may require a press release.
 - iii. M. Benda stated that the vet college has a good vaccination rate but acknowledges that we are in an area that has differing opinions on this



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- topic. They also state that other colleges may be strongly recommending vaccinations for faculty and employees but are not enforcing it.
- iv. D. Howell asserted that some concerns brought up on the town hall involve the 13 plus “bargaining units” and the revisitation of their contracts in the event of a vaccination mandate. (Staff-side issue)
 - v. R. Bensel said they had talked to M. Kotlikoff about these issues and was told an estimate of 600-700 staff at Cornell were not vaccinated and of those around 100 were not under any circumstances going to get vaccinated. Some concerns over workers leaving were also raised in this conversation, and although the “bargaining units” issue would be difficult to navigate, the larger issue was the hard-set persons against getting vaccinated.
 - vi. N. Danev asked to formalize the process of voting on resolutions only after they have been introduced in a past meeting.
 - vii. R. Bensel suggested recommending creating centers for booster shots.
 - viii. M. Benda asserted they would like to see a campus fully vaccinated and would support a booster clinic. They posed the question of how the faculty feels.
 - ix. J. Feit brought up the issue of doctoring among student vaccination cards. They also spoke to VP Lombardi about booster shots and the process to offer them on campus is already underway.
 - x. B. Fortenberry stated HR is putting together a video, which they have taken part of, speaking on why certain faculty have chosen to being vaccinated.
 - xi. T. Fox stated that faculty, if vaccinated, do not have to be tested weekly.
 - xii. D. Hiner stated that being tested twice a week may be a better avenue than requiring vaccines as they do not completely prevent you from getting COVID.
 - xiii. D. Cady asserted undergraduate students get tested once a week and Greek life twice a week. They also stated vaccination and increased testing frequency are not mutually exclusive.
 - xiv. P. Hanley asserted the graduate students, who are not required to get tested weekly if vaccinated, were concerned that they were not being tested. P. Hanley supported the sentiment of encouraging testing within different populations of students.

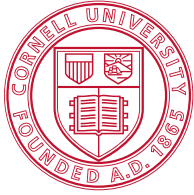


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- xv. N. Danev moved to postpone the resolution to the next meeting. They also encourage anyone wanting to change or contribute to the resolution to contact them.
1. R. BenseI seconded the motion.
 2. J. Feit asked if the amendments are to be made public or privately since the Resolution has already been presented.
 3. R. BenseI moved for unanimous consent that they should amend as they wish. They stated that the person creating the amendment may accept friendly amendments.
 4. G. Giambattista stated that it is a bit contradictory to standard process.
 5. The postponement of the resolution passed with unanimous consent.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:15PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Clerk of the Assembly



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U.A. Resolution # 1

**Calling Upon Cornell University to Require COVID-19
Vaccination for All Faculty, Staff, and Students**

August 30th, 2021

1 **Sponsored by:**

- 2 - **Nikola Danev, Ranking Member of the University Assembly and PhD Student in**
3 **Genetics, Genomics and Development**
4 - **Jacob Feit, Executive Vice Chair of the University Assembly**
5

6 **Whereas**, the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in over 4 million deaths and 205 million cases
7 globally, and over 600,000 deaths in the United States alone,
8

9 **Whereas**, the Delta variant of the virus that causes COVID-19 is nearly twice as contagious as
10 previous variants, it might cause more severe illness than previous strains in unvaccinated
11 persons, unvaccinated people remain the greatest concern, and vaccinated people appear
12 to be infectious for shorter periods than unvaccinated people, according to the Centers for
13 Disease Control and Prevention¹,
14

15 **Whereas**, the US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has expressed that under the
16 ADA, Title VII, and other federal employment nondiscrimination laws, an employer may
17 require all employees physically entering the workplace to be vaccinated for COVID-19,
18 with certain accommodations², such as those afforded for students by Cornell at this time;
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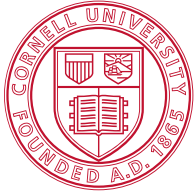
20 **Whereas**, the United States Food and Drug Administration (USFDA) has approved the Pfizer
21 COVID-19 vaccine (Comirnaty) for the prevention of COVID-19 disease in individuals
22 16 years of age and older³,
23

24 **Be it therefore resolved**, the University Assembly calls upon the President, Provost, Vice
25 President of Human Resources, and their designees to institute a requirement for all
26 faculty, staff and students to receive a COVID-19 vaccine;

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Delta Variant: What We Know About the Science.
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/variants/delta-variant.html> Accessed: August 12th, 2021

² U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. What You Should Know About COVID-19 and the ADA, the Rehabilitation Act, and Other EEO Laws. <https://www.eeoc.gov/wysk/what-you-should-know-about-covid-19-and-ada-rehabilitation-act-and-other-eeo-laws> Accessed: August 12th, 2021

³ United States Food and Drug Administration. FDA News Release: FDA Approves First COVID-19 Vaccine.
<https://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/fda-approves-first-covid-19-vaccine> Accessed: August 30th, 2021



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Resolved, this requirement is to be set up in the same way as the requirement for students to be vaccinated, i.e. the wording may be as follows:

“Cornell is requiring COVID-19 vaccination for all students, faculty and staff attending the Ithaca, Geneva, and Cornell Tech campuses for the fall 2021 semester. Medical and religious exemptions will be accommodated, but the expectation will be that our campuses and classrooms will overwhelmingly consist of vaccinated individuals, greatly reducing the risk of infection for all. Affiliates who do not comply will be subject to progressive enforcement measures.”

Resolved, the University shall consider offering paid time off for employees experiencing side effects after receiving the vaccine, in addition to the already offered paid time off to receive the vaccine;

Be it finally resolved, the University shall update the University Assembly with reasoning as to why this policy was not implemented sooner, when it will be implemented, or otherwise a reason for the rejection of this resolution.