

Cornell University University Assembly

Cornell University Assembly

Minutes of the February 7th, 2023 Meeting

4:45 pm – 6:15 pm

401 Physical Sciences Building | Zoom

I. Call to Order

- a. D. Cady called the meeting to order at 4:48 pm.
 - i. *Members Present:* G. Akkan, S. Aysola, M. Benda, R. Bensel, D. Cady, K. Cram, E. DeRosa, A. Haenlin-Mott, M. Heeney, I. Hewson, D. Howell, Y. Hua, A. Juan, J. Kruser, M. McEntee, B. Milles, V. Valencia, S. Williams
 - ii. *Members Absent:* D. Hiner, J. Sun
 - iii. *Also Present:* E. Kalweit, R. Platt, K. Weyble, J. Withers

II. Land Acknowledgement of the Gayogoho·noꝓ (Cayuga Nation)

- a. D. Cady stated the UA's acknowledgment of the Cayuga Nation.

III. Call for Late Additions to the Agenda

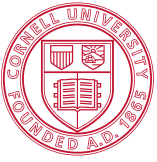
- a. D. Cady called for late additions to the agenda.
- b. S. Williams moved to add Resolution 5 to the agenda by unanimous consent.
 - i. M. Heeney seconded the motion.
 - ii. D. Cady called for questions regarding the addition of the Resolution to the Agenda.
 - iii. D. Cady asked whether there was dissent to adding Resolution 5: Dependable and Inclusive Supply of Pharmaceutical and Essential Nonprescription Supplies to the Agenda during Business of the Day.
 1. G. Akkan stated that she has another addition to the agenda. D. Cady stated that the Assembly would first consider adding Resolution 5 to the Agenda.
- c. G. Akkan stated that she had another addition to the agenda during open forum.
 - i. D. Cady stated that G. Akkan could bring up her topic during open forum.

IV. Approval of the Minutes from January 24th, 2023

- a. M. Heeney put forward a motion to approve the minutes from the January 24th meeting.

V. Open Forum

- a. Update on Campus Forum on Public Safety



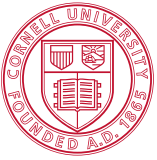
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- i. J. Withers stated that the Assembly asked for a campus forum on public safety in early February and that this was more difficult to translate to other Assemblies than she originally planned given the unique structure of the University Assembly. She stated that whereas the other three Assemblies have a committee for communications that would be able to publicize the event. She stated that the University Assembly can still put together a special meeting using the info list that would spread information about the meeting to those who receive Assembly agendas. She also stated that since many of the Assemblies have heard from David Honan already, it may be more helpful for him to give an update on the new division of Public Safety.
- ii. D. Howell stated that the Executive Committee and the Office of the Assemblies have discussed the Codes and Judicial Committee rewriting the University Assembly charter to establish a committee in charge of communications so that future Assemblies could hold meetings of this nature successfully.
- iii. D. Cady stated that the Assembly does not have the infrastructure or charter details that other Assemblies have, which means that moving forward with a public forum would require consideration of what this infrastructure could look like.
- iv. R. Bensel asked D. Howell and J. Withers whether the Assembly could borrow the boilerplate from other Assemblies for the University Assembly's use.
 1. J. Withers stated that she had not considered that, but that the governing documents for all four Assemblies should be considered to determine whether the Assembly has the authority to hold a forum in its responsibilities.
 2. R. Bensel stated that the Codes and Judicial Committee may be too busy to rewrite the charter at this time.
- v. D. Cady stated that the University Assembly does not have the infrastructure for communications that other Assemblies have and that they must recognize that they cannot hold forums or widely publicize their work as other Assemblies do because of this.
- vi. J. Kruser stated that in this case, a presentation from the University Assembly would be redundant given D. Honan's attendance at every other Assembly. He stated that the Assembly likely has not developed an infrastructure in this manner because these kinds of events are usually handled by constituent Assemblies.
- vii. D. Cady stated that he would like to table the issue for now.



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- viii. A. Juan stated that the Public Safety Advisory Committee has found a new Director for the Community Response Team and is thinking of a way to publicize this. He stated that if they could organize the event themselves, the Assembly could collaborate with them on this effort.
 - 1. D. Cady stated that this would fall into the precedent the Assembly used last year of co-sponsoring forums rather than initiating them themselves.
- b. G. Akkan stated that she would like to initiate a channel for funding a response to the earthquake in Turkey. She stated that as someone from Turkey, she is concerned about the rising death tolls and would like to initiate a response at the university level.
 - i. D. Cady thanked G. Akkan for sharing her thoughts and stated that while the University Assembly does not currently have a budget, the presence of other Assembly heads allows the Assembly to initiate these conversations.
 - ii. I. Hewson stated that this is not the first time that Cornell has been engaged with disaster and that a colleague in the microbiology department tried to initiate relief funding for Puerto Rico following its recent hurricane. He stated that there is a real potential to have something more formalized and it would be good to put in place a “CU Response System”, a framework for the University’s response for future disasters.
 - 1. D. Cady asked to clarify what he meant by a “CU Response System”.
 - 2. I. Hewson stated that if the Assembly can come up with a way to enable the Cornell community to develop a response with a nametag to it, this might give the university’s senior administration impetus for response.
 - iii. J. Kruser stated a reminder that Cornell has a university-wide association with United Way and that this may be a good way to find an established channel for funding relief in this manner.
 - iv. B. Milles stated that she is sorry for any potential loss G. Akkan faced from the earthquake and that she would like to partner with her in her efforts.
 - v. M. Heeney stated that there was a move to increase the number of PhD students from Ukraine last year following the events in the country. She asked whether this would be a method of aid for Turkey and stated that an initiative like this may be a good way for a university to express support.
 - vi. Y. Hua stated that working with United Way to identify a potential effort to be collaborative and that at the Cornell China Center, they participate in multiple donation efforts and run into a lot of customs-related issues outside of their expertise.



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1. G. Akkan stated that any students from Turkey would also need financial assistance and that it may be helpful to establish a connection between Cornell and universities in Turkey.
- vii. D. Cady stated that he encouraged Assembly members to do research on whichever approach they feel most inclined to and that they would consider adding the topic to the agenda of the next meeting.
- viii. G. Akkan thanked the Assembly for their support.

VI. Business of the Day

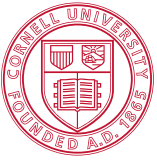
- a. D. Cady stated a reminder that President Pollack's visit to the University Assembly with Joel Malina, Vice President for University Relations, will be held on February 21st. He stated that the University Assembly uses a 15-15 model allocating 15 minutes for President's remarks and 15 minutes for a Q&A and that all pre-submitted questions are due by February 14th. He stated that questions could be sent to himself, the Executive Committee, or the Office of the Assemblies.
- b. R. Bensel presented updates from the Codes and Judicial Committee on [Resolution 3 – On Amending the University Assembly Bylaws](#) and [Resolution 4 – On Revision of Codes and Judiciary Committee Responsibilities](#).
 - i. R. Bensel stated that K. Weyble, a fellow member of the Codes and Judicial Committee, had a discussion with President Pollack on the day of this meeting in which they made a good deal of progress on both Resolutions. He stated that they set aside the discussion of whether President Pollack can rewrite the bylaws of the University Assembly at their meeting and focused on the Resolutions.
 - ii. R. Bensel stated that Resolution 3 called for President Pollack to respect the autonomy of the University Assembly in organizing its own procedures. He stated that her objections were to lines 7-10 and that she asked that the Assembly strike those clauses, which he thought was something the Assembly could do. He stated that it is his recommendation to the Committee to strike those clauses, keep everything else, and send the Resolution on.
 1. D. Cady asked why lines 7 and 8 are being omitted. R. Bensel stated that President Pollack's interpretation of the University Assembly Bylaws is that the Board of Trustees has the authority to do anything. He stated that this is a compromise that sets aside the issue and sets aside Resolution 6, as referenced in Resolution 3.
 - iii. J. Kruser stated that he had issues with the Resolution based on his understanding of how the university operates. He stated that he believed the



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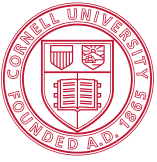
University Assembly should not support the Resolution because they do not have the authority mentioned in the Resolution to confer upon the President and that they rather serve as an advisory body representing its constituents. He stated that the Section 3.5 of the Reservation of Authority section of Charter read that “Nothing contained herein shall be construed to limit or constrain the President or other officers of the university in the exercise of their delegated authority” and that in order for Resolution 3 to be passed, the Charter must first be amended accordingly requiring the approval of the Board of Trustees.

1. R. Bensel stated that the Committee is suggesting striking the clause of the Resolution that mentioned this topic.
2. J. Kruser asked R. Bensel what the Assembly was hoping to gain from the Resolution.
3. R. Bensel stated that the Assembly’s bylaws do state that the President does not have the authority to intrude upon the Assembly’s authority to design its organization. He stated that the university bylaws do grant this authority and that trumps the section of the charter.
4. J. Kruser stated that the authority is also granted to the President in the Assembly’s charter.
5. R. Bensel stated that the Reservation of Authority is also contentious on what that section of the Charter includes. He stated that the university Charter does not contain language on committee jurisdictions or organization of the Assembly’s procedures and that this is instead contained in the Assembly’s own bylaws. He stated his emphasis of the point that with lines 7-10 struck, the President would sign the Resolution.
6. D. Cady asked whether R. Bensel would like to move to strike those clauses.
 - a. R. Bensel asked V. Valencia, a fellow Codes and Judicial Committee member, whether she would strike lines 7-10. She responded that she would strike lines 7-10.
 - b. R. Bensel asked K. Weyble, another fellow member of the Codes and Judicial Committee, whether he would strike lines 7-10. He responded that he would strike lines 7-10.
7. R. Bensel put forward a motion to amend from Resolution 3 – On Amending the University Assembly Bylaws to strike lines 7-10 by unanimous consent.



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- a. D. Cady asked whether there was any dissent to the initial amendment.
 - b. J. Kruser stated he would likely not vote for the Resolution even with the amendment and asked how abstaining would work with unanimous consent.
 - c. R. Bensel stated that the Assembly could abstain from unanimous consent.
 - d. D. Cady stated that in this case, it would be for an amendment, and it therefore would not matter. He accepted the motion to amend Resolution 3 to strike lines 7-10 by unanimous consent.
- iv. D. Howell asked what the Assembly gets from lines 13-14 and whether this would mean that future charter amendments that the Assembly passes would automatically get passed without presidential approval.
1. R. Bensel stated that this would not change that process, but that the President would have to have a really strong argument to veto future Assembly action to alter their procedures.
 2. D. Howell stated that she did not understand the goal of the Assembly with this Resolution given that the President did not seem to give a sufficient reason to veto Resolution 6.
 3. R. Bensel stated that the President's main objection to the Assembly's actions was that the President did not want the Assembly involved in the Student Code of Conduct.
 4. D. Howell stated that they were not changing the Student Code of Conduct, but that the Assembly cannot function under its current charter due to the current Student Code of Conduct.
 5. R. Bensel stated that the President's veto of Resolution 6 was based on the misunderstanding that the Assembly's intent to give students a place.
- v. A. Haenlin-Mott stated that while she understood that the Resolution was soft, it still accomplishes a lot and asked what the impact of not passing the Resolution would be.
1. R. Bensel stated that Resolution 3 was intended to allow Resolution 4 to update the jurisdiction of the Codes and Judicial Committee as planned and on updating jurisdictions in the future.
- vi. J. Kruser stated that he appreciates R. Bensel's efforts in working with the President on this, but that the best avenue for establishing University Assembly autonomy in altering its own procedures can be found in Article 2,



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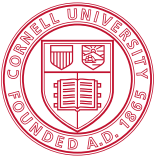
Section 209 of the Graduate and Professional Student Assembly charter, which carves out this autonomy.

1. R. Bensel stated that he agreed with J. Kruser and that by enacting this Resolution, the Assembly would be able to feasibly begin a change in the charter. He stated that the process of remodeling the charter and bylaws to correct past mistakes require the consent of the University Assembly and that he is in favor of doing so in the long run.
- vii. D. Cady stated J. Kruser's comment that the Assembly could simultaneously remove gendered language from the charter if they were to revise it and that the Assembly should now move to discuss Resolution 4.
- viii. R. Bensel stated that the President expressed issues with lines 7-11 and that Vice President Malina would be sending those who met with the President a list of suggestions to modify the Resolution accordingly.
- ix. R. Bensel put forward a motion to delay voting on Resolution 4 – On Revision of Codes and Judiciary Committee Responsibilities to the February 21st meeting to allow the Committee to reconsider the Resolution by unanimous consent. S. Williams seconded the motion, and no dissent was expressed by the Assembly.
- x. D. Howell asked whether the Assembly would vote on Resolution 3 at this meeting. D. Cady stated he wanted to take J. Kruser's question before moving on to voting.
- xi. J. Kruser put forward a motion to amend the resolution to remove the "on the Ithaca campus..." clause from line 22.
 1. D. Cady asked whether J. Kruser was putting forward a motion to amend or suggesting an amendment.
 2. J. Kruser stated that he was putting forward a motion to amend the Resolution.
 3. R. Bensel stated that the Committee had a lot of problems carving out the jurisdiction of the Assembly, citing that the Assembly does not have jurisdiction of Weill Cornell Medicine as an example.
 4. J. Kruser stated that being less specific would be better able to capture the constituency without excluding members.
 5. R. Bensel stated that he would support the amendment with the understanding that if the Committee comes up with better wording, J. Kruser would be for the amendment.
 6. J. Kruser stated that he agreed and rescinded the amendment.



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- xii. R. Bensel stated that J. Kruser is correct in his comment on revising the charter to remove gendered language. He stated that the revision of the charter would include a number of changes that the Assembly needs to sincerely consider to make the Assembly what they want it to be under its charter and bylaws.
- xiii. R. Bensel put forward a motion to end the debate on Resolution 3 and move into voting. S. Williams seconded the motion.
 - 1. By a vote of 9-4-3, the Assembly passed Resolution 3 – On Amending the University Assembly Bylaws.
- c. D. Cady introduced Resolution 5: Dependable and Inclusive Supply of Pharmaceutical and Essential Nonprescription Supplies to the Assembly.
 - i. S. Williams stated that George Washington University has recently initiated a program that provides students with better access to medical resources. She stated that the Resolution would support the creation of a pilot program through Cornell Health’s Pharmacy for multi-unit vending machines carrying essential nonprescription medicine including emergency contraception to increase health accessibility and health equity on campus.
 - 1. D. Cady stated that S. Williams did not need to read the Resolution to the Assembly.
 - ii. M. Heeney stated that the University has the infrastructure for students to have access to these necessities and that it is not a huge ask to the University to support the Resolution. She stated that there was a ton of research done that measured student support.
 - 1. D. Cady stated that he seconded the point that students want this kind of access.
 - iii. S. Williams stated that she wanted to emphasize and thank the many other contributors from the Student Assembly.
 - iv. A. Juan stated that it is great that the Resolution lays out plans for using pre-existing vending machines on campus and put forward a motion to amend the Resolution to read “University Assembly” instead of “Student Assembly” by unanimous consent.
 - 1. S. Williams seconded the motion, and no dissent was expressed by the Assembly.
 - v. S. Williams put forward a motion to amend line 139 to read “Student Assembly Rep and Undergraduate Rep, University Assembly”.
 - 1. M. Heeney seconded the motion, and no dissent was expressed by the Assembly.



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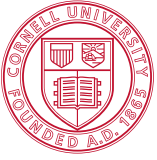
- vi. D. Howell stated a comment that line 111 should read “over-the-counter non-prescription drugs” instead of “over-the-counter prescription drugs”.
 - 1. M. Heeney seconded the motion, and no dissent was expressed by the Assembly.
- vii. D. Cady stated that he encouraged the Assembly to take a more thorough look at the Resolution until voting at the February 21st meeting.

VII. Assembly Reports

- a. Student Assembly
 - i. V. Valencia stated that the Student Assembly went over a resolution amending the charter that moves the Orientation Committee to be housed under the Tatkon Center and that they will discuss Resolution 5 at their February 9th meeting.
- b. Graduate and Professional Student Assembly
 - i. K. Cram stated that M. Heeney is now the Assembly’s Vice President for Communications and that the Assembly is preparing for the President’s visit, among numerous other future guest speakers.
- c. Employee Assembly
 - i. A. Haenlin-Mott stated that the President’s Address to Staff occurred on Monday, February 6th, which had 103 in-person and 113 online attendees. She stated that many events are scheduled for the Employee Assembly to close their term, including an event with Christine Lovely, Chief Human Resources Officer, at the end of April.
- d. Faculty Senate
 - i. E. DeRosa stated that the Faculty Senate will meet again on February 15th and that she had no further updates.

VIII. Committee Reports

- a. Executive Committee
 - i. D. Howell stated that the minutes from the last Executive Committee meeting have been uploaded to the Box drive.
- b. Codes and Judicial Committee
 - i. R. Bensel stated that the Codes and Judicial Committee has not met since the Assembly’s last meeting.
 - ii. D. Cady stated his encouragement for any Assembly member to get involved with the Codes and Judicial Committee.
- c. Campus Welfare Committee



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- i. A. Juan stated that the Campus Welfare Committee has settled on a meeting time and that they are ready to begin their work.
 - d. Campus Committee on Infrastructure, Technology, and the Environment
 - i. D. Cady stated that D. Hiner stepped down from his position as Chair of the Committee and this has become an open position for the University Assembly to fill.

IX. Liaison Reports

- a. D. Cady stated that a liaison position is open for the Campus Planning Committee for the University Assembly to fill.

X. Adjournment

- a. D. Cady stated that he gave the wrong number for the vote on Resolution 3 and that it was by a vote of 9-4-5 that the Resolution passed.
- b. A. Haenlin Mott stated that she serves on the Campus Planning Committee as the Employee Assembly liaison and that it is a great committee of which to be a member.
- c. B. Milles put forward a motion to adjourn the meeting. R. Bensel seconded the motion.

This meeting was adjourned at 6:12 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

P.J. Brown

Clerk of the Assembly