

Minutes
University Assembly
February 14th, 2017
4:30pm – 6:00pm
401 Physical Sciences Building

- I. Call to Order
 - a. G. Kaufman called the meeting to order at 4:30PM.
 - b. *Present:* E. Baptist, J. Berger, L. Copman, M. de Roos, K Fitch, M. Hatch, R. Herz, R. Howarth, G. Kaufman, J. Kruser, M. McBride, M. Munasinghe, S. Park, N. Rogers, C. Van Loan, E. Winarto
 - c. *Absent:* E. Loew, U. Smith
 - d. *Others present:* D. Barbaria, V. Bhaya, L. Falkson, C. Walcott
 - e. Call for Late Additions to the Agenda
 - i. J. Berger was absent but had requested G. Kaufman to move into Executive session after the meeting. The motion was seconded, and the Agenda was **amended**.
- II. Approval of Minutes
 - a. 1.31.2017 Meeting Minutes
 - i. M. de Roos motioned to amend a typo in her name. The Minutes were **amended** to reflect the change.
- III. Assembly Reports
 - a. EA Chair
 - i. There were no updates.
 - b. SA President
 - i. M. McBride said the SA is preparing for elections and getting the Elections Committee fully staffed.
 - c. Dean of Faculty
 - i. C. Van Loan said the Faculty Senate had a discussion about the Arts College curriculum.
 - ii. He said that the Academic Calendar Committee will take a survey and deliberate possible academic calendars.
 - d. GPSA President
 - i. M. Munasinghe said the GPSA passed Resolution 8 last week, regarding the recent executive order on immigration.
 - ii. This week, they passed Resolution 9 which makes a commitment to work with students to complete their degrees if they cannot return to the country.
 - iii. The GPSA also discussed Resolution 10 regarding workers' compensation coverage and fair medical leaves and disability coverage.
 - iv. Resolution 12 is about allocating money to Advancing Science and Policy's trip to D.C. for the March of Science.

IV. Committee Reports

a. Executive Committee

- i. G. Kaufman said the Transportation Hearing and Appeals Board is not defunct so they will begin appointing members.
- ii. M. McBride asked if the Executive Committee could gather information on the Budget Committee, especially because the tuition keeps increasing.

b. Campus Welfare Committee

- i. U. Smith was not present.

c. Campus Infrastructure Committee

- i. J. Kruser said the CIC is reviewing a potential resolution about web accessibility. They had some issues about members being involved because of distance.

d. Codes and Judicial Committee

- i. The CJC is going to be discussing the definition of “student” under the Campus Code of Conduct, as well as transcript notations and the staffing of the University Hearing and Review Boards.

V. Liaison Reports

a. Policy Advisory Group

- i. E. Winarto said that PAG has not met since last time. Their next meeting is March 20.

b. Student Health Advisory Committee

- i. J. Berger was not present.

c. Campus Planning Committee

- i. R. Howarth said the CPC discussed a report on new solar power that Cornell wants to put out.
 1. M. Hatch said one of the sites are off of Dodge Road.
 2. R. Howarth said that Cornell will not be using the solar energy, but will sell the new facility. He said it is a step in the right direction.
- ii. R. Howarth said the CPC also discussed how others view Cornell’s campus as well as gateways to campus.
- iii. The CPC also discussed an outdoor art project that will be near Human Ecology.
- iv. M. Hatch said the CPC discussed the congestion of East Ave, and the solution will likely be widening the roads.

VI. Business of the Day

a. Office of the University Ombudsman

- i. L. Falkson said the Ombudsman Office is made up of C. Walcott, herself, and Helen Lang.
- ii. She said the Ombudsman Office deals with issues ranging from transportation issues to being dismissed from the University. They engage in problem solving.
- iii. Staff issues include micro-aggression and new supervisors, while student issues include questions about exam policies, unfair fees, and difficulties with respect to advisors.

- iv. L. Falkson said the Ombudsman helps visitors solve problems, find options, pros and cons to the options, and resources.
- v. They are a neutral place. They are not decision makers, do not provide legal advice, and do not conduct formal investigations. The Ombudsman Office is confidential, informal, neutral, and independent.
- vi. Over the years, the ombudsman assists between 200-400 visitors.
 - 1. This past year, there was a slightly lower number of visitors as compared to last year, but an increase in number of undergraduate students visiting.
- vii. C. Walcott said one big issue is getting the word out. Some weeks, the office is empty, while other weeks it is very busy.
- viii. R. Herz asked if the Ombudsman performs check-ups on students after helping them.
 - 1. L. Falkson said they tell students that they do not have to come back but that they are free to come back more than once. She said they not keep records, but they sometimes check up on students who are at risk.
- ix. M. McBride asked if the Ombudsman has ever been subpoenaed or released information due to imminent risk.
 - 1. L. Falkson said they have never been subpoenaed in her years here.
 - 2. C. Walcott said regarding imminent risk, they make sure the risk is addressed, for example, sexual predation. They would want to make sure that is reported to the appropriate authorities and investigated.
- x. M. Hatch asked if the UA could take some action to reformulate the role of the Ombudsman to investigate and attempt to resolve complaints and problems.
 - 1. C. Walcott said they give council and advice on how to proceed, but that they do not intervene.
 - 2. L. Falkson said the Ombudsman Office is a personal conversation. She said those are things to think about.
- xi. L. Copman said she is wondering if the Ombudsman has a mechanism to do an anonymous survey for visitors of the office as well as resources that are missing. She said she thinks it is time for the Ombudsman to do an external evaluation based on the Annual Report.
 - 1. L. Falkson thanked her for her points.
- xii. N. Rogers asked if visitors could meet outside of office hours, as well as how well the Ombudsman Office is doing relative to other schools.
 - 1. L. Falkson said that their size of annual visitors is similar to other Ombudsman Offices.
 - 2. C. Walcott said they are willing to meet at any time and they are happy to be flexible about times.
- xiii. J. Kruser said he made use of the Ombudsman's Office early in his career. He said the office provided him with valuable information that he needed to gather when he was new to the University.

- VII. Late Additions to the Agenda
 - a. An Executive Session regarding Confidentiality was called.
- VIII. Adjournment
 - a. The meeting was adjourned at 6:00PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Vishal Bhaya
Assemblies Clerk