

Charter

Cornell University Assembly

As amended on April 25, 2023

PREAMBLE

After consultation with members of the campus community, and to effect more extensive involvement in campus governance by the representatives of the constituent assemblies of faculty, students, and employees, the President, through the authority granted them by the Board of Trustees, hereby establishes this Charter for the University Assembly of Cornell University.

ARTICLE I: NAME AND DEFINITIONS

Section 1: Name

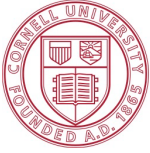
The name of this organization is the University Assembly of Cornell University, hereinafter referred to as the Assembly or the UA.

Section 2: Definitions

- A. **Campus Community:** The students, staff, and faculty of the Ithaca and Geneva campuses of the university.
- B. **Constituency:** A constituency is a population represented by one of the constituent assemblies.
- C. **Constituent Assembly:** Any one of the following campus governance units of the university may be considered a constituent assembly: Student Assembly, Graduate and Professional Student Assembly, Employee Assembly, or Faculty Senate.
- D. **Session of the Assembly:** A session of the Assembly begins June 1 and continues through May 31 of the next year.

ARTICLE II: OBJECT

The object of the Assembly is to improve and sustain the involvement of the campus community in the governance of campus affairs affecting the broad campus community by establishing open, effective, and efficient channels of communication between and amongst the community and university administration.



39 **ARTICLE III: AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITY**

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41 The Assembly, by delegation from the President, has the following authority and responsibilities:

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43 **Section 3.1: Authority in policy development**

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45 The Assembly may examine, on its own initiative, matters which involve the interests or concern the
46 welfare of a substantial segment of the campus community and may make recommendations or
47 resolutions thereon to the President or to other appropriate officers or decision-making bodies of the
48 University. Such matters include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- 49 common standards of conduct,
- 50 campus planning,
- 51 diversity and inclusion,
- 52 environmental impact and sustainability,
- 53 family support,
- 54 health services,
- 55 information technology,
- 56 public safety, and,
- 57 transportation and commuter policies.

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59 **Sub-Section 3.1.1: Assembly responsibilities**

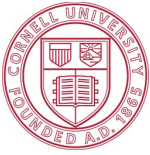
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61 To the extent practical and appropriate, the Assembly shall provide public notice of either the
62 terms or the substance of each proposed recommendation or resolution and a meaningful
63 opportunity for community participation in the development of such recommendations and
64 resolutions. Such opportunity may include:

- 65 A. a comment period of at least one calendar month during which any member of the
66 community may submit written information or opinions for the Assembly's
67 consideration,
- 68 B. at least one public hearing during which any member of the community may submit
69 information or opinions to the Assembly in person for its consideration, and,
- 70 C. solicitation of pertinent information from appropriate University officials.

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72 **Sub-Section 3.1.2: Recipient responsibilities**

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74 A. To the extent practical and appropriate, University officials will provide pertinent
75 information as the Assembly requests.
- 76 B. Recipients of recommendations and resolutions shall reply in writing, either accepting
77 them or explaining why they will not be implemented. When circumstances prevent
78 recipients' response within one calendar month, they shall inform the Assembly of
79 such circumstances and a date by which it can expect a response.

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81 **Sub-Section 3.1.3: Policies and actions subject to Assembly review**

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- 83 A. Responsible University officials shall consider designating the Assembly, or one of its
84 constituent assemblies, as a stakeholder in each impact statement, prepared under the
85 terms of University Policy 4.1, Policy on the Formulation and Issuance of University
86 Policies, which involves the interests or concerns the welfare of a substantial segment
87 of the campus community. If the Assembly is not identified as a stakeholder, the
88 impact statement should incorporate a brief explanation for this determination.
- 89 B. Where circumstances permit, the Assembly shall be allowed a period of at least one
90 calendar month to review and respond to proposed changes of the following policies:
- 91 a. the Rules and Regulations for the Control of Traffic and Parking on the
92 Grounds of Cornell University.
- 93 b. Officers of the university should consider consultation with the Assembly
94 before implementing other significant actions or policies which involve the
95 interests or concern the welfare of a substantial segment of the campus
96 community.
- 97 C. The Assembly may review or recommend specific policies and actions on its own
98 initiative or in response to a petition from members of its constituencies.
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100 **Section 3.2: Appointments to certain administrative offices**

101 **Sub-Section 3.2.1: Confirmation of certain Presidential appointments**

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104 The Assembly must approve each appointment or reappointment by the President of the
105 University of the University Ombuds. In the event of a vacancy in the office of the University
106 Ombuds, the President or a designee will appoint a search committee to which the Assembly
107 may appoint a representative. The University Ombuds may serve any number of consecutive
108 terms; however, no single term may exceed two years.

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110 **Section 3.3: Internal operations**

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112 The Assembly has authority in matters concerning its internal operation and maintenance, including
113 provisions for the creation of bylaws and procedures.

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115 **Section 3.4: Establish committees**

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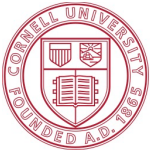
117 The Assembly establishes standing committees and ad hoc committees as needed to perform its
118 duties.

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120 **Section 3.5: Reservation of authority**

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122 Nothing contained herein shall be construed to limit or constrain the President or other officers of



123 the
124 University in the exercise of their delegated authority. The Assembly shall also defer to the advisory
125 authority of the Faculty Senate and the college and school faculties regarding matters of educational
126 policy within their purview pursuant to the University Bylaws.
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128 **ARTICLE IV: MEMBERSHIP**

129 **Section 4.1: Composition and terms**

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- 132 A. The total membership of the Assembly shall consist of twenty voting members: five
133 Undergraduate Student Representatives, five Graduate and Professional Student
134 Representatives, five Employee Representatives, and five Faculty Representatives.
 - 135 B. Appointments to the Assembly will be made before the last regularly scheduled meeting of
136 the current session of the Assembly. Seats left unfilled after this time will be considered
137 vacant. Terms shall be served for a duration determined by the constituent assembly at the
138 time of their appointment, and may be for one or two years concurrently.
 - 139 a. For a given session of the Assembly, the Student Assembly, Graduate and Professional
140 Student Assembly, Employee Assembly, and Faculty Senate may appoint four
141 members from their respective constituencies to terms concurrent with that session of
142 the Assembly. Excluding the presiding officers, at least two of the appointed members
143 from each constituent assembly at a given time must also serve concurrently as
144 members of the constituent assembly responsible for their appointment.
 - 145 b. The presiding officer of each constituent assembly serves as a voting member of the
146 Assembly concurrent with their term of office.
 - 147 c. Each constituent assembly may appoint members to the Assembly in the manner of its
148 choosing and may fill vacancies as they occur with members who will serve the balance
149 of the term of the vacated member.
 - 150 C. The Assembly may provide in its bylaws for appointment of additional non-voting members to
151 serve ex-officio.
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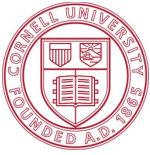
153 **Section 4.2: Exclusion**

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155 A voting member of the Assembly may not serve concurrently as a member of the Board of Trustees
156 of the University.
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158 **Section 4.3: Removal**

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160 Any member may be removed by affirmative vote of two-thirds of seated members of the assembly
161 and consent of the constituent assembly responsible for his or her appointment.
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163 **ARTICLE V: OFFICERS**



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Section 5.1: Positions

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The officers of the Assembly are the Chair, the Executive Vice Chair, and the Vice Chair for Operations, who must be of different constituencies. Additionally, a ranking member must be appointed for each constituency not otherwise represented by the officers of the Assembly.

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Section 5.2: Terms

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The term for each office is June 1 to May 31.

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Section 5.3: Election

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- A. The organizational meeting for the next session of the Assembly shall occur after the adjournment of the final regularly scheduled meeting of the current session of the Assembly and prior to the beginning of the next session of the Assembly to ensure that the Assembly may organize before the next session begins.
- B. At the organizational meeting of the Assembly or at the first meeting after a vacancy arises, the Assembly must elect officers from its membership by secret ballot in closed session. The highest ranking non-returning member of the current session of the Assembly shall preside over the election of the Chair for following session. Where no such person exists, the longest consecutively serving member of the Assembly shall preside over the election of the Chair.
- C. Elections will utilize the exhaustive ballot system: until a candidate receives a majority of votes cast, the candidate receiving the fewest number of votes will be removed from the ballot and another round of votes cast.
 - a. If, after the floor is closed for nominations for specific officer position, only one candidate is nominated to be an officer, he or she will be seated immediately, unless a member of the Assembly opposes the nomination.
- D. As soon as possible after the officers have been elected, seated members of the constituency not represented by the officers must caucus and elect, following the same procedure as provided for the election of officers, a ranking member to represent their constituency.

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Section 5.4: Responsibilities

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Sub-Section 5.4.1: Responsibilities of the Chair

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The Chair:

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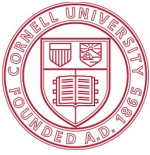
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- A. presides over meetings of the Assembly;
- B. serves as the spokesperson of the Assembly; and,
- C. transmits any formal recommendations, resolutions, or reports issued by the Assembly to the appropriate recipients.



206 **Sub-Section 5.4.2: Responsibilities of the Executive Vice Chair**

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208 The Executive Vice Chair:

- 209 A. presides over meetings of the Executive Board;
- 210 B. receives and tracks reports, resolutions, and other items of business from members of
211 the Assembly and the chairs of its committees;
- 212 C. prepares and distributes the agenda for each meeting of the Assembly to all members
213 of the Assembly and to the Office of the Assemblies at least twenty four hours prior to
214 the meeting;
- 215 D. assists the Chair in compiling reports and materials as needed; and,
- 216 E. fulfills the responsibilities of the Chair in his or her absence or if the position is
217 vacant.
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219 **Sub-Section 5.4.3: Responsibilities of the Vice Chair for Operations**

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221 The Vice Chair for Operations:

- 222 A. reviews and approves expenses under the discretionary budget of the Assembly;
- 223 B. monitors the activities of each committee of the Assembly;
- 224 C. assures that each committee of the Assembly is properly staffed, consulting with the
225 Executive Board, the committee's chair, and the appropriate officers of the constituent
226 assemblies as needed; and,
- 227 D. fulfills the responsibilities of the Executive Vice Chair in his or her absence or if the
228 position is vacant.
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230 **Sub-Section 5.4.4: Responsibilities of the Ranking Member**

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232 The ranking member:

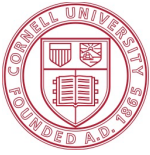
- 233 A. serves as a voting member of the Executive Board;
- 234 B. represents the interest of his or her constituency in meetings of the Executive Board;
235 and,
- 236 C. resigns from office in the event that another member of his or her constituency
237 becomes an officer of the Assembly.
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239 **Section 5.5: Removal**

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241 The Assembly may remove any of its officers upon an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the seated
242 membership of the Assembly. Immediately thereafter, a new officer must be elected from among the
243 voting members of the Assembly for the balance of the term of office.
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245 **ARTICLE VI: EXECUTIVE BOARD**

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247 The Assembly has an Executive Board (the Board) to manage its daily operation and to provide
248 continuity of operation outside of the academic year.

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250 **Section 6.1: Membership**

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252 The Board consists of the officers and the ranking members of the Assembly.
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254 **Section 6.2: Authority during the academic year**

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256 The Board:
257 A. prepares the agenda for each meeting of the Assembly;
258 B. calls special meetings of the Assembly as needed; and,
259 C. removes members from committees in cases where behavior or absence disrupts the sound
260 operation of those committees.
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262 **Section 6.3: Emergency Authority**

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264 During periods between academic semesters and during university holidays, the Board may
265 additionally:
266 A. speak on behalf of the Assembly on matters where, in the opinion of the Board, a delay would
267 prevent effective exercise of the Assembly's authority or hinder the efficient operation of
268 institutional functions for which the Assembly is responsible; and,
269 B. convene any ad hoc committees as needed to fulfill its responsibilities.
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271 In taking any such actions, the Board must make a reasonable effort to involve all of its members,
272 including those absent from campus, and to consult the chairs of any committees that the Assembly
273 would ordinarily consult. The Chair must report such actions, including the results of any votes, at
274 the first meeting of the Assembly that occurs after the actions are taken.
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276 **ARTICLE VII: CHANGES IN THE CHARTER AND**
277 **BYLAWS OF THE UNIVERSITY ASSEMBLY**

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279 A. An affirmative vote of a majority of the seated members of the Assembly is required to amend
280 the Bylaws of the Assembly, and an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the seated membership is
281 required to amend the Charter.
282 B. Proposed amendments to the Bylaws or the Charter of the Assembly must be publicized at
283 least one week before any meeting where they are discussed or adopted. The Assembly may
284 not adopt amendments to the Charter at the same meeting where they are introduced or
285 modified, and the President of the University must approve such amendments before they
286 may be implemented.