

## EA R6: Reducing Community Violence and Hate through Staff Involvement and Support

**Abstract:** In response to recent cases of violence and discrimination on campus, the EA makes this statement in opposition and calls on the administration to take specific actions to challenge institutional inequity.

**Sponsored by:** Jeramy Kruser, Executive Vice Chair, Research, Tech Transfer & Information Technology Representative

**Reviewed by:** Executive Committee, 09/18/2017

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**Whereas,** over the past year there has been an increase in hate-based incidents reported on college campuses across the country; and

**Whereas,** the data collected by Cornell's Department of Inclusion and Workforce Diversity shows that Cornell has experienced a similarly steep increase in reports of bias; and the current resource centers tasked with addressing issues of bias are underfunded and understaffed.

**Whereas,** on September 6, 2017 it was reported that students from Zeta Psi, a Cornell University fraternity, shouted "build a wall" and "let's build a wall around the LLC" at the Latino Living Center; and

**Whereas,** on September 15, 2017 students from the Chi Chapter of Psi Upsilon, a fraternity no longer affiliated with Cornell University, allegedly used racial slurs against a Black Cornell student and violently assaulted him; and

**Whereas,** later that same day on September 15, 2017, two or more Cornell students were captured on video using racial slurs against another student; and

**Whereas,** Policy 6.4 states that "Cornell University is committed to providing a safe, inclusive, and respectful learning, living, and working environment for its students, faculty, and staff members"; and

**Whereas,** it is a violation of the Campus Code of Conduct to "harass another person...by acting toward that person in a manner that is by objective measure threatening, abusive, or severely annoying and that is beyond the scope of free speech;" and

**Whereas,** it is a violation of the Campus Code of Conduct to "assault or cause any physical injury to another person on the basis of disability, ethnicity, gender, national origin, race, religion, or sexual orientation or affectional preference;" and

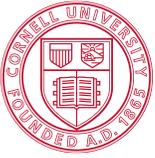
**Whereas,** the standard of evidence employed by Policy 6.4 and the Code of Conduct are inconsistent; and

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## Cornell University Employee Assembly

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42 **Whereas**, pursuant to New York State Penal Law Article 485, hate crimes “do more than threaten  
43 the safety and welfare of all citizens” because they “inflict on victims incalculable physical and  
44 emotional damage and tear at the very fabric of free society,” “send a powerful message of  
45 intolerance and discrimination,” and “disrupt entire communities and vitiate the civility that is  
46 essential to healthy democratic processes;” and  
47
- 48 **Whereas**, bias, discrimination, and hate crimes, by their nature, affect the fabric of the Cornell  
49 community, prevent the fulfillment of Cornell’s motto “I would found an institution where any  
50 person can find instruction in any study,” and  
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- 52 **Whereas**, these acts are contrary to all that we, the representative employees of Cornell, stand for;  
53 and  
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- 55 **Whereas**, these recent events place the onus on Cornell University to establish and justify its  
56 members’ trust in our community.  
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- 58 **Be it therefore resolved**, the Cornell Employee Assembly unequivocally condemns these and other  
59 violent, racist, and bigoted actions that deny our staff, faculty, and students the right to physical  
60 safety and the right to express themselves with the expectation of mutual respect from their peers and  
61 colleagues; and  
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- 63 **Be it further resolved**, the administration will include staff, in a regular and meaningful way, in  
64 strategic diversity and inclusion planning efforts across the university.  
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- 66 **Be it further resolved**, the administration will develop a more effective institutional accountability  
67 structure for diversity and inclusion efforts across the university by:
- 68 • considering the creation of a central office focused on institutional equity and the hiring of an  
69 executive to oversee initiatives for all populations; and
  - 70 • defining the roles of the University Diversity Officers, or implementing a more effective  
71 administrative model and more thorough accountability measures for progress on initiatives  
72 under Cornell’s framework.  
73
- 74 **Be it further resolved**, the administration will bolster its investment in staff resources by:
- 75 • increasing investment in the staffing needs of the various resource centers and providing  
76 long-term funding for additional full-time positions; and
  - 77 • investing in staff to support employees and faculty of various identities in the workplace, and  
78 forming strategic partnerships with local agencies to support employees and faculty living in  
79 the Ithaca and surrounding areas.  
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**Cornell University**  
**Employee Assembly**

81 **Be it further resolved**, the administration in collaboration with representative staff, will invest in the  
82 ongoing education and development of staff and enhance initiatives that build interpersonal skills and  
83 promote mutual understanding by:

- 84 • developing, on an as-needed basis, programming that is responsive to current events and  
85 provides a space for staff to engage in dialogue and collectively process and understand why  
86 particular actions take place; and
- 87 • developing and implementing an ongoing, longitudinal education model for employees that  
88 builds awareness of identities, examines the impact of identity on others in the workplace,  
89 and provides opportunities for practical application of inclusive strategies in the workplace  
90 for the entirety of the employee lifecycle; and
- 91 • increasing the frequency of intentional, informal interactions between staff to foster trust,  
92 meaningful connections, and innovation.

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94 **Be it finally resolved**, the administration will engage the staff community in discussing and defining  
95 any changes to policies around freedom of speech, including:

- 96 • clarifying the limits of free speech in the context of the workplace, particularly the ability to  
97 participate in faculty and student-led demonstrations or for staff to voice their own concerns  
98 and opinions in the workplace; and
- 99 • working with the University Assembly to institute a consistent standard of evidence for bias-  
100 related/hate crimes under the Campus Code of Conduct and Policy 6.4, and clearly  
101 articulating the interaction with and role of HR in assisting in the resolution of these matters.

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103 **Adopted by Vote of the Assembly (19-1-0), January 16, 2018,**

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105 **Respectfully Submitted,**

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107 *Jeremy Kruser, Executive Vice Chair and Research, Tech Transfer & Information Technology Representative*