



Cornell University
Graduate and Professional
Student Assembly

**GPSA Resolution #4: Condemning Hate Crimes and Hate Speech,
and Supporting Students**

Abstract: This resolution affirms the Graduate and Professional Student Assembly's solidarity with the Cornell community and requests the appropriate considerations and additions to the Campus Code of Conduct through the University Assembly Codes and Judicial Committee.

Sponsored by: Jesse Goldberg, GPSA Arts & Humanities Voting Member

Whereas, over the past year there has been an increase in hate-based incidents on college campuses across the country;¹ and

Whereas, on September 6, 2017 one or more Zeta Psi member(s) shouted "build a wall around the LLC" at the Latino Living Center; and

Whereas, on September 15, 2017 multiple alleged Psi Upsilon members, a fraternity no longer affiliated with Cornell University, used racist slurs against a Black Cornell student and violently assaulted him and other members of his fraternity on their own property; and

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

Whereas, all of these incidents appear to be clear violations of the Campus Code of Conduct, should the allegations prove true, as 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," or
- "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;"² and

Whereas, the Ithaca Police have arrested John P.A. Greenwood and charged him with one count of assault in the third degree; and

¹ <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/01/opinion/hate-crime-lebron-james-college-park-murder.html?mcubz=0>

² Cornell Campus Code of Conduct, II.A.1.c-d: <https://www.dfa.cornell.edu/sites/default/files/policy/CCC.pdf>



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Whereas, the Ithaca police are investigating the events of September 15 as a possible hate crime;³
and

Whereas, pursuant to New York State Penal Law Article 485, hate crimes “do more than threaten the safety and welfare of all citizens” because they “inflict on victims incalculable physical and emotional damage and tear at the very fabric of free society,” “send a powerful message of intolerance and discrimination” and “disrupt entire communities and vitiate the civility that is essential to healthy democratic processes;”⁴ and

Whereas, bias, discrimination, and hate crimes, by their nature, affect the fabric of the Cornell community, prevent the fulfillment of and are deeply antithetical to Cornell’s motto “I would found an institution where any person can find instruction in any study;” an

Whereas, these recent events place the onus on Cornell University to establish and justify its members’ trust in our community; and

Whereas, we, the Graduate and Professional Student Assembly, acknowledge that violence is not merely interpersonal, but also institutional and historic; and

Whereas, on Thursday September 21, the Student Assembly passed Resolution 8;⁵

Be it therefore resolved, that the GPSA joins the SA in calling on all members of the Cornell community to join us in this condemnation; and

Be it further resolved, that the GPSA joins the Student Assembly in charging all members of the Cornell community to consider how best to heal these harms, and how best to accord all members of our community the equal dignity and respect due to them as our peers; and

Be it further resolved, that the GPSA unequivocally supports all of the demands brought to the university administration by Black Students United⁶ and La Asociación Latina ; and

³ <https://ithacavoice.com/2017/09/ithaca-police-investigate-possible-racially-motivated-assault-collegetown/>

⁴ <http://ypdcrime.com/penal.law/article485.htm>

⁵ [SA Resolution 8 website link once uploaded]

⁶

<http://cornellsun.com/2017/09/20/hundreds-of-cornell-students-occupy-willard-straight-hall-after-delivering-demands-to-university/>

⁷

<https://thetab.com/us/cornell/2017/09/07/build-the-wall-comments-heard-outside-cornells-latino-living-center-5480>



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Be it further resolved, that the GPSA calls on the University Assembly Codes and Judicial Committee to expedite consideration of Campus Code of Conduct changes requested by Black Students United and La Asociación Latina by the end of the Fall 2017 semester; and

Be it further resolved, that the GPSA calls on Cornell University to support its students by committing to never again recognizing a chapter of Psi Upsilon on campus; and

Be it finally resolved, that the GPSA calls on the University Assembly Codes and Judicial Committee to add “documentation status” to the Code of Conduct Title III, Article II, Section A, Subsection E.

Respectfully Submitted,

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