



Cornell University
Student Assembly

Cornell University Student Assembly

Minutes of the Thursday, September 2, 2021 Meeting

4:45 PM – 6:30 PM

Memorial Room, Willard Straight Hall

I. Call to Order & Roll Call

- a. A. Ononye called the meeting to order at (EST).
- b. Roll Call
 - i. *Members Present:* A. Williams, A. Lampert, A. Gleiberman, A. Ononye, C. Tempelman, C. Leon, D. Ilango, D. Eisman, D. Cady, E. Bentolila, E. Yan, H. Wade, J. Bansah, J. Jiang, J. Mullen, K. Santacruz, L. Smith, M. Louis, M. Baker, N. Overton, N. Reddy, P. Gronemeyer, V. Valencia
 - ii. *Members Absent:* K. Thakkar, Y. Logan

II. Land Acknowledgement of the Gayogohó:nq̓ (Cayuga Nation)

- a. Cornell University is located on the traditional homelands of the Gayogohó:nq̓ (the Cayuga Nation). The Gayogohó:nq̓ are members of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, an alliance of six sovereign Nations with a historic and contemporary presence on this land. The Confederacy precedes the establishment of Cornell University, New York State, and the United States of America. We acknowledge the painful history of Gayogohó:nq̓ dispossession and honor the ongoing connection of the Gayogohó:nq̓ people, past and present, to these lands and waters.

III. Approval of the Minutes

- a. August 26, 2021
 - i. Motion to approve the August 26th minutes – **approved** by Unanimous Consent

IV. Open Microphone

- a. Leadership from Cornell EARS announced that it is back and focused on peer mentoring for supporting students. It is now more informal and there is no peer counseling, for more information visit the Cornell EARS website.
- b. P. Mehler stated that there will be freshman election information sessions on Sept. 9th at 7:30pm in RPCC and Sept. 10th at 5pm in Room 402 in Willard Straight.
 - i. L. Smith asked if the SA meeting on Sept. 9th will be at RPCC.
 1. P. Mehler stated that the information session is intentionally scheduled after the meeting, they would like to have the SA meeting at RPCC if possible. But, as of right now, the SA meeting is scheduled for the Memorial Room in Willard Straight Hall.

V. Initiatives

- a. J. Bansah stated that there is EMS free training on Sunday, 9/5. For more information, J. Bansah suggested reaching out to them or M. Baker.
 - i. H. Wade asked who the point of contact is.
 1. J. Bansah explained that they and M. Baker are the points of contact.

VI. Presentations and Forums

- a. P. Gronemeyer encouraged all SA members to follow COVID-19 guidelines, as every SA member are ambassadors and role models on campus.
- b. A. Ononye asked all participants speak in the microphone when speaking.
- c. University Hearing and Review Panel Presentation by J. Richards, a chair of the Codes and Judicial Committee.
 - i. J. Richards explained that there is a new Code of Conduct this year, and a UHRP that is made up of students, faculty, and staff. It is up to the assemblies to staff this panel and this presentation is merely guidance on the selection process. The deadline for the application launched is Sept. 10. To announce the opportunity, it is recommended to market it as a new and exciting leadership opportunity for the inaugural year of the panel that will shape the panel for years to come. The Assemblies and Senate respectively solicit applications and submit them to the director each year. It is asked that the applications be solicited from Sept. 10th to Sept. 24th. In order to qualify for the UHRP, applications must not have a conflict of interest, meaning they cannot be a member of the SA or GPSA or an employee of the Office of the Assemblies while on the panel. It is commitment of a two-year term and there is required annual training. Some suggested application attributes are a lack of implicit biases, cooperative, concise and clear in their logical reasoning, and honesty. This is not an opportunity for advocacy. The suggest application material is a statement of interest questionnaire and a resume. Resumes are mostly used as tiebreakers.
 1. P. Gronemeyer expressed gratitude for the presentation and asked if the conflict of interest only applies to members of the executive committee of the SA.
 - a. J. Richards answered that all members of the SA have a conflict of interest.
 2. D. Cady asked for access to Powerpoint and questionnaire.
 - a. J. Richards stated they were unsure if they would be found helpful but would share them with the assembly.
 3. M. Baker asked if there is a difference by the UHRB and the previous panel.
 - a. J. Richards explained that the concrete difference is the new Code of Conduct. The name of the panel was to highlight that it is working under a new code.
 - b. Board for summer follows t
 4. L. Smith asked what the recruitment is fail safe if there is not enough applications. they don't get enough applicant
 - a. J. Richards stated they are confident that there will be enough applicants. If there is not, the director will unilaterally appoint people.
 5. A. Ononye asked if there is anything the SA should do next.
 - a. J. Richards stated that if the SA decides to apply these suggested guidelines, the next steps include put the

application together, launching it to the student body hopefully by Sept. 10, and selecting applicants by Sept. 24th.

6. L. Smith questioned who set the launch date as Sept. 10th, as it is a short timeframe and places a lot of stress on the assembly.
 - a. J. Richards explained there is a lot of stress on the CJC and students could not be solicited until the new semester. A panel is needed as soon as possible.
7. J. Jiang asked if the UHRP receive all the cases by the university.
 - a. J. Richards stated they receive any violation at all of the Code of Conduct.
 - b. J. Jiang asked if someone was in violation of the code if they could apply.
 - i. J. Richards explained that is conflict of interest.

VII. New Business

- a. SA R10: Amendments to the Election Rules for Fall 2021
 - i. Abstract: This resolution updates the Student Assembly Election Rules for the Fall 2021 Election. This is necessitated by the ongoing public health restrictions related to COVID-19, and the ability to return to in-person elections, petition, and campaigning.
 - ii. P. Mehler explained that this resolution is the amendments to the SA Election Rules and it is updated every semester. One of the main changes is that it has added the ability to change to online. As of right now, everything is planned to be in-person, but also, they will have the ability to go online. There are also some changes coming to the appeal process, as the JCC no longer exists. The Office of the Assemblies, the Law School, and the Scheinman Institute on Conflict Resolution are working together to create an appeals process.
 - iii. A. Williams stated that Facebook Messenger is not listed under what is not social media section. Facebook Messenger is a separate app from Facebook and many international students use that to communicate with other students.
 1. P. Mehler stated they would be happy to have the Election Rules amended to have Facebook Messenger listed under the not social media section.
 - iv. A. Gleiberman asked if the resolution could be amended to include any messenger apps or messenger functions.
 1. N. Overton explained that Instagram direct messages cannot be separated from Instagram, while Facebook Messenger is a separate app from Facebook.
 - v. H. Wade stated that Facebook Messenger and Facebook have been merged and suggested it may be helpful to have a blanket statement covering all direct messaging functions.
 - vi. A. Williams stated that Facebook Messenger is still a separate app even though you can use it in the Facebook ap
 - vii. A. Gleiberman stated that it would confusing to allow only one.

1. P. Mehler stated that social media section came from a challenge in the Spring 2021 election. They are trying to define what is allowed beyond email and text messages. Social media is when someone posts something and everyone can see it, rather than message sent directly to one person.
- viii. A. Lambert asked if this includes petition signatures through direct messaging.
 1. P. Mehler stated that you cannot campaign during petition season, and petition signatures will now be in person.
- ix. A. Ononye expressed concern that members of the Elections Committee are allowed to run for SA the semester after being on the committee.
 1. P. Mehler stated that rule is mostly for freshman and transfer student and the only information they receive is the election rules. To work in the Elections Committee, they do have to sign a confidentiality agreement. The purpose is to encourage people to be involved in the Student Assembly and the Elections Committee.
 2. A. Ononye stated it might be a conflict of interest if one worked in the Elections Committee in the semester previous are running for higher position in the Student Assembly.
 - a. P. Mehler explained that there is no election information they would receive that would give them an advantage.
- x. M. Baker agreed with A. Ononye's sentiments and stated it should state that they can run for the SA a year after serving on the Elections Committee, rather than a semester after.
 1. P. Mehler explained that the rule's goal is to encourage people to get involved.
- xi. H. Wade asked if there was any past cheating through the Elections Committee.
 1. P. Mehler explained this became a rule in 2018.
- xii. N. Overton stated they can see both sides of the issue and suggested an amendment to allow only freshman or transfer students to run the semester after serving on the Elections Committee.
 1. P. Mehler acknowledged the concern that it would give students from the Elections Committee advantage but explained that it would not.
- xiii. A. Gleiberman asked if this section was changed.
 1. P. Mehler stated that it used to be that it was a year after serving on the Elections Committee but was changed in the Spring 2021 semester.
- xiv. D. Cady asked if it were possible to change the language regarding non-social media apps to include peer-to-peer direct messaging under the not social media list.
- xv. Motion to amend the language on line 76 to state "email, GroupMe, WhatsApp, Signal, SMS texting, and private messaging features on other applications are not social media" – **amended** by a vote of 21-0-1.
- xvi. J. Mullen asked for clarification on the final section regarding the Undesignated At-Large seats for president and vice president runner-ups.

In the previous election had to take the third-place candidate had to take the one Undesignated At-Large seat. J. Mullen asked if is that process is laid out in these rules or if it was implied.

1. P. Mehler explained that there are four Undesignated At-Large seats, two for there for their own reason, one is for the presidential runner up and one. for vice president runner up. If there is any open seat, the next highest candidate will take that seat. The previous rules did not state that, but it has now been updated to reflect this.
- xvii. A. Williams expressed concern over line 326, where having voting booths for elections has been removed and worried it does not allow all students equal opportunities to vote in the election.
1. P. Mehler explained that has been crossed out for the past 4 years, and there has not been an issue with no voting booths.
 2. A. Williams asked if it were possible to publicize if you need to help voting to go to 109 Day Hall.
 - a. W. Treat answered that this is possible.
- xviii. D. Cady stated that the SDS does have and does give out computers with accommodation for students with disabilities.
1. P. Mehler stated they will work with the Office of the Assemblies to add access to these computers in 109 Day Hall during the voting period.
- xix. P. Gronemeyer stated at the bottom at all Cornell websites that states that if anyone needs help with viewing the website there is an email listed to message.
- xx. Motion to amend to line 301 to 302 to state “semester” – amended 14-6-1
- xxi. Motion to approve Resolution #10 – approved by a vote of 21-0-1
- b. Motion to amend the agenda to begin debate on Resolution 13 – amended by Unanimous Consent
- c. SA R13: Dissolving the Research and Accountability Committee
- i. Abstract: This resolution is intended to dissolve the Research & Accountability Committee.
 - ii. M. Baker explained that the purpose of this resolution is to dissolve the R&A Committee. The R&A Committee was created in January 2020 and was useful for past assemblies. However, it is no longer needed, and the SA has been succeeding without it. If it needs to be reinstated in the future, future SA will be able to do so.
 - iii. N. Overton asked what the circumstances were that this committee was created.
 1. M. Baker explained that it was created in January 2020 and only was functioning for 2 months before being shutdown due to the pandemic.
 - iv. L. Smith provided context that a past vice president was failing to meet their duties.
 - v. C. Tempelman asked if this resolution also gets rid of the community member chair of the R&A Committee.

1. M. Baker answered that it dissolves the entire committee.
- vi. C. Leon asked what would qualifying needing to bring the committee back.
 1. M. Baker stated that it would be if the consensus was the committee would be helpful to have.
- vii. D. Cady explained they understand the desire to make the Student Assembly, but if there is a possibility in the future that this committee will be needed, why dissolve it now.
 1. M. Baker stated they do not see a need for this committee in the future.
- viii. J. Mullen expressed concern that there is always a need for accountability.
 1. M. Baker explained that the committee was extremely dysfunctional last year. The first two months after the creation of the committee it was effective, however, after that it did nothing.
 2. J. Mullen stated it is not the function of the committee itself for it to be dysfunctional, but it was the members of the committee and the SA. Accountability is not inherently dysfunctional.
- ix. A. Gleiberman stated that SA members should be doing their own research. Additionally, the Executive Committee approves of the members of the committee, in order to truly hold members accountable, it would be beneficial to have a committee outside of the assembly tasked with that.
 1. M. Baker asked if that means the SA should seek out a 3rd party tasked with accountability.
 2. A. Gleiberman stated that is a good idea.
- x. A. Williams motioned to table the resolution so that SA has the opportunity to restructure the committee
 1. L. Smith dissented and stated that accountability for each member is inherent, as it is an elected position for only one year. If their constituents felt their representative was not a good job, they will have the opportunity to not reelect that representative.
- xi. Motion to table – failed by a vote of 8-10-3
- xii. There was a motion to vote.
 1. D. Cady dissented and stated that the assembly should discuss the resolution more. There are legitimate concerns about the R&A committee, however it would be beneficial to consider other options before immediately dissolving it. This resolution as it is just removing accountability. If there are no immediate concern, there is no reason to act so fast to remove it. Additionally, many representatives run uncontested races, so having internal accountability is essential.
 - a. M. Baker asked if the SA should continue the process of staffing the committee and then dissolve the committee in a few weeks.
 - i. D. Cady stated there should be a third party in place before the committee is dissolved.

- i. Abstract: This resolution approves the Student Assembly Operating Budget for the 2021-2022 Academic Year.
- ii. M. Baker explained that by the second meeting of each year, the SA budget has to be improved. The budget for each category is as followed: Administrative receives \$2,000, Communications receives \$500, Initiatives receives \$2,000, Internal Operations receives \$250, Dining receives \$250, Special Projects receives \$15,000, and the Summer Experience Grant receives \$25,000. M. Baker explained that the Summer Experience Grant budget has been doubled, as it the most popular among students.
- iii. There was a motion to be excused by H. Wade.
- iv. There was a motion to be excused by N. Overton
- v. J. Jiang thanked M. Baker for their work and asked for clarification on the Appropriations Committee budget.
 - 1. M. Baker explained that normally the Appropriations Committee receives \$2,500, but always overspends. This year, M. Baker decided to give the Appropriation Committee more money.
- vi. L. Smith stated that the SA should not pass a budget with a committee they are thinking of removing or without giving that committee any funding if it does remain.
- vii. Motion to amend to make the budget of Research & Accountability Committee \$50 – amended 17-1-1.
- viii. Motion to vote on Resolution #11 – approved by a vote of 19-0-1.
- h. Motion to amend the agenda to begin debate on Resolution 12 – amended by Unanimous Consent
- i. SA R12: Amendments to the Convocation Committee’s Appendix B Guidelines
 - i. Abstract: This resolution seeks to amend the Convocation Committee’s Appendix B Guidelines to reduce the number of guaranteed Convocation Committee seats offered to senior Student Assembly members.
 - ii. M. Baker explained that this resolution amends Convocation Committee Appendix B documents. The only change is that it used to invite all seniors on the SA, but it has now been changed to three.
 - iii. K. Santacruz asked how many people usually on the Convocation Committee.
 - 1. M. Baker stated that there is usually about 30 people.
 - iv. A. Lampert asked if there was any reasoning for the change.
 - 1. M. Baker stated that the Convocation Committee has been attempting to change this for the past few years. They wanted an exact number, as if there were 15 seniors in the SA one year, they would all have to be invited onto the committee.
 - v. A. Williams asked how they settled with three.
 - 1. M. Baker explained that at the beginning of the summer, they requested zero, and M. Baker countered with six. In a compromise, they settled on three.

- vi. A. Ononye stated this has been a long discussion. This change will allow the Convocation Committee to still have SA representation but not to be dominated by SA members.
- vii. K. Santacruz stated that SA members are representatives of the students and the Convocation Committee is an SA organization.
 - 1. M. Baker explained that A. Ononye is already on the committee. Additionally, because the SA is already elected, the Convocation wanted to be diversified among the senior class.
- viii. D. Eisman asked if there were seats for the president and vice president of the SA.
 - 1. M. Baker stated that it may be a conflict of interest if the SA president is not a senior. It would not include the SA president or vice president if they are not seniors.
- ix. A. Williams asked if the Convocation Committee chooses who on the SA is invited.
 - 1. M. Baker stated that should be codified but believed the SA would choose who is invited.
- x. A. Gleiberman stated that, while in discussion, the Convocation Committee wanted to choose.
- xi. Motion to amend the resolution to state “for the president and the vice president of the senior class, and 6 voting members of the SA to be chosen by the SA” – amended by a vote of 17-0-2
- xii. Motion to amend line 41 of the resolution to state “2021” – amended by Unanimous Consent
- xiii. Motion to vote on Resolution #12 – approved by a vote of 17-0-3.
- j. Motion to amend to begin debate on Resolution 14 – amended by Unanimous Consent
- k. SA R14: Amendments to the Convocation Committee’s Governing Documents
 - i. Abstract: This resolution affirms changes that were made to the Convocation Committee’s constitution to account for its separation from Class Councils and removes Article III, Section 4, Part C from the Convocation Committee’s constitution.
 - ii. M. Baker explained that this resolution approves all of the amendments to the Convocation Committee’s Governing Documents. M. Baker stated they removed Article III, Section 4, Part C of the constitution, as it stated the chair has unilateral power to remove a member.
 - iii. A. Williams asked if M. Baker decided on this amendment or
 - 1. M. Baker stated the Convocation Committee did not directly approve the amendment but have been notified of all the changes.
 - iv. There was a motion to vote.
 - 1. L. Smith dissented and stated that Article 6 is not really followed and should be changed from 8 members to a simple majority.
 - v. Motion to amend Article 6 to state “a simple majority is enough voting members” – amended by Unanimous Consent
 - vi. Motion to vote on Resolution #14 – approved by Unanimous Consent
- l. Amendments to Appendix B of the Student Assembly Charter

- i. Abstract: These amendments to Appendix B of the Student Assembly Charter are focused on updating outdated terms, adding mission statements, and changing methods of operation.
- ii. A. Williams stated they found a few grammatical errors in the document and asked if it were possible to amend the document to fix these errors.
- iii. There was a motion to be excused by E. Bentolila.
- iv. D. Cady asked that the Appendix B that it is for all students regardless of disability status.
- v. Motion to amend to Section U2 to state “20.00”, Section W1 to state “Thursday”, and to state “regardless of disability status” – **amended** by Unanimous Consent
- vi. D. Eisman commended A. Gleiberman and M. Baker for their work on these amendments.
- vii. Motion to approve the amendments – **approved** by Unanimous Consent
- m. Motion to amend the meeting by 10 minutes – **approved** by Unanimous Consent
- n. There was a motion to be excused by A. Lampert.
- o. Motion to begin debate on resolution 13 – **approved**
- p. SA R13: Dissolving the Research and Accountability Committee
 - i. Motion to amend the line 44 to 45 of the resolution to state “that the Research and Accountability Committee will be immediately dissolved and will be replaced by third party to observe accountability measures” and amend line 50 to insert “be it further absolved that any necessary actions will be brought forward by the office of the assemblies”
 - 1. L. Smith dissented and stated adding a third party will not help the Student Assembly and there are no guidelines for this.
 - ii. D. Eisman asked how this will affect the budget that was passed earlier in the evening.
 - 1. M. Baker explained that the money it would go to a reserve account.
 - iii. M. Baker stated it is the same language as the Elections Committee rules.
 - iv. D. Cady expressed hope to have a future resolution that has the guidelines for this spelled out.
 - v. Motion to table the resolution – **tabled** 13-0-3

VIII. Adjournment

- a. A. Ononye adjourned the meeting at 7:04pm (EST).

Respectfully Submitted,
Ciara Shanahan
 Clerk of the Student Assembly