



Cornell University
Student Assembly

Cornell University Student Assembly

Minutes of the Thursday, September 23, 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 4:48pm (EST).
- b. Roll Call
 - i. *Members Present:* A. Williams, A. Gleiberman, A. Ononye, C. Tempelman, C. Leon, D. Ilango, D. Eisman, D. Cady, E. Bentolila, H. Wade, J. Bansah, J. Jiang, J. Mullen, K. Santacruz, L. Smith, M. Louis, M. Baker, N. Overton, N. Reddy, P. Gronemeyer, V. Valencia, Y. Logan
 - ii. *Members Absent:* K. Thakkar, A. Lampert, E. Yan

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

- a. Cornell University is located on the traditional homelands of the Gayogohó:nq' (the Cayuga Nation). The Gayogohó:nq' 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:nq' dispossession and honor the ongoing connection of the Gayogohó:nq' people, past and present, to these lands and waters.

III. Late Additions to the Agenda

- a. Motion to amend the agenda to add Resolution #21, Resolution #19, and Resolution #22 – **amended** by Unanimous Consent
- b. Motion to add Resolution #29 – **amended** by Unanimous Consent

IV. Approval of the Minutes

- a. September 9, 2021
 - i. Motion to amend the minutes to remove “are any of their help needed tonight” from Section 5G – **amended** by Unanimous Consent
 - ii. L. Smith noted that spelling of J. Feit’s last name was incorrect throughout the minutes and that the amendment to Resolution #23 was just removing the phrase “of a majority” and not the entire phrase “speaking on behalf of a majority of the student body”.
 1. Motion to amend the minutes to replace the incorrect spellings of J. Feit’s last name with the correct spelling and have the amendment to Resolution #23 just remove “of a majority” – **amended** by Unanimous Consent
 - iii. J. Jiang explained that Section B Subsection 6 Point 2 state that J. Jiang was making a statement when J. Jiang was actually asking for clarification.
 1. Motion to amend the minutes to have this section reflect J. Jiang asking for clarification, not a statement of fact – **amended** by Unanimous Consent

- iv. D. Cady stated that Section H Subsection 11 Point 2S states “DC” instead of “D. Cady”.
 - 1. Motion to amend the minutes to replace “DC” with “D. Cady” – **amended** by Unanimous Consent
- v. Motion to approve the September 9th minutes – **approved** by Unanimous Consent

V. Open Microphone

- a. P. Mehler stated that the Candidate Forum with the freshman and transfer candidates is tonight, September 23, at 7:30pm in 303A Appel Commons.

VI. Announcements and Reports

- a. M. Baker stated that according to the SA Charter, the VP of Finance has to announce the byline hearing dates for when organizations will be coming to the Appropriations Committee. On Monday, September 27, the Student Assembly, the Cornell Environmental Collaborative “ECO”, and the Collegiate Leadership Program will be having byline hearings at 5:15pm to 8:30pm in 145 McGraw Hall.
- b. L. Smith stated there has been confusion over the process of committees and it seems like there are things that need to be resolved and asked for the VP of Internal Operations to keep the SA updated on how the committee process is going.
- c. J. Jiang stated that the election rules are a little confusing, especially for new members, and suggested that maybe in the next election cycle the rules could be announced more clearly
- d. A. Ononye announced that PSAC is having their open session on Tuesday, September 28th, at 12pm, and on Wednesday, September 29, at 4:30pm in Willard Straight Hall. A. Ononye encouraged members to attend and for members to encourage their constituents to attend. Additionally, the UHRB applications close on Monday, September 27th.

VII. Business of the Day

- a. Motion to amend the agenda to move Staffing Committees to after New Business – **amended** by Unanimous Consent
- b. L. Smith stated that staffing committees can be done in executive session or off of the record.

VIII. New Business

- a. SA R24: Dissolving the City and Local Affairs Committee
 - i. Abstract: This resolution dissolves the City and Local Affairs Committee in recognition of the absorption of the committee’s duties by the Office of Student Government Relations.
 - ii. L. Smith explained that this resolution is somewhat bittersweet, as this committee has been a big part of their Cornell experience. This resolution recognizes that since the formation of the Office of Student Government Relations, which has a local relations arm, the need to have a City and Local Affairs Committee has dissipated over the past couple of semesters. Most of the work that was traditionally done by the City and Local Affairs Committee has been absorbed by the Office of Student Government Relations and their local relations team. In hopes of avoiding the issues down the line of having two separate people running two separate committees that could be doing the same thing, this disbands one of them to simplify the advocacy efforts as an assembly. The first resolve clause removes a clause from the job description for the Vice President of External Affairs, the second clause

strikes the whole committee clause from the SA committees. The last clause states that anyone who has applied for the City and Local Affairs Committee for this cycle for Fall 2021 will be considered for recruitment by the Office of Student Government Relations. One of the things that has been different between the City and Local Affairs Committee and Office of Student Government Relations is how they interact with nonprofit organizations. L. Smith considered adding language regarding this, however decided to ask the Office of Student Government Relations to consider in their advocacy agenda that they will present to the SA by the end of the fall semester to include at a local level provision focused on nongovernmental affairs and relations in the community.

- iii. There was a motion to table the resolution.
 1. D. Cady asked for clarification why it has to be tabled.
 2. A. Gleiberman explained that it is because it a change to the bylaws, the SA has to wait a week before it can be approved.
- iv. Motion to table Resolution #24 – **tabled** by Unanimous Consent
- b. SA R25: Defending Haitian Students and Dedicating Further Resources to Programs Helping Haiti
 - i. Abstract: This resolution calls on Cornell to reaffirm its commitment to protecting Haitian students under Temporary Protected Status and undocumented Haitian students from Immigrations and Customs Enforcement.
 - ii. S. Celestin explained that they are originally from Haiti and moved to Miami Florida at the age of 6. They attended the University of Florida for undergraduate and are now at Cornell pursuing a PhD in Computer Science. Haiti was founded in 1804 as the second free republic in the Western Hemisphere after the United States. Its independence was the first successful slave revolt in the world in modern times. At the time, then-president Thomas Jefferson did not recognize Haiti as a new nation, and as a result, the US placed a trade embargo on Haiti. Additionally, the French Government required that Haiti pay back \$150 million for property loss. These two major things prevented economic development in the country. Moving forward into the 1900s, the US occupied Haiti. During the occupation, the US forcibly changed the Haitian constitution to allow foreigners to purchase land in Haiti and allowed for neocolonialism. Because of that, there was strong inspiration for black nationalism, and this created support for the future dictators François Duvalier and Jean-Claude Duvalier from the late 1950s to 1986. Since 1986, there has been a mixture of corruption in government and natural disasters. Throughout the recent history in Haiti, the US was a place for refuge for a lot of people in Haiti and for people seeking an escape from human rights issues, political turmoil and persecution, and also just simply people who want a better life. That is the reason S. Celestin’s father moved their family here successful in 2000 and it is because of this opportunity that they are able to speak at this meeting and be a part of the Cornell community. A majority of the individuals on the US-Mexico border are not coming directly from Haiti, they are actually in transition from other Latin American countries such as Guatemala, Brazil, and Chile. Because of recent issues in Haiti, they thought it was an opportunistic time to come to the land

of the free. In immigration policy, a group of people to focus on is asylum seekers, which are people wanting to get away from Haiti to be protected from political persecution and the effects that has on them and their families. There are also people just searching for a better life, with the recent assassination of the Head of State and the earthquake. Regarding immigration enforcement, any inhumane treatment of people just immigration should never be supported. On the US-Mexico border, there have been reports of inadequate hygiene, shelter, and due process of those detained. More recently, there have been alarming images of border patrol members using whips designed to mainly control horses because used to control the Haitian people. It created a lot of backlash, as these images can be very triggering for people who are ancestors of enslaved people. Regardless of what policies you support, this treatment or any inhumane actions towards the Haitian people should definitely not be supported. Cornell and the greater Cornell community should support and advocate for immigration policies that support asylum seekers, immigration policies that protect temporary protective status seekers, and immigration policies that support and advocate for enforcement that treats individuals with decency. To support Haitian students and students of Haitian descent, Cornell should send out a message to the community to show support. The last suggestion is to create great programs that allow for undergraduate students in Haiti to come and experience some of the benefits that Cornell has and help inspire and share ideas with future leaders. For decades, a lot of the aid that has been sent to countries are just temporary solutions and create a need and dependency on foreign aid. It would great for Cornell to advocate for support that is focused on created a future for nations like Haiti to prosper on their own.

- iii. J. Bansah thanked S. Celestin for their presentation and asked J. Mullen if the Haitian Students Association had any input regarding this resolution.
 1. J. Mullen stated that they spoke to the Caribbean Students Association and they would actually like to be cosponsors of the resolution.
- iv. Motion to amend Resolution #25 to include Cornell Caribbean Students Association, Cornell Pan-African Students Association, Professor Judith Byfield and Professor Ernesto Bassi – **amended** by Unanimous Consent
- v. M. Louis personally commended the resolution and stated that their dad is from Haiti and it would mean a lot to have this resolution be passed. The process to becoming a citizen is not easy and it is full of deterrents to keep people from coming here.
- vi. J. Jiang thanked the cosponsors and asked if the following information is correct: the recent assassination of the Haitian president has contributed to increased suffering and the foreign intervention and neocolonialism by Western countries has contribute to this.
 1. J. Mullen stated that information is correct.
 2. J. Jiang asked if it was possible to add in the final clause of the resolution a line about condemning the neocolonialism foreign policies of the US government.

3. Motion to amend the Resolution #25 to add in on Line 29 to state “the Student Assembly urges Cornell to strongly condemn the deportation policy against Haitians and the colonialist-like interventionist foreign policies by the Biden administration” – amended by Unanimous Consent
- vii. L. Smith stated that Resolutions #36 and #37 from last academic year Student Assembly were ignored by President Pollack and urged that they are reconsidered in the future.
 - viii. D. Ilango commended S. Celestin for coming to the SA to speak and asked J. Mullen if they consulted with the Haitian Students Associations.
 1. J. Mullen explained that the Haitian Students Association is not active, however they did receive direct approval from the Caribbean Students Association.
 2. S. Celestin stated that the Haitian Students Association is not functional and is dormant, they function through the Caribbean Students Associations.
 - ix. Motion to amend Resolution #25 so that the cosponsors are reflected in both the beginning of the resolution and the end of the resolution – amended by Unanimous Consent
 - x. D. Eisman thanked the cosponsors of the resolution but expressed hesitancy over the inclusion of Res. 36 and 37 of the last SA in the resolution, as a majority of the members of the current SA were not present for those resolutions.
 1. Motion to amend Resolution #25 to remove mentions of Resolution 36 and 37 of the previous SA – amended by Unanimous Consent
 - xi. Motion to vote on Resolution #25 – approved by a vote of 21-0-1
- c. SA R26: Approving Special Projects Funding Request for the Accessibility
- i. Abstract: This resolution approves \$697.61 of Special Projects Funding to the Cornell Intellectual Property and Ethics Club (CIPEC) for their Accessibility Case Competition to increase accessibility on Cornell’s campus.
 - ii. D. Cady explained that this resolution is a Special Projects Funding request to the CIPEC, which is the Cornell Intellectual Property and Ethics Club. They are doing a case competition on accessibility at Cornell. Ever since D. Cady first became a member of the SA, they were impressed by the professionalism and the enthusiasm of the CIPEC, as they are truly a group of Cornell students committed to trying to find ways to benefit this campus, which is similar to the intention of many SA members. This accessibility case competition is focused on finding ways to make Cornell accessible, specifically for students with disabilities. D. Cady was impressed by their efforts to try and have an open dialogue about what is accessible on campus, but to do it in a way that would look towards creating real solutions and real change. This has been being planning for a long time, and they are receiving funding for other sources as well. After many conversations, they have come to a conclusion that one of the best ways the SA can help the CIPEC right now is through partially funding the competition.
 - iii. M. Baker stated that this competition is open to all students as a structural and policy approach to improving the campus. It takes places on 9/24, 10/7, 10/15, and finishes on 10/21 with a cash prize of \$1000 that goes to the

- winner. CIPEC has told the SA their advertising plan, which looks very solid, and they have submitted their budget.
- iv. D. Cady clarified that the point of this competition is to create policies for physical, infrastructure, or anything in between for students with disabilities. It is all driven by students for students, it is not just a competition, it is about creating a better campus.
 - v. L. Smith stated that the resolution looks good, but on the finance side of things, not specifically about this project, asked M. Baker what the amount is left in the Special Projects fund after this. L. Smith also recommended that on resolutions for future Special Projects funding to include what the status of the Special Projects Fund will be and perhaps what percentage that the project will be of the Special Projects funding.
 1. M. Baker stated that they can do that and there is currently about \$10,000 remaining of Special Projects funding.
 - vi. D. Eisman asked, if following the competition, if there is a way to make the Student Assembly to move forward on the ideas and issues that are brought up.
 1. D. Cady explained that was a major crux of the conversations that were happening. The ultimate goal is to promote whatever solutions come out of the accessibility case competition.
 - vii. A. Williams asked how they came to \$697.61 specifically.
 1. M. Baker stated they submitted a request for the funding, and this is the exact amount they needed.
 - viii. Motion to vote on Resolution #26 - approved by Unanimous Consent
 - d. Motion to amend agenda to begin discussion on Resolution #28 – amended by Unanimous Consent
 - e. SA R28: Amending the Student Assembly Standing Rules to Codify the Content of the Special Projects Funding Application
 - i. Abstract: This resolution amends the Student Assembly Standing Rules to codify the content of the Special Projects Funding Application.
 - ii. M. Baker explained that this resolution is codifying the content of the Special Projects Funding application. It is not in the standing rules and this resolution puts it in the Standing Rules for future VP of Finances to look at and implement.
 - iii. Motion to vote on Resolution #28 – approved by Unanimous Consent
 - f. SA R27: Support for Interim Policy 6.3
 - i. Abstract: This resolution reaffirms student support for the updated Title IX Policy 6.3 which will prohibit all romantic or sexual relationships between staff members and undergraduate students.
 - ii. A. Ononye stated that this resolution is in support of Policy 6.3. Policy 6.3 is currently in interim review and the current goal is to have every assembly show support for this becoming a permanent policy. Policy 6.3 prohibits romantic and sexual relationships between staff members and undergraduate students, there is already a similar policy regarding student and faculty relationships.
 - iii. L. Smith asked when this would become a permanent policy.
 1. A. Ononye stated the goal is for it to become a full policy in January. Right now, it is under review and going through the different

assemblies. Next week, there will be a more in-depth conversation about this policy.

- iv. H. Wade asked for the reasoning for this policy. Staff members roles might not tangentially directly related to students.
 - 1. A. Ononye stated that after doing a review of campus, that these relations do create unfair power dynamics and priorities. As a clarification, this only applies to permanent employment on campus, not student workers.
- v. L. Smith asked that, since the presentation is next week, should the resolution be tabled until after the presentation.
 - 1. A. Ononye stated that the Title IX wanted to be sure they have student support for the policy. Everything written in resolution is directly from their website.
- vi. Motion to vote on Resolution #27 – approved by Unanimous Consent
- g. SA R21: Amending and Ratifying the Student Assembly Bylaws
 - i. Abstract: This resolution amends and ratifies the Student Assembly Bylaws. Notable amendments include: creating separate ex-officio positions for the different Tri-Council constituencies and creating a Student Athlete ex-officio position.
 - ii. A. Ononye stated this resolution was discussed last week.
 - iii. L. Smith stated they were hesitant for each of the three Tri-Council members to have ex-officio seats. If this resolution does pass, L. Smith encourages those in favor of the additional seats to push them to come to meetings and participate in the SA.
 - 1. A. Ononye completely agreed and stated that this resolution is not just creating positions for the sake of more positions. The President of IFC stated they were excited about this resolution and is already considering members to send to regular SA meetings
 - iv. M. Baker expressed support for the addition of these three seats, as the rotational basis of the current seats don't allow for direct representation and support of each community. don't have a lot of the support and direct voice on the student assembly.
 - v. A. Gleiberman echoed L. Smith's sentiment and stated that the one ex-officio from the Tri-Council is still supporting all the communities under the Tri-Council. There are not been anyone from the Tri-Council at any meeting this year or advocating for these additional positions. No one from the tri council has been to this, speaking on behind on this
 - 1. A. Ononye reemphasized that the Tri-Council constituencies all have different needs and that each operate really differently from each other.
 - vi. D. Cady thanked A. Ononye for the resolution and voiced their support for the additional ex-officio seats as it highlights how the SA is committed to be representative of the student body. This resolution will allow the SA to be more invited to student communities and more inviting to members of these communities who want to engage in policy and change around campus.
 - vii. Motion to end debate – passed by a vote of 16-4-1
 - viii. Motion to vote on the Resolution #21 – approved by a vote of 15-6-1
- h. SA R19: Amending and Ratifying the Student Assembly Charter

- i. Abstract: This resolution amends and ratifies the Student Assembly Charter for the 2021-2022 academic year.
 - ii. A. Ononye stated that this resolution is also from last year and nothing has changed within the charter except for the date and year.
 - iii. Motion to vote on Resolution #19 – approved by Unanimous Consent
- i. SA R22: Dissolving the Research and Accountability Committee and Creating the Office of Ethics
 - i. Abstract: This resolution is intended to dissolve the Research & Accountability Committee and create the Office of Ethics to preserve accountability measures.
 - ii. M. Baker stated that this resolution was discussed at the last meeting and dissolves the Research and Accountability Committee and establish the Office of Ethics.
 - iii. L. Smith stated the SA missed a good opportunity with the restructuring of the code. Looking back through documents from the past, there was a university court system that a Student Assembly proposed, and it was a really comprehensive document. Hopefully, the assembly is more astute in the future when conversations are going on at a university level, so that they can be related to Student Assembly problems.
 - iv. Motion to approve Resolution #22 - approved by Unanimous Consent
- j. SA R29: Amending the Student Assembly Standing Rules to Establish the Consent Agenda
 - i. Abstract: This resolution makes an amending to the standing rules implementing a consent agenda as part of the regular Student Assembly meeting agenda.
 - ii. L. Smith explained that a consent agenda is a very popular thing in municipal governments, and it is a way to have a bunch of things on the agenda but not have to vote on them all individually. This resolution proposes that the SA implement a consent agenda as part of the agenda process. With this, hopefully, it would allow for agenda to include time to incorporate any responses the SA receives on resolutions that were conveyed to the President. After passing a resolution, the SA does not really have any opportunity to look at the responses received from the President and others. If for some reason, there are somethings in the consent agenda that you don't think you should be and you would like further discussion on it, any member can ask to pull things out of the consent agenda and there is no discussion in it, and it is moved to the full agenda. It would be really beneficial for both the SA and community members to have time to reflect on any kind of correspondences received from the administration on SA resolutions.
 - iii. A. Ononye commended the resolution but asked if the resolution went through a committee.
 - 1. L. Smith explained that it did not go through a committee, however since it was approved by unanimous consent to be added to the agenda that it is allowed.
 - iv. D. Cady thanked L. Smith for their work and asked if it has to be tabled.
 - 1. L. Smith explained that it does not have to be tabled.

2. D. Cady asked if L. Smith was willing to have people reach out to them with any questions, they have regarding the consent agenda.
 - a. L. Smith asked if tabling the resolution would allow time for people to ask questions.
 - b. D. Cady stated that would be great.
- v. J. Bansah motioned to strike lines 34 to 39 in the resolution as they don't see a reason for the Vice President to get reports, where the committee chairs are already holding each member accountable to their world.
 1. L. Smith explained that they are only changing it to say Rule 14 in the red, so the number makes it work.,
 2. A. Williams stated that is just keeping the resolution focused
 3. Motion to amend the resolution to strike lines 34 to 39 – **amended** by a vote of 20-0-1.
- vi. There was a motion to table the resolution.
 1. J. Mullen dissented and stated this resolution is self-explanatory and it makes more sense to approve it now.
 2. L. Smith stated that within the resolution, it does state that the consent agenda would be implement two weeks after the resolution is approved.
 3. The motion to table was rescinded.
- vii. Motion to vote on Resolution #29 – **approved** by Unanimous Consent
- k. Motion to have the staffing of committees on record – **failed** by a vote of 0-18-3.

IX. Adjournment

- a. A. Ononye adjourned the meeting at 6:12pm (EST).

Respectfully Submitted,
Ciara Shanahan
Clerk of the Student Assembly