



Cornell University
Student Assembly

Cornell University Student Assembly

Minutes of the Thursday, October 21, 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 4:45pm (EST).
- b. Roll Call
 - i. *Members Present:* M. Baker, J. Bansah, D. Cady, P. Da Silveira, D. Eisman, A. Gleiberman, P. Gronemeyer, D. Ilango, A. Juan, J. Kim, C. León, Y. Logan, M. Louis, L. Lu, J. Mullen, N. Overton, N. Reddy, K. Santacruz, L. Smith, M. Song, C. Tempelman, V. Valencia, H. Wade, A. Williams, E. Yan, A. Ononye
 - ii. *Members Absent:* A. Lampert, E. Bentolila, J. Jiang, K. Thakkar

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. Late Additions to the Agenda

- a. Motion to amend the agenda to have the presentation of the Office of Student Government Relations Advocacy Agenda before Announcements and Presentations – amended by Unanimous Consent
- b. Motion to add Resolution 31 to the agenda – amended by Unanimous Consent

IV. Consent Agenda

- a. Meeting Minutes – September 30, 2021
 - i. C. Tempelman stated that their last name was spelt wrong in both sets of minutes.
 1. Motion to amend the Sept. 30th and Oct. 7th minutes to replace ‘Templeman’ with ‘Tempelman’ – amended by Unanimous Consent
 - ii. Motion to approve the September 30th minutes – approved by Unanimous Consent
- b. Meeting Minutes - October 7, 2021
 - i. D. Cady explained that Section 6, Subpoint D states that P. Mehler became a representative on the City Council when P. Mehler became an Alderperson.
 1. Motion to amend the Oct. 7th minutes to stated that P. Mehler became an Alderperson on the Common Council – amended by Unanimous Consent
 - ii. Motion to approve the October 7th minutes – approved by Unanimous Consent

- c. A. Ononye stated Resolutions 10, 12 and 14 were acknowledged by the President, Resolutions 11 and 15 were submitted to the President and are awaiting a response, and Resolution 13 was tabled indefinitely by the assembly. Detailed comments from the President are available on the Office of the Assemblies website.

V. Open Microphone

- a. There were no speakers present at open microphone.

VI. Presentations and Forums

- a. Office of Student Government Relations Advocacy Agenda 2021-2022 by E. Rubin
 - i. The Office of Student Government Relations is a higher education advocacy that is an arm of the Student Assembly. It is compiled of three levels, the state, local, and federal levels and OSGR lobbies the higher education concerns of Cornell students. The advocacy agenda lays forth the groundwork for initiatives for the rest of the year and the advocacy agenda will be posted on the OSGR website if approved at this meeting. The most work that can be done by OSGR is completed at the local, then state level, and then at the federal. The advocacy agenda for 2021-2022 builds off the agenda of previous years, as most initiatives are not things that can be accomplished quickly. Several members of the SA are part of the OSGR, including L. Smith, A. Williams, and J. Mullen.
 - ii. Motion to approve the Office of Student Government Relations Advocacy Agenda – approved by a vote of 24-0-1

VII. Announcements and Reports

- a. Byline Reports
 - i. EARS: Empathy, Assistance & Referral Services
 - 1. M. Baker stated that the Appropriations Committee revoted on their recommendation for EARS after receiving their appeal and the committee now recommends \$1.30.
 - 2. B. Lederman, co-president of EARS, stated that EARS is still looking to receive \$1.60 funding. One of the issues that the Appropriations Committee brought up is that EARS does not prioritize training undergraduate students; however, after receiving this feedback, EARS made a unanimous decision to have undergraduate students completing prioritized. EARS is working hard to reorganize their funds so that less of it goes towards marketing and staff and more goes towards training. The expected participation in training is expected to go up in the next few years and it is currently in discussion of making EARS training a project structure for course credit. That cannot go forwards without official Cornell approval, the \$1.60 allocation is important for the success of EARS.
 - 3. B. Feldman, the Reimagine Task Force Chair of EARS, explained that it is imperative that EARS is fully funded at this time and EARS has ambitious goals for expanding their presence on campus with undergraduate students. Additionally, EARS needs to be able to communicate their change from peer counseling to peer mentoring and their location changes from the old mode. Students need as much mental health support in these unprecedented times and EARS just reimaged their services and restructured due to the pandemic. EARS is looking for support from the SA.

4. B. Lederman stated that EARS is the only organization offering this service. B. Lederman asked for the SA to allow EARS to be a fully funded mental health organization.
5. D. Cady stated that in their understanding, in accordance with the charter and the bylaws, that the appeals letter EARS submitted is to come to the full assembly.
 - a. M. Baker stated they will put it in the Box so that everyone can see it.
6. J. Mullen seconded EARS leadership's statement and explained that many representatives ran for the SA on the platform of supporting student mental health. EARS is one of the most necessary organizations on campus.
7. C. Tempelman asked if EARS could share their new budget that considers the restructuring or do they need more time to prepare that.
 - a. B. Lederman explained that they are still waiting from a response from the university and will keep the SA informed.
8. H. Wade stated the letter the Appropriations Committee received was filled with many promises, but not many actions. H. Wade asked how EARS plans to increase support for these peer mentoring services, as the reason that the Appropriations Committee originally did not recommend \$1.60 because EARS was spending money on things like hand sanitizer at disproportionate amounts.
 - a. B. Lederman explained that their hands are tired in terms of where EARS is supposed to spend their money. In terms of promises, B. Lederman explained that they and F. Li are constantly in collaboration with other students and organizations and did not want to make false promises on the budget.
9. L. Smith asked if EARS would be open to sharing their byline application with the entire assembly, as only those on the Appropriations Committee can see their application.
 - a. B. Lederman stated that they are okay with and explained that after they submitted their initial budget application, the only feedback they got was that the committee was impressed by it. After they learned that the Appropriations Committee only recommended \$1.30, they were very surprised.
 - b. M. Baker stated that they will put EARS byline application in the Box.
10. A. Ononye communicated that SA members cannot make specific comments and questions about the budget.
11. A. Williams voiced disappointment that the lowering of the allocation was meant to encourage EARS to restructure better, but EARS probably needs money in order to properly restructure.
12. N. Overton thanked EARS for access to their byline application and stated that the appeals letter fully explained why EARS needs the \$1.60 allocation and encouraged all members to read the appeals letter.

13. M. Song echoed previous sentiments and stated that the appeals letter sufficiently responded to the issues brought up. Supporting our peers, as well as their mental health, should be an utmost priority of the SA.
 14. D. Cady stated that all members should read the appeals letter and reminded the assembly that they will only know too late how much an extra 20 cents will go to support students in a moment of crisis.
 15. C. León explained that they have had friends who have recently been turned away from their CAPS counselors because they are over capacity. Taking money away from the only organization dedicated to peer-to-peer support would be the worst decision the SA could make.
 16. A. Juan thanked EARS for coming the meeting and echoed support for continued to fund mental health services.
 17. Motion to appeal the Appropriations Committee recommendation of \$1.40 for EARS – **appealed** by a vote of 20-2-3.
 18. Motion to allocate EARS \$1.60 for the 2022-2024 Byline Cycle – **approved** by vote of 18-3-5.
- ii. Multicultural Greek and Fraternity Council (MGFC)
 1. M. Baker explained that MGFC requested \$1.07 and the Appropriations Committee recommended \$1. This is because MGFC has a \$10,000 rollover. MGFC is not appealing this recommendation.
 2. Motion to approve – **approved** by a vote of 20-0-2.
 - iii. Willard Straight Hall Student Union Board (WSHSUB)
 1. M. Baker stated that WSHSUB requested \$3.30 and the Appropriations Committee recommended \$3.30. Previously, they received \$0.50, but they have merged with the Welcome Weekend Committee, which had been allocate \$2.40 in the 2020-2022 byline cycle.
 2. Motion to table – **tabled** by Unanimous Consent
 - iv. M. Baker explained that they did have a Cornell Minds Matter byline hearing, but they did not have a presentation. The SA has to wait until they get that information to the committee.
 - v. Student Activities Funding Commission (SAFC)
 1. A. Gleiberman explained that SAFC organizations are currently going under major reforms with what they can their money on. They are streamlining the processes and the tier system to make it more equitable for all clubs. They are currently putting together a committee of key stakeholders and club leaders from all different areas to look at this and they are working with other byline organizations to help them transition to be able to fully fund the clubs under them. This is large project, and the Committee commended their work to reimagine funding for all clubs.
 2. Motion to table – **tabled** by Unanimous Consent
 - vi. M. Baker announced that there will be a byline hearing for CUEMS, the Convocation Committee, and GJAC in 1245 McGraw Hall on Monday, October 25, at 5:15pm.

- b. A. Ononye stated that President Pollack will be coming to a SA meeting in November and reminded representatives to reach out to their constituents for any questions or concerns.
- c. K. Santacruz stated that they are working on a resolution with D. Cady revolving around reviewing and modifying subtitles in recording lectures to accurately represent the information in these lectures. If anyone is interested in this resolution, helping, or giving any input, it would be very much appreciated.
- d. A. Ononye stated that sprint meetings are going to be starting soon, which are opportunities for members to collaborate on resolutions together and check in on what other representatives are working on.
- e. J. Bansah communicated that they are planning the next social, which will be a casual game night, and they are looking for recommendations for locations.

VIII. **New Business**

- a. SA R32: Calling on Cornell University to Appropriately Recognize and Honor Veterans Day
 - i. Abstract: This resolution calls on University Administration to establish Veterans Day as a University-holiday where courses are canceled, and veteran staff are not required to work.
 - ii. D. Cady explained that this is a part of a larger collective of resolutions, one of which has passed in the GPSA and another was introduced in the UA. The goal is to pass the resolution through every assembly.
 - iii. R. Molina, president of the Undergraduate Veterans Association, explained that Cornell is home to over 400 veterans, 93 of which are undergraduate students. Without official university recognition, veterans have to use either vacation days or personal time-off to participate in Veterans Day events. Veterans should be afforded the time and opportunity to celebrate a day that honors them. Additionally, it would give those that many have any military affiliation a day of rest.
 - iv. J. Feit explained they are trying to pass the exact same resolution in every assembly in order to bypass President Pollack to send it right to the Board of Trustees.
 - v. Motion to amend line 5 of the resolution to replace “staff” with staff “university affiliates” – amended by Unanimous Consent
 - vi. A. Ononye thanked the co-sponsors for their work.
 - vii. L. Smith stated that calendar stuff tends to be tricky in that the Faculty Senate controls the academic calendar and the process of setting the academic calendar is five years out. L. Smith asked how this factors into the resolution.
 - 1. J. Feit stated that the UA have brought many of the same points regarding calendar issues. The New York State legislation will be increasing the number of days mandated by accredited university in New York, so there is very little leeway there. Moving forward, we will have to decide whether to treat this as a religious holiday, where certain folks would be exempt from class, or like national holiday, where everyone is given the day off. We really believe it is important that this is treated as a national holiday, because you would still have to make up work even if you are exempt from class. One idea was splitting up the two days of fall break.

- viii. Motion to vote on Resolution #32 – approved by a vote of 24-0-1.
- b. SA R33: Confronting Cornell's Legacy in American Imperialism in the Philippines
 - i. Abstract: This resolution calls for acknowledgement of Cornell President Jacob Gould Schurman's role in the colonization and conquest of the Philippines.
 - ii. J. Mullen thanked the Cornell Filipino Association for attending the meeting. This resolution is directly addressing Cornell's third president, Jacob Gould Schurman, who decided the structure of American imperial rule in the Philippines. He was directly inspired by Kipling's "White Man's Burden" and was outwardly a patronizing imperialist. Over 20,000 Filipinos were directly killed in this brutal conquest and over 200,000 from disease. After the war ended, the Philippines was ruled directly as a colony, with its resources and its people exploited for the US's benefits. The long-term effects still linger today with the US still being an imperial force in the Philippines. The US still controls military bases in the Philippines and used COVID-19 vaccines to place pressure on the President of the Philippines to extend VFA. None of Cornell's biographical information on Schurman on official websites makes any reference to his viewpoints and comment on Filipinos or any reference to Schurman's role in Filipino colonization on campus. Cornell has never officially apologized for Schurman's words and actions. The resolution demands include Cornell formally apologizing for Schurman's role in American imperialism, establish corrective measures by dedicating a memorial in Schurman Hall, rename Schurman Hall, and expanding all Ethnic Studies programs, and addressing the history of military exploitation and continued military involvement in the Philippines.
 - iii. N. Overton asked if the memorial will still be in Schurman Hall if it is renamed.
 - 1. J. Mullen explained that renaming Schurman Hall will take a longtime, whereas adding a plaque would take less time. It gives Cornell more options to proceed.
 - iv. A. Juan expressed their support of the resolution and stated that other peer institutions have been addressing the leaders' names that are on buildings, such as Princeton and Woodrow Wilson School of Public Policy.
 - v. H. Wade expressed disdain that J. Mullen was refusing to give minority students the chance to present in front of the SA and asked why J. Mullen refuses to give students of color the space to actually advocate, instead making them go through J. Mullen.
 - 1. J. Mullen explained that they asked the Cornell Filipino Association and they said it was fine.
 - 2. H. Wade asked why they were not the forefront of the situation and stated that J. Mullen is taking away voices from minority individuals.
 - a. Leadership from the Cornell Filipino Association stated that they don't really understand this criticism and allies play an important role in advocacy. This is not relevant to the discussion of Schurman's legacy of imperialism in the Philippines.

- vi. Leadership from the CFA clarified that J. Mullen is representing on behalf of the CFA since their cultural chair was not available due to conflicting schedules.
- vii. Motion to vote on Resolution #33 – approved by a vote of 22-0-2.
- c. A. Ononye announced that M. Baker has stepped down as the VP of Finance and V. Valencia will be the new VP of Finance.
 - i. E. Yan asked what the transition process if and if there will be an election to choose the new VP of Finance.
 - ii. A. Gleiberman echoed E. Yan about having an internal election to determine the VP of Finance.
 - iii. A. Ononye stated that the parliamentarian is not present at this meeting.
 - iv. A. Gleiberman stated that the government documents, in the bylaws, article 2, section 2, suggests an internal election.
 - v. L. Smith asked how this effects the byline process,
 - 1. A. Ononye explained that they did receive M. Baker’s formal recognition and they are determined to continue the byline process.
 - vi. A. Gleiberman stated that line 46 in the bylaws only mentions electing the VP and does not mention dropping down to the runner-up in the assembly election.
 - vii. A. Ononye communicated that V. Valencia is the interim VP of Finance. The outgoing VP of Finance agreed with this and this is the process of how it was down in the past.
- d. SA R31: Amending and Ratifying the Student Assembly Bylaws of the Office of Student Advocate
 - i. Abstract: The resolution amends and ratifies the Student Assembly Office of Student Advocate Bylaws for the 2021-2022 academic year.
 - ii. L. Smith stated that a big part of this resolution is adding an International Student Affairs Director and asked if they have found someone for this position.
 - 1. D. Hernandez stated that they SA has to approve the changes to the bylaws before the director can be announced.
 - iii. Motion to vote on Resolution 31 – approved by a vote of 20-0-1.

IX. Adjournment

- a. A. Ononye adjourned the meeting at 6:09pm

Respectfully Submitted,
Ciara Shanaban
Clerk of the Student Assembly