



Cornell University
Student Assembly

Cornell University Student Assembly

Minutes of the Thursday, November 4, 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, E. Bentolila, D. Cady, P. Da Silveira, D. Eisman, A. Gleiberman, P. Gronemeyer, D. Ilango, J. Jiang, A. Juan, A. Lampert, 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:* J. Kim

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 add the first nomination for the Office of Ethics after the PSAC presentation – amended by Unanimous Consent

IV. Consent Agenda

- a. A. Ononye stated that Resolution 21 was accepted by the president, Resolutions 22, 23, and 25 were acknowledged by the president, and Resolution 24 was tabled indefinitely.
- b. Approval of the Minutes
 - i. October 21, 2021 and October 28, 2021 Meeting Minutes
 1. Motion to amend Section 4, Part C of the October 28th minutes to add “and scholarships” – amended by Unanimous Consent
 2. Motion to approve the October 21st and October 28th minutes – approved by Unanimous Consent

V. Open Microphone

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

VI. Announcements and Reports

- a. C. Hodges, a representative on the Public Safety Advisory Committee (PSAC) asked the SA to consider writing a resolution that asks for PSAC to update the SA once a semester on its progress and the projects it is working on to encourage collaboration and unity of effort and to consider writing a resolution that creates an alternative first response committee under the SA that focuses on recruiting students to work with

PSAC and the alternative public safety group. The PSAC investigation was chartered decades ago but was refurbished with the murder of George Floyd with the new mandate to try understanding public safety infrastructure through the lens of racial justice. The problem, seconded by surveys and focus groups, is that CUPD is the primary responder for calls and they respond to 70% of calls. There is uneasiness and anxiety when CUPD responds to call, and this is higher among people of color and LGBTQIA+ students. With the current public safety infrastructure, if you are in the middle of an emergency and you call 911, there is a 70% chance that an armed officer will arrive. The current infrastructure places students and community members in the position whether the decision is to either summon an institution which creates fear or no help at all, which is the definition of structural racism. The solution that PSAC recommends, and that university administrators and the President have agreed to, is to build an alternative first response system that will respond to the majority of calls or services instead of or in lieu of CUPD. The next issue is defining exactly what this model looks like and coproducing the model with community members. There is currently a working group that is working on this process, across two main lines of efforts. The first is looking at the calls for service and what people call 911 request assistance with and then, identifying what the ideal resource would be in response. The second line of effort is pure analysis of what other universities and cities are implementing and what the best practices and promising models are. It is time consuming work and also needs to be done in conversation with the constituencies the SA represents and the other constituencies at the university. The two resolutions they are asking the SA to write, and pass are one to have PSAC update the SA once a semester on their progress and another to have a subcommittee on alternative response in order to recruit and retain students who would be committed to contributing to the process. If anyone is interested in working on this, please reach out.

- i. A. Juan asked why the SA needs to create a committee with the purpose to recruit people that would be committed to PSAC and asked if students can not directly join PSAC.
 1. C. Hodges explained that PSAC is currently 12 members and there are three undergraduate representatives. The process of designing and implementing this alternative response system is a heavier pole than just the 12 members of PSAC and the work on this alternative approach response model as spun off into its own working group. More people need to get involved with this process and there are serious bandwidth issues right now.
 2. A. Juan asked for clarification if people cannot just PSAC.
 - a. C. Hodges clarified that people can join PSAC, but there is process and people have to be recommended or appointed by administrators or assemblies. It is easier for folks to get involved with the working group.
- ii. A. Williams asked for clarification on the subcommittee would look like structure-wise.
 1. C. Hodges answered that would be the discretion of the assembly.
- iii. D. Cady explained that Chief Honan gave a similar presentation in front of the UA and asked if they could go into detail of what the needs and function of this committee would be.

1. C. Hodges explained that they are here to get the conversation going regarding creating the committee and that there is not a specific structure in mind.
 - iv. J. Jiang asked if there would be a seat for international students on the committee, as international students face issues such as language barriers when interacting with authorities.
 1. C. Hodges stated that they are open to that idea and that concern should be kept in mind as the committee is created.
 - v. D. Cady asked what the timeline would be moving forward.
 1. C. Hodges explained that the timeline of the report is 24 months. They have identified what is needed and will be working on staffing groups next semester.
- b. Nomination for the Office of Ethics
 - i. D. Cady explained that this comes from an earlier resolution this semester that dissolved the Research & Accountability Committee and created the Office of Ethics, which is a semi-separate office that is focused on holding SA members accountable. The first candidate for the Office of Ethics is N. Sharma. There will not be a vote on this candidate at this meeting, this is just an introduction.
 - ii. L. Smith communicated that the Office of Ethics will be 7 members with 1 chair and is modeled after similar structures at several schools. The Office is currently tasked with coming back the SA at the end of the spring semester with a Student Assembly Code of Ethics.
 - iii. N. Sharma introduced themselves and explained that they are a transfer student from University at Albany currently in the ILR School. At their previous university, they worked on the Committee of Ethics for the student government. There were many issues with this committee, especially as it was a direct branch from their Senate and was used mainly by members to persecute individuals, they felt were not being ethical. Because of this experience, they were not particularly interesting in joining student government after arriving at Cornell. However, after conversations with D. Cady about the design of the Office of Ethics, N. Sharma explained they were excited about the setup of the Office and would be extremely committed to the Office throughout their time at Cornell. This system for the Office of Ethics is desirable because it creates the opportunity for learning and growth for members. N. Sharma expressed hope that this Office would be supportive of members and would like to see the Office of Ethics reach the most potential that it could be.
 - iv. J. Mullen stated that they are in N. Sharma's class on ethics and expressed that N. Sharma is very knowledgeable regarding ethics.
 - v. A. William commended N. Sharma's passion for ethics and asked for clarification regarding the process of staffing the Office.
 1. D. Cady explained that this is a unique process and that each nomination brought upon the assembly requires a two-thirds vote to be approved. After this, the Office of Ethics should be independently running, and the SA will not have to be involved unless they are needed to be.

- vi. K. Santacruz asked if N. Sharma had a specific vision for the Office of Ethics.
 - 1. N. Sharma answered that they do not envision the Office of Ethics as an executive committee that is able to take action in general. The office should have the power to step in and give guidance and recommendations to the assembly.
- c. Byline Reports
 - i. Convocation Committee
 - 1. V. Valencia explained that the Convocation Committee requested \$18.00 and the Appropriations Committee recommended \$18.00.
 - 2. Motion to approve the recommendation by Unanimous Consent – **failed**
 - 3. Motion to approve the recommendation – **approved** by a vote of 23-1-4.
 - ii. Gender Justice Advocacy Coalition (GJAC)
 - 1. V. Valencia communicated that GJAC requested \$3.45 and the Appropriations Committee recommended \$3.45.
 - 2. D. Cady stated that the SA should look into ways to separately fund the Big Red Shuttle, as it seems like an essential service.
 - 3. Motion to approve the recommendation – **approved** by a vote of 25-0-3.
 - iii. Cornell University Emergency Medical Service (CUEMS)
 - 1. V. Valencia stated that CUEMA requested \$4.70 and the Appropriations Committee recommended \$4.70.
 - 2. Motion to approve the recommendation – **approved** by a vote of 24-0-4
 - iv. Athletics and Physical Education
 - 1. V. Valencia explained that Athletics and Physical Education requested \$9.08 and the Appropriations Committee recommended \$9.08. This organization is different than other organizations on campus, as they do not have an E-Board and receive funding from other places. Athletics and Physical Education fund the Big Red Sports Pass that allows students to attend sporting events for free except for Men's Hockey. Despite having a large rollover, the Committee did not think it was appropriate to lower their allocation and one possibility to spend down this rollover is subsidizing Cornell Fitness Center memberships.
 - 2. L. Smith explained that they were not in favor of passing this recommendation, as the idea of subsidizing fitness passes has been an empty promise for the past few years and it unlikely to happen.
 - 3. A. Lampert asked if this includes the physical education classes that are required.
 - a. V. Valencia explained that the Athletics and Physical Education department has a much larger budget than what the Appropriations Committee is allowed to see, as the committee is only allowed to see what that \$9.09 goes to.
 - 4. D. Cady asked if V. Valencia could disclose how much their rollover is.

- a. V. Valencia explained that they could not.
 - b. D. Cady asked if V. Valencia could reach out and asked if they are comfortable with sharing this information with the assembly at the next meeting.
 - i. V. Valencia answered that they could asked the department if they could come to the meeting next week and explain.
5. A. Williams asked what the \$9.09 goes to other than the Big Red Sports Pass.
 - a. V. Valencia answered that that question is budget-specific, and they will ask the Athletics and Physical Education department to come to the meeting next week to avoid confidentially issues.
6. H. Wade asked what the categories are that their budget typically goes to.
 - a. V. Valencia explained that they host giveaways, spend money on advertisements, and purchase things that student can use.
7. A. Juan asked if the NDAs signed by the Appropriations Committee contradicts with Appendix A, Section 8 of the Charter and how can the assembly approve the recommendation without being able to see the budget.
 - a. V. Valencia stated that is how they did it with EARS a few weeks ago. This is how the process was done in the past.
 - b. L. Smith stated a point of information that in previous byline cycles, the entire SA signed NDAs to have access to the budget information.
8. D. Cady asked if V. Valencia or L. Smith could clarify the process of everyone signing NDAs.
 - a. L. Smith explained that the entire assembly has a fiduciary responsibility to the byline cycle and are allowed access to that information.
9. P. Da Silveira asked why NDAs are necessary when dealing with public money that all of the students are paying for.
 - a. A. Ononye explained that information regarding speakers and speakers' budget, especially information from the Convocation Committee and Slope Day Planning Board, cannot be public information.
 - b. D. Eisman stated that Convocation Committee and Slope Day each sign their own NDS with speakers and performers. If that is the only limitation for the NDAs, it can be easily avoided.
 - i. A. Ononye explained that the information they give the Appropriations Committee provides dates and ranges from multiple years and that information cannot be going into the public as well,
10. N. Overton asked if this recommendation could be tabled to allow the Athletics and Physical Education department to come to next week's meeting.

- a. A. Ononye stated that this recommendation has to be tabled regardless.
 - 11. Motion to table the recommendation – **tabled** by a vote of 25-0-3.
- v. Haven: The LGBTQ Student Union
 - 1. V. Valencia explained that Haven was allocated \$4.20 in the 2020-2022 cycle. For this cycle, Haven requested \$4.40 and the Appropriations Committee recommended \$4.40. Haven put in a lot of work into their programming during the pandemic and they have a very concrete plan for spending down their rollover.
 - 2. H. Wade stated that Haven’s presentation was quite thorough, and they had a very concrete plan for how they were going to spend their allocation.
 - 3. Motion to table the recommendation – **tabled** by Unanimous Consent.
- vi. Community Partnership Funding Board (CPF)
 - 1. V. Valencia stated CPF requested \$2.00 and the Appropriations Committee recommended \$2.00. CPF provides grants for different initiatives on campus. The Committee asked that CPF were more specific in future applications.
 - 2. D. Cady asked for an example of one of these funds.
 - a. V. Valencia stated that they had partnered with Cornell Health to have kidney disease screening for free and have also partnered with minority organizations on campus for fun events.
 - 3. Motion to table the recommendation – **tabled** by a vote of 23-1-4.
- vii. V. Valencia announced that there will be byline hearings on Monday, Nov. 8, in 145 McGraw Hall for CUPB, PFC, Cornell Concert Commission. On Wednesday, Nov. 10, in 366 McGraw Hall, there will be byline hearings for Club Insurance, SHS, and ALANA.
- d. D. Cady announced that the exact version of the resolution the SA passed that called on administration to establish Veterans Day as a university holiday passed in the UA.
- e. D. Eisman stated that the Educational Policy Committee will be meeting with the Provost, and if any members had any concerns they would like brought to please reach out.
- f. H. Wade asked D. Cady if the resolution will be going to the President or the Board of Trustees.
 - i. D. Cady stated that they can speak to H. Wade later, but the hope was to get the resolutions passed before Veterans’ Day.
- g. M. Hoy stated that Veterans Day is November 11, and they are giving out green light bulbs that could be put out on your porch. It a little campaign to bridge the military or veteran on military gap between students. Putting a light out does not symbolize supporting every US war campaign, but as a thanks to the veterans on campus. M. Hoy stated they have 24 green light bulbs and flyers to give out.

VII. Business of the Day

- a. L. Smith asked for an update on the vacancies on the SA.
 - i. A. Ononye explained that both the next runner-up for the SA and the UA have been contact. The next person-in-line for the SA has rejected the position, so they are in the process of reaching out to other people.

- b. A. Gleiberman stated that the confidential information that is given to the Appropriations Committee is watermarked confidential. Information that is not marked confidential should be able to be discussed within the SA.
 - i. A. Ononye stated that they have reached out to President Pollack about this and it will take them about 30 days to respond. It would most likely be affecting the next byline cycle; however, the policy will probably not change, as the university is typically very confidential with financial information.
- c. J. Mullen asked if the discussion tabled last week will be discussed at this meeting.
 - i. A. Ononye stated there has to be motion to reintroduce the subject.

VIII. Adjournment

- a. Motion to adjourn – approved by a vote of 25-0-2.
 - i. A. Ononye adjourned the meeting at 5:56pm

Respectfully Submitted,
Ciara Shanahan
Clerk of the Student Assembly