

## Resolution 39: Zoom Live Transcript Implementation Request

**Abstract:** This resolution calls for the use of automatic live transcription (closed captioning) feature on all applicable academic zoom meetings to better accommodate students through the current and possible future online/remote learning period.

**Sponsored by:** Duncan Cady '23, Kate Santacruz '23

**Reviewed by:** 2/3 majority of Student Assembly voting members

**Type of Action:** Legislation

**Originally Presented:** 01/27/2022

**Current Status:** New Business

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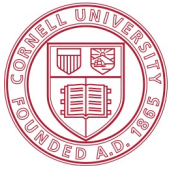
**Whereas,** Cornell University is currently holding all academic courses remotely, using the video conference software zoom, and the first two weeks of Spring 2022 instruction will take place in a virtual environment;

**Whereas,** Cornell prides itself in their mantra of “any person and any study” and must make sure that goes to ensure an inclusive educational environment for all students;

**Whereas,** automatic subtitles are often imprecise and may not necessarily correctly convey the material spoken, especially with complex academic topics;

**Whereas,** The most recent free and paid versions of zoom offers, including all versions of zoom being used at Cornell University, an automatic live transcription (closed captioning) feature that can be easily turned on in any zoom meeting in under two clicks and does not negatively affect any aspects of the meeting;

**Whereas,** Zoom describes this service as the following in a statement from October 2021: “auto-generated captions (also known as live transcription) are now available on all free Zoom Meetings accounts. This feature, which provides automatic captioning during a Zoom video call, is also available for paid Zoom Meetings and Zoom Video Webinars accounts. It’s important to us that everyone can successfully connect, communicate, and participate using Zoom. Without the proper accessibility tools, people with disabilities face tremendous barriers when using video communication solutions. That’s why we [Zoom] are focused on building out a platform that is accessible to everyone, and features such as auto-generated captions are an important part of that mission.”;



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31 **Whereas,** Unlike other accessibility features Zoom offers including “Features like keyboard  
32 accessibility, pinning or spotlighting interpreter video, screen reader support, and voicemail  
33 transcription”, this accessibility feature must be turned on by the meeting host and can only be  
34 requested by meeting participants;

35 **Whereas,** Cornell University can further accommodate all kinds of students, learners, and  
36 participants in university-related zoom meetings by simply turning on this new feature that can  
37 be simply and in intrusively incorporated into any learning environment when beginning a zoom  
38 new meeting;

39 **Whereas,** this feature must be turned on individually before or at the beginning of an individual  
40 zoom meeting by the meeting host or co-host thus cannot automatically be implemented without  
41 teaching assistants, professors, faculty, and academic department heads being aware of this  
42 feature;

43 **Whereas,** This Zoom feature was introduced in late 2021, thus many members of the Cornell  
44 community, inducing many who may seek to benefit from this as an accommodation to students,  
45 including by not limited to, students with disabilities, students with inconsistent auto output set  
46 up in meetings, students without stable internet, etc. do not know about this feature;

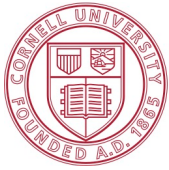
47 **Whereas,** Similarly, many teaching assistants, professors, faculty, academic department heads,  
48 and college Deans likely do not know about this feature nor its potential benefits despite their  
49 best intentions;

50 **Whereas,** Cornell University’s Student Disability Services recognizes the importance of this  
51 accessibility feature as an accommodation not only specific to students with disabilities and see  
52 this feature as possibly beneficial in academic learning environments, advising students to  
53 request it should they be able to;

54 **Whereas,** The Student Assembly holds a unique relationship with the administration including  
55 faculty to request accommodations and increased accessibility in leaning environments for all  
56 students;

57 **Be it therefore resolved,** That President Pollack respectfully requests to teaching assistants,  
58 professors, faculty, and academic department heads that, when possible and not intrusive to the  
59 class material or learning environment, all in-class zoom meetings turn on automatic live  
60 transcription (closed captioning/meeting subtitles) and are recorded to be available for students  
61 and the appropriate parties after viewing;

62 **Be it further resolved,** That the Deans of the all-academic schools and colleges, including but  
63 not limited to Agriculture and Life Sciences (CALS), Arts and Sciences (A&S), Dyson,  
64 Engineering, Art, Architecture, and Planning, Hotel Administration, Human Ecology, and  
65 Industrial and Labor Relations requests to their respective teaching assistants, professors, faculty,  
66 and academic department heads that, when possible and not intrusive to the class material or



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67 learning environment, all in-class zoom meetings turn on automatic live transcription (closed  
68 captioning/meeting subtitles) and are recorded to be available for students and the appropriate  
69 parties after viewing;

70 **Be it further resolved,** that college or school-specific Student Assembly representatives  
71 formerly and respectfully request to the Deans of their respective schools that, when possible and  
72 not intrusive to the class material or learning environment, all in-class zoom meetings turn on  
73 automatic live transcription (closed captioning/meeting subtitles) and are recorded to be  
74 available for students and the appropriate parties after viewing;

75 **Be it finally resolved,** these requests sent out to turn on the automatic live transcription (closed  
76 captioning/meeting subtitles) feature be made at the earliest convenience and are sent out before  
77 the beginning of the second (2) week of instruction starting Monday, January thirty first  
78 (01/31/2022) to give all relevant parties time to implement this new feature in their meetings.

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80 Respectfully Submitted,

81 Duncan Cady '23

82 *Students With Disabilities Representative At-Large, Student Assembly*

83 Kate Santacruz '23

84 *Dyson Representative, Student Assembly*