

**Cornell University**  
**University Assembly**

**Cornell University's University Assembly**

Agenda of the February 8th, 2022 Meeting

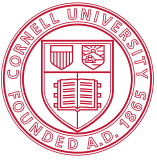
4:30 PM – 6:00 PM

401 Physical Sciences Building | Zoom

- I. Call to Order
  - a. Roll Call
  - b. Land Acknowledgment of the Gayogohono (Cayuga Nation)
  - c. Call for Late Additions to the Agenda
- II. Approval of the Minutes
  - a. [1/25/2022 Meeting Minutes](#)
- III. Open Forum
  - a. Presentation from Public Safety Advisory Committee (PSAC) - Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer Joanne DeStefano
  - b. PSAC Question/Answer Session
- IV. New Business
- V. Assembly Reports
  - a. Student Assembly
  - b. Graduate and Professional Student Assembly
  - c. Employee Assembly
  - d. Faculty Senate
    - i. [Update Regarding Honor Conferral Practices](#)
- VI. Committee Reports
  - a. Executive Committee
    - i. President Pollack visit preparation
  - b. Codes and Judicial Committee
  - c. Campus Welfare Committee
    - i. [Natatorium Resolution Updates](#)
  - d. Campus Committee on Infrastructure, Technology and the Environment
    - i. [Smart Waste Management Resolution Updates](#)
- VII. Liaison Reports
- VIII. Adjournment

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*If you are in need of special accommodations in order to fully participate, please contact Student Disability Services at (607) 254-4545 or the Office of the Assemblies at (607) 255-3715 or [assembly@cornell.edu](mailto:assembly@cornell.edu) prior to the meeting.*



# Cornell University University Assembly

## Cornell University Assembly

Minutes of the January 25th, 2022 Meeting

4:30 PM – 6:00 PM

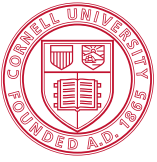
Zoom

- I. Call to Order
  - a. J. Feit called the meeting to order at 4:33pm.
  - b. *Members Present:* I. Akisoglu, V. Aymer, M. Benda, R. Bensel, D. Cady, N. Danev, E. DeRosa, J. Feit, B. Fortenberry, T. Fox, P. Hanley, D. Hiner, D. Howell, M. Louis, A. Ononye, D. Sharp, J. Withers.
  - c. *Members Absent:* C. Levine, J. Richards
  - d. *Also Present:* O. Gustafson, T. Jordan, B. Lewenstein, T. Brant, S. Carson
- II. Land Acknowledgment of the Gayogoḥo·noꞤ (Cayuga Nation)
  - a. J. Feit recited the Land Acknowledgement.
- III. Approval of the 11/30/2022 Minutes
  - a. R. Bensel moved to approve the meeting minutes.
    - i. E. DeRosa seconded the motion.
    - ii. The motion **passed** with unanimous consent.
- IV. Open Forum
  - a. B. Fortenberry related the upcoming visits listed in the agenda.
- V. New Business
  - a. Ombudsman Appointment
    - i. B. Fortenberry stated they received a letter from the president to recommend Professor Bruce Lewenstein.
    - ii. D. Cady and E. DeRosa spoke to the process of recommending an Ombudsman.
    - iii. B. Lewenstein introduced themselves and answered questions about their vision for the role.
    - iv. Discussion ensued on the office's status as a reactive versus proactive role, their willingness to report their findings to the U.A, and their aforementioned vision for the role.
    - v. D. Cady motioned to approve the ombudsman appointment.
      1. N. Danev seconded the motion.
      2. The motion **passed** with 18-0-0.
  - b. Earth-Source Heating (CUBO)
    - i. S. Carson, T. Jordan, O. Gustafson presented on Earth-Source Heating and the Cornell University Borehole Observatory (CUBO).



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- ii. Discussion ensued on earthquakes, consultation of the nearby colleges, the drilling depth, safety mechanisms, funding, and timeframes with data gathering.
      - iii. B. Fortenberry stated that D. Sharp had entered after the vote but had voted in the affirmative. They also noted that C. Levine was overseas and wanted to express their support for the appointment of Professor Bruce Lewenstein.
- VI. Assembly Reports
  - a. Student Assembly
    - i. A. Ononye reported Resolution 35: Calling on Cornell to Eliminate Legacy Preference in Admissions has been submitted to the president and Resolution 37: Recommendation for the Student Activity Fee for 2022-2024 was accepted by the President.
  - b. Graduate and Professional Assembly
    - i. P. Hanley stated the GPSA has not met.
  - c. Employee Assembly
    - i. J. Withers stated they had their Spring Semester Meeting with President Pollack and Vice President Opperman about the semester start. They are planning to meet with Russell Reynolds, a firm that has been retained in the search for the new Chief Human Resource Officer. The Employee Welfare Committee is working on a resolution about employee onboarding. The Communications Outreach and Recognition Committee is reviewing 14 nominations for the Award for Staff Integrity and Inclusion. The Education and Development Committee received an update about the Employee Degree Program: 35 staff members completed their degrees.
  - d. Faculty Senate
    - i. E. DeRosa stated they had their December Faculty Senate meeting. The Faculty Senate had two draft proposals presented: Part-time Bachelor's Degree for Non-traditional Students and Re-thinking the Honor's Distinction. They will vote on these resolutions in the Spring.
    - ii. B. Fortenberry asked if the Part-time Bachelor's Degree for Non-traditional Students would apply to Cornell employees as well.
    - iii. E. DeRosa confirmed. They also stated they are also considering the prison population and the military.
    - iv. J. Feit asked about the motivation behind removing the Dean's List.
    - v. E. DeRosa stated that it is applied differently across colleges, creating extremes where one may have 65% of students on the Dean's List and another college may only have 15%. In contrast, there will be GPA-based



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Honor's and Distinctions applied universally. However, they also reminded the body that this proposal is still under consideration.

- vi. J. Feit asked about the potential disadvantages students may have when pursuing high-profile employment, as they may be compared against other institutions and candidates that give the Dean's List.
- vii. E. DeRosa stated that their argument is to make the blanket policy from Cornell known as to not disadvantage students. E. DeRosa offered to ask that this resolution comes before the GPSA and the SA.
- viii. D. Cady expressed concerns about recruitment cycles if this blanket policy was created. They asked if the Faculty Senate would be open to presenting the resolution before the SA and the UA.
- ix. E. DeRosa stated that the slide decks, proposals, and related conversations are posted on their website.

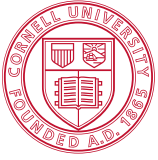
### VII. Committee Reports

- a. Executive Committee
  - i. No updates were reported.
- b. Codes and Judicial Committee
  - i. No updates were reported.
- c. Campus Welfare Committee
  - i. D. Howell stated they had their Spring Semester Kick-off meeting. They are working on a draft resolution in support of a natatorium at Cornell and a memo asking to collaborate with the SA and GPSA on a campus welfare resolution in response to campus crises last semester.
- d. Campus Committee on Infrastructure, Technology, and the Environment
  - i. I. Akisoglu motioned to the meeting by 5 minutes.
    1. D. Sharp seconded the motion.
    2. The motion passed with unanimous consent.
  - ii. I. Akisoglu stated that the next CITE meeting will be opened to all members of the assemblies. There will be presentations facilitated by the Campus Sustainability Office for R5 and a representative from Big Belly.

### VIII. Adjournment

- a. R. Bensel motioned to adjourn the meeting.
  - i. J. Withers seconded the motion.
  - ii. The motion passed with unanimous consent.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:04pm.



Cornell University  
University Assembly

Respectfully Submitted,  
Kassandra Jordan  
Clerk of the Assembly

November 10, 2021

## Proposal Regarding the Award of Honors and Distinctions to Cornell's Undergraduate Students

### Three Recommendations:

1. Replace the diverse approaches to the award of Latin honors with a single approach so that all colleges and schools would confer Latin honors on the bases of percentiles in the colleges and schools, as follows: *Summa cum laude* – top 5%, *Magna cum laude* – next 10%, and *Cum laude* – next 15%;
2. Eliminate dean's list; and
3. Eliminate non-Latin academic honors and distinctions that are determined solely based upon grade point average (GPA) and align the nomenclature used across colleges and schools by adopting a single naming convention for distinctions, "distinction in x," as determined by each college, school, or major.

### Background and Rationale

This is a proposal from all the college and school deans; the college and school academic associate deans who comprise the Associate Deans Council; the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education, Lisa Nishii; the Provost, Michael Kotlikoff; and the Provost Council. It is aimed at creating consistency across the undergraduate colleges and schools in the award of academic honors and distinctions, and balancing recognition of high achieving students against amelioration of an unhealthy culture of competition at Cornell. The proposal contains three recommendations to achieve these goals: (1) replace the diverse approaches to the award of Latin honors with a single approach so that all colleges and schools would confer Latin honors on the basis of percentiles in the colleges and schools, as follows: *Summa cum laude* – top 5%, *Magna cum laude* – next 10%, and *Cum laude* – next 15%; (2) eliminate dean's list; and (3) eliminate non-Latin academic honors and distinctions that are determined solely based upon grade point average (GPA) and align the nomenclature used across colleges and schools by adopting a single naming convention for distinctions, "distinction in x," as determined by each college, school, or major.

### The Associate Deans Group Cross-college Mapping Project

For many years, Cornell undergraduate students have complained that differences in academic policies across the undergraduate colleges and schools create confusion. Moreover, when students believe that divergent academic policies result in inferior treatment for them as compared to other students in the same major but in a different college or school, the "disadvantaged" students may perceive their treatment as unjust. This is particularly true for students enrolled in cross-college majors. (Presently, there are at least ten cross-college majors and for May 2018 graduates, the last year data were collected, 25% of graduates earned a cross-college major.)

In response to these student concerns, and as part of an ongoing effort to identify best practices, the academic associate deans' group convened by Vice Provost Nishii has begun to review academic policies across the undergraduate colleges and schools – the “Cross-college Mapping Project.” In those instances where policies diverge, the associate deans have considered whether the differences advance distinct academic objectives for the colleges and schools, or whether the differences are not warranted and perhaps even arbitrary or problematic. As part of its cross-college and school academic policy review, the associate deans examined academic honors and distinctions for undergraduate students and unexpectedly found wide variations across the university. The associate deans concluded, and the other proponents agreed, that these differences did not advance college- and school-specific missions or goals, and that they could produce the negative effects of which students complained – confusion and perceived or actual inequities.

The proponents also believe that having many types of awards based solely on grades perpetuates an obsession with grades and makes students feel that they are in competition with each other. Students' obsession with grades can impact their choice of courses and make them less likely to take risks in their course selections. The proponents advocate for a more measured approach that affords recognition for academic achievement but does not promote an undue and constant emphasis on grades, while also addressing concerns about inequities across colleges and schools. The three recommendations contained in this proposal, in their totality, are aimed at achieving such a balance: (1) honors and distinctions based solely upon GPA would be reduced to one type, Latin honors, to be conferred only once, after degree completion, and by one unit, the student's college or school, and not by major;<sup>1</sup> (2) the colleges and schools would eliminate dean's lists; and (3) the colleges and schools would strive towards greater shared understanding (and practice) involving distinctions that are awarded upon graduation for excellence that extends beyond GPA alone.

#### Current Latin Honors Policies at Cornell

There is a huge range across Cornell's colleges and schools in the conferral of Latin honors. As discussed below, at one end of the range, no students in a college or school could receive Latin honors, and at the other end, during the period of spring 2017 through fall 2019, 74% of students received Latin honors. The proposal sponsors found this enormous disparity to be inequitable and unintended. Here are the current policies:

- The College of Architecture, Art, and Planning; the College of Human Ecology; and the School of Industrial and Labor Relations do not confer Latin honors.
- The College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, the College of Engineering, the Dyson School of Applied Economics and Management, and the School of Hotel Administration

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<sup>1</sup> As set forth directly below, three colleges or schools do not award Latin honors, but they do award dean's list, which would be eliminated, and, thus, these colleges and schools would not be increasing the number or type of honors and distinctions awarded.

award three levels of Latin honors (*summa cum laude*, *magna cum laude*, and *cum laude*). The award is conferred at the degree level and on the basis of GPA.

- The College of Arts and Sciences awards three levels of Latin honors, but the award is conferred at the level of the major and the requirements for conferral are set by the department for each major.

For the colleges and schools that confer Latin honors at the degree level, the: (1) GPA requirements and (2) average percentile of students awarded Latin honors for the period of spring 2017 through fall 2019 are as follows:

- The College of Agriculture and Life Sciences
  - *Summa*:  $\geq 4.00$ , *magna*:  $\geq 3.75$ , *cum laude*:  $\geq 3.50$
  - 44.3 % of students on average received Latin honors
- The College of Engineering
  - *Summa*:  $\geq 4.00$ , *magna*:  $\geq 3.75$ , *cum laude*:  $\geq 3.50$
  - 48.5% of students on average received Latin honors
- The Dyson School
  - *Summa*:  $\geq 4.00$ , *magna*:  $\geq 3.75$ , *cum laude*:  $\geq 3.50$
  - 74.1 % of students on average received Latin honors
- The School of Hotel Administration
  - *Summa*:  $\geq 4.00$ , *magna*:  $\geq 3.85$ , *cum laude*:  $\geq 3.75$
  - 21.5% of students on average received Latin honors

The College of Arts and Sciences is the only college to award Latin honors at the level of the major; honors are bestowed based on assessments of students' honors theses. In 2017-2018, 20.9% of students received Latin honors.

#### Latin Honors at the Other Ivy League Institutions

All of the other seven Ivy League institutions award Latin honors. All but Brown confer three levels of Latin honors. (Brown confers only *magna cum laude*.) All but Princeton confer Latin honors at the degree level as opposed to the major level. Of the six institutions conferring Latin honors at the degree level, five use percentiles to determine eligibility, one uses GPA, and one uses several criteria, including GPA. For the four institutions that use percentiles and confer three levels of Latin honors, all confer *summa cum laude* to students in the top 5% of the graduating class and *magna cum laude* to the next 10%. For *cum laude*, the percentiles range from the next 10% to the next 20% below *magna cum laude*. Thus, the total percentile of graduating students receiving Latin honors range from 25% to 35%. (Several of our non-Ivy peer institutions were sampled; most award three levels of Latin honors using percentiles that also total in the same 25%-35% range.)



## Current Dean's List Policies at Cornell

All of Cornell's colleges and schools have dean's list, but the GPA requirement ranges from 3.3 to 3.75, as follows:

- The School of Industrial and Labor Relations = 3.3 (first years), 3.4 (sophomores), and 3.6 (juniors and seniors)
- The College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, the Dyson School, and the College of Engineering = 3.5
- The College of Arts and Sciences = 3.6
- the College of Human Ecology = 3.7
- The School of Hotel Administration = 3.75
- The College of Architecture, Art, and Planning = 3.8

These large differences in GPAs produce significant differences in the percentages of students eligible for dean's list across Cornell's colleges and schools, with the percentages varying twofold in some instances. As with Latin honors, the proponents were surprised by these differences and found them to be inequitable. Also, for most colleges and schools, the percentages were extremely high; the proponents believe too high.<sup>2</sup>

## Dean's List at the Other Ivy League Institutions

Five of the other seven Ivies – Brown, Dartmouth, Harvard, Princeton, and Yale – do not have dean's list.

## Other Cornell Honors and Distinctions

In addition to Latin honors and dean's list, across Cornell's undergraduate colleges and schools, there are eight other types of honors and distinctions awarded. A few are based solely upon GPA (which is in effect the same as Latin honors at the degree level, but under a different name), but most are based upon GPA as well as performance in an academic activity such as research or an honors thesis. These honors and distinctions have various titles – distinction in all subjects, distinction and with honors, high distinction and honors, high distinction, high honors, and honors distinction in research.

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<sup>2</sup> Because the recommendation is to eliminate dean's list, it is unnecessary to elaborate further. Suffice it to say, though, that if the recommendation to eliminate dean's list is rejected, the proponents believe it would be essential to adopt a more equitable, uniform approach across the colleges and schools, just as is being proposed for Latin honors.

## Recommendations

**Recommendation 1: Replace the diverse approaches to the award of Latin honors with a single approach so that all colleges and schools would confer Latin honors on the bases of percentiles in their colleges and schools, as follows: *Summa cum laude* – top 5%, *Magna cum laude* – next 10%, and *Cum laude* – next 15%**

For the reasons stated above, the proponents have concluded that Cornell colleges and schools should have a consistent approach to Latin honors so that all undergraduate students are eligible to receive Latin degree honors upon satisfying a shared set of criteria, which the proponents recommend be percentiles. This would mean that the College of Architecture, Art, and Planning; the College of Human Ecology; and the School of Industrial and Labor Relations would confer Latin honors commencing the 2022-2023 academic year, and that in the College of Arts and Sciences, Latin honors would no longer be conferred at the level of the major by departments.<sup>3</sup>

For the specific criteria, the proponents recommend that commencing the 2022-2023 academic year, three levels of Latin honors be awarded to the top 30% of graduating students based upon the following percentiles:

- *Summa cum laude* – top 5% of graduating students,
- *Magna cum laude* – next 10% of graduating students, and
- *Cum laude* – next 15% of graduating students.

Based upon data collected for spring 2017 through fall 2019, the top 5% (*summa*) represents a GPA of approximately 4.00 across Cornell's undergraduate colleges and schools, which is the GPA currently used for the award of *summa cum laude* for all of the Cornell colleges and schools that confer Latin degree honors – the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, the College of Engineering, the Dyson School of Applied Economics and Management, and the School of Hotel Administration. The next 10% (*magna cum laude*) represents a GPA of approximately 3.88, and the next 15% (*cum laude*) represents a GPA of approximately 3.73. These GPAs for *magna cum laude* and *cum laude* are consistent with the GPAs currently used by the School of Hotel Administration but higher than the GPAs used by the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, the College of Engineering, and the Dyson School of Applied Economics and Management. The academic associate deans for these latter three

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<sup>3</sup> For undergraduate students presently enrolled at Cornell, the colleges and schools that currently confer Latin degree honors would use either their present eligibility criteria or the eligibility criteria set forth in this proposal, whichever are more advantageous for the students.

colleges/schools believe that these heightened GPAs are warranted to reduce the percentiles of students receiving Latin honors, which the associate deans believe are now too high.<sup>4</sup>

The proponents recommend using percentiles rather than GPAs because using GPAs produces great disparities across the colleges and schools. The proponents do not believe there is a principled basis for this disparity and find it inequitable. As indicated earlier, currently, the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, the College of Engineering, and the Dyson School use identical GPAs of 4.00, 3.75, and 3.50 for the three levels of Latin honors. According to the previously cited GPA data from spring 2017 through fall 2019, for the Dyson School, these same GPAs result in a significantly different percentile of students eligible for Latin honors (see data on page 3). Using the same 2017-2019 GPA data, and applying them to the remaining colleges and schools, if all of Cornell's colleges and schools were to confer Latin honors on the bases of these GPAs, the ranges across the colleges and schools would be exceedingly large:

- Using a GPA of 4.00 for *summa*, eligibility would range from 1.6% to 18.1%.
- Using a GPA of 3.75 for *magna*, eligibility would range from 23% to 51.4%
- Using a GPA of 3.50 for *cum laude*, eligibility would range from 47.2% to 78.2%

For *magna*, if we use a GPA of 3.85, as is currently used by the School of Hotel Administration, the eligibility range across colleges and schools would be 11.7% to 31%.

As these data demonstrate, for *summa*, there would be an elevenfold difference in conferral rates; for *magna*, depending upon whether the GPA is 3.75 or 3.85, there would be either a twofold or almost threefold difference; and for *cum laude*, while the proportionate difference is not as huge, there is a 30% difference in conferral rates in one college as compared to another. Moreover, the percentage of students graduating with Latin honors at all levels is so large as to undermine the expectation that Latin honors are awarded based upon high academic achievement.

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<sup>4</sup> Assuming the 2017-2019 trends continue, the GPAs that would be required for Latin honors (4.00, 3.88, and 3.73) are high, but the group does not recommend lowering the GPAs to increase the percentiles of students receiving Latin honors beyond what is the norm at the other Ivy and peer institutions. Nonetheless, the proponents do not object to increasing the eligibility for *cum laude* to the top 35% of graduating students (the next 20% below *magna cum laude*) if members of the Faculty Senate prefer this approach. However, based upon the above-referenced 2017-2019 data, this change would not have much impact on the requisite GPA, as the top 40% of graduating students had a GPA of 3.64 as opposed to a GPA of 3.73 for the top 30%.

In contrast, if we use the proposed percentiles (5%, 15%, 30%), while there is still a range in GPAs, the disparities across colleges and schools are not so substantial and the number of qualifying students is not excessive. Based upon the 2017-2019 data, the ranges correlating to the proposed percentiles would be:

- Top 5%: GPA ranges from 3.92—4.09
- Top 15%: GPA ranges from 3.82—3.99
- Top 30%: GPA ranges from 3.67—3.88.

Most important, the proportion of students receiving honors would be the same in each college and school, so this approach best promotes the fundamental goal of equity. This approach is also the one used at most of the other Ivy League institutions.

Finally regarding the benefits of a consistent approach to Latin honors across Cornell, to the extent that Latin honors are significant to prospective employers and graduate and professional school admission officers, the current approach may make it difficult for them to understand the basis for and significance of Latin honors for any given student. With a standard approach across the university, it will be possible to use a uniform transcript notation.

The proponents are aware that there might be inequities in Latin honors eligibility across majors because of disparate GPAs in the majors, but the proponents do not believe the solution is to confer Latin honors at the level of the major as this approach would create a new set of difficulties. For example, for cross-college majors, students in any given cross-college major might be held to very different sets of degree-level requirements, thereby creating inequities for those students. Another problem arises with majors too small to award some or even any Latin honors to a single student. During the 2019-2020 academic year, there were 34 majors with one to nineteen students meaning that the top 5% of enrolled students constitutes less than a single student, so none of these 34 majors could award *summa cum laude* to any student in the major. For 2018-2019, there were 33 such majors and for 2017-2018 there were 39 such majors. During these three academic years, there were also numerous majors with less than seven students so that not even a single student could receive *magna cum laude* (17 such majors in 2019-2020, 18 in 2018-2019, and 21 in 2017-2018). For these three years, there were majors so small (less than four students) that 30% of the declared majors did not amount to a full student so that not a single student in that major could even receive *cum laude*. Another complication would arise with students who have double majors.

In sum, while neither the approach of conferring Latin honors at the level of the college/school or at the level of the major is perfect, the proponents believe that the former approach creates less problems and is less administratively onerous, and it is recommended that the colleges and schools seek to address internal inequities within their units.<sup>5</sup>

## **Recommendation 2: Eliminate Dean’s List**

The proponents believe that eliminating dean’s list is an important step towards accomplishing the goals of this proposal. Because dean’s list is awarded repeatedly, eight times during a typical four-year college career, and, by its very title “dean’s list,” it signals that the college and school leaders deem a high GPA to be the achievement most worthy of the deans’ commendations, it continuously promotes the centrality of high grades, thereby feeding grade obsession, increasing student academic stress, and encouraging students to have a grade-centric approach to their education. Students may thus be discouraged from exploring the curriculum more broadly and taking more intellectual risks than they otherwise would if not so focused on grades. The repetitive nature of the award, and its timing throughout the students’ academic career, make it likely that dean’s list causes students more academic stress and has more sway over course selection than Latin honors, which is awarded to students only once and after they have completed all their coursework.

Moreover, unlike Latin honors, the majority of other Ivies do not have dean’s list, so there is no concern that eliminating its award would put our students at a lesser footing vis-à-vis students at the other Ivies.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Nonetheless, if the Faculty Senate determines it preferable to award Latin honors at the level of the major instead of the degree, pursuant to consistent standards across the colleges and schools, the proponents would not object. The proponents appreciate that there are pros and cons to both approaches, and both would accomplish the essential purpose of achieving consistency across colleges and schools.

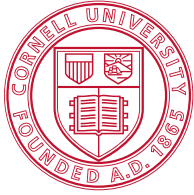
<sup>6</sup> Eliminating Latin honors could also attenuate competition and grade-driven course selection, but for the reasons just stated, the proponents believe that eliminating dean’s list would better accomplish the goals of this proposal and none of the sponsors advocate eliminating both awards. Additionally, because the majority of other Ivies confer Latin honors, eliminating Latin honors would create an anomalous approach vis-à-vis the other Ivies, potentially putting our students at a disadvantage.

The proponents recommend a uniform transcript notation indicating that dean’s list was eliminated commencing the 2022-2023 academic year. Prior dean’s list notations for students currently enrolled at Cornell would continue to be included on transcripts.

**Recommendation 3: Eliminate non-Latin honors and distinctions that are determined solely based upon GPA and align the nomenclature used across colleges and schools by adopting a single naming convention for distinctions, “Distinction in X,” as determined by each college, school, or major**

Finally, integral to this proposal, the sponsors recommend reducing the number and types of non-Latin honors and distinctions, presently eight, to one – “distinction in X,” and eliminating honors and distinctions based solely upon GPA because they resemble if not replicate Latin honors. Colleges and schools could award as many types of “distinctions in X” as they choose, based upon academic activities they choose or a combination of GPA and academic activities, as is the norm now, including requiring a minimum GPA for eligibility. However, while there would not be a limit on the number of ‘distinctions in X’ that could be awarded by a college, school or major, it would be antithetical to the intent of this proposal if they were to proliferate and, thus, it is recommended that the colleges, schools, and majors limit the “distinctions in x.”

As is currently the case, colleges and schools could choose to confer “distinction in X” at the college- or school-level or by departments at the major-level. While the “distinction in X” would continue to be defined and operationalized at the level of the college, school or major, the impact for cross-college majors will need to be carefully considered, as this is the context in which inconsistent academic policies and practices are most confusing and vexing for our students.



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**U.A. Resolution # X [← assigned by Chair or Vice Chair]**

**Support for Faculty Senate Proposed Resolution: Inclusion and Prioritization  
of a New Natatorium in the ‘Do the Greatest Good’ Capital Campaign**  
[Date]

1 **Sponsored by:** [Debra Howell, EA, Chair, Campus Welfare Committee; Kyle Karnuta,  
2 GPSA  
3

4 **On Behalf Of: Faculty Senate Proposed Resolution**  
5

6 **Whereas,** THE F.S. Proposed Resolution outlines specific background on the current situation  
7 and that context which remains unsatisfactory.  
8

9 **Whereas,** the needs of the Cornell community for universal access to free, indoor recreation,  
10 sporting event facilities, and exercise facilities are not being satisfied.  
11

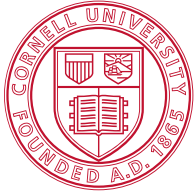
12 **Whereas,** some faculty, staff, students, are no longer able to participate in aquatic fitness at  
13 Cornell.  
14

15 **Whereas,** [If not already addressed, the final Whereas Clause must confirm the problem comes  
16 under the authority of the University Assembly. Essentially, this clause should reference  
17 an item listed in the UA Charter/Bylaws, or must confirm that this issue *significantly*  
18 affects more than one of our constituent groups.]  
19

20 **Be it therefore resolved,** the University Assembly aligns its support with THE F.S. Proposed  
21 Resolution imploring the administration to include and prioritize a new natatorium to the  
22 list of fundraisings items donors may directly contribute to in Cornell University’s ‘Do  
23 the Greatest Good’ capital campaign for the benefit of the University and the community  
24 the University serves.  
25

26 **Be it further resolved,** that a new natatorium should be of sufficient size and quality to meet the  
27 current and future needs of the Cornell community. To help ensure this, the planning  
28 needs to involve Cornell leaders with knowledge and expertise in this area including the  
29 Directors of Athletics, Aquatics, Cornell Wellness, Physical Education, Recreational  
30 Services, and Head Varsity Swimming Coaches.  
31

32 **Be it finally resolved,** [as appropriate, state what follow-on monitoring should be taken. For  
33 instance, a status update to the UA each academic year or semester; appointment of a UA



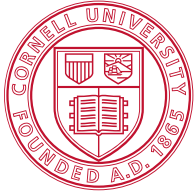
## Cornell University University Assembly

34 liaison, etc. Many Resolutions will take more than the current UA session to be effective.  
35 How do we help future UA's keep track?]

**No signature block is present until the resolution has been disposed of by the Assembly (Passed, Failed, Withdrawn, etc.) Then a block with the certifying member (customarily Chair/Vice-Chair) verifying the authenticity and vote tally of the resolution.**

36





# Cornell University University Assembly

## Appendix A

### 37 **Background**

38 This resolution arises from the imminent need for Cornell University to develop plans, fundraise, and  
39 construct a new natatorium. This resolution seeks to support the F.S. Proposed Resolution, sponsored by  
40 Faculty Senate senators Ashleigh Newman, Yuval Grossman, and at least 11 other faculty senators.

41  
42 The Campus Welfare Committee (hereby, the Committee) is charged with ensuring that diversity and  
43 inclusion, family support, and health services for the Cornell student body, faculty, and staff is prioritized  
44 in both conversation and action. The F.S. Proposed Resolution advocates for the construction of a new  
45 natatorium to benefit the mental and physical health of the entire Cornell community. As such, the  
46 Committee is compelled to support the F.S. Proposed Resolution.

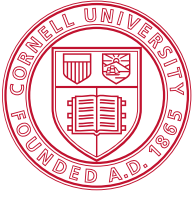
47  
48 As outlined in the F.S. Proposed Resolution, swimming and access to water-based exercise have proven  
49 benefits for mental health. These benefits include increasing self-esteem among college students,  
50 combatting Seasonal Affective Disorder (common in climates similar to Cornell's), and potentially  
51 alleviating mental health concerns brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. Indoor swimming facilities  
52 play a key role in providing access to free, indoor recreation and exercise options for students seeking to  
53 exercise their mental and physical well-being.

54  
55 Unimpeded access to swimming facilities (meaning indoor swimming facilities, given Cornell's climate  
56 during most of the academic year) is also an equity concern. As outlined in THE F.S. Proposed  
57 Resolution, people of color make up the majority of enrolled students in beginning swimming classes  
58 offered at Cornell. Citing the Resolution, "students who have completed this course out of necessity  
59 report undergoing a transformative experience starting with reluctance, fear, and dread to one of immense  
60 pride and accomplishment when they learn how to swim and pass Cornell's swim test."

61  
62 Additionally, the Committee has been made aware that, due to a limitation of access to the pools made in  
63 part to extend the lifespan of the existing pools, women's open swimming hours have been cut. Women's  
64 swim hours have historically provided a safe space for women to access swimming facilities, to network,  
65 and to build community at Cornell. The elimination of this program has been met with disappointment  
66 from the female aquatic community at Cornell.

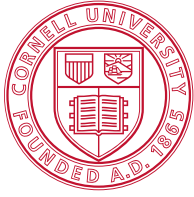
67  
68 As a result of decreased pool hours, unexpected pool closures, and an overall reduction in pool  
69 availability, the aquatic community and culture is being pushed out of Cornell. Specifically, many  
70 faculty, staff, and retirees are now swimming off campus (YMCA, Island Fitness, Borg Warner). In  
71 addition, the Cornell Varsity swimming and diving teams had to hold all home fall meets at Ithaca  
72 College, and the Cornell water polo team is only able to obtain one hour of practice time per week at  
73 Ithaca College. In an effort to attract and retain both academic and athletic talent, the offerings must  
74 improve.

75  
76 In alignment with THE F.S. Proposed Resolution, the Committee recommends incorporating the  
77 construction of a natatorium at Cornell within the scope of the "Do the Greatest Good" campaign. To  
78 quote THE F.S. Proposed Resolution, "a modern natatorium is an eight-lane, 50-meter by 25-yard pool  
79 that is at minimum 9 feet deep, with 14-foot depth in the diving well (for 3-meter springboard diving)."



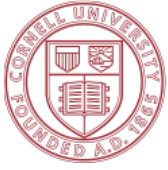
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80



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## Appendix B Faculty Senate Proposed Resolution



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### U.A. Resolution #3

#### Increasing the Number of Sustainable Waste Receptacles on Campus

[11/30/2021]

**Sponsors:** Jacob J. Feit, Executive Vice Chair of the University Assembly; Ian Akisoglu, Chair of the Campus Committee on Infrastructure, Technology, and the Environment; Duncan Cady, Undergraduate Representative to the University Assembly

**ABSTRACT:** In order to ensure Cornell University remains a clean, safe, environmentally sustainable, and ecologically compatible educational and living community, investments must be made to increase the number of sustainably compatible waste receptacles across the University's Ithaca, New York campus. Additionally, waste receptacles ought to be strategically placed such that both financial and natural resources are conserved, recycling habits are rationally incentivized, in order to protect these lands, public health, natural resources, and regional biodiversity.

**Whereas,** Cornell University is recognized as a “global leader in sustainability and climate change research, teaching and engagement,” specifically, such that our “campuses are living laboratories for developing, testing and implementing solutions that address these most challenging issues,” as digitally noted by administrators,<sup>1</sup> and

**Whereas,** Cornell University is currently “the leading Ivy League institution rated by AASHE STARS, and one of just eight universities in the world to achieve the highest possible STARS rating of Platinum,”<sup>2</sup> and

**Whereas,** Cornell University's Campus Master Plan promotes the important role of stewardship ensuring that the University's continued development “respect[s] and manage[s] the physical

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<sup>1</sup><https://sustainability.cornell.edu/#:~:text=Cornell%20is%20a%20global%20leader,change%20research%2C%20teaching%20and%20engagement>

<sup>2</sup><https://sustainablecampus.cornell.edu/about/reports-awards-facts/awards-rankings#:~:text=In%202019%2C%20Cornell%20University%20became,possible%20STARS%20rating%20of%20Platinum.>



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environment of the campus and its broader land base for the health of the university, its constituencies, its neighbors and the larger regional ecosystem,”<sup>3</sup> and

**Whereas**, in their November 16, 2021 visit to the Assembly, President Pollack and Vice President Malina expressed their support for the sustainable development of campus, noted the important role that sustainable infrastructure plays in the daily happenings of the Cornell community, and

**Whereas**, the installation of such “smart” waste and recycling infrastructure has the potential to “measure diversion rates,”<sup>4</sup> by employing using self-harnessed solar power to continuously provide waste accumulation metrics, resulting in informed decision making with respect to collection times, cycles, and/or patterns, and

**Whereas**, “smart” waste management and recycling infrastructure are similarly outfitted with the technology necessary to “periodically compact[s] the trash inside, creating space for more,”<sup>5</sup> and

**Whereas**, in the current absence of a similar method of remotely tracking metrics of waste accumulation, our current waste disposal and recycling system inefficiently and unnecessarily burns fossil fuels and wastes financial resources surveying and collecting waste from receptacles that are not fully filled, and

**Whereas**, in the current absence of a similar method of remotely tracking metrics of waste accumulation, admirable attempts to conserve financial resources and reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions inadvertently neglect overfilled waste receptacles, resulting in a greater likelihood of wildlife accessing waste, posing a potential danger physical danger, as well as perpetuates existing issues of waste ending up in our local waterways and natural environment(s), resulting in devastating environmental/ecological consequences, and

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<sup>3</sup>[https://masterplan.cornell.edu/doc/CMP\\_PART\\_1/campus\\_waste\\_\\_plan\\_principles\\_essential\\_features.pdf](https://masterplan.cornell.edu/doc/CMP_PART_1/campus_waste__plan_principles_essential_features.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> <https://bigbelly.com/solutions/campus/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://news.brown.edu/articles/2011/02/belly>



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**Whereas**, our peer institutions, including Massachusetts Institute of Technology,<sup>6</sup> Brown University,<sup>7</sup> and Boston University<sup>8</sup> have all implemented “smart waste & recycling” initiatives on their campuses with phenomenal success, and

**Be it therefore resolved**, Cornell University shall efficiently invest the funds and resources necessary for the full, successful implementation of a campus-wide network of solar-powered waste receptacles, outfitted with monitorization technology allowing for the efficient tracking of waste receptacle capacity in order to strategically plan collection timing, ultimately reducing greenhouse gas emissions necessarily involved in waste collection and processing, and

**Be it further resolved**, such waste receptacles must be limited in quantity as a means of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and the financial burden of sustaining this initiative, however, these installed “smart” receptacles ought to be strategically placed with respect to foot-traffic and living spaces, facilitating practical, equitable access to proper waste disposal, in totality ensuring adequate waste and recycling disposal is rationally incentivized, limiting the propensity for littering and dumping, and

**Be it finally resolved**, the commencement of this initiative will continue to support the historic and thriving environmentalist values of Cornell University, making good on promises of sustainable development.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jacob J. Feit

Executive Vice Chair, University Assembly

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<sup>6</sup> <https://news.mit.edu/2011/bigbelly-solar-at-mit>

<sup>7</sup> <https://news.brown.edu/articles/2011/02/belly>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.bu.edu/articles/2009/big-bellied-trash-eaters-arrive/>