



Cornell University University Assembly

Cornell University Assembly

Minutes of the October 5th, 2021 Meeting

4:30 PM – 6:00 PM

Physical Science Building

- I. Call to Order
 - a. B. Fortenberry called the meeting to order at 4:35pm
 - 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, A. Ononye, J. Richards, J. Withers
 - c. *Members Absent:* D. Howel, C. Levine, M. Louis, S. Tanis
- II. Late Agenda
 - a. J. Feit motions to add committee appointments to the agenda
 - i. P. Hanley seconded the motion
 - ii. The motion passed with unanimous consent
- III. Open Forum
 - a. Updates regarding Potential Invitees and Guest Speakers
 - i. B. Fortenberry stated Police Chief Honan acknowledged he received the invite, and the PSAC voiced an interest in joining to report the work they have been doing.
 - b. Search for a new University Ombudsman
 - i. B. Fortenberry stated that K. Cunningham reached out to see if we would like to appoint a representative to aid in the search for a new University Ombudsman.
 - ii. R. Bensel asked who uses the Office of the Ombudsman.
 - iii. G. Giambattista stated that the Ombudsman makes a report to the assembly every year. They offer to see if they can find the minutes associated.
 - iv. B. Fortenberry stated that their goal is to have a member for every role in the assembly.
 - v. A. Ononye recommended D. Cady.
 1. D. Cady stated that they would be happy to talk with someone about the requirements and time commitments.
 - vi. R. Bensel asked if they intend to appoint an Ombudsman from outside or inside the university.
 - vii. T. Fox stated that it has always been a Cornell member.
 - viii. E. DeRosa stated that someone had recommended an individual who has been at Cornell for a long time and understands where to access resources.
 - ix. R. Bensel nominated D. Cady to be their representative.
 1. E. DeRosa seconded the motion
 2. D. Cady accepted under the understanding that they would learn more about the position and then make a more formal decision



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3. The motion **passed** with unanimous consent.

IV. Assembly Reports

a. Student Assembly

- i. A. Ononye stated that they discussed financial aid, the students who have not formally revived their financial aid packages, the Cornell Readership Program, and the slope day program. They also had the Professional Fraternity Council (PFO) come to speak about their charter. The PFO had been required to report diversity statistics to a PFC. At the beginning of the year, they attempted to remove the clause and the SA rejected the movement. They had an open forum with those returning PFO representatives as they requested to uphold their original request. They had a resolution in support of Orange Shirt Day. The SA will also be swearing in their new freshman and transfer representatives on Thursday.
- ii. J. Feit asked for the PFO's basis for wanting to remove the diversity statistics clause
 1. A. Ononye stated the PFO is a relatively new organization, and they umbrella all the professional student organizations on campus, which has struggled in the past with diversity. They are seeing organizations leave on that basis of being required to create diversity reports.
- iii. An individual in the chat asked for the meaning of the Orange Shirt Day
 1. A. Ononye gave the summation of the resolution, which can also be encapsulated by its abstract: "This resolution calls for Cornell University to declare Orange Shirt Day, or National Day of Remembrance for the U.S. Indian Boarding Schools, an official day of recognition and solidarity. In its declaration, it promotes awareness and active engagement in educational resources and an acknowledgment of the current 6,509 Native American children's gravesites/bodies recovered in the U.S. and Canadian residential schools." This day is formally recognized by the United States, however, they would also like the University to formally recognize this day.
- iv. B. Fortenberry asked if they had any insight on the issues with financial aid.
 1. A. Ononye reported that during the forum they gleaned that the Financial Aid and Bursar Offices are severely understaffed and as a result, they were not able to get to the financial packages in a timely manner. They are trying to ensure it will not happen again. Another issue arose in the form of bursar holds as if a student was late in paying tuition it would result in a hiring freeze.
 2. D. Cady stated that in order to negate this issue from happening in the future, they are trying to train up their new members and achieve full office capacity.



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- b. Graduate and Professional Student Assembly
 - i. P. Hanley stated that they had not met since last week and were focused on staffing.
- c. Employee Assembly
 - i. J. Withers stated that they also had not met since the last meeting, however, they are looking at a resolution in support of Interim Policy 6.3 tomorrow.
 - ii. R. Bensel asked what Interim Policy 6.3 entailed.
 - 1. J. Withers reported it was the policy on consensual relationships and they extended it to ban romantic relationships between staff and undergraduates.
- d. Faculty Senate
 - i. E. DeRosa reported that they had two senate meetings. One was a special senate meeting around faculty concerns on teaching in person. In their first meeting, they passed two resolutions: one on accommodations and another on faculty digression to teach online. During the second meeting they had updates on the Anti-Racism Initiatives on the university level and the new department in the College of Human Ecology. They had four new resolutions, one was from the University Faculty Committee, which resolved the processes of the approval process of international dual degrees programs. This was resolved over the summer and so it was motioned to be withdrawn. Two resolutions were on title changes within the ILR school. The last resolution was a senate-sponsored proposal that all new university programs should be approved through the state.
 - ii. D. Cady asked about the university's response to the first resolution on accommodations for faculty, staff, and students due to COVID.
 - 1. E. DeRosa reported that President Pollock stated that it is the universities prerogative to be a student-centered, residential experience, in-person teaching university. They will post the response with the resolutions as to be publicly available.
 - iii. N. Danev asked if the university acknowledged the Faculty Senate's position and inquired about the scope of programs that would be approved through the senate.
 - 1. E. DeRosa stated that there was no direct response from the University when going against the recommendations of the Senate for the Dual Degree International Double Degree Program. But the five steps recommended by the Senate are part of the approval process and are the reason for the withdrawal of the aforementioned resolution.
 - 2. R. Bensel stated the Faculty Senate rejected the Peking Dual Degree program and the university approved the program without reporting to the Faculty Senate. There are two resolutions for the Dual Degree



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programs, the one currently being voted on provides that all the information about the program and proceedings will be forwarded to the Faculty Senate before being sent to the provost. R. Bensel stated the second proposal was created privately between the Dean of Faculty and the central administration. This resolution will go into effect if the first resolution is rejected. In this resolution, the Faculty Senate does not have the ability to amend, advise, or participate in the join program.

- iv. A. Ononye asked about the Anti-Racism Initiative progress
 - 1. E. DeRosa stated that the concrete plans will soon be announced.

V. Committee Reports

- a. Executive Committee
 - i. J. Feit stated there was nothing to report.
- b. Codes and Judicial Committee
 - i. J. Richards stated that their first meeting will be this Friday. They will be discussing their new role and hearing from the new Hearing Panel Chair,
 - ii. B. Fortenberry asked about appointment statuses.
 - 1. J. Richard stated that they have not appointed anyone yet.
- c. Campus Committee on Infrastructure, Technology and the Environment (CCITE)
 - i. I. Akisoglu reported the CCITE received 2 appointments from the GPSA and 2 appointments from the Student Assembly. Currently, they are missing a voting member from the Employee Assembly.
 - ii. J. Withers stated that they will be voting on liaison appointees in the next meeting.

VI. Liaison Reports

- a. Campus Planning Committee (CPC)
 - i. I. Akisoglu reported that the CPC talked on the topics of construction of a new building funded by the National Science Foundation Grant; the hot water master plan and earth source heating is on schedule to begin construction of a test well in the Spring of 2022; Fernow Green modifications to the stair scheme; and back up to the Deiseal Generator will be in Grand Field Hall.

VII. Adjournment

- a. R. Bensel moved to adjourn.
 - i. N. Danev seconded the motion.
 - ii. The motion **passed** with unanimous consent.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:19pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Clerk of the Assembly