



Cornell University  
Student Assembly

## Cornell University Student Assembly

Minutes of the Thursday, April 15, 2021 Meeting  
4:45pm via Zoom

### I. Call to Order & Roll Call

- a. C. Huang called the meeting to order at 4:46pm (EST).
- b. Roll Call
  - i. *Members Present:* L. Abd Elmagid, M. Baker, J. Bansah, K. Butler, C. Castillo, U. Chukwukere, L. Contreras, A. Gleiberman, S. Kapoor, A. Lampert, A. Miramontes Serrano, E. Perez, T. Reuning, K. Santacruz, M. Shardow, L. Smith, C. Templeman, V. Valencia, N. Watson, S. Woldai, V. Xu, S. Zverev, C. Huang
  - ii. *Members Absent:* Y. Yuan, R. Zohar, L. Zumpano

### II. Land Acknowledgement of the Gayogohó:nq' (Cayuga Nation)

- a. Cornell University is located on the traditional homelands of the Gayogohó:nq' (the Cayuga Nation). The Gayogohó:nq' 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:nq' dispossession and honor the ongoing connection of the Gayogohó:nq' people, past and present, to these lands and waters.

### III. Open Microphone

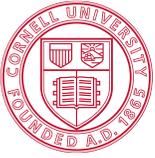
- a. No speakers present at open microphone.

### IV. Approval of the Minutes

- a. April 8, 2021
  - i. Motion to approve the April 8<sup>th</sup> minutes – **approved** Unanimous Consent

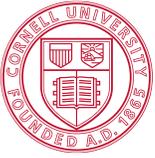
### V. New Business

- a. There was a motion to amend the agenda to begin discussion on the SAIFC Proposal regarding a Rain Garden.
  - i. Motion to amend the agenda – **amended**
- b. SAIFC Proposal – Rain Garden
  - i. A. Lampert explained that this is a proposal for the funding for a rain garden outside of Corson Hall that has been in the works since the Fall 2020 semester led by Dr. Nina Bassuk.
  - ii. L. Smith stated that the site where the rain garden is going to be is currently just grass and it will be very excited to see its transformation in conjunction with class being taught on it.
  - iii. C. Huang asked where on campus this will be located.
    1. L. Smith stated it is near Plant Science and the Agricultural Quad.
  - iv. V. Xu asked how many students this will actually impact as it \$12,000.
    1. A. Lampert stated that it is actually around \$9,000. The classes that have been working on it are around 20 students, but they have been working on this project for a long time. They've done a lot of



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- research which has shown that rain gardens have been very impactful on college campuses.
2. L. Smith explained that additionally is will be featured on a map of spots on campus that are environmentally designed and will be an attraction to visitors.
  - v. Motion to vote on the proposal – **approved** 20-0-2
- c. SA R41: Disengaging Cornell from the War in Yemen
- i. Abstract: This resolution calls for an end to Cornell's relationship with Saudi Arabia and arms manufacturers involved in war crimes in the War in Yemen.
  - ii. J. Mullen explained this resolution builds on the presentation about the War in Yemen last SA meeting and includes support from several professors and faculty and the Arab Student Association at Cornell.
  - iii. L. Abd Elmagid stated that this is very good initiative that J. Mullen did extensive work and research on. It ties into the growing theme of asking Cornell to be transparent with its engagements and uphold its ethical standards in every partnership.
  - iv. L. Smith asked if the administration has responded to Resolution #39.
    1. C. Huang stated that the administration has not responded to Resolution #39.
  - v. A. Miramontes Serrano expressed support for the resolution but stated that the Engineering communities have expressed concern over the employers being singled out.
    1. J. Mullen stated that the four companies singled out in the resolution have been committing war crimes by providing weapons to Saudi Arabia.
    2. M. Shardow explained that Cornell students could still apply for jobs at those companies, they just would not be allowed to recruit on campus.
  - vi. A. Gleiberman asked if there has been discussions where potentially other funding could come from for diversity programs, as many of these programs are funded by these companies.
    1. J. Mullen stated they have not directly brought this specific question up with the College of Engineering, but perhaps the funds that are



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- already provided by companies that are more ethical could be prioritized.
2. L. Abd Elmagid stated that this question is more for administration rather than the organizers. It is up to administration to reevaluate their partnerships and make sure they are ethical.
- vii. L. Smith asked if there were any precedents on donations being publicly disclosed and redirected to another location.
1. J. Mullen explained this demand came from the professors that called upon the university to have transparency.
  2. L. Smith asked if it would be more fitting to just not accept those funds in the first place.
    - a. J. Mullen stated that part of disclosing previous donations would be advocating to not accept these donations. There is no justification to take these funds now.
- viii. M. Baker asked what the four companies being discussed are.
1. J. Mullen stated that the four companies are BAE, Northrop Grumman, Lockheed Martin, and Boeing.
- ix. L. Smith asked if this would continue after the conflict is resolved.
1. J. Mullen stated that, following the guidelines established by Resolution #39, these practices would be held up as long as Saudi Arabia continues with other human rights abuses and unethical practices.
- x. There was a motion to amend line 80 in Resolution #41 to state Resolution #39.
1. Motion to amend Resolution #39 – **amended**
- xi. V. Xu stated that when discussing Resolution #39, there were parallel discussions going on in the Faculty Senate and asked if the Faculty Senate is planning to discuss this as well.
1. J. Mullen stated that currently they are not discussing it, but in 2018 there was more momentum around it. If you look on the cosponsor page of the resolution, there are several cosponsors who are also in the Faculty Senate.
  2. V. Xu asked how the administration responded to the efforts in 2018.
    - a. J. Mullen stated this was mentioned in the last meeting, but administration did not respond.
- xii. M. Baker stated they have had discussion with Engineering students on their perspective on how beneficial job fairs are in general and how we can diminish the negative impacts of this resolution. M. Baker expressed concern over first-generation students whose parents are not engineers and don't know much about these companies and job opportunities in general.
1. L. Abd Elmagid stated that many questions being asked are very similar. Additionally, the focus should be on the positive impact that



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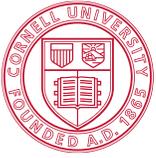
Cornell would not be complicit in the killing of millions of people and the manufactured famine that is starving children.

2. T. Reuning asked for representatives who are not members of marginalized communities or first-generation communities to not speak for them, as many who are actually members of those communities would rather students do not go work for these companies and contribute to the war crimes being committed.
  3. L. Contreras reaffirmed T. Reuning's statements and stated their community would care more about a genocide occurring than four companies coming to a job fair.
  4. E. Perez emphasized the previous statements and that this is bigger issue.
- xiii. Motion to vote on Resolution #41 – **passed** 17-1-3
- d. SA R42: Adding Mental Health Checks to the Daily Check
- i. This resolution calls for the addition of a mental health and wellbeing related question on the Daily Check Portal to better connect students with mental health resources during the COVID-19 pandemic.
  - ii. A. Ononye stated that this resolution focuses on adding Mental Health checks to the Daily Check portal. This is obviously a temporary fix to the mental health challenges faced on campus, but hopefully would provide an increased opportunity for students to seek help and identifying people in need and care on campus. It does not automatically sign a student up for a CAPS session, but it gives students access to mental health resources on campus they may not have known existed.
  - iii. Motion to vote on Resolution #42 – **passed** 20-0-1
- e. There was a motion to amend the agenda to include Resolution #43.
- i. Motion to amend the agenda - **amended**
- f. SA R43: Demanding Cornell Implement a University-Wide Slip Day System
- i. Abstract: This resolution calls on Administration to create an academic policy that grants each student 10 slip days to be used at their discretion in each enrolled course per semester.
  - ii. N. Watson stated this resolution is calling on administration to implement a new university wide policy allowing for slip days in every academic class. The Information Science Department currently has this policy for slip days,



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- which act as extensions that do not require the student to ask the professor for them.
- iii. K. Butler asked if they apply for exams, homework, and all assignments and for more clarification on what a slip day is.
    1. N. Watson stated that a slip day is a one-day extension on an assignment and generally applies to any assignment except for prelims and finals.
  - iv. L. Smith stated that this resolution was reviewed by committee today and asked if they would consider tabling until next week to allow people to read through it.
    1. N. Watson stated that this resolution was born out of the events of the past week and it would look favorably on approving this today as it is beneficial for all students.
  - v. K. Santacruz asked if the Information Science Department gives out 10 slip days.
    1. N. Watson stated that 10 is kind of an arbitrary number and is open to suggestions, but 10 is the standard.
    2. K. Santacruz if it 10 per semester or 10 per class.
      - a. N. Watson explained it is 10 per class.
  - vi. J. Bansah asked if there is a timeline for when administration would approve this to move forward and if it applies to seven-week courses.
    1. N. Watson stated that if it approved by the SA today, C. Huang will convey this to the President as a recommendation for administration. There are also avenues through the Faculty Senate they can go through. In regard to seven-week courses, it would most likely be half the number so 5 slip days.
  - vii. T. Reuning expressed support for this resolution as it would assist all students, especially first-generation students and other marginalized communities that are shown to be less likely to ask for extensions.
  - viii. L. Smith stated it may be helpful to work directly with the Academic Policy Committee.
    1. N. Watson thanked L. Smith for their input and stated they will work the committee to add pressure to administration to get this approved.
  - ix. S. Kapoor stated they are a member of the Academic Policy Committee and expressed their support for the resolution. S. Kapoor asked if there is any



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plans of speeding this resolution up, as it tends to take a very long time to implement academic policy change.

1. N. Watson stated they do not have a timeline, but President Pollack must respond with 30 days of receiving the resolution.
- x. Motion to vote on Resolution #43 – **passed** 19-0-1

### **VI. Adjournment**

- a. C. Huang adjourned the meeting at 5:32pm (EST).

Respectfully Submitted,

*Ciara Shanahan*

Clerk of the Student Assembly