



Cornell University Student Assembly

Cornell University Student Assembly

Minutes of the Thursday, August 30, 2018 Meeting
4:47pm-6:25pm in Willard Straight Hall: Memorial Room

I. Call to Order & Roll Call

- a. V. Devatha called the meeting to order at 4:47 pm.
- b. Roll Call
 - i. *Present:* J. Anderson [0], D. Barbaria [0], V. Devatha [0], O. Din [0], J. Dominguez [0], O. Egharevba [0], A. Hailu [0], S. Harshvardhan [0], N. Hernandez [0], S. Iruvanti [0], A. Jain [0], K. Kebbeh [0], N. Matolka [0], D. Nyakaru [0], G. Park [0], E. Shapiro [0], M. Shovik [0], J. Sim [0], F. Uribe-Rheinbolt [0], I. Wallace [0], B. Weintraub [0]
 - ii. *Absent:* S. Lim [0], M. Peralta-Ochoa [0]

II. Approval of Minutes

- a. J. Anderson moved to amend the agenda such that the approval of the August 23rd minutes would occur before the open microphone – **amended**.
- b. Motion to approve the August 23rd minutes – **approved**.

III. Open Microphone

- a. No speakers at the open microphone.

IV. Announcements and Reports

- a. J. Anderson said that SA Orientation is on the 8th of September, and that any member who cannot make it to the orientation should let him know as soon as possible so as to find a time to make it up.

V. Business of the Day

- a. Resolution 4: Amending the Student Assembly Bylaws for Clarity, Efficiency, and Executive Committee Structure
 - i. D. Barbaria said that the Executive Committee (henceforth Exec) reviewed and approved the amendments shown in the current copy of the appendix of Resolution 4, but the amendments could not be put into place since the resolution had been tabled since last week. He moved to amend the resolution such that these changes would be put in place – **amended**.
 - ii. D. Barbaria moved to amend the title of the committee on line 387 to read “Financial Organization Review Committee,” and for the organization name on line 389 to read “Student Activities Funding Commission” – **amended**.
 - iii. D. Barbaria said that the language of the previous amendments is the language that the Student Activities Funding Commission (henceforth SAFC)

requested, and that there needs to be a way to control the number of organizations under SAFC since there are many organizations that have almost the same e-board and the same advisor, but are slightly different. He also said that these organizations should not have what amounts to multiple fundings.

- iv. Uchie Tergel said that SAFC takes its funding from byline, and that it needs a way to control its growth. She added that there are currently no checks and balances present in regards to new student group registration, and that is why the Financial Organization Review Committee (henceforth FORC) must be created.

1. U. Tergel is the chair of SAFC.

- v. D. Barbaria said that the committee will only act when it truly believes an organization is trying to cheat SAFC. He added that they are still in the early stages of planning in this regard and that it should be present in the bylaws.
- vi. V. Devatha moved to amend line 25 of the resolution such that it would read “Dale Barbaria ‘19” – amended.
- vii. Tirenolu Onabajo asked how often new organizations are created that are duplicates of other organizations.
- viii. U. Tergel said there are 40 to 60 new groups registered each semester. She added that they have not yet dug through the entire list, but the current projection is that 30-40% of the organizations are duplicates.
- ix. J. Dominguez asked if there are currently any plans to try and increase the requirements to make a new group on campus.
- x. U. Tergel said that there are currently no other restrictions in making a new student group, and that there was a meeting last semester with Joe Scaffido in which this solution was created.
- xi. D. Barbaria said that this will not be the only solution, and that the idea is to adjust the tier structure in the future. He added that some SAFC organizations would be better funded by a different byline organization, and that there are many changes to discuss, with the creation of FORC being the first one. He also said that they are trying to get this done prior to SAFC’s impending request in Fall 2019 for a byline funding increase.
- xii. J. Dominguez asked a further question.
- xiii. U. Tergel said that hopefully, when the office sees a new group on campus, they would be able to ask whether the function of this group is served by another group, and why the proponents of the new group did not go to the existing group. She added that such a system is currently not present at Cornell.
- xiv. Adam Klier asked if there will be a system in place to make sure that the power of FORC is not abused.
- xv. D. Barbaria said that the entire structure of the Assembly is meant to prevent that, and that while there is no specific channel for this, any decision made by FORC can be overturned by the Appropriations Committee (henceforth AppsCom).
- xvi. O. Egharevba referenced SAFC’s earlier stated goal of achieving no more than 3% growth by the next byline cycle, and asked by how much eliminating duplicate organizations would stifle SAFC’s growth.

- xvii. U. Tergel said that this would probably stifle the growth significantly, and that each of the 40 to 60 new groups per semester can each ask for \$500 of funding in a semester.
- xviii. N. Hernandez moved to amend the resolution – **amended**.
 - 1. Line 493 would now include “First Generation Students Representative” following “both Minority Liaisons”.
 - 2. Line 502 would be struck until the words “Task Force”.
 - 3. Lines 506-509 would be struck.
- xix. I. Wallace moved to amend the resolution – **amended**.
 - 1. Line 173 would see “individual infrastructure” replaced with “Campus Planning Committee”.
 - 2. Line 174 would see “Diversity” replaced with “infrastructure and sustainability”.
 - 3. Between lines 174 and 175 would now include “7. Provide the assembly updates on the status of the 2035 Carbon Neutrality Campus Initiative,” and the previous instance of “7.” would be changed to “8.”.
- xx. J. Dominguez said that he would dissent with section 7 of the resolution because it confuses the role of Exec, and since each member has powers independent of those of their committee, he does not see the reason for section 7.
- xxi. J. Anderson said that people have voiced concern about this role, and that his focus was to improve the flow of how to use a very strong position to make it a key part of the assembly.
- xxii. J. Sim said that the advantages to this position could be enjoyed by the chairs of other committees as well as the Student Assembly Infrastructure Fund Committee (henceforth SAIFC). He added that an increased amount of respect is not a valid reason to make a chair a VP, and that the Assembly does not judge committees by the amount of money that is under their purview.
- xxiii. J. Sim moved to **divide the question**, such that Section 7 would be considered separately to the rest of the resolution – approved 14-1-3.
 - 1. Section 7 is the section relevant to the creation of the VP Infrastructure position.
- xxiv. V. Devatha said that he would look favorably on a motion to vote on the section of the resolution independent from Section 7.
- xxv. D. Barbaria asked how the vote would work.
- xxvi. Edem Dzodzomenyo clarified.
- xxvii. D. Barbaria asked how the majority rules would work.
- xxviii. E. Dzodzomenyo said that both sections would require a 2/3rds majority.
- xxix. Motion to vote on the parts of Resolution 4 independent of Section 7 – **approved** 19-1-2.
- xxx. B. Weintraub said that there is a lot of bureaucracy in the Student Assembly, and increasing the amount of bureaucracy without good reason is not a good thing. He added that the SA should try to improve the issues of the SAIFC without increasing bureaucracy, and that it is simple to improve communication issues.

- xxxi. D. Barbaria said that it is important to realize that the problems with SAIFC are not communication or oversight errors, but a failure of the committee to function in the past due to a lack of institutionalization. He added that this solution will not fix all of the problems of SAIFC, but it will allow it to function in a way that it is meant to.
- xxxii. I. Wallace said that it is not true that the VP positions' responsibilities are solely within the SA. He began to continue his point.
- xxxiii. V. Devatha said that a point of information is meant to be a question.
- xxxiv. I. Wallace yielded his time.
- xxxv. D. Nyakaru said that a lot of the work that VP Diversity & Inclusion does is outside of the SA, and that there is a huge misunderstanding as to what the chairs do. She added that the Financial Aid Review Committee (henceforth FARC) has a lot of money, like SAIFC, but also a lot of institutional support, unlike SAIFC. She also said that if this solution does not work, then it can be amended again to come up with a different solution.
- xxxvi. V. Devatha yielded his chairmanship to J. Sim for the purposes of this comment. He said that, with committees like FARC and Dining, there is a lot of infrastructure, and that SAIFC should get that infrastructural support regardless of whether this passes.
- xxxvii. O. Egharevba said that he and other members of the committee are having trouble wrapping their heads around this position. He asked what makes this committee more deserving of a position on Exec than others who also do great work. He added that the question should be how the SA can improve the SAIFC. He also asked D. Barbaria that, if the committee is horrible, then why the question isn't how it can be improved.
- xxxviii. J. Anderson said that all SA committees can be chaired by non-SA members with the exceptions of FARC and SAIFC. He added that SAIFC is very important to the student body, because these are the concerns that students have. He also said that he does not believe adding this position is adding more bureaucracy, but rather is streamlining, and that when this position is put on Exec it signals that the SA is making infrastructural issues a priority.
- xxxix. D. Barbaria said that what makes this committee different is that it is one of only two whose operations are detailed in charter, the other being AppsCom. He also clarified that this is a committee who deserves to have a Vice President chairing it, not for its chair to be a Vice President, and that there is a difference between the two.
- xl. Ashwin Viswanathan said that he has served on SAIFC before, and that there are many issues with it that require the committee to have more structure in terms of how to operate. He added that, if the Assembly deems committees to need a position on Exec to be successful, then there is no point of having committees as separate entities. He also said that communication issues won't be solved just by having the head of the committee on Exec, and that a greater cultural shift in the committee is required.
- xli. G. Park said that the argument about the position becoming respected if on Exec is ridiculous, but that if the position can help streamline things, then there is no harm in passing the resolution, even if it only helps marginally.
- xl. E. Shapiro said that the problem seems to be that SAIFC does not have structure around it, and that he does not believe that adding a VP position

does that. He added that the Assembly should be reaching out to relevant people and organizations. He also asked D. Barbaria whether he intends to attend SAIFC meetings this year.

1. The VP Finance is a member of the SAIFC.
- xliii. D. Barbaria said that he intends to, but that he cannot attend all SAIFC meetings, and the past chairs attended a total of four in three years. He added that the question at hand is whether this position is beneficial to the functioning of the Assembly, not whether any given chair should be a VP position.
- xliv. O. Din said that he supports the idea of putting this position on Exec and that it is important that this is being discussed, but not that important. He added that the current chair of SAIFC wants this to happen, that Exec approved it, and that the Assembly should just approve it. He also said that if this section is killed today, then nothing else is going to happen in regard to improving the committee.
- xlv. V. Devatha said that Exec passes resolutions because they think it should be discussed, not because they are in favor of it.
- xlvi. A. Viswanathan asked what the process of removing a rule from bylaws would be.
- xlvii. V. Devatha said it would be an amendment.
- xlvi. J. Anderson said that everyone has made up their minds, and moved to vote.
1. J. Dominguez dissented, saying that this question merits more discussion.
 2. J. Anderson **withdrew** his motion.
- xlix. A. Klier asked why this reform is an advantage over other previously mentioned reforms.
1. O. Din moved to vote.
 1. There was a dissent.
 2. O. Din maintained his motion.
 3. The motion failed 10-10-1.
 - li. A. Klier restated his question.
 - lii. D. Barbaria said that he does not believe that this is more important than the other solutions, and that the actual timeline and functions of the committee are outlined in charter, which would require approval from President Martha Pollack.
 - liii. J. Anderson said that this strengthens leadership and tells the person that they are committing themselves. He added that there have been complaints in the past regarding previous leadership, and that this position will fix that.
 - liv. D. Barbaria urged the committee not to take this issue too seriously, and that this is not an extreme legislative change. He added that this can be tabled if things are getting out of hand.
 - lv. I. Wallace said that this committee may not be deserving of a VP position, but that he will lose his chairmanship of the committee should this resolution pass, and that anyone on the Assembly can get it when it is voted on. He also said that SAIFC has been failing, and that this is not a one-fix solution, but neither will any other proposed solution. He asked what would be better between a cultural change and an enduring structural change.
 - lvi. J. Anderson moved to vote.

1. J. Sim dissented, saying that he sees concerning points about how this can be changed and then un-changed, and that the SA should try other solutions before this change is made.
 2. J. Anderson maintained his motion.
 3. The motion passed 13-7-1.
- lvii. Motion to vote solely on Section 7 of Resolution 4 – **failed** 13-5-3.
- lviii. V. Devatha asked if the final resolution must now be approved.
- lix. D. Barbaria replied in the affirmative.
- lx. T. Onabajo said that she wanted to raise a point regarding SAFC that she did not think of before, and that she can see a situation in which a club thinks it's different from another, but members of FORC might not see how it is different. She asked whether an extra layer could be added such that they can appeal to the SA.
- lxi. D. Barbaria said that that is implicit as-is, and would be a worthy addition to be explicit. He added that he is not in favor of making it explicit because that would almost make the appeal part of the process, which should not be used trivially. He added that this is, in part, to try and slow the flow of appeals.
- lxii. T. Onabajo said that if there is a concern regarding influx, then SAFC's diversity chair could be on the committee and handle that.
- lxiii. Discussion on this topic continued.
- lxiv. A. Viswanathan asked how many voting members are on AppsCom.
- lxv. D. Barbaria said that there are 15.
- lxvi. A. Viswanathan said that FORC has three AppsCom members and two SAFC members, and asked whether the proponents of the resolution could see a problem with a committee that is majority AppsCom members being able to appeal its decisions to AppsCom.
- lxvii. Shivani Parikh said that she wanted to provide insight into ALANA funding, and that all umbrella presidents generally are aware of the creation of new organizations because none of them are so vast. She added that ALANA has a roughly \$100,000 surplus at the moment.
- lxviii. V. Devatha asked T. Onabajo to restate her question.
- lxix. T. Onabajo said that her original question was to ask whether the SA should explicitly say that appeal is an option.
- lxx. N. Hernandez said that she believes that T. Onabajo's point is valid, and moved to amend the resolution.
- lxxi. D. Barbaria said that it is great that so many of the Ex-Officio Assembly positions are in attendance.
- lxxii. V. Devatha asked if there is formal language for the amendment.
- lxxiii. T. Onabajo said that she is unsure if she wants to explicitly say this.
- lxxiv. F. Uribe-Rheinbolt said that one reason to have a member of FORC be a diversity-oriented person is because the SA wants to make sure that this is a power that is seen.
- lxxv. J. Anderson moved to amend the resolution.
1. This amendment would remove the first "and" on Line 391, and add the phrase "and the VP of Diversity and Inclusion".
 2. There was a dissent.

- lxxvi. A. Viswanathan said that adding this position would put six members on the committee, and suggested making the VP of Diversity and Inclusion a nonvoting position on this committee.
- lxxvii. D. Barbaria said that that was the original thought, but that it is important to have these voices.
- lxxviii. A. Viswanathan said that four votes would now be necessary to pass something.
- lxxix. J. Anderson said that chairs can break ties.
- lxxx. A. Viswanathan asked who the chair would be.
- lxxxi. J. Anderson said that the chair would be a member of AppsCom, since FORC is a subcommittee of AppsCom.
- lxxxii. E. Shapiro asked a question.
- lxxxiii. D. Barbaria said that this essentially adds on to the role of VP Diversity and Inclusion.
- lxxxiv. E. Shapiro moved to amend that this role be detailed in the relevant section of the bylaws.
 - 1. Line 167 would now read “14. Serve as a member of the Financial Organization Review Committee”.
- lxxxv. J. Anderson’s motion to amend Resolution 4 – amended.
- lxxxvi. E. Shapiro’s motion to amend Resolution 4 – amended.
- lxxxvii. E. Shapiro asked a clarifying question.
- lxxxviii. D. Barbaria said that everything in blue and red on the resolution will go into effect, save for the section of line 409 that was removed.
- lxxxix. Motion to vote on Resolution 4 – approved 17-0-3.

VI. New Business

- a. Resolution 5: Ensuring Accessible Study Spaces for All Students
 - i. N. Hernandez said that this resolution was a long time coming since the relevant Cornell Daily Sun article was released.
 - ii. J. Anderson said that eHub changed its membership qualifications over the summer, and that the new requirements are exclusionary for students not considered to be in an “entrepreneurial” major, and that the true problem is the lack of adequate study space in Collegetown. He added that this resolution says that the guidelines should be changed, and that Cornell should add more study spaces in Collegetown.
 - iii. G. Park asked whether or not the Assembly has much say over eHub policy guidelines.
 - iv. J. Anderson said that Cornell has contributed money to build eHub and that they use the Cornell ID. He added that Cornell has leverage in theory, but the true nature of the relationship is unknown.
 - v. G. Park said that this resolution will obviously pass, and asked what the specific plan would be going forward with this resolution.
 - vi. J. Anderson said that this resolution cannot be passed today, and that his hope is that between now and next week, the director of eHub can sit down with the relevant parties such that this resolution becomes more of a memorandum of an understanding between parties. He added that there is truly a need in Collegetown for safe study options.

- vii. V. Devatha asked if the proponents of the resolution have reached out to the director of eHub yet.
- viii. J. Anderson said that they have not yet reached out, but that he will reach out to them.
- ix. V. Devatha asked whether J. Anderson is anticipating his reaching out.
- x. J. Anderson replied in the affirmative, but said that they will reach out anyway.
- xi. N. Hernandez said that she does not think that the resolution will pass easily at all, and that it is unfair that Collegetown only has one study space.
- xii. B. Weintraub said that it is definitely an issue that there is a lack of study space in Collegetown, but that he takes issue with the recommendation to change the guidelines back. He added that many people in the School for Hotel Administration are engaged in entrepreneurial ventures, and that it can be very important to have a dedicated space. He also said that more study spaces are necessary in Collegetown, but that the Assembly should be sure to differentiate between study spaces and entrepreneurship spaces, and that he would be in favor of seeing a separate discussion.
- xiii. N. Hernandez said that if eHub had originally functioned in the way that B. Weintraub implied, that would make sense, but that it did not, and that it is currently the only study space in Collegetown, which leaves many people out.
- xiv. E. Shapiro said that he is involved in various entrepreneurial activities, and that eHub is a relatively new space which was not built for people sitting and studying, but for people to collaborate on new ideas and startups.
- xv. Motion to table Resolution 5 – tabled.

VII. Adjournment

- a. V. Devatha adjourned the meeting at 6:25 pm.

VIII. Executive Session

Respectfully Submitted,
John Hannan
Clerk of the Assembly