

1.0 HISTORY, GENERAL ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

NOTE: In many cases, policies governing the Joan and Sanford I. Weill Medical College and Graduate School of Medical Sciences of Cornell University differ from policies governing Cornell's Ithaca campus. Faculty at the Medical College and Graduate School of Medical Sciences should consult with the Office of the Provost for Medical Affairs for the relevant policies.

1.1 HISTORY

To best understand the unique character of Cornell University, one must know something of its origins. Ezra Cornell and Andrew Dickson White were both members of the New York State Senate when the Morrill Act, the "Land Grant Act," was adopted by Congress. Cornell, a farm-bred mechanic who lived in Ithaca, had seen a career spent in various unsuccessful enterprises suddenly transformed by great wealth when the scattered telegraph lines he had built were consolidated to form the Western Union Company. He wanted to provide training in the practical arts and sciences for sons and daughters of the laboring classes. White was a gentleman and a cosmopolitan, a scholar impatient to offer vigorous and progressive intellectual education as an alternative to the fusty drills in the classics so typical of the academies of his day.

At first, the backgrounds and the visions of Cornell and White seemed hopelessly incompatible, and they opposed each other as the legislature sought to find the best use for New York's share of the federal land scrip provided by the Morrill Act. Happily, both eventually were inspired by the idea of uniting their separate ambitions in a single university and from that moment worked together to create "an institution where any person can find instruction in any study."

Cornell pledged his farm for a campus and five hundred thousand dollars for endowment on the understanding that the legislature would commit the proceeds of the land grant to the new university. Thus the university, by an act of the legislature, was created as an institution endowed with both public and private funds. It received its charter in 1865 and graduated its first class in 1869.

In 1896, the following academic units were designated as part of a reorganization of the university: the College of Agriculture; the College of Architecture; the Department of Arts and Sciences (also known as the Academic Department); the College of Civil Engineering; the Graduate Department; the College of Law; the Sibley College of Mechanical Engineering; and the Veterinary College. Special faculties were set up for all of the divisions except the Graduate Department, which was administered by the University Faculty.

In 1898, the Cornell Summer School, which had been established in 1893 with a dean and a faculty, was renamed the Summer Session. Also in 1898, the Medical College was established in New York City. In 1903, the Department of Arts and Sciences was renamed the College of Arts and Sciences, and in 1909, the Graduate Department became the Graduate School. The College of Engineering was created in 1920 by amalgamating three independent units: the School of Civil Engineering, the School of Electrical Engineering, and the Sibley School of Mechanical Engineering.

The College of Human Ecology had its origins in the Department of Home Economics in the College of Agriculture. In 1925, it became the College of Home Economics and in 1969, acquired its present name. In 1925, the College of Law was renamed the Cornell Law School. In 1935, the division of Extra Mural Courses was established, which in 1958, merged with the Summer Session to form the Division of Summer Session, Extramural Courses, and Part-time Study. It subsequently changed its title over the years and is now the School of Continuing Education and Summer Sessions. The School of Nutrition, established in 1941, became the Graduate School of Nutrition in 1956, and in 1974, it combined with the Department of Human Nutrition and Food to form the Division of Nutritional Sciences, under the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and the College of Human Ecology.

The School of Nursing was established jointly with the New York Hospital in 1942 but was terminated in 1979. The School of Business and Public Administration was authorized in 1942 but did not become operative until after the end of WWII. In 1955, its name was changed to the Graduate School of Business and Public Administration; in 1983, to the Graduate School of Management; and in 1984, to the Samuel Curtis Johnson Graduate School of Management.

The School of Industrial and Labor Relations was authorized by the state legislature in 1944 and admitted its first students in 1945. From 1922 until 1950, courses in hotel administration were offered through a department of the College of Home Economics; and in 1950 that department became the School of Hotel Administration. The Graduate School of Medical Sciences was established in New York City in 1952; its two divisions include faculty members of the Medical College and staff members of the Sloan-Kettering Institute.

The Division of Biological Sciences was created in 1965, and dissolved in 1999, with its sections becoming departments in the Colleges of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Arts and Sciences, and Veterinary Medicine. In 1967, the College of Architecture became the College of Architecture, Art, and Planning. The College of Agriculture was renamed the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences in 1971, and in 1975, the Veterinary College was renamed the College of Veterinary Medicine.

In addition to the division, school, college, and department faculties, there are faculty groups associated with the many university centers, institutes, laboratories, programs, and special facilities. These include the Africana Studies and Research Center, established in 1969; and the Women's Studies Program, which was accepted into the College of Arts and Sciences in 1972, and subsequently renamed the Feminist, Gender and Sexuality Studies Program in 2002.

The University Library was designated an academic division of the university in 1975. The university librarian and the associate and assistant librarians hold academic appointments.

The interdisciplinary unit of Faculty of Computing and Information Science (FCI) was established in 2000.

The history and structure of the university foster respect for differences, freedom of thought and expression, devotion to the unprejudiced search for knowledge, and a civil, rational approach to solving problems. On April 27, 1940, on the occasion of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the signing of the university charter, Carl L. Becker, the John Wendell Anderson Professor of Modern History *Emeritus* and Historian of the University, recognized this when he stated in his address ["The Cornell Tradition: Freedom and Responsibility", Cornell University: Founders and the Founding, Cornell University Press, 1943]:

It seems to me appropriate on this memorial occasion to recall the salient qualities which have given Cornell University its peculiar character and its high distinction; and...to express the hope that Cornell in the future, whatever its gains, whatever its losses, may hold fast to its ancient tradition of freedom and responsibility—freedom for the scholar to perform his proper function, restrained and guided by the only thing that makes such freedom worthwhile, the scholar's intellectual integrity, the scholar's devotion to the truth of things as they are and to good will and humane dealing among men.