

The University Assemblies

The structure of the campus government system has undergone a number of transformations. A university senate was established in 1970 and was replaced by a campus council in 1977. During the 1979-80 academic year, a special committee made a study of campus governance and proposed alternatives that were submitted to referendum in the fall of 1980. The resulting charters were subsequently approved by the Board of Trustees, and the current system took effect in 1981. It was comprised of three assemblies: the Employee Assembly, the University Assembly, and the Student Assembly. In the spring of 1993, the Graduate and Professional Student Assembly (GPSA) split from the Student Assembly. The GPSA formed its own charter and received approval from the Board of Trustees.

The Employee Assembly is composed of elected nonacademic employee representatives from the endowed units, the contract units, and one chosen from either the Geneva Agricultural Experiment Station or at large. The term of service is two years. The Employee Assembly has the authority to examine the university's personnel policies and to make recommendations to the appropriate university units and administrators concerning those policies; to examine other university policies affecting the employment environment at Cornell and to make recommendations to the appropriate agents; and to provide a mechanism for the informal exchange of information and views between employees and university administrators.

The University Assembly is composed of students, faculty members, and staff. Faculty and staff members serve for two years; student members serve for one year. The University Assembly has authority for those aspects of the conduct of members of Cornell University covered by the Campus Code of Conduct and the Statement of Student Rights; has the responsibility for selection of members of the Hearing and Review Boards; has legislative authority over policies which guide the activities of the Cornell Store, Cornell Health: Cornell University Health Services, Transportation Services, and Cornell United Religious Work; and has authority over matters concerning the internal operation and maintenance of the University Assembly governing system. It conducts public hearings on topics of current community interest; makes recommendations to the University Faculty in academic matters; and may establish such standing and ad hoc committees as are necessary to the performance of the duties of the University Assembly.

The Student Assembly is composed of elected representatives who are registered students and who serve for one year. The Student Assembly has authority over certain nonacademic policies that primarily affect students. Specifically, it has legislative authority, subject to the approval of the president, over the policies of the Department of Campus Life and the Office of the Dean of Students, as well as the authority to review the budgets and actions of those units.

The Graduate and Professional Student Assembly is composed of fifteen voting members, who are elected by their larger governing body, called the Council of Representatives (COR). The COR has representatives from each field and three representatives from each professional school. The GPSA has one member from each professional school, three at-large members, and nine members from the specified field clusters. GPSA and COR members serve a one-year appointment. The GPSA ensures a direct focus for the continued involvement of graduate and professional school students in the governance of nonacademic affairs and in the life of the university.