



Resolution #	46
Originally Presented On	February 3, 2010
Sponsor(s)	Rammy Salem '10
Subject of Resolution	Making the Swim Test Optional
Type of Action	Sense-of-the-Body
Status/Result	New Business

Whereas, the original women’s physical education director believed the skill of swimming to be “a good thing for proper young ladies to know”;¹

Whereas, Cornell University has no discretion on discerning what it means to be “a proper young lady”;

Whereas, the United States currently does not have mandatory conscription, nor did it have for the past 37 years;

Whereas, the swim test requirement does not relate to the core academic mission of the University;

Whereas, the current swim test does not adequately prove that students can swim;

Whereas, students who may have a phobia of water are forced to take the swim test in order to graduate;

Whereas, students with minor disabilities are also forced to take the swim test in order to graduate;

Whereas, children four years old and younger have the highest death rate due to drowning, representing more than 25 percent;

Whereas, the odds of dying from drowning due to water transport accidents in the United States as of 2006 are 1 in 10,940;

Whereas, the University’s swim requirement, if mandated for safety reasons, is inconsistent with the most likely causes of death for Americans (see table below);

Type of Accident or Manner of Injury ²	Lifetime Odds
Intentional Self-Harm	1 in 115
Assault	1 in 207
Car occupant in motor vehicle accidents	1 in 802

¹ Lin, Elaine. “Freshman Swim Test Made Coed After 92 Years.” Cornell Daily Sun. February 2, 2009. <http://cornellsun.com/section/news/content/2010/02/02/freshman-swim-test-made-coed-after-92-years>

² All data taken from the National Safety Council “Odds of Dying” table. 2006. http://www.nsc.org/news_resources/injury_and_death_statistics/Documents/Odds%20of%20Dying%201510.pdf

Be it therefore resolved, that the Student Assembly strongly urges the University to make optional the swim test required for all undergraduate students in order to graduate;

Be it further resolved, that the University explore other death-prevention educative sessions or training workshops as an alternative to the mandatory swim test;

Be it finally resolved, that this resolution be forwarded to President David Skorton, Vice President of Student and Academic Services Susan Murphy, and Director of Aquatics Fred Debruyn.

Respectfully submitted,

Rammy Salem

At-Large Representative

Student Assembly President