



**Cornell University**  
**Student Assembly**

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## Student Assembly R. 55: Restorative Justice for the Cornell Community

*Sponsors: Lisa Liu and Noah Tulskey  
Propose on February 12th, 2014*

1 Whereas, Cornell seeks to create a community where personal identifiers such as race,  
2 gender, sexual orientation, religion, ethnic identification, and disabilities are celebrated to  
3 create a “united student body across differences,”;  
4

5 Whereas, historically, there have been academic years with hundreds of reported bias  
6 incidents;  
7

8 Whereas, there have been 17 bias incidents on the Cornell campus during the Fall 2013  
9 semester;  
10

11 Whereas, some bias incidents in the past have resulted in community forums, workshops, and  
12 programs to discuss the issues, such as the ones held by university-sponsored program called  
13 Cornell Responds;  
14

15 Whereas, the university plays a role in creating an environment without discrimination,  
16 harassment, and violence as established by the University Policy Office in Policy 6.4:  
17 Prohibited Discrimination, Protected-Status Harassment, Sexual Harassment, and Sexual  
18 Assault and Violence;  
19

20 Whereas, Policy 6.4 states “the university maintains processes to provide redress and  
21 remediation to individuals or groups who believe they have been the victims of these acts”;  
22

23 Whereas, there is a university-wide system to report a bias incident but no avenue for open  
24 discussion of the reported issues with representatives from the parties involved in the bias  
25 incidents;  
26

27 Whereas, in some bias incidents regarding matters with race, gender, or sexual orientation, the  
28 incident did not stem from malicious intent;  
29

30 Whereas, putting value in different perspectives can lead to true understanding among those  
31 involved in bias incidents, which are the goals of a restorative justice system;  
32

33 Whereas, restorative justice is a reparation philosophy that attempts to unite communities  
34 through open dialogue rather than dividing them with punishments;  
35

36 Whereas, a restorative justice approach to conflict puts emphasis on the victim and the  
37 communities that are affected as a source of support;  
38

39 Whereas, restorative justice systems currently exist at 80 colleges and universities which  
40 include but are not limited to Cornell, MIT, Northwestern, Stanford University, University of

1 Rochester, and Washington University in Saint Louis;

2  
3 Whereas, the idea of establishing the program at Cornell has been headed by the Assistant  
4 Dean of Students, Kiranjit Longaker, but the developmental details have not yet been  
5 determined;

6  
7 Be it therefore resolved, that a restorative justice approach to bias incidents that are not under  
8 the jurisdiction of the Office of Judicial Administration nor Student Academic Services be  
9 established and practiced in the case that a bias incident case cannot be accommodated for by  
10 the existing Reporting Bias System;

11  
12 Be it further resolved, that this restorative justice approach incorporates a facilitated discussion  
13 and that one or more involved parties may partake in the discussion that could include what  
14 mindset occurred in the moment of the incident, why the bias incident was taken as offensive,  
15 and steps to take in the future for resolution of the case;

16  
17 Be it further resolved, that students be trained to facilitate these discussions;

18  
19 Be it further resolved, the development of the restorative justice system is led by a Restorative  
20 Justice Team at Cornell consisting of representatives from the Office of the Dean of Students,  
21 Incident Management Team, students, or any other interested parties to be convened in the  
22 Spring 2014 semester;

23  
24 Be it finally resolved, that the Office of the Assemblies, which include the University Assembly,  
25 the Employee Assembly, the Graduate and Professional Student Assembly, and the Student  
26 Assembly, inform their constituencies about the establishment of the restorative justice  
27 approach and to continue to uphold a sense of accountability in the community.

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29 Respectfully submitted,

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31 Lisa Liu '15  
32 Arts & Sciences Representative

33  
34 Noah Tulskey '16  
35 VP Diversity and Inclusion