

CGSU Constitution and Bylaws

Article I: Union Meetings and Decision Making

Section A: Meetings

Subsection A1: General Membership Meetings

- (1) General membership meetings are to take place five times per year. Time and location of these meetings will be announced a minimum of fourteen (14) days in advance, and shall be chosen after consultation with membership.
 - (a) Notice of general membership meetings will be given via email, and will be posted on the CGSU website.
- (2) Only members and those interested in joining CGSU will be allowed to attend general membership meetings, with exceptions to be determined on a case-by-case basis by the members attending the meeting.
- (3) General membership meetings will only take place during Cornell's academic year.
- (4) General Meetings Procedure:
 - (a) The Organizing Committee will appoint two conveners and one notetaker from the general membership (not currently serving on the Steering Committee) in advance of each meeting to facilitate discussion.
 - (i) The conveners are authorized to address the membership to advise or vote on any dispute arising from the current meeting.
 - (ii) The notetaker will be responsible for producing the minutes and distributing them to the general membership.
 - (A) Minutes from general membership meetings will be sent by the no to full membership within one week of meeting date.

Subsection A2: Special Meetings and Actions

- (1) Special meetings and actions will occur in case of emergency, or if otherwise a general meeting is necessary in addition to, or in between, the five general membership meetings
- (2) To the extent possible, special meetings and actions will follow same prior notice and procedural guidelines as general membership meetings. If notice is not possible on this timeline, it shall take place as soon as possible
- (3) In the case that a special meeting or action is necessary, notice to membership shall state a specific reason for meeting or action.
- (4) To the extent possible, special meetings and actions should occur during Cornell's academic year.

Subsection A3: Standing Committee Meetings

- (1) The six standing committees - Organizing, Communications and Outreach, Research and Contract, Grievance, Unity, and Legal Affairs - shall prepare a report of activities for each General Membership Meeting.
- (2) The officers elected to chair the six standing committees, upon consultation with volunteer members of his/her respective standing committee, shall have the authority to call these meetings.
- (3) Elected standing committee chairs shall only have the authority to call meetings for the standing committee for the committee chaired.
- (4) The elected standing committee chair shall announce the time and location of these meetings a minimum of seven (7) days in advance, and shall do so only after consultation, to the extent possible, with volunteer standing committee members.
- (5) Notice of standing committee meetings will be given via email to CGSU members who have expressed interest in participating in a particular standing committee.
- (6) Standing committee meetings are open to the general membership of CGSU, and any member in good standing who has volunteered to serve on a particular committee can attend.
- (7) Standing committee meetings should occur during Cornell's academic year. If this is not possible, (4) and (5) in this Subsection should still be followed.
- (8) The elected chair of a standing committee shall decide norms of communication in consultation with volunteer members of the standing committee.
- (9) Minutes from standing committee meetings will be advertised to and made available to the full membership within one week of meeting date.

Subsection A4: Steering Committee Meetings

- (1) The eleven (11) elected steering committee members shall meet once per month at a time mutually agreed upon at the beginning of the semester by members of the committee.
- (2) Notice of each steering committee meeting shall be emailed to the general membership a minimum of seven (7) days in advance. If unable to attend in person, a steering committee member may call in so as to participate.
- (3) Steering committee members shall choose the norms of communication for these meetings.
- (4) All members in good standing are allowed to attend steering committee meetings as observers, though participation is limited to steering committee members.
- (5) Minutes from steering committee meetings will be sent to full membership within one week of meeting date.

Subsection A5: Working-Group Meetings

- (1) Working-group meetings will be called as necessary by members of working group.
- (2) Working-group members can decide on norms of communication prior to or during meetings.
- (3) Minutes from working-group meetings must be sent to general membership within one week of meeting date.

Section B: Decision Making

Subsection B1: Types of Decisions

- (1) Substantive decisions will be determined through general referenda. These decisions affect the long-term collective bargaining aspects of CGSU. Routine duties of standing committees and the steering committee are not subject to referenda.
 - (a) Examples of substantive decisions include strike votes, the initiation of negotiations, the acceptance or rejection of any agreement with Cornell University, amendments to the Union's Constitution and Bylaws, and the decision to affiliate/disaffiliate with a national union.
- (2) Procedural decisions will be determined either by consensus or, if no consensus can be reached, by vote at CGSU membership meetings, steering committee meetings, or standing committee meetings (see §§B2, 1, a). These decisions involve the maintenance and everyday functions of CGSU, as well as the routine duties of standing committees and the steering committee.
 - (a) Examples of procedural decisions include creating sub-committees, determining meeting times, setting agendas, developing strategies, and ordering supplies.

Subsection B2: Decision-Making at General Membership Meetings

- (1) Decisions can be determined by either consensus or vote.
 - (a) The aim of consensus is for unanimity. The practical meaning of consensus for this Union shall be subject to ongoing discussion and readjustment among and by the general membership.
- (2) All members present at general meetings may vote.
- (3) All votes are won by simple majority, not including absentions and people absent.
- (4) Quorum requirement: If 20 CGSU members are not present at a general meeting, procedural decisions may not be made, although they may be discussed as part of the business of the meeting. Such a decision should be tabled until the next meeting or, if urgent, may require a special meeting and/or a special electronic vote.

Subsection B3: Referenda Procedure

- (1) A referendum can be called in the following ways:

- (a) 10% of the CGSU membership may send an email to the Secretary requesting a referendum
- (b) Members at a regular open meeting can agree by consensus or vote to have a referendum
- (2) After a referendum is called, the Secretary will work with the member or members calling the referendum to decide upon its final wording.
- (3) The referendum will occur in such a way that all members are able to vote.
 - (a) Generally, the referendum will take place online.
 - (b) The length of time allowed for voting must be a minimum of 72 hours.
 - (c) For a decision to be reached by referendum, one-third of the total membership must vote for the referendum to be binding, of which a simple majority is needed for approval.
- (4) The following decisions will be made by referendum:
 - (a) Approval of a collective bargaining agreement
 - (b) Modification of CGSU dues
 - (c) Affiliation or disaffiliation with any other union
 - (d) Any other substantive decisions related to the functioning of CGSU

Subsection B4: Status of Decisions Reached

- (1) The results of a referendum are fully binding for CGSU.
- (2) Decisions made at the general open meetings by consensus or by voting are fully binding for CGSU, as long as they do not contradict the Constitution and Bylaws.
- (3) Newer referenda may modify or reverse previous referenda.

Article II: Union Governance

Section A: Overview

- (1) CGSU will be governed by a combination of standing committees and elected members who comprise the steering committee. The Union is also comprised of various working groups. Committees may be added, eliminated or merged via amendment procedure.
 - (a) Standing committees: CGSU will maintain six standing committees as outlined in [Section 2, Article 1.] Any member may join any standing committee.
 - (b) Steering committee: The steering committee consists of the elected positions outlined in Article X. Any substantive decisions proposed by the steering committee are subject to CGSU's procedure for referenda in Article I.
 - (c) Working groups: Working groups are ad-hoc committees developed for the purpose of solving/researching a particular issue relevant to CGSU. They are temporary in nature and can be initiated by any member. They are not elections-based and provide the general membership of CGSU with a voice outside of the steering committee. Working group findings will be presented at CGSU general membership meetings. Any substantive decisions proposed by Working groups are subject to CGSU's procedure for referenda in Article I.

Section B: The Standing Committees

- (1) The Standing Committees consist of the following:
 - (a) Organizing Committee.
 - (i) This committee is responsible for organizing the Union's regular meetings. It oversees the selection of meeting conveners, note takers, and other relevant roles as needed. Led by the Organizing Committee chair, it works to expand Union membership and, in tandem with other standing committees, to promote an inclusive and representative membership.
 - (b) Communication and Outreach Committee.
 - (i) The committee's goals include building networks and alliances with other Cornell organizations; building support among sectors of the Cornell community for graduate student unionization; and reaching out to the broader Ithaca community, including labor organizations, faith institutions, and municipal and county government. Led by the Communication and Outreach Committee Chair, this committee is also responsible for managing the Union website, social media outlets, and sending Union activity updates to the relevant mailing lists.
 - (c) Research and Contract Committee.
 - (i) The committee develops strategies to be presented to the broader membership for how the Union should act on specific issues (short term) as well as how best to develop capacities for collective bargaining power (long term). Led by its chair, it also helps coordinate efforts to gather information relevant to Union concerns and activities, the working conditions of graduate students, and potential future collective bargaining agreement language.
 - (d) Grievance Committee.
 - (i) The grievance committee functions as a forum for members and non-members to report problems and issues the Union can work on, initiate an inquiry, or advocate. With its committee chair, it produces an annual report of concerns, improvements, and on-going issues for CGSU members and graduate students.
 - (e) Unity Committee.
 - (i) The Unity Committee exists to ensure that issues of marginalization, disunity, and distrust among Union members, and among Union members and administration, faculty, and other external powers, are addressed directly by the leadership and the membership. Under the leadership of its chair, the Committee will serve as a forum to discuss and resolve issues that those who are historically under-represented or marginalized on college campuses, in Union structures, and in the workplace generally tend to face. Such issues may include, but are not limited to: racial, gender, and age discrimination; homophobia; censorship of non-mainstream political and religious views; and bullying.

- (ii) In addition, the Committee will work with the Organizing Committee to promote inter-Departmental dialogue and ensure inclusion across all Departments. It will bring these concerns to the leadership and General Membership as central issues and part of everyday Union business.
- (f) Legal Affairs Committee.
 - (i) The Legal Affairs Committee is responsible for maintaining the Union's archive, the official constitution and bylaws, as well as overseeing the referendum, amendment, and election processes. Led by the Secretary, the committee also educates CGSU members on unfair labor practices and, in tandem with other standing committees, helps develop long-term strategies for collective bargaining power and communication with the NLRB.

Section C: The Steering Committee and Responsibilities

- (1) The Steering Committee of CGSU will be composed of a combination of committee chairs and other elected officials. The Steering Committee shall:
 - (a) Faithfully carry out the decisions of the membership and act on its behalf.
 - (b) Coordinate the work of the union.
 - (c) Facilitate member discussion, debate, and participation in decision-making.
 - (d) Meet at least once a month.
 - (e) Coordinate the activities of all committees, ensuring that the actions of each committee adhere to CGSU Constitution and are authorized by the general membership.
 - (f) Conduct a review each March of the Standing Committees, minutes of the General Meetings, and working groups, and make recommendations at the final general membership meeting of the academic year for their improvement, continuation, or dissolution. It shall also report on its own activities for the year and on the health of CGSU in general. Final authority for such decisions will be subject to the CGSU referenda procedure outlined in Art. I, §B.
 - (g) Ensure the smooth transition of leadership roles by arranging an orientation for new officers before the end of each academic year, or within 30 days of any filled vacancy.
 - (h) Provide full and detailed statements of any actions or business done in the name of CGSU, upon request.
- (2) The members of CGSU will elect each position in the Steering Committee for a term of one year, whose tenure begins each Fall of the new academic year and terminates at the conclusion of the following summer.
 - (a) Individuals may nominate others or self-nominate, i.e. "open nomination" procedure.
 - (b) The winner of each election needs a plurality of votes, or simple numerical victory of other candidates.
 - (c) Special attention should be paid to ensure that the steering committee reflects the diversity of graduate students.

- (3) Elections will be held each April to elect the steering committee of the following academic year, except for the first year (2014-2015), when they will be held in the fall of 2014.
- (4) The Steering Committee consists of the following eleven (11) positions:
- 1) Administration Liaison
 - (a) The Administration Liaison communicates with the head of Cornell Labor Relations, and is the official point of contact for the University.
 - (b) Liaison mediates communication between CGSU and Cornell administrators.
 - 2) GPSA Liaison
 - (a) The GPSA Liaison establishes and maintains channels of communication with GPSA. Liaison helps coordinates efforts when appropriate, but also communicates to GPSA issues, concerns, and position statements to GPSA when necessary or desirable.
 - 3) Membership Coordinator
 - (a) The Membership Coordinator manages the membership card system, adding and removing members as needed. Coordinator will maintain a logbook which details member's status, dues paid, and withdrawal date if applicable. Coordinator is also responsible for maintaining the mailing list and member list.
 - (b) Coordinator may appoint membership as needed.
 - (c) Coordinator will sit on the Organizing Committee.
 - 4) Communication and Outreach Chair
 - (a) Chair is responsible for organizing media contact, facilitating communication with faculty, undergraduates, and other Cornell unions.
 - (b) Chair also manages the website and social media, and provides regular updates to the mailing list and membership list on activities of the union.
 - 5) Organizing Committee Chair
 - (a) Chair is responsible for developing strategies for expanding membership in an inclusive way, as well as (with the committee) day-to-day work in implementing those strategies.
 - 6) Research and Contract Committee Chair
 - (a) In addition to coordinating committee research projects, Chair will help design future collective bargaining agreement language for potential contract negotiations.
 - 7) [And 8] Treasurer (2 positions)
 - (a) Both treasurers have access to union bank account and chair the "Finance" Committee.
 - (b) Members of finance committee have ability to audit treasure to ensure funds are spent according to the constitutional processes and follow federal law.
 - 8) See 7, above
 - 9) Secretary
 - (a) Chairs the Legal Affairs Committee.

- (b) The Secretary is responsible for familiarizing members with Cornell policy and the National Labor Relations Act, any necessary filings and correspondence with the Department of Labor, as well as other applicable state and federal laws.
 - (c) The Secretary serves in an advisory capacity when faculty and/or administrators are suspected of committing unfair labor practices, and takes the lead in dealing with government regulatory agencies.
 - (d) In addition, the Secretary can coordinate with the Research and Contract Committee for developing strategies to achieve voluntary recognition with Cornell and, if need be, in filing a representation petition with the NLRB.
 - (e) The Secretary may appoint assistant coordinators for help as needed, particularly to help with committee responsibilities involving the Union's archive, Constitution and Bylaws, and referendum process.
- 10) Grievance Committee Chair
- (a) Chair records, organizes, and sorts the variety of grievances of graduate students and produces an annual report of concerns, improvements, and on-going issues for union members and graduate students.
 - (b) Chair will coordinate with Secretary as needed to fulfill duties in accord with the requirements of Art. IV, §B.
- 11) The Unity Committee Chair
- (a) Chair will coordinate with the Grievance, Legal and Organizing Committees as needed, and report to the general membership on all workplace issues, problems and successes falling within the purview of the Unity Committee.
 - (b) In the election for Chair, members of historically underrepresented groups will be especially encouraged to run.

Article III: Constitutional and Bylaws Amendment Process

Section A: Amendment Procedure

- (1) The bylaws of this constitution can be amended at any point under the following procedure:
 - (a) Amendments may be filed by the Steering Committee and/or with a written and signed petition of 10% of the members in good standing.
 - (b) The required amendment petition form will be made available on the CGSU website.
 - (c) Amendments will be made available to the general membership for a comment period of fourteen (14) days.
 - (d) One person designated from the Legal Affairs Committee will collect pro and con statements from the membership, then will circulate the statements in a single document to the general membership for consideration.
 - (e) Upon review, the original proponent may decide to withdraw the amendment for resubmission.

- (f) Amendment proposals will be ratified by a 2/3 voting majority.

Section B: Post-Ratification Procedure

- (1) Every amendment to the Constitution and Bylaws shall be also maintained in an appendix that will be attached to the Constitution and Bylaws. Such appendix shall note the date the amendment was approved by the membership, the previous language, and new language as modified by the amendment.
- (2) They must be published on the CGSU website, and a notification must be sent out to all members via email no later than 15 days after ratification.
- (3) Parts of the constitution that conflict with ratified amendments are considered null and void. The Secretary shall raise any conflicts noticed with the Steering Committee.

Article IV: Discipline and Dispute Resolution

Section A: Disciplinary Procedure

Subsection A1: Determining and Filing Charges

- (1) Any member or group of members may file a charge against another member, including officers, for a violation of the Constitution and Bylaws, dereliction of duty, or for actions that are believed to be against the good and welfare of CGSU.
- (2) To file:
 - (a) Member must provide a written letter to the Secretary that includes, if applicable, the claimed section(s) of the CGSU Constitution and Bylaws that the member believes are being violated, along with a description of the alleged action or behavior involved.
 - (b) If a charge involves an action that the member believes to be against the good and welfare of the Union, the member should state this and provide an explanation.

Subsection A2: Hearings

- (1) Any accused member will be given a full and fair hearing to determine if a charge has merit and, if so, what discipline the violation should require, up to and including suspension or expulsion from CGSU.
- (2) The Secretary shall within one week of receiving a charge, email a copy of the charge to all members, and state that nominations are currently being accepted for a hearing committee of three members in good standing to conduct a hearing in this matter.
 - (a) If the Secretary is charging another member or is being charged, the Steering Committee shall decide upon a replacement for the charged member in the

processing of charge under this article and the Secretary will promptly forward all materials related to the charge to that officer.

- (3) The nomination period for the hearing panel will be one week from the date of the email. If more than three members are nominated (and accept their nominations) or self-nominate, the Secretary shall conduct an election. The election shall be conducted at the next regular meeting of the Union or electronically, if the next Union meeting will not take place within two weeks.
 - (a) Any party charging or being charged may not be nominated to serve on a hearing panel.
- (4) Once a hearing board has been empaneled, it shall accept evidence and testimony as it deems necessary to decide on the merits.
 - (a) The board must publish a rationale that explains the reasoning behind its decision.
- (5) All members are required to assist the hearing board perform its duties, upon the board's request.

Subsection A3: Decision of the Hearing Board

- (1) The hearing board's rationale and decision will be emailed to all members.
- (2) At the next Union meeting, the decision shall be placed on the agenda for discussion among members. Within one day of the meeting, the Secretary shall email the membership to conduct an electronic referendum of one week's length on whether the membership would like to accept the hearing board's recommended decision. The only responses will be "yes" or "no."
- (3) If a majority of votes are cast for the "no" option, or there is an equal number of "yes" and "no" votes, at the end of the referendum period, the Secretary shall place the issue on the agenda of the next Union meeting when a discussion and a motion on how to proceed with discipline or no discipline will occur.

Subsection A4: Revocation, Dismissal, and Appeals

- (1) A charge may be revoked at any time by the member originally filing the charge. If this occurs, the hearing process will immediately stop.
- (2) The hearing board may unanimously decide to dismiss a charge without conducting a hearing if it deems such charge to be frivolous and/or without merit. If it does so, the hearing board will email all members in the Union with its decision and rationale.
- (3) Any member in good standing other than the member(s) that filed the charge may appeal this decision to the Secretary, who will conduct a referendum on the question of whether the hearing should proceed.

Subsection A5: Records

- (1) At the conclusion of the hearing process, a permanent record detailing the charge and final disposition of the case shall be transferred to the Secretary for filing in the Union's archive.

Section B: Internal Union Grievance Procedure

- (1) A member feeling aggrieved by an action, inaction, interpretation of the CGSU Constitution and Bylaws, or another decision by CGSU, must initiate her/his complaint or appeal within thirty (30) days of the time s/he is aware, or reasonably should have been aware of the Union's action or decision.
 - (b) The grievance shall be made in writing to the Secretary.
 - (c) The Secretary is empowered to dismiss grievances that are not made in accordance with the guidelines in this section with written notice to the member filing.
 - (d) A member may not institute any state or federal court action regarding a matter covered by this grievance procedure until a final decision and action on the grievance has been issued by the Union as discussed in Section D of this article unless a final decision on the grievance is not issued within four months of the date the member initially filed her or his written grievance with the Secretary.

- (2) Depending on the circumstances of the grievance, the Secretary will work with the grievant(s) and the member(s) the grievance involves to determine if mediation would assist the parties in coming to a resolution. If both parties agree, the Secretary shall find a member sufficiently removed from the dispute to serve as mediator.
 - (a) The mediation shall be conducted according to mediator standards of practice adopted by the Association for Conflict Resolution.
 - (b) Any voluntary agreement reached in mediation shall be memorialized in writing and must receive a majority vote at the next Union meeting in order for the grievance to be resolved.
 - (c) If the voluntary agreement is not agreed to by the Union, the grievance process shall continue as outlined in (3) of this Section.

- (3) If mediation is not elected by both of the parties and the Secretary, or ends without a written resolution, the grievance shall be presented to the Steering Committee for resolution. The Steering Committee shall consult with the grievant and permit full opportunity to be heard prior to making a written decision with a rationale explaining the reasoning behind its decision.

- (4) The grievant may appeal the decision of the Steering Committee to the Union by notifying the Secretary in writing within one week of receiving such decision.
 - (a) The Secretary shall place resolution of the grievance on the agenda for the next Union meeting and shall immediately email the initial written grievance and the decision of the Steering Committee to the membership for its review prior to the meeting.
 - (b) A majority vote will be required for any final action taken by the membership to resolve the grievance.

- (5) At the conclusion of the grievance process, a permanent record detailing the charge and final disposition of the case shall be transferred to the Secretary for filing in the Union's archive.

Article V: Elections

Section A: Steering Committee Elections

Subsection A1: Officer Election Committee

- (1) Annually, by January 31, the Secretary shall email all members in good standing calling for nominations by February 15 for the five-member officer election committee.
 - (a) Any member who serves on the officer election committee is prohibited from running for any Steering Committee position.
 - (b) If more than five members are nominated (and accept their nominations) or self-nominate, the Secretary shall conduct an election.
 - (c) The election for the officer election committee shall be conducted at the next regular meeting of the Union or electronically, if the next Union meeting will not take place within two weeks. Any tie results shall be resolved by a coin toss.

- (2) The officer election committee must:
 - (a) Announce through an email to all members a procedure for receiving nominations for steering committee positions.
 - (i) Any member in good standing may nominate another member (or self-nominate) for a steering committee position. A member may only appear once on the steering committee ballot. If nominated for more than one position, may choose which one to run for.
 - (ii) Members must have at least two weeks from the committee's initial notification of the opening of nominations to make nominations.
 - (iii) A member may only serve in a particular steering committee position for one term.
 - (iv) After nominations have closed, the committee will determine, in accordance with the Constitution, the eligibility of the nominees.
 - (v) If no eligible nominee is found for particular steering committee positions, the committee shall email the membership and reopen nominations for a period of one week. If no eligible nominations are received, the newly elected steering committee may appoint a member to the vacant position for the next term.
 - (b) Decide and publicize the date for the election by emailing the membership at least two weeks prior to the election along with a list of steering committee candidates. Upon request of members without access to the Internet, the committee will deliver such notice to such members' homes if provided with such address.
 - (c) Forward any candidate communications to the membership list on a schedule to be determined by the committee. The committee may prepare a voter guide and may ask candidates to provide statements or information to the voter guide.

- (d) Conduct the election on the Cornell Ithaca campus on or before April 15.
- (e) Prepare voting ballots for such election. The names of the candidates for a steering committee position shall appear on the ballot in alphabetical order. No write-in votes may be accepted. The committee shall also make provisions for an absentee ballot procedure for members away from the Cornell Ithaca campus.
- (f) Outline and execute procedures that ensure the voting process remains secret.
- (g) Count and tabulate votes noting the total number of members voting along with the number of blank and void ballots. Each candidate may attend the vote counting, and may have one member-observer present. The committee shall keep all ballots under seal for one year following the date of the election.
- (h) Present a written report on the election at the next general membership meeting after the election. After the report has been made, the membership shall, after approving the report, discharge the Officer Election Committee from its duties. The committee shall transfer all records to the Secretary for filing in the Union's archive.

Subsection A2: Election Challenges

- (1) Any member may challenge the conduct or results of a steering committee election by filing a written challenge with a member of the Officer Election Committee, cc'ed to the Secretary. The challenge must describe, in detail, the exact conduct or results being challenged.
- (2) To be accepted for review, challenges must be received within one week of the announcement by the Officer Election Committee of the election results. The Officer Election Committee shall promptly investigate such challenge and make recommendation for its disposition to the next regularly scheduled meeting or a special meeting called to discuss the election.
- (3) The membership will take final action on any recommendation of the Officer Election Committee at such a meeting. If the challenge involves a member or members of the Officer Election Committee, the Secretary shall process the challenge using Disciplinary Procedure in Article IV.

Subsection A3: Term of Office

- (1) The new steering committee assumes office on May 1 (May Day) of every year.
- (2) Upon expiration of the terms of the old officers, all books, records, monies, and all other properties of the Union shall be delivered to the newly elected officers when they assume office.

Subsection A4: Steering Committee Vacancies

- (1) The steering committee shall be empowered to fill vacancies on the committee until such time as nominations can be made.
 - (a) At the next general membership meeting, nominations for the vacant position(s) shall be opened and an election conducted at the meeting via secret ballot.
 - (b) Ballots shall be stored for one year in the Union archive.

Article VI: Membership

Section A: Eligibility

- (1) Membership in CGSU is open to all Cornell graduate students and professional students on all campuses, regardless of funding source, work or fellowship status, or citizenship, and to all Cornell graduate degree recipients who:
 - (a) have been awarded their degrees not prior to August 2013;
 - (b) remain at Cornell or under its auspices as short-term lecturers, adjuncts, researchers or otherwise as non-tenure track academic workers; and
 - (c) have not been hired by Cornell as administrative or support staff.
- (2) To retain membership, CGSU members must remain in good standing (see Section E).

Section B: Membership Procedure

- (1) Membership will incur upon the filing of valid membership cards by the Union. [See appendix A to “Membership” section.]
- (2) Two identical membership cards will be sent to eligible parties via email.
 - (a) Each card must be printed on paper, filled out, and physically signed in ink. No digital signatures will be accepted.
- (3) One of the signed cards must be returned to the Membership Coordinator, which will be filed in the Union archive. The other card will be kept by the new member.
 - (a) Upon request, lost cards can be replaced by the membership coordinator.

Section C: Privileges of Membership

- (1) All CGSU members may participate in general meetings, run for elected office, vote in all elections and referenda, and join committees and working groups.
- (2) Any CGSU member may file official motions at general meetings.
- (3) Any CGSU member may unofficially introduce issues of concern at general meetings.
- (4) All CGSU members may file grievances with the Grievance Committee, or file charges for disciplinary action against other members.
- (5) All CGSU members have free and full access to Union information, including the names, membership status, and contact information of other members.
 - (a) No information, general or Union related, will be divulged by CGSU about any member to any non-member without that member’s prior permission.

Section D: Dues

- (1) Dues are \$5 per member, per academic year, to be paid on or before October 31 or upon filing for membership.

- (2) The amount may be altered by general referendum.

Section E: Loss of Membership and Voluntary Withdrawal

Subsection E1: Loss of membership

- (1) Loss of membership occurs automatically upon:
 - (a) non-payment of dues after notification;
 - (b) graduating from or leaving Cornell permanently.
- (2) Permanent loss of membership may be a component or result of disciplinary action, arising from violation of this Union's Constitution and Bylaws, or federal law. Please see Art. IV.

Subsection E2: Voluntary withdrawal procedure

- (1) Members may ask to leave the Union at any time by written request and the return of his/her membership card (if available) to the membership coordinator.
- (2) Upon request and return, the membership coordinator will destroy the cards and log the date of the withdrawal.
- (3) Should the member, otherwise eligible, decide to rejoin the Union, membership procedures for new members will apply.

Appendix A

CGSU Membership Card:

I, _____, current/former-eligible Cornell University graduate or professional student, hereby join Cornell Graduate Students United (CGSU) and authorize CGSU to represent me for the purposes of collective bargaining with Cornell University. My collective bargaining authorization and membership in CGSU will continue until a) I no longer am a graduate and/or professional student, or a continuing, short-term academic employee at Cornell University; b) I choose to revoke my membership in CGSU via a written request to the Union's Membership Coordinator and return my membership card to the membership coordinator; or c) the Union revokes my membership through the process outlined in the CGSU Constitution and Bylaws.

Signature _____ Department/Program _____

Date _____

Appendix B

Constitutional Amendment 1

Approved via referendum May 17, 2015

Consensus Seeking, Ending Debate, Voting: Decision-Making in the General Assembly

When important procedural decisions must be made in the General Assembly, we propose that the meeting's facilitators guide the group through the following ordered, time-bound steps:

1) **Proposal** (5 min max): presentation of the proposal by its proponents (formal committee or working group). (Note that according to the constitution, a working group can be formed by any members of the union.) The proposal may or may not have been pre-circulated.

2) **Consensus-building discussion** (Pre-established time, displayed on the agenda, suggested 10 min): Agenda drafters establish a set time for consensus building. Facilitators guide discussion. The aim is to resolve member concerns about the proposal through facilitating an active, creative, and collaborative airing and revision process. An ordered "stack" of members to speak will be kept by facilitators during this time. A straw poll can be taken at any time and proposed by any member.

1 minute warning: facilitators check if anyone would like to be added to the stack one minute before time expires.

When time is up, remaining "on stack" members will have the chance to air their concerns.

In the event getting through the stack takes less than the pre-established time, move to 3.

3) **Move to consensus*** (5 min max): A final straw poll will be taken to see where people stand (e.g. thumbs up for support, to the side for not sure, down for concerns, arms crossed for a block). Those with thumbs down will have another opportunity to raise outstanding concerns, and any member may suggest revisions for remedy.

4) **Vote to Table; Voting as a back-stop:** If consensus has not been reached** at the end of step 3, facilitators will ask members if they'd like to **vote to table**.

Voting to table: this assumes and requires member willingness to create a working group whose purpose is to form a revised/new proposal for the next GA meeting. This working group should be made up of volunteer members in support of the proposal and those who have blocked or have otherwise significant concerns.

If a simple majority votes yes, it is tabled.

If a simple majority votes no, the proposal will be moved to an **immediate vote**.

* “consensus”-based decision-making strives for solutions that everyone in the group can support or at least live with. Facilitators guide the group through discussion of opinions, concerns, and collaborative resolution of aired concerns, with the aid of straw polls.

** “not reaching consensus” means that there are remaining blocks or significant concerns. Although unanimity is ideal, consensus is considered “reached” if members who disagree with a proposal are willing to “stand aside” after their concerns have been heard and a meaningful attempt has been made to address them.

Constitutional Amendment 2

Approved via referendum May 24, 2015

Endorsement Policy

In the event that CGSU is approached by any party seeking an endorsement of a petition or other signed document, the following processes must occur in order to secure endorsement:

- 1) The document under consideration must be circulated to the Communications & Outreach Committee. If a simple majority of committee members finds the endorsement relevant to the mission of CGSU (not necessarily in line with the mission, merely relevant to graduate employees), the process continues.
 - 1a.) If an endorsement proposal is stopped at this point, it can be reintroduced if 5% of the membership signs a petition in its favor.
- 2) The Communications & Outreach Chair creates a password-protected page on the CGSU website containing 1) a link to the document being considered and 2) a poll with the options “Yes I support endorsement,” “No I do not support endorsement.” The poll also provides a space for feedback on the content of the endorsement.
- 3) The membership is notified of the endorsement being considered and given the password to the secure page.
- 4) After 72 hours from the circulation of the email, the poll results are tabulated.
 - 4a.) If 5% or more of the membership participates and 2/3 (66.6%) of the voting members select “Yes I support endorsement,” the document is endorsed by CGSU as a body.
 - 4b.) If the 5% quorum is not reached or less than 2/3 (66.6%) vote “Yes I support endorsement,” the document is not endorsed by CGSU. Individual members may of course endorse any document or petition as individuals.

Constitutional Amendment 3

Approved via referendum May 24, 2016

Forestallment of Dues

Dues shall be reduced to \$0 until a collective bargaining agreement is reached between CGSU and Cornell University or the amount is changed by general referendum as per Article VI, Section D (2).