



# Cornell University Student Assembly

Originally Presented On	11/20/14
Type of Action	Legislation
Status/Result	New Business

## S.A. Resolution #31 Developing an International Students Union

Sponsored by: Shivang Tayal'16, Matthew Stefanko'16, Chanida Susumpow'15, Binoy Jhaveri '16

**Whereas**, currently, the purpose of the International Students Board is to promote cross-cultural understanding and international life through programing, sponsoring and co-sponsoring international groups

**Whereas**, in its current state, the International Students Board does not address advocacy and representation related issues in the international community at Cornell;

**Whereas**, in its current state, the International Students Board is restrictive in its membership and does not have a membership of general body members;

**Whereas**, as of Fall 2014, international students comprised of 19.1% of Cornell's total student population and still do not have a student organization dedicated to representing their needs and resources;

**Whereas**, it is the Student Assembly's responsibility that international students are adequately represented through student activities on campus;

**Whereas**, there is widespread support in the international community for a student organization with the aim of addressing the needs and concerns of international students and promoting internationalism on campus;

**Be it therefore resolved**, that the Student Assembly approves the changes to the International Students Board's constitution as outlined in the appendix

Respectfully Submitted,

**Shivang Tayal '16**

*Vice President of Diversity and Inclusion, Student Assembly*

**Matthew Stefanko '16**

*Vice President of Finance, Student Assembly*

**Chanida Susumpow '15**

*President, International Students Board*

**Binoy Jhaveri '16**

*Vice President of Finance, International Students Board*

Appendix

**CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS of the International Students Union**

Article I – Name:

The name of this organization is International Students Union (ISU), herein called the “Union”.  
The executive board of the International Student Union will be called the “Board”.

Article II – Purpose:

To represent and advocate international causes, to be a resource for international students on the Cornell campus, and to promote internationalism, which would be defined as including, but not limited to, the cross-cultural understanding of international life on campus and in Ithaca and the cooperation between trans-national groups and individuals on campus.

Article III – Membership:

A. Membership to International Student Union:

Any registered, resident student of the Cornell community and who is interested in the purpose of the Union can be a member subject to the application process in Article IV.

B. Membership to Board:

Any registered, resident student of the Cornell community, including Members of the Union, may choose to run for membership of the Board subject to the election procedure outlined in Article VI. Non-students may be associated with the Board, or be elected by the Board to honorary membership. Honorary members do not have voting privileges during meetings.

C. Members already accepted to the Board but not on campus due to study abroad, leave and other semester-long off-campus programs, will continue to be board members but will not have any voting privileges. Upon return, they will be expected to resume any board related duties as per usual.

Article IV – Responsibilities:

In light of the Union’s purpose as stated in Article II, its responsibilities include, but are not restricted to:

A. To promote and fund international activities proposed by any undergraduate or graduate student group on campus.

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- B. To represent and advocate for any issues concerning International students, both undergraduate and graduate, at a campus wide level.
- C. To organize and plan events to promote and encourage diversity and cross cultural dialogue in terms of a trans-national context.
- D. To maintain and prepare the annual budget and administer funds available to the Union to various organizations on campus.
- E. To maintain liaisons with Faculty Committees, International Students and Scholars Office, Students Assembly, the University, and local community.
- F. To foster cross cultural exchange through: the Union's General Body Membership and meetings, events hosted by the Union, and events partly or wholly co-sponsored by the Union.

Article V – Structure:

The Union will have a general membership open to all Cornell students. Members are expected to participate in different functions by signing up on an ad-hoc basis. The functions include publicity, operations, planning, and advocacy.

The Board consists of 12 members: the president, 5 vice presidents, and 6 executive members. Each Vice President will be responsible for one of ISU's main functions: finance, publicity, operations, planning, and advocacy. Everyone on the board is expected to show up to mandatory hearings, General-Body meetings, as well as actively participating in event coordination. Application to the board is selective based on Article IV.

The board needs subcommittees/functional teams. This is an internal way for the Board to prepare executive members for VP positions. The President is responsible for forming subcommittees and tries to accommodate everyone's interests. Each VP will lead a subcommittee that reports to the President, it is the duty of the VP to ensure the members of his/her team are involved, in some capacity, in all responsibilities pertaining to his/her role.

A. The job descriptions of the Board members are:

- a. The President
  - i. Casts a vote in case of a tie in a Board meeting
  - ii. Oversees the Union and presides over meetings
  - iii. Serves as a spokesperson for the Union
  - iv. Represents the Union at official events
  - v. Represents the Union in the Student Assembly, Graduate Professional Student Assembly, and with other administrators of Cornell
  - vi. Sets the Union and Board size as needs change, but with respect to article VI – D
  - vii. Establishes the direction and growth of the Union
- b. The Vice President of Operations
  - i. Maintains records of all meetings and dealings of the Board and the g-

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- body, and provides them for the members of the Board either at meetings or upon request
- ii. Coordinates with the President in the process of removal of Board members
  - iii. Monitors the progress and efficiency of the Board
  - iv. In the absence of President, will oversee the Board and preside over the meeting
  - v. Coordinate recruitment for the board and the union
  - vi. Maintain smooth functioning of g-body meetings
  - vii. Coordinating general members' roles for different events
- c. The Vice President of Finance
- i. Keeps a permanent record of financial transactions and reimbursements
  - ii. Allocates funds upon approval of the Board
  - iii. Informs the Board of its financial affairs regularly on the first week of each month
  - iv. Serves as the contact person for all funding organizations on campus
  - v. Meets regularly with adviser to discuss and evaluate the financial condition of the organization
  - vi. Other than the President, represents the Board before the Student Assembly
  - vii. Coordinate with Student Assembly Appropriation Committee
- d. The Vice President of Planning
- i. Leads Planning effort to organize internal and external events for the greater Cornell community
  - ii. Coordinates the execution of ISU events that foster international awareness and cultural exchange
- e. The Vice President of Public Relations
- i. Leads Public Relations effort to organize of all ISU publicity efforts
  - ii. Maintains contact with all student organizations on campus
  - iii. Is responsible for branding and marketing the group
- f. The Vice President of Advocacy
- i. Form ties with various International Clubs around campus
  - ii. Initiate conversations with International Students
  - iii. Identify challenges concerning International students experience at Cornell
  - iv. Host events, forums, and campaigns to help bring awareness to said challenges
  - v. Write and submit Diversity Inclusion Plan to the SA.
- g. Executive Members:
- i. Responsible for voting and deciding on funding for internal events and events of other groups on campus
  - ii. Responsible for voting on all board decisions such as election and constitutional changes
  - iii. Will be assigned to help with minimum of 1 and maximum of 2 VPs
- h. Ex-Officio Member:
- i. Selected from the Student Assembly's International at-large position
  - ii. Acting as a liaison between the Union and the Student Assembly
  - iii. Working in close conjunction with the Union's President and the VP of Advocacy

B. The title of "Officer" will be given to members who are alternates to elected executive

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[committee members in cases of absences.](#)  
C. [The Program Coordinator of the International Students and Scholars Office shall be the Advisor of the Board.](#)

#### Article VI – Election of Board Members;

A. Election of Board members and Executive Committee members will be held whenever necessary each year for the following year. The election procedure is duly described in Section F of this article.

B. The election must be duly publicized. The publicity may take the following forms: Notification in the ISSO newsletter, fliers, and advertisements in the media.

C. All registered Cornell students are eligible to be on the Board

E. The mechanics of election to the Board are as follows:

1. Prospective members will send applications prior to the election.
2. A screening interview with members of the current Board will take place.
3. New members to the Board will be selected as per the current needs of the organization.

F. The mechanics of election of [VPs](#) within the Board are as follows:

1. Contested Executive Committee positions, and names of those nominated to the positions, will be noted. If only one person is running for an officer position, s/he is automatically elected to it. If there is no candidate for the position, the members will vote amongst themselves to designate a person.
2. Ballot sheets will be handed out. For each contested position, each Board member should vote for one person only, and write the person's name in the space provided.
3. Ballot sheets will be collected and vote counted.
4. The names of the new Executive Committee members will be announced.

#### F. [Membership application to the union](#)

1. [Prospective members should fill out a form at a recruiting event or email the VP of Operations.](#)
2. [Member must attend at least 3 meetings and participate in at least 1 event coordination to be considered part of the ISU.](#)

#### Article VII – Resignation/Removal of Board Members

A. A petition signed by 50% of the Board will be necessary for the Board to consider the removal of any member.

B. If any member fails to meet the requirements of her/his office, a two-thirds majority vote of the Board can remove her/him from the Board. A member can be removed from the Board if found to conflict with the interests of the Board. This procedure also requires a two-thirds majority vote after a full hearing.

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C. Three absences (and two for the first semester of new members) will be allowed per semester. If someone exceeds that allowance, each case will be assessed individually. The president will speak with the member, and the board will discuss the case in light of the member's contributions and other factors.

D. Arriving ten minutes late unexcused at a board meeting constitutes a half- absence, while arriving one hour or more after the beginning of the meeting under similar conditions is counted as a full absence.

#### Article VIII – Mechanics of Meetings:

##### Board meeting

A. Meetings will take place weekly during the academic calendar, except during school holidays.

B. In the events that members of the Board feel that Executive Board members should explain or clarify their actions, the President is required to call a meeting of the Board within two weeks of receiving a petition to that effect, signed by at least one-third of the Board members.

C. Quorum will be one-half of the Board, of whom one must be the President, unless she/he is excused.

D. The President will not vote during a decision-making process, unless there is a tie. In case of a tie, the President may cast a vote, or call for a re- vote, at her/his discretion.

##### General Body Meeting

A. Meetings will take place weekly during the academic calendar, except during school holidays.

#### Article IX – Internal Administrative Spending:

Internal administrative spending is defined as any expenditures incurred on activities only limited to the internal membership of the Board for any administrative purposes. The Union shall not spend more than 5% of its total Student Activity Fee allocation on internal administrative spending.

#### Article X – Guidelines for Co-Sponsorship:

The following guidelines may be followed for funding a co-sponsored event.

A. Consider the cost-benefit ratio for the event.

B. Consider the anticipated size and profile (diversity) of the crowd attending the event.

C. Consider the percentage of the total budget requested from the Board and that the organization has explored other possible funding resources.

D. Consider whether the event is open to the entire Cornell community and promotes internationalism and/or multiculturalism. If event does not fall under any of the aforementioned category, the board can only fund publicity materials. All other events

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will be considered on a case by case basis.

E. Provide maximum to small and new organizations, but not at the expense of the former points (Article IX A-D)

F. All student organizations, to be considered for co-sponsorship, must have registered their organization with the Student Activities Office under the Dean of Students. If not possible, the co-sponsorship applicants must be recognized by some element of the university, either through professors, departments, or student organizations. ISU will also co-sponsor events organized by Program Houses and Study Programs provided they meet the criteria outlined in Article IX A-D

G. To avoid double funding of a particular item using Student Activity Fee (SAF) money, each group seeking co-sponsorship will be required to detail what SAFC/GPSAFC funding is to be used for. ISU co-sponsorship can be used for items not covered by SAFC/GPSAFC funding (e.g. Food) as well as to supplement SAFC/GPSAFC funding where this is not adequate to cover a particular item. ISU can also explicitly state what portions of a particular budget it will not fund.

H. Student organizations are required to submit 1 copy of the completed budget proposal per member of the board, prepared according to the Board's recommended outline (which will be made available to all students organizations), to the Board preferably at least two weeks prior to the proposed event. This procedure will give the Board sufficient time to review the proposal and address any issues that may arise. Budgets can be submitted up to two weeks after the event but are not guaranteed an equal review and/or funding disbursement. Late applications are subject to a penalty.

I. Board members who are applying on behalf of their other affiliated organizations may not be present for the discussion of their funding request or participate in the voting process.

J. If a member holds an officer position in another organization that applies for funding, he / she will be prohibited to vote on any decision relating to that organization

K. The financial advisory committee will review the budget before submitting it to the Board for hearing. If not properly prepared, the financial advisory committee may ask an organization to revise the budget. Once the budget is submitted to the Board for hearing, decisions may be based on the available information, rather than sending back the budget for additional information.

L. If a student organization feels that it was not treated fairly, it has the right to appeal to the Board to reconsider the funding decision. But the appeal must be made within a week after negotiation.

M. The Board must review all budget proposals. A full quorum (one-half) of the Board is required to allocate funds. In the case of an organization unable to have its budget reviewed at a regular meeting before the event (for some acceptable reason), the Board may call an emergency meeting to review the budget.

N. Funds for the co-sponsored events of the International Festival can be allocated (if

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necessary) by the Executive Committee in consultation with at least one member (other than the Vice-President for Finance) of the financial advisory committee. This right has to be approved by the Board. Notifications to the Board must be made within a week.

O. ISU reserves the right to ask for copies of receipts from groups and examine the group's budget after an event has taken place.

P. Co-sponsorship handling & budget hearing procedure

- The board member collecting the budget should review it for completeness. If items are missing or the budget incorrect, the group should be contacted and requested to bring the necessary information / budget corrections with them to Sunday's hearing
- At the budget hearing the group will be asked to present itself, its mission and outline the budget to be considered for co-sponsorship. The board members are then free to ask questions to the group representative with due regard to the former points (Article IX A-F)
- During closed session: President will allow 5 minutes of open forum to discuss event. Then a call for dollar amounts will be made. A second from another board member is required for each figure suggested. The person suggesting must give reasons for his/her figure. When all suggested amounts have been presented voting will take place by hands starting w/ the lowest suggested sum. If there is a tie the president will cast his/her vote.
- Groups will be contacted at the latest by the following Tuesday evening with the decision of the board. The e-mail as well as indicating the amount funded will explain in detail the reason for any deductions made by the board and include any suggestions made during the groups' presentation. The e-mail must also specifically request that all publicity acknowledges ISU co-sponsorship. Also if the event has an entrance fee a request will be made at this time for two complimentary tickets to permit members to attend according to the guidelines outlined in Article IX M.
- Groups that are late or failed to appear at a previous hearing are not guaranteed an equal review and/or funding disbursement. They are subject to a penalty.
- Groups that fail to include ISU's logo as a sponsor on their publicity material (online and printed) will be penalized.

Article XI – Subcommittees:

- A. The Board may form ad hoc subcommittees from time to time for any special function, as it finds necessary.
- B. The Board may select members from the subcommittees from within the Board and/or outside the Board.
- C. Subcommittees will report to the President of the Board.
- D. All decisions of the subcommittees will be subject to the approval of the Board, unless otherwise authorized by the Board.

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Article XI – Amendments:

- A. Any member of the Board may propose an amendment to this constitution.
- B. An amendment shall be passed by a two-thirds majority vote.

Appendix 1: Instructions to groups seeking co-sponsorship from ISU

The following information is available on the ISU website: [www.rso.cornell.edu/ISB](http://www.rso.cornell.edu/ISB)

- Your group must be recognized by the university. The group is encouraged to be registered with the Students Assemblies Office. Contact Roxanne Edsall for more information.
- We can fund events by Program Houses and Study Programs.
- Events must be open to the entire Cornell Community. As a result, we do not fund events held during University Holidays.
- Groups, on occasion, may request funding for overseas events and trips, contingent upon the event/trip following ISU's usual funding criteria. Following the trip, groups who receive funding for such events are required to present their experiences / trip in an ISU-sponsored event. Such funding grants may be competitive.
- We cannot sponsor events where a portion of ISU co-sponsorship funds would go to charity. Only operating expenses would be covered. However a donation box is permitted.
- We can fund events up to two weeks after they have taken place, PROVIDED the co-sponsorship form was submitted before the event in question.
- Groups can be funded up to thrice per semester.

Funding Procedure:

- Follow SAFC guidelines, with the exception of food.
- Indicate on the form the date submitted and e-mail the ISU Vice-President for Finance to inform him/her of the co-sponsorship request.
- Provide 1 copy of the budget proposal per board member, and an equal number of copies of any additional information you wish to include.
- We fund on an event by event basis and can provide a maximum of \$1000 (see below) for events with less than 250 attendees. Events that are likely to have over 250 attendees or involve the organization of several groups may receive a greater maximum funding disbursement.
- 10-minute hearings will take place during regular Board meetings i.e. Sunday evenings from 2:30 p.m. onwards.
- You will be contacted by e-mail of the Board's decision within 2 days of the hearing.
- If the budget proposal is incomplete in any way, the Board can ask the group to return the following week to present a revised budget.
- If your event obtains funding from ISU all publicity (tickets, flyers, posters) for the event must contain the following "Co-sponsored by ISU"

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- ISU reserves the right to ask for copies of receipts from groups and examine the group's budget after an event has taken place.
- A group must complete our survey to be eligible for receiving funding next time.

#### Appendix 2: Non-discrimination Clause

As an organization, ISU not discriminate on the basis of actual or perceived age, color, disability, ethnicity, gender identity or expression, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, veteran status, or any combination of these factors when determining its membership and when determining the equal rights of all general members and executive board members, respectively, which shall include, but are not limited to, voting for, seeking, and holding positions within the organization.

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