Faculty Senate
December 6, 2023

ALL IN-PERSON ATTENDEES PLEASE SIGN-IN ON ONE OF THE SHEETS

ALL ZOOM ATTENDEES PLEASE SIGN-IN VIA THE CHAT

SENATORS: Name and Department
FACULTY GUESTS: Name and Department
NON-FACULTY GUESTS: Name and Affiliation
PRESS: Name and Affiliation
Cornell University is located on the traditional homelands of the Gayogohó꞉nǫ꞉ (the Cayuga Nation). The Gayogohó꞉nǫ꞉ are members of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, an alliance of six sovereign Nations with a historic and contemporary presence on this land. The Confederacy precedes the establishment of Cornell University, New York state, and the United States of America. We acknowledge the painful history of Gayogohó꞉nǫ꞉ dispossession and honor the ongoing connection of Gayogohó꞉nǫ꞉ people, past and present, to these lands and waters.

This land acknowledgment has been reviewed and approved by the traditional Gayogohó꞉nǫ꞉ leadership.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HYBRID FORMAT</th>
<th>In-person and remote attendance</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ZOOM CAPTIONING</td>
<td>Choose “Live Transcription” in the Zoom menu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TO SPEAK</td>
<td>2 minutes to pose a question or make a statement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Identify yourself: First name, Last name and Department</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zoom first (Muted until called)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Floor next (to allow Senators to come up to the microphone)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Back to Zoom</td>
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<tr>
<td>Back to Floor</td>
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<tr>
<td>CHAT</td>
<td>Want to attend to statements on the floor; set to everyone</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do not want to disadvantage in-person attendees; 2 minutes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Please limit chat to sharing resources with each other</td>
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<td>Will be published ‘as is’ publicly on DoF website after meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>RECORDING</td>
<td>Started at 3:30PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Audio and chat will be posted on agenda webpage after meeting</td>
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Approval of Zoom Transcription Minutes

November 8, 2023

Unanimous consent requested
Raise hand (in-person or remote) for corrections only
Resolution to eliminate a transcript notation for a grade of incomplete when the instructor has substituted another grade

Lisa Nishi, Industrial and Labor Relations, Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education

Initially presented @ 10/11/23 Faculty Senate Meeting
Grade of Incomplete – Current Policy

According to the Cornell University Grading System, adopted in 1965, a grade of INC is appropriate only when 2 basic conditions have been met:

1. Student has substantial equity at passing level
2. Student has been prevented by circumstances beyond their control
Grade of Incomplete – Current Policy

According to current policy,

– The fact that a student took an INC becomes a permanent part of the student’s transcript even after a grade has been submitted (denoted by an *)
Whereas...

1. By definition (according to policy), student is not at fault for needing a temporary INC; should not be punished for a setback out of their control by having a permanent notation. The * invites unnecessarily punitive negative inference.

2. The notation may pressure a student to disclose private information.

3. Even without the permanent notation for a temporary INC, a transcript reader has all necessary information.

4. Cornell is an outlier in its practice.

5. Actual implementation of the required notation is inconsistent, and therefore inequitable, across Cornell’s colleges/schools.
Grade of Incomplete – Recommended Change

Eliminate a permanent transcript notation (*) for a temporary INC when an instructor later substitutes for a grade.
Be it therefore resolved...

That the Cornell University Grading System policy be revised by eliminating the clause that states:

“[t]he symbol INC becomes a permanent part of the student’s transcript, even when a grade is later submitted,”

and substituting the text:

“[t]he symbol INC becomes a permanent part of the student’s transcript only when another grade is not later submitted.”
Resolution to discontinue posting median grades on student transcripts

Lisa Nishi, Industrial and Labor Relations, Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education

Initially presented @ 11/8/23 Faculty Senate Meeting
Median Grades on Transcripts – Policy History

1997

Faculty Resolution passed to post median grades on (a) transcripts; and (b) University Registrar (OUR) website with 2 underlying goals: (1) encourage students to take courses with low median grades; and (2) curb grade inflation.

1998: Postings on OUR website began

2006: EPC Resolution to remove median grades from OUR website until they could also be posted on transcripts because inextricably linked (failed)

2008: Postings on transcripts began for students matriculating in 2008, after a decade long delay due to technological obstacles

2009: EPC resolution to remove median grades from OUR website because was having opposite effect than intended (failed)

FS Resolution passed to remove posting of median grades from OUR website – this time, backed by published study (Bar, Brinda & Asaf, 2009) that showed: (1) students are enrolling in courses with high (not low) median grades; and (2) grade inflation accelerated after the new policy was implemented. Both outcomes were opposite of what the FS intended. However, the resolution did not address postings on transcripts, which therefore continued even though median grades were no longer posted on OUR website.

2011: Cornell Daily Sun article protesting median grades on transcripts

2011: Students began crowdsourcing median grade data from transcripts to recreate OUR postings, available on Reddit and commercial sites

2018: SA Resolution to reinstate OUR postings. If others will see median grades on transcripts, students should also be able to see before enrolling

2023: Cornell Daily Sun article echoing sentiments of 2011 article

2023: SA Resolution (current under discussion) to discontinue practice of including median grades on official transcripts
Whereas...

1. While the Faculty Senate sought to address the problem of strategic course selection by discontinuing the practice of posting median grades on the OUR website, the continued posting on transcripts results in the same behavior, which is antithetical to Cornell’s fundamental principle of learning for the sake of learning.

2. By promoting median grades, Cornell focuses students on how they perform relative to peers, fueling unproductive stress and amplifying competition.

3. Cornell is anomalous in this practice, which may disadvantage Cornell students.

4. The research study showed that publicizing median grades promotes grade inflation and disproportionately impacts certain students.
Whereas...

5. Students are disheartened – they report that the practice demoralizes them, devalues their academic accomplishments in the classroom, detracts from learning, reinforces student competition, and discourages academic risk taking.

6. Students report the practice results in inequities in courses with multiple sections where section instructors have different medians which are aggregated to produce one standardized median grade for all sections.

7. Commercial websites introduce another inequity by making Cornell course median grade information available for a fee, advantaging those students able to pay these fees.
Be it therefore resolved....

That the university discontinue posting median grades on transcripts.
Education Policy Committee (EPC) Response to Removing INC and Median Grade from Student Transcripts

Rebecca Nelson, Plant-Microbe Biology Section Plant Breeding and Genetics
Chair of the EPC
Senate Discussion
Update on Proposal toward establishment of a teaching professor track and Teaching-Track Title Taskforce (T4)

Senator Michael Ryan Clarkson, Computer Science
Charlie Van Loan, Computer Science Emeritus
# Fall 2023 Discussion Sequence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sept.</th>
<th>Senate presentation on the issues that relate to the establishment of a Teaching Professor track.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sept.–Oct.</td>
<td>Discussion of issues among the academic deans and the provost.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov.</td>
<td>DoF asks the academic deans to identify a representative from their unit to serve on the T4.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec.</td>
<td>T4 make-up announced. T4 website set up. Assessments from Senate committees (CAPP, EPC, and AFPSE) received. First T4 meeting scheduled for week of Dec 18.</td>
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## T4 Membership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Department</th>
<th>College</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lawrence Blume</td>
<td>Information Science &amp; Economics</td>
<td>BOWERS</td>
<td>AD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael Clarkson*</td>
<td>Computer Science</td>
<td>BOWERS</td>
<td>RTE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susan Fubini</td>
<td>Clinical Sciences</td>
<td>CVM</td>
<td>AD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarah Giroux</td>
<td>Global Development</td>
<td>CALS</td>
<td>AD, RTE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fran Kozen</td>
<td>Fiber Science &amp; Apparel Design</td>
<td>CHE</td>
<td>RTE</td>
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<tr>
<td>Neema Kudva</td>
<td>City &amp; Regional Planning</td>
<td>AAP</td>
<td>AD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beth Lyon</td>
<td>Clinical Programs</td>
<td>LAW</td>
<td>AD, RTE</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jeff Niederdeppe</td>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>BROOKS</td>
<td>AD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Derk Pereboom</td>
<td>Philosophy</td>
<td>A&amp;S</td>
<td>AD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Suzanne Shu</td>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td>SCJCB</td>
<td>AD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Charles Van Loan*</td>
<td>Computer Science</td>
<td>BOWERS</td>
<td>Emeritus</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alan Zehnder</td>
<td>Mechanical &amp; Aero. Engineering</td>
<td>ENG</td>
<td>AD</td>
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Charge: The Teaching-Track Title Taskforce will develop a proposal and Faculty Senate resolution to create a framework for Teaching Professor titles at all ranks, using the enabling legislation approach seen in titles like Clinical Professor and Research Professor. With broad representation from various colleges and schools, the composition of the committee ensures that each one can utilize this enabling legislation to customize the implementation of a Teaching Professor track based on their specific educational goals.

Timeline: The proposal should be sent to the Senate in time for debate at the April meeting and vote at the May meeting.
T4 Meetings

T4 meeting agendas and minutes will be posted on the T4 website. Comments and feedback are accepted through the website or through contact with any member of T4.
Acknowledgments

• We thank Eve for working with the deans and setting up T4.
• We appreciate the ongoing administrative support provided by CA Shugarts and Jill Short in the DoF Office.
• We are grateful for feedback received from colleagues in several colleges and from the AFPSF, CAPP, and EPC committees.
Senate Committee responses to proposal toward establishment of a teaching professor track

Rebecca Nelson, Plant-Microbe Biology Section Plant Breeding and Genetics
Chair of the Education Policies Committee (EPC)

Mark Milstein, Management, Director of Center for Sustainable Global Enterprise
Chair of the Academic Programs and Policies Committee (CAPP) [5 minutes]

Tracy Stokol, Clinical Pathology
Chair of the Academic Freedom and Professional Status of Faculty (AFPSF)
Senate Discussion
Senate Announcements and Updates

Eve De Rosa, Dean of Faculty, Chair of the University Faculty Committee; Psychology
Chelsea Specht, Associate Dean of Faculty, Chair of the Nominations and Elections Committee; Plant Biology
Senate Announcements and Updates

• Nominations and Elections committee are seeking:
  
  • Financial Policies Committee – FPC (1)
    • [https://theuniversityfaculty.cornell.edu/committees/standing-senate-committees/fpc-current/](https://theuniversityfaculty.cornell.edu/committees/standing-senate-committees/fpc-current/)

  • University-ROTC relations Committee - URRC (1) *
    • [https://theuniversityfaculty.cornell.edu/committees/standing-senate-committees/university-rotc-relationships-committee-urrc/](https://theuniversityfaculty.cornell.edu/committees/standing-senate-committees/university-rotc-relationships-committee-urrc/)

  • Committee on Music (3)
    • [https://theuniversityfaculty.cornell.edu/committees/standing-senate-committees/music-current/](https://theuniversityfaculty.cornell.edu/committees/standing-senate-committees/music-current/)

  • University Assembly – UA (3)
    • [https://assembly.cornell.edu/shared-governance-cornell/university-assembly](https://assembly.cornell.edu/shared-governance-cornell/university-assembly)

  • University Assembly Committees: [Campus Welfare Committee](https://theuniversityfaculty.cornell.edu/committees/standing-senate-committees/campus-welfare-current/) & [Campus Planning Committee](https://theuniversityfaculty.cornell.edu/committees/standing-senate-committees/campus-planning-current/) (2)
Senate Announcements and Updates

• Vote - Qualtrics link tomorrow morning and have until noon, December 15, 2023.
  • Resolutions to eliminate a transcript notation for a grade of incomplete when the instructor has substituted another grade and to discontinue posting median grades on student transcripts.

• What the faculty could do for the Freedom of Expression theme year? The executive committee of the AAUP brought a proposal for a campus-wide educational series on academic freedom.
  • Senator Lieberwitz, Industrial and Labor Relations, has been invited to serve as a bridge between the two communities.
  • Looking for 3-5 Senators to volunteer for a forthcoming Faculty Senate steering committee to create a Spring event(s) for an examination of academic freedom, focusing on its:
    • Definition: Explore perspectives on academic freedom.
    • Significance: Investigate why academic freedom is a core university value.
    • Responsibilities: Identify responsibilities for faculty, students, and the institution.
    • Fostering: Develop strategies to foster a culture of academic freedom.
Good of the Order
Adjournment