

# Directors'-S Resolution Summary

## Results

The vote tallies for the Directors'-S Resolution are

Yes = 61  
No = 36  
Abstain = 9  
DNV = 20

## The Resolution

This [resolution webpage](#) contains background and uploaded comments. Here is the resolution itself:

*Whereas* President Pollack charged the Faculty Senate to develop plans for an educational requirement for students in her [July 2020 letter](#) to the Cornell community;

*Whereas* Africana Studies; American Studies; American Indian and Indigenous Studies; Asian American Studies; Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies; and Latinx Studies are the units that can best create and deliver the content of such a requirement;

*Be it resolved* that the Faculty Senate supports the recommendations for a student requirement that are made in this [proposal](#).

## Voter Comments

Voters were able to upload comments on their ballot. Below are the comments so obtained.

good course offering but overall proposal seems to me less desirable than WG-S

Comments from Buz Barstow (Faculty Senator for Biological and Environmental Engineering), after consultation with department faculty and staff (particularly Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee) These comments are the same as those posted for our vote on the Faculty Education Requirement, but we believe are important for this vote as well. We first want to emphasize our support for the recommendations of anti-racism initiative working groups. In consultation with my colleagues in Biological and Environmental Engineering, we are voting yes for the faculty, staff and student education proposals. We believe that racial reconciliation and restoring a sense of common good and community is the way of the future, both in the United States and globally. We strongly believe that doing nothing (voting no) is not an option. We also strongly believe in the possibility of education, if done right, to move minds, and make the world a better place. If these proposals create rational, well-meaning dialog and action, they will be succeeding (and are already doing this). The turbulent summer of 2020 and the debate around the anti-racism initiative has created an unprecedented degree of engagement with our colleagues that we believe bodes well for the future. We have had some of the most substantive faculty senate meetings on almost any subject considered. However, just because this trend exists, it does not mean that any particular strategy for achieving racial reconciliation and opportunity for all regardless of background is the right one. While we believe a right strategy undeniably exists, we think that humility in the face of this challenge is essential for success. As of today, no faculty or student body exists that fully reflects the diversity of the United States or the world. This means we don't yet have a workable strategy to achieve this. This means we need to constantly experiment and constantly improve with

training, hiring and promotion, funding, and personal interaction. We advise that the Center for Racial Justice evaluate the educational process from the outset. There is a strong, and we believe legitimate, fear amongst our colleagues that mandatory training, if done poorly could have a counter-productive effect on our community. It could unproductively use valuable student, faculty and staff time, generate cynicism, while doing nothing to build a sense of shared community. We are worried that this will be the end of diversity education, not the beginning. We believe these concerns are particularly acute with regards to staff training that has already begun to roll out. Here, time commitments are far larger than those envisioned by the faculty senate. While much to the credit of the CALS staff there has been no outright hostility, we believe this has the potential to be overly burdensome, patronizing, and ostracizing and to widen pre-existing political divisions that are found in the wider country. Given these concerns, we want to encourage the higher ups to strongly consider the use of persuasion first, rather than coercion first to educate the faculty, staff and students. We also advise caution in the roll out of educational measures, monitoring of their effectiveness, wide choice of material, monitoring of time commitment, and limits on the duration of any mandatory measures (say 10 to 15 years). We hope the educational tools developed are used to address systemic racism much in the same way that Title IX has been working to address sexual harassment, with the evolution of both rules and ways of teaching people appropriate behavior.

I believe it is appropriate for us, as teachers, to say what curriculum needs are. I believe the need for a curriculum that addresses racism is clear. I believe that we should draw on the expertise of our local experts to design and deliver that curriculum. Therefore, I'm voting for the "directors" version of the resolution. I'm saying that I don't think it's appropriate to let this curricular obligation devolve to the individual colleges. Either we are "one Cornell" or we are not, and I believe we hold too strenuously to the decentralized principle when we start creating duplicative materials across campus even though we have appropriate expertise in a particular set of units.

Below are comment collected from my dept: -This is a fine proposal, but it does not address all the points of the charge. Key bits were taken from here and integrated in the UFC-S resolution. -This is a great resolution—these courses must be taught by qualified faculty, and the units with those faculty must be given the resources (e.g. more hires!!) to do so.

We offer Senate resolution S as an alternative. Carl Franck, Physics

The director's proposal contains some plans on how to design such a course to educate students, however I am after that they significantly underestimate the required resource to develop and run such a class for all students -- let me clear we are talking of something similar to the freshman writing seminar is requires a massive organizational effort to run. I am not sure that the 6 centers are capable of running such program.

Comments: Not thought to be particularly manageable.

I fully support this resolution and wish the directors of these programs had been included in the working groups originally.

The departments already have expert faculty who have created material/courses on these topics. Creating a large course requires extra resources, and I am very doubtful about the effectiveness of a large course.

On the whole, I think that the proposal in this resolution is a good idea. I thought that this project was going to be rather narrowly focused on racism and ethnocentrism; so I am puzzled about the role of FGSS would play. Is the focus to be broader -- on all forms of bias? I am also worried about where all the TAs needed for the big course will come from, especially with regard to the need for TAs in other courses. Hopefully the administration will find the bodies and find the money to pay them.

We strongly support this resolution. As the director of one of the programs put it in the presentation of this resolution, "The possible has been tried and failed. Now it's time to try the impossible."

I think it is far preferable to provide a wide range of choices to students for courses from the colleges/departments, as well as from a university-wide course that may be developed. There is no need to have only one course for all students.

My colleagues were generally comfortable with this variant on the proposal. They do not support anything that would be mandatory, particularly at the graduate level. Rather, they endorse the idea of creating very high quality material that would attract wide interest by being of such inherent strength.

Directors resolution is much better than UFC-S resolution. I'm in favor of the directors being given more time to come up with a more concrete course, and am dismayed with how late their input was sought. I do not support their list of interim proposed courses; seeking to harvest current outrage by directing students and attendant tuition dollars to existing specialized courses that conveniently reside only in their departments is disingenuous.

I am so grateful to the Director's for this wonderful proposal, as well as to the original Working Group S for doing the hard work before them.

Since there has been virtually no science faculty involved in this decision, I object to any requirement that adds to those already in place regarding DEI issues. These are NOT the only departments who need a voice in DEI issues.

I disagree that the most doctrinaire amongst us are well suited to creating a non-indoctrinating course.

I wholeheartedly agree with the views of the Directors that their programs are the best repository of knowledge about many of the issues central to anti-racism education. In the best of all possible worlds, all students would be able to take a course from these experts. But we are talking about teaching THOUSANDS of students per semester to make sure everyone gets their turn, and I am not at all satisfied that the Directors have really considered the logistics of teaching so many students. Only a MOOC-style course or a highly distributed requirement being satisfied by many (most? all?) departments/programs working in concert can meet the challenge of handling this very large student load. I'd rather see students able to choose a course where they'll have some hope of being able to participate in substantive discussions of these important matters, and that means distributing the course requirement outside these programs (as well, of course, as maintaining their current lineup of valuable courses, and no doubt adding new ones).

While I have no expertise in addressing this challenge that we are facing, I do believe that those with expertise on the subject should be taking the lead with two caveats. One, expertise is not always exclusively found in any disciplinary silo and this leadership should reflect the larger experience of all of us. In other words, units and disciplines that are explicitly focused on minority demographics/studies do not hold the monopoly on approaches and solutions. All must be part, or this (whatever this is) will fail. Yet, I believe that there is an understanding and experience in these disciplines that should be at the fore – though not exclusive and not without partnership with other “experts” that may not be housed in explicitly expert units or disciplines. This leads to my second caveat. While, I believe we should use the expertise and perspective of our community, the larger community can't set aside its responsibility in engendering a fair and just community. Without the larger community's input, leadership and participation, the legitimacy of the outcomes of these resolutions will be in doubt. Just because someone makes you do something and says you should be some way, does not always (or even generally) make one change. How we get to where we want to be will require community wide leadership, participation and understanding. This is particularly relevant to student curriculum content. If they don't see the relevance and import, it will simply be viewed at best as a waste of their time and at worst, resented.

I strongly object to the self-righteous tone and content of the report on which this resolution is based. These six departments finally came up with a proposal after months of negativity and inflexibility, in large part due to internal disagreements that stem from heavily ideological thinking and dogmatic posturing. It is clear from the report and discussion in the Faculty Senate that many of these faculty want to conduct indoctrination of Cornell students, most likely along the lines of "critical race theory." This does not bode well for these departments being the central key to the student requirement. While I do support a student requirement, I absolutely reject these departments serving as the one and only vehicle to Cornell's implementation of such a requirement.

The curriculum should remain in the hands of the colleges.

It is an interesting proposal, but it relies on either a strong financial support coming from the Central Administration or a reattribution of resources. I am skeptical of the Provost's and President's actual commitment when things are pricey, and I am against reattributing resources, as it means less for everyone, while some areas are already running on tight budgets. Besides, I am concerned with both implicit and explicit assumptions that only these 6 units are the best ones to speak about race. Why is FGGs so central while Jewish Studies is not there (I seem to remember the Holocaust was the largest racist operation of the 20th C.)? How could one believe that a black CompLit faculty working on race and gender in Africa or a Latin American indigenous anthropologists working on ethnic cleansing in Brazil are not as competent as members of the 6 programs, just because of their job affiliation? Then, this is a very

Arts & Sciences oriented proposal that will only speak difficultly to all units.

The incorporation of the plans developed by the Directors into the UFC resolution was a good step. I concur that the expertise represented by the these Directors' units is essential for appropriate critical reflection on these issues. I would still like to see some "antiracism in the disciplines" as a follow-on aspect of the student educational experience.