

Senator-F1 Resolution Summary

Results

The vote tallies for the Senator-F1 Resolution are

Yes = 54

No = 44

Abstain = 9

DNV = 19

The Resolution

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

Whereas President Pollack and #DoBetterCornell have called for faculty to be educated about systemic racism and bias,

Whereas the Faculty Senate supports a strong and effective institutional response to address issues of racism and systemic inequalities,

Whereas the Faculty Senate has received and considered the “Working Group-F Final Report to the Faculty Senate,” dated April 5, 2021,

Whereas a faculty that collectively commits to understanding and addressing systemic inequalities and enhancing diversity, equity, and inclusion is better able to fulfill the university’s mission and guide Cornell’s diverse student body,

Whereas the Office of Faculty Development and Diversity (OFDD) and colleges, schools, and departments have developed initiatives to improve education and culture of faculty, staff, and students around issues of diversity, equity and inclusion,

Be it resolved that the Faculty Senate endorses the goal stated in the Working Group-F final report, of creating educational programs “to support faculty in creating an antiracist, just and equitable climate for our campus community.”

Be it further resolved that the Faculty Senate supports the development of faculty educational programs by the university-level OFDD and by the colleges, schools, and departments to address issues of systemic injustice, diversity, equity and inclusion.

Be it further resolved that the Faculty Senate encourages departments and colleges to work with each other and with the OFDD to evaluate the participation rates and effectiveness of these programs.

Be it further resolved that the Faculty Senate calls for the relevant Senate standing committees, including the [Academic Freedom and Professional Status of the Faculty Committee](#), the [Educational Policy Committee](#), and the [Faculty Committee on Program Review](#), to participate in the process to design, vet, review, recommend, and/or discontinue any and all university-wide programs for faculty education.

Voter Comments

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

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.

We should not devolve to units; we should draw on expertise of our centers with deep knowledge of these issues (Africana, FGSS, AIISP, etc.).

Please note that this alternative resolution was arrived at in collaboration with colleagues across the university and has the support of some, but not all members of my department. I would add that our new antiracism center will also serve as a resource for educational materials. Carl Franck, Physics

Almost any training material coming from offices like OFDD are practically useless -- the Title IX training we were required to complete in the fall did not contain any useful information and I found it insulting that the faculty is suggested to do it. The current resolution does not give the FS any oversight over the training materials produced by OFDD.

Comments: mildly supportive; a minority said that bottom-up efforts tend to be haphazard.

I am troubled by endorsement of this statement from the WG-F report: "creation of an anti-racist, just and equitable climate for our campus community" requires that faculty "understand that structural racism, colonialism, and injustice, and their current manifestations have a historical and relational basis." It is an obvious triviality that those phenomena, like all social phenomena, have a historical basis; I don't think that faculty need to be taught that! (The suggestion that some faculty don't understand this is bizarre.) As for them having a relational basis -- what does that mean? Based on the relation of what to what? It is disturbingly unclear what the first goal stated in the WG-F report is; so I am uncomfortable with endorsing it. Nonetheless, I favor enough in the Senator-F-1 resolution for me to be will to endorse it.

We strongly support this resolution, especially the part supporting the OFDD. As one faculty member put it, "I have taken many OFDD-organized workshops over the years and have always found them to be deeply thoughtful, importantly provocative, and very effectively done. Participation in them, which also involves meeting and exchanging with many Cornell colleagues whom I would not otherwise meet (e.g. from other colleges), has also significantly broadened my understanding of the university as a whole and of various situations that other colleagues and their constituents encounter. I think it is very important for Cornell to strengthen rather than weaken the OFDD."

This resolution supports goals that are widely supported in the faculty and the rest of the university.

My colleagues and I presume that in practice, the material created in Arts, Engineering, CIS and other nearby units should be rather uniform. However, we do feel that each unit has special circumstances that could lead to modest customization.

This is an ibid of my prior comments, but it is no less pertinent here than as before. While I support the goal of the resolution to support faculty, staff and students in creating an antiracist, just and equitable climate for our campus community, I can't see this approach as just when we are treating different populations (Faculty, Staff and Student) differently based on self-defined elitist ideas. It's ok for us to require others to participate, but we only participate voluntarily? Seriously? Secondly, I don't see a scope of content (curriculum and pedagogy) that meet the needs of the goal(s) at the level of the participants. I'll grant you that I maybe asking too much given the stage we're at, but these resolutions were presented as approaches rather than aspirations. Perhaps it would be best if we went back to resolutions that supported our President in creating possible approaches and then for her to present them to the Senate for insight or for the Senate to come up with concrete approaches as possible methods of approach rather than the hodge-podge of presentations and conversations that confuse the larger concern/goal of creating an antiracist, just and equitable climate for our campus community,... let alone responsible citizens beyond the borders of our campus.

I am voting "for" this resolution as a "failsafe" in case my preferred alternative, the previous resolution, fails, so that we have some requirement, whether across the university or in the colleges.

I am strongly opposed to mandatory faculty education.

I'd rather everyone engage in these efforts, but if that's not possible then I think we should have at least something so I'm voting yes on everything for the F component.