

Resolution 172: Adopting University Policies for Reasonable Accommodations for Faculty, Instructors, Staff, and Students During the Pandemic

Q1 - Do you support the resolution titled "Resolution on adopting university policies for reasonable accommodations for faculty, instructors, staff, and students during the Pandemic?"

Resolution 1 (Y=67 , N =21 , Abs = 8; DNV=32)

Comments

I think the University is doing some of this already with their policies. Additional clarity and improvements to the system can only help.

I agree with the general sentiments but remain uncomfortable with the language as drafted for reasons voiced during the 9/9 meeting.

YES, POST ANONYMOUSLY. We strongly support this resolution, which reaffirms the importance of shared governance and the need to involve faculty and staff in the decision-making process. It is clear that the university's policy statement of August 11 should be rescinded immediately, so that accommodations can be granted to faculty and staff who need them. It appears as though the university's reopening plan did not sufficiently account for the effects of its policies on vulnerable members of employee households, such as children under 12 or immunocompromised adults. Both groups could be infected by vaccinated faculty and staff members in the same household, if the latter are not sufficiently protected from becoming virus carriers.

I have chosen to Abstain from voting on these Resolutions. Because the vote was called immediately following the exceptional Senate meeting, I was unable to discuss the issues with my fellow department members. I think that Cornell has an imperative to provide the highest quality of instruction to our students, and this means teaching in person whenever possible. I am convinced that COVID transmission in classroom settings is rare, and that the risk of infection is low. Although a large number faculty were signatories, by my estimate they represent only about 5% of the University faculty. Also, virtually all the signatories were from the Humanities, with very few representatives from STEM fields. This suggests a polarization within the Cornell faculty on these Resolutions. I would like to better understand the challenges that the Humanities faculty face while teaching. In the College of Vet Med where I work, academic life seems to have settled to a new normal that involves widespread use of masks, and near-universal in-person teaching. Doug Antczak, Microbiology & Immunology / Baker Institute for Animal Health

I very strongly support this Resolution and believe that, once it passes, it should be the Dean of Faculty Office responsibility to strongly present the contents to the central administration.

anonymous please: I was astonished, once again, that the university appears to be doubling down on its unsupportable view, expressed in its August 11th email, that it is entitled to refuse disability-based accommodations to faculty with health conditions that require remote teaching. Far from fixing the problem, the second email--giving department heads or deans discretion to grant exceptions under extraordinary circumstances, with not even a reference to disability-based pleas--highlights what was wrong with the first. Any attorney involved in civil rights enforcement will have an easy time identifying not only a failure to accommodate the disabled but outright discrimination against this vulnerable group.