



Originally Presented on:	February 6th, 2020
Type of Action:	Internal Policy
Status/Result:	New Business

S.A. Joint Resolution #1¹²

Changing the “Women's Issues Representative At-Large” position to the “Womxn’s Issues Representative At- Large”

ABSTRACT: This resolution seeks to amend the Cornell Student Assembly Bylaws and Charter, changing the “Women's Issues Representative At-Large” position to the “Womxn’s Issues Representative At- Large”.

Sponsored by: The Cornell Student Assembly’s Black Caucus

Whereas, this resolution is not predicated with the intent of a debate on what is “womxn” or “womxnhood,” instead is an active step for inclusion and a continual engagement and progressing towards gender justice;³

Whereas, more than two genders exist;⁴

Whereas, more than two sexes exist;⁵

Whereas, sex is an illogic marker of gender;

Whereas, wrongly, sex and gender are often conflated and confounded as a single overlapping, interchangeable identity;

Whereas, the word “womxn” acknowledges intersectional feminism—and more specifically Black trans intersectional feminism;

Whereas, the word “womxn” is a modification in spelling that is to “stress the concept that womxn are their own separate individuals, capable of operating on their own and without a man to help them”;⁶

Whereas, “[The] x allows space for individuals who identify as genderfluid, genderqueer, gender non-conforming, or non-binary. The “x” in womxn works the same way, and as such, opens up the free-human-woman concept to include trans women”;⁷

¹ As it stands, the Black Caucus requests that all resolutions manufactured by the Caucus to then be approved by the Student Assembly (which most, if not all resolutions will not fall under), respectfully be labeled a “Joint Resolution”. This categorization is used in order to preserve the autonomy, agency, and sovereignty of the Black Caucus.

² Attached below is the Black Caucus resolution, not to be voted on, rather to be referenced as the original document.

³ This is not to say active discussion about inclusion cannot take place, instead, that a debate on the conversation of “are trans-women, women” is degradative, violent and inexcusable.

⁴ <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/feminism-gender/#GenSocCon>

⁵ <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/feminism-gender/#GenSocCon>

⁶ <https://medium.com/@knottyvibescompany/intersectional-feminism-101-what-is-womxn-36c0a3140126>

⁷ <https://www.dailydot.com/irl/womyn/>

39 **Whereas**, the previously utilized word, “womyn”, created in 1975, was in part a commentary on the
40 principle of, “We are females who survived girlhood”, which in its exact nature is exclusionary of
41 transgender women;⁸
42
43 **Whereas**, for some the “x” represents the “complexity of gender”;
44
45 **Whereas**, “*womxn* with an *x* [is used] both to acknowledge the history of exclusion in many second wave
46 feminist organizations and to signal its welcome to all woman-identified individuals, regardless
47 of assigned sex at birth”;⁹
48
49 **Whereas**, the arcane use of “women”, “wimmin”, “womin”, or “womyn” undoubtably brings into
50 question TERF-y implications and the purposeful exclusion of *womxn*; ¹⁰
51
52 **Whereas**, feminists are not immune to “infighting and gatekeeping”;
53
54 **Whereas**, “transmisogyny [...] within feminist communities – where [...] genders are invalidated by the
55 policing of what women’s bodies and experiences should be, instead of embracing them for what
56 they are”;¹¹
57
58 **Whereas**, a change from “women” to “*womxn*” centers the Black trans experience as understood through
59 *womxn*hood;¹²
60
61 **Whereas**, it is understood that this is a cosmetic, surface level change, that will hopefully bring about real
62 long lasting change both intra-Assembly and on the wider campus;
63
64 **Whereas**, the social implications of using a colonizer language such as English to then weaponize the
65 gatekeeping of “womanhood” props up the “larger structures that greatly impact [...] livelihoods
66 [and] expose many trans wom[x]n, particularly Black trans wom[x]n who are targeted and
67 surveilled by the State, to violence”;¹³
68
69 **Whereas**, EVERYONE has learning and unlearning to do, in which it is of the utmost importance to
70 reiterate that those who are holders or vessels of said identities do not exist in order to correct,
71 teach, and/or coddle those who are unknowing, unwilling, or even working towards said
72 betterment;
73
74 **Whereas**, the renaming of the “women’s” seat to “*womxn*’s” seat is not a full stop, one step process to
75 create inclusive spaces that combat trans-exclusionary, cis-white feminist narratives, transphobic
76 narratives, and transmisogynist narratives—rather it is a (very) small step that works to codify
77 inclusion, diversity, accessibility, and equity—along with the notion that it is each and every
78 members’ duty (and specifically the soon to be “*womxn*’s” liaison) to lift those voices who do not
79 have traditional normative modes of power along the (intersectional) lines of age, gender, sex,
80 race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and disability.
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8 <https://www.dailydot.com/irl/womyn/>

9 <http://womxnofworth.web.unc.edu/sample-page-2/>

10 Reference: Trans-Exclusionary Radical Feminist

11 <https://everydayfeminism.com/2015/05/feminist-phrases-marginalize-trans-women/>

12 <https://www.csindy.com/coloradosprings/why-we-use-the-word-womxn/Content?oid=19884026>

13 <https://everydayfeminism.com/2015/05/feminist-phrases-marginalize-trans-women/>

83 **Be it therefore resolved,** that (1) The Cornell Student Assembly approve and adopt the attached
84 Bylaws and Charter amendments.

85
86 Bylaws- Section 4: Diversity; Subsection A- Diversity & Inclusion Committee; Sub-subsection d.-Composition; Subsub-
87 subsection iii-

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89 Student Assembly representation: SA LGBT Liaison at large, **Women’s Womxn’s** representative, International
90 representative, both Minority Liaisons, and the Vice President of External Affairs are required to be members of the
91 committee.

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93 Bylaws- Section 4: Organization Specific Guidelines, Subsection T, Sub-subsection i-

94
95 The Women’s Resource Center shall collaborate with the Student Assembly **Women’s Womxn’s** Liaison
96 Representative, Community Life on safety, health, and other topics pertinent to women on campus.

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98 Charter- ARTICLE IV: MEMBERSHIP, Section 1: Composition, Subsection A. General Composition:

99
100 The SA will consist of 28 voting members who are registered undergraduate students at Cornell University. Up to two
101 additional votes shall be allocated to the entire community of undergraduates as a whole present at a Student Assembly
102 meeting on motions that express the opinion of the assembly. Such community votes shall be allowed only as provided
103 by the Assembly in its bylaws. Eleven voting members of the SA will be elected by and from the student populations of
104 the colleges and schools, one from each: the College of Architecture, Art and Planning ; the School of Hotel
105 Administration; the College of Human Ecology; and the School of Industrial and Labor Relations. Two each shall be
106 elected from the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and the College of Engineering; and three shall be elected
107 from the College of Arts and Sciences. In addition, twelve voting members will be elected at-large by and from the
108 University undergraduate student population as a whole; two at-large seats are to be reserved for candidates seeking the
109 offices of President and Executive Vice President of the Student Assembly and must be explicitly designated as such;
110 two at-large seats are to be reserved for non-constituent, undesignated at -large group candidates who do not run for
111 President or Executive Vice President; two at-large seats are to be reserved for candidates seeking to represent minority
112 students; one at-large seat is to be reserved for candidates seeking to represent international students; one at-large seat
113 is to be reserved for candidates seeking to represent **women’s womxn’s** issues in relation to the broader Cornell
114 community; one at-large seat is to be reserved for candidates seeking to represent First Generation College students;
115 and one at-large seat is to be reserved for candidates seeking to represent the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender,
116 Queer community. The two remaining non-Constituent, undesignated at-large seats are to be contested by candidates
117 running for President and Executive Vice President and by non-constituent, undesignated at-large group candidates not
118 running for President or Executive Vice President. Five seats shall be elected by and from new students entering in the
119 fall. Should there be no candidate running for a given seat, the seat shall be considered vacant.

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121
122 (2) And, that henceforth, the previously named “Women’s Issues Representative At- Large”
123 shall be renamed the “Womxn’s Issues Representative At- Large”—as to be referred to in texts
124 (such as public statements, posts, or liaisons with organizations) and all current and future
125 iterations of the Cornell Student Assembly’s Governing documents—
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Respectfully Submitted,

The Cornell Student Assembly's Black Caucus

Gavin Cole Martin '20

*Founding and Original Member, Cornell Student Assembly's Black Caucus
Chair & Speaker, Cornell Student Assembly's Black Caucus
Vice President of Research & Accountability, Student Assembly
College of Arts & Sciences Representative, Student Assembly*

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Undergraduate Student Representative, University Assembly*

Nabila Okudo '22

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Appropriations Committee, Student Assembly*



1st CAUCUS SESSION (2019-20)

BC. RES. 02

Changing the Cornell Student Assembly's "Women's Issues Representative At-Large" position to the "Womxn's Issues Representative At-Large"

IN THE CORNELL STUDENT ASSEMBLY'S BLACK CAUCUS

Drafted: January 25th, 2020
 Introduced: February 2nd, 2020- Spring Cycle
 Passed: February 2nd, 2020

Caucus Member Gavin Martin submitted the following resolution; which was voted on in a 11-00-00 vote by the caucus with no noted descent.

RESOLUTION

Changing the Cornell Student Assembly's "Women's Issues Representative At-Large" position to the "Womxn's Issues Representative At-Large"

Whereas, this resolution is not predicated with the intent of a debate on what is "womxn" or "womxnhood," instead is an active step for inclusion and a continual engagement and progressing towards gender justice;¹

Whereas, more than two genders exist;²

Whereas, more than two sexes exist;³

¹ This is not to say active discussion about inclusion cannot take place, instead, that a debate on the conversation of "are trans-women, women" is degradative, violent and inexcusable.

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Whereas, sex is an illogic marker of gender;

Whereas, wrongly, sex and gender are often conflated and confounded as a single overlapping, interchangeable identity;

Whereas, the word “womxn” acknowledges intersectional feminism—and more specifically Black trans intersectional feminism;⁴

Whereas, the word “womxn” is a modification in spelling that is to “stress the concept that womxn are their own separate individuals, capable of operating on their own and without a man to help them”;

Whereas, “[The] x allows space for individuals who identify as genderfluid, genderqueer, gender non-conforming, or non-binary. The “x” in womxn works the same way, and as such, opens up the free-human-woman concept to include trans women”;⁵

Whereas, the previously utilized word, “womyn”, created in 1975, was in part a commentary on the principle of, “We are females who survived girlhood”, which in its exact nature is exclusionary of transgender women;⁶

Whereas, for some the “x” represents the “complexity of gender”;

Whereas, “*womxn* with an x [is used] both to acknowledge the history of exclusion in many second wave feminist organizations and to signal its welcome to all woman-identified individuals, regardless of assigned sex at birth”;⁷

Whereas, the arcane use of “women”, “wimmin”, “womin”, or “womyn” undoubtably brings into question TERF-y implications and the purposeful exclusion of womxn;⁸

Whereas, feminists are not immune to “infighting and gatekeeping”;

Whereas, “transmisogyny [...] within feminist communities – where [...] genders are invalidated by the policing of what women’s bodies and experiences should be, instead of embracing them for what they are”;⁹

Whereas, a change from “women” to “womxn” centers the Black trans experience as understood through womxnhood;¹⁰

⁴ <https://medium.com/@knottyvibescompany/intersectional-feminism-101-what-is-womxn-36c0a3140126>

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⁹ <https://everydayfeminism.com/2015/05/feminist-phrases-marginalize-trans-women/>

¹⁰ <https://www.csindy.com/coloradosprings/why-we-use-the-word-womxn/Content?oid=19884026>



Whereas, it is understood that this is a cosmetic, surface level change, that will hopefully bring about real long lasting change both intra-Assembly and on the wider campus;

Whereas, the social implications of using a colonizer language such as English to then weaponize the gatekeeping of “womanhood” props up the “larger structures that greatly impact [...] livelihoods [and] expose many trans wom[x]n, particularly Black trans wom[x]n who are targeted and surveilled by the State, to violence”;¹¹

Whereas, EVERYONE has learning and unlearning to do, in which it is of the utmost importance to reiterate that those who are holders or vessels of said identities do not exist in order to correct, teach, and/or coddle those who are unknowing, unwilling, or even working towards said betterment;

Whereas, the renaming of the “women’s” seat to “womxn’s” seat is not a full stop, one step process to create inclusive spaces that combat trans-exclusionary cis-white feminist narratives, transphobic narratives, and transmisogynist narratives—rather it is a (very) small step that works to codify inclusion, diversity, accessibility, and equity—along with the notion that it is each and every members’ duty (and specifically the soon to be “womxn’s” liaison) to lift those voices who do not have traditional normative modes of power along the (intersectional) lines of age, gender, sex, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and disability. Now **therefore**, be it-

Resolved, That-

(1) The Cornell Student Assembly Bylaws and Charter be Amended to read:

Bylaws- Section 4: Diversity; Subsection A- Diversity & Inclusion Committee; Sub-subsection d.-Composition; Subsub-subsection iii-

Student Assembly representation: SA LGBT Liaison at large, ~~Women’s~~ Womxn’s representative, International representative, both Minority Liaisons, and the Vice President of External Affairs are required to be members of the committee.

Bylaws- Section 4: Organization Specific Guidelines, Subsection T, Sub-subsection i-

The Women’s Resource Center shall collaborate with the Student Assembly ~~Women’s~~ Womxn’s Liaison Representative, Community Life on safety, health, and other topics pertinent to women on campus.

Charter- ARTICLE IV: MEMBERSHIP, Section 1: Composition, Subsection A. General Composition:

The SA will consist of 28 voting members who are registered undergraduate students at Cornell University. Up to two additional votes shall be allocated to the entire community of undergraduates as a whole present at a Student Assembly meeting on motions that express the opinion of the assembly. Such community votes shall be allowed only as provided by the Assembly in its bylaws. Eleven voting members of the SA will be elected by and from the student populations of the colleges and schools, one from each: the College of Architecture, Art and Planning ; the School of Hotel Administration; the College of Human Ecology; and the School of Industrial and Labor Relations. Two each shall be elected from the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and the College of Engineering; and three shall be elected from the College of Arts and Sciences. In addition, twelve voting members will be elected at-large by and from the

¹¹ <https://everydayfeminism.com/2015/05/feminist-phrases-marginalize-trans-women/>



University undergraduate student population as a whole; two at-large seats are to be reserved for candidates seeking the offices of President and Executive Vice President of the Student Assembly and must be explicitly designated as such; two at-large seats are to be reserved for non-constituent, undesignated at-large group candidates who do not run for President or Executive Vice President; two at-large seats are to be reserved for candidates seeking to represent minority students; one at-large seat is to be reserved for candidates seeking to represent international students; one at-large seat is to be reserved for candidates seeking to represent ~~women's~~ womxn's issues in relation to the broader Cornell community; one at-large seat is to be reserved for candidates seeking to represent First Generation College students; and one at-large seat is to be reserved for candidates seeking to represent the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer community. The two remaining non-Constituent, undesignated at-large seats are to be contested by candidates running for President and Executive Vice President and by non-constituent, undesignated at-large group candidates not running for President or Executive Vice President. Five seats shall be elected by and from new students entering in the fall. Should there be no candidate running for a given seat, the seat shall be considered vacant.

- (2) And, that henceforth, the previously named “Women’s Issues Representative At-Large” shall be renamed the “Womxn’s Issues Representative At- Large”—as to be referred to in texts (such as public statements, posts, or liaisons with organizations) and all current and future iterations of the Cornell Student Assembly’s Governing documents—

Action Statement: This resolution, if passed, by the Black Caucus will:

1. Issue the immediate creation of a standardized committee in order to format the Joint Resolution fashioned after the above Black Caucus Resolution, that is to be sent to the Cornell Student Assembly—
 - a. Where the Caucus resolution is to be attached as a pdf to said Resolution
2. Request approval before the Committee on Diversity & Inclusion--
3. Present said Joint Resolution to be deliberated and discussed by the Cornell Student Assembly—
 - a. When brought to the floor and voted on (final vote), to utilize the “roll call” voting method.
 - b. To request and preface the confines and parameters of appropriate comments during deliberation and discussion.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Noted Resolution Decent: N/A