# Faculty Senate

February 12, 2024

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

# Gayogo̱hó꞉nǫʼ Land Acknowledgement

Cornell University is located on the traditional homelands of the Gayogo̱hó꞉nǫ' (the Cayuga Nation). The Gayogo̱hó꞉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 Gayogo̱hó꞉nǫ' dispossession and honor the ongoing connection of Gayogo̱hó꞉nǫ' people, past and present, to these lands and waters.

This land acknowledgment has been reviewed and approved by the traditional Gayogo̱hó꞉nǫ' leadership.

# Rules of Engagement

**HYBRID FORMAT**          In-person and remote attendance

**ZOOM CAPTIONING**      Choose "Live Transcription" in the Zoom menu

**TO SPEAK**               2 minutes to pose a question or make a statement
Identify yourself: First name, Last name and Department
Order: Zoom first, Floor next, Back to Zoom, Back to Floor, etc.

**CHAT**                   Want to attend to statements on the floor; set to everyone
Do not want to disadvantage in-person attendees
Limit chat to sharing resources with each other, published 'as is' publicly on DoF website
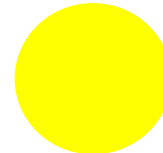
**RECORDING**            Started at 3:30PM, Video, audio, and chat posted publicly after the meeting

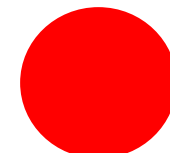**THREE MICROPHONES**   To ensure all perspectives are fairly represented and discussed

Comments in favor       Neither in favor or opposition       Comments in opposition

# Approval of Zoom Transcription Minutes

December 11, 2024

Unanimous consent requested
Raise hand (in-person or remote) for corrections only

# Introduction to the Provost

Kavita Bala, Provost, Computer Science

# Senate Q&A

# Local Child Care Development

Michelle Artibee, Director of Workforce Wellbeing, Human Resources

# CHILD CARE DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

Michelle Artibee, Director, Workforce Wellbeing, HR

Faculty Senate – 2/12/25

**As of June 2024, 975 children ages 0-4 years were enrolled in Cornell's endowed or contract college health plans and had a parent/caregiver with an Ithaca campus work address.**

**Percentage of children by constituency***

Staff/union              62%
Faculty/RTE faculty  31%
Postgraduates          7%

*Represents primary employee covering child and does not account for dual career affiliations. Excludes children not covered by Cornell plans. Excludes graduate/professional student families unless covered by a faculty/staff spouse or partner.

# Tompkins County Challenges

**The Child Development Council of TC reported in 2023 that:**

- TC had 1 spot for every 3 children (ages 5 and under) in need of care.*

- The number of TC family child care providers had plummeted from 100 to 14 over the prior 10 years due to regulatory demands and industry challenges

**Lack of *ongoing* federal and state support for child care, especially for capital/start-up costs and ongoing labor costs.**

**Early child care professionals exiting the industry due to increased costs, low wages, lack of benefits, etc.**

*Expect updated numbers from Council in Spring 2025

# Child Care Supply Growth Initiative

- **In Oct. 2023, Cornell [announced an investment](#) of $372k/yr for up to five years ($1.86M) to grow TC child care supply in partnership with the Child Development Council of Tompkins County***

  - $300k/yr available to assist potential/existing providers with costs like construction, furnishings and materials, obtaining a license, requirements for opening (e.g. fencing), etc.

  - $72k/yr in salary funding for Child Care Development Director managed by the Council

- Providers receive business coaching from director and must meet quality standards.

- Providers can leverage these funds to apply for other NYS funding.

- Goal: increase net child care supply in Tompkins County by a minimum of 50 slots each year (250 total).

*Does not include annual $70k contribution via Cornell Community Relations for general operating expenses.

# Initiative Update

- Child Care Developer was hired April 2024.

- In the first 10 months: **$121,435** in funding **distributed to 10 programs (3 centers, 7 home programs)** to open or expand, resulting in **191 new slots** in Tompkins County.

  - 48 spots opened in 2024, 78 opened in Jan., and rest later in 2025.

  - Add'l application being reviewed – potential 8+ slots.

- Developer is coaching **nine additional providers** and expects to receive applications from the majority in CY25.

  - A new 144-slot center ("First Learning") is reportedly opening in the Ithaca South Works development Fall '25.

# NEW PROVIDER: DANBY DAYCARE

Link to Spectrum News 1

# **Ongoing**

1.  Closely monitor initiative, apply learnings, and adjust design as needed.

2.  Promote new child care programs and slots to incoming faculty, along with other family life benefits.

3.  Continue exploring community partnerships to build child care supply.

# Supports Available

Work/Life in HR provides **free consultations** to faculty and staff (including candidates) on issues of child care, parenting, elder/adult care, and other aspects of family life. Contact [worklife@cornell.edu](mailto:worklife@cornell.edu)

The **Faculty Dependent Care Travel Fund** provides eligible faculty with up to $1,500 annually in reimbursement for qualified dependent care expenses due to professional travel.

# Senate Discussion

# Proposed new School of the Environment and Sustainable Development

Benjamin Houlton, Ronald P. Lynch Dean, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Ecology and Evolutionary Biology

Look again at that dot. That's here.
That's home. That's us. On it everyone
you love, everyone you know, everyone
you ever heard of, every human being
who ever was, lived out their lives.

-Carl Sagan
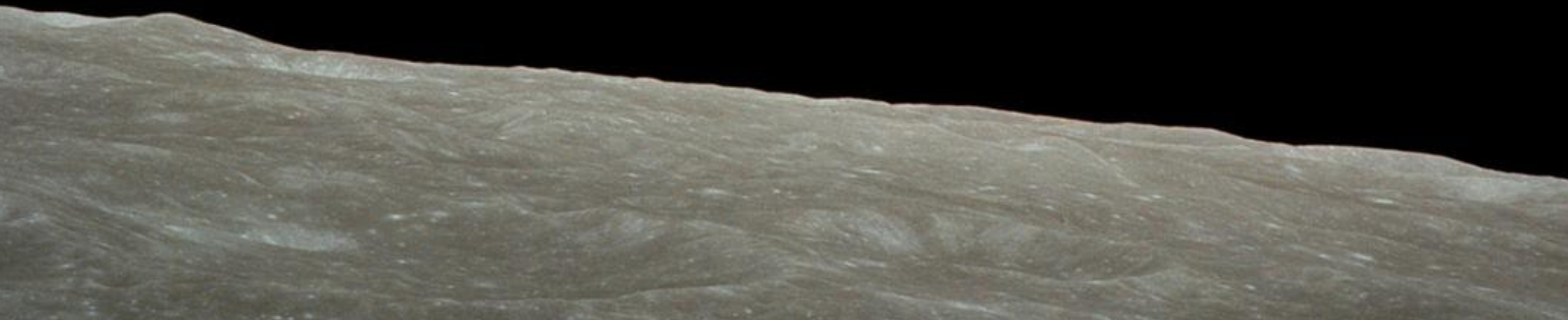
# Social-Planetary Context: Disruptive Innovation



## This moment calls for it…
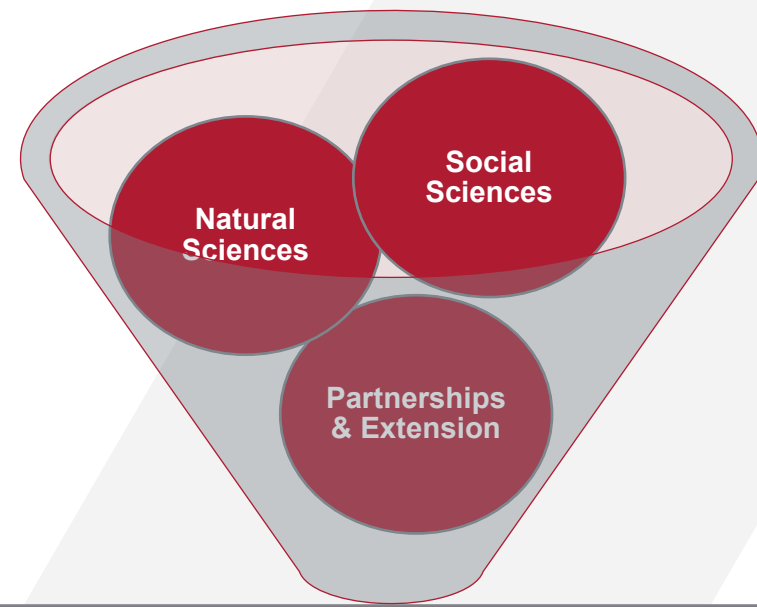
- UN (broad sustainability goals include integration among social science, natural science, and computational modeling)
- Paris Agreement
- Climate Leadership Community protection Act NYS
- Convention on Biological Diversity

**Positive Change**

Stronger together (plus new)

Natural Resources & the Environment + Global Development =

# New School of the Environment and Sustainable Development

# Process

- **Jan-April 2024**

   Discussions CALS leadership DNRE and GDEV chairs on potential to join the two units

- **May 2024**

   Initial idea and interim structure presented to the faculty and staff in both units

- **June-August 2024**

   Benchmarking, citation analyses, open meetings, feedback opportunities with faculty and staff

- **August 2024**

   Faculty and staff retreat, open meetings, student meetings

- **October 2024**

   Final Feedback and vote

- **February 2025**

   Senate and Provost

93% were either supportive (63%) or neutral (30%)

Neutral voters generally in agreement, pointed out issues to be addressed in future decisions

7% opposed no pattern of unit, rank or role

# Benchmarking



Yale SCHOOL OF THE ENVIRONMENT

UC SANTA BARBARA
Bren School of Environmental Science & Management

Duke NICHOLAS SCHOOL of the ENVIRONMENT

M | SEAS SCHOOL FOR ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

# Synergies in Extension and Outreach

**Transforming local to global**

- Forestry, aquatics, food policy & enhancing outreach to small-holder farmers and landowners.

**Enhanced funding opportunities**

- Shared & collaborative strategies to enhance funding resources with stronger partnerships.

**Strengthening  local synergies**

- Possibility to enhance GD&E footprint in NYS through harnessing thought leadership; syncing social sciences with applied.

**Reaching constituencies**

- Programing to benefit the world around us.

**Space: Rice Hall (with Fernow & the Sisler Hub)**

Look again at that dot. That's here.
That's home. That's us. On it everyone
you love, everyone you know, everyone
you ever heard of, every human being
who ever was, lived out their lives.

-Carl Sagan

**CornellCALS**
College of Agriculture and Life Sciences

# Senate Q&A

# Student Evaluations of Teaching project

Steve Jackson, Vice Provost for Academic Innovation, Information Sciences
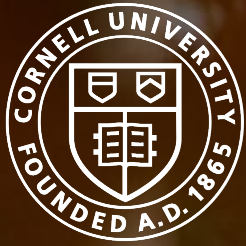
# Student Evaluations of Teaching (SETs) Project

Steven Jackson, Information Science and Science and Technology Studies, Vice-Provost for Academic Innovation

Faculty Senate,
12 February 2025

# Follow along! (+ sharing / feedback)

- https://academicinnovation.cornell.edu/set-history/

# SETs project background and rationale

## Rationale/concerns:

- Disparate and aging legacy eval systems across (and within) colleges;
- Concerns around <u>bias</u> and <u>efficacy</u> of existing evaluation mechanisms;
- Concerns around how SET data is used in faculty review (including P&T decisions);
- Poor response rates.

## Responses:

- New centrally-licensed **software tool** (Explorance Blue, used by most peers)
- Research-based **common core question set** (+ ability to tailor and add questions at the college, department and potentially instructor level)
- **Guidance to deans and chairs** on use of SET data in P&T decisions (and strategies for more holistic evaluation of teaching, including for purposes of P&T)
- Recommendations for **improving response rates**.

# Longer background (see site)

- NAMES: Lisa Nishii (VPUE), Julia Thom-Levy/Steve Jackson (VPAI), Matt Ouellett/Rob Vanderlan (CTI), Brad Bell (ILR), Natasha Holmes (A&S), Rene Kizilcec (CIS), Michelle Smith (A&S), Carol Grumbach (AVPUE) + Sarah Giroux (CALS), Kathy Dimiduk (ENG), Mark Lewis (ENG), Sasa Zivkovic (AAP), Jodi Korich (CVM), Barbara Mink (SCJCB), Marianella Casasola (CHE), Jason Hecht (IRP) (+ input from law, Knight writing center, etc.)

- Launched spring 2019, review of (extensive!) research literature on bias and best practice in teaching evals, review of existing (200+) eval systems at Cornell, examination/discussion with leading peers (Stanford, Michigan, etc.)

- Proposed alternate question set reviewed with ADs and Deans; piloted fall 2019 in 14 courses (AEM, ASIAN STUDIES, BIOEE, BIOGM, COMM, ENTOM, FGSS, GOV, HADM, ILR, NTRES). Results analyzed by instructors, Survey Research Institute and SET Committee. Revised question set Dec 2021.

- New question set piloted in CHE in spring/fall 2022.

- Fall 2023: expanded SET content committee, much additional college feedback, new draft shared with deans/colleges/department chairs and some faculty sessions in several colleges FA23-SP24.

- Additional feedback and revisions (refinement and compacting) Jan-Apr 24. Field tested with ~30 students (cognitive interviews) in March-April. Provisionally finalized version of all docs (core questions, guidance to chairs and deans, response rate policy) May 2024.

- SETs advisory council w all-college representation established Fall 2024; sharing and feedback with faculty senate EPC and department chairs Fall 2024.

- Sharing and feedback with Student Assembly Spring 2025; first college transitions (ILR, AAP, CHE) Spring 2025.

# Guidance for Chairs and Deans

- Summarizes research around known problems of bias in SETs data
- Encourages more holistic and multidimensional assessments of teaching, esp. for purposes of promotion and tenure (also awards)
- Provides guidance for improving mechanisms of assessment: faculty peer evaluations, teaching portfolios, etc.
- Re: SETs data: 'improve and decenter'
- See: https://academicinnovation.cornell.edu/sets-guidance-to-chairs-and-deans/

# Guidance for Chairs and Deans (cont'd)

- Adopt a holistic and multidimensional approach that considers SEVERAL inputs (and doesn't over-rely on student evaluations of teaching as a/the primary pillar of the teaching 'case')
- Include regular and systematic faculty peer evaluations that include input on performance, content, and course design (not just unstructured or single-session observations)
- Account for variations in teaching set-up (size, level, content, pedagogical methods, etc.) and recognize those who take on classes with distinct teaching challenges
- Consider what student evaluations CAN and CAN'T do well. CAN: report on their own experiences, provide feedback on concrete elements like organization, communication, availability of support, and their experience of specific course elements; CAN'T: provide single-question assessments of instructor effectiveness, offer evaluations of instructor mastery of materials; evaluate value/relevance (or not) of course design and disciplinary knowledge

# Guidance for Chairs and Deans (cont'd)

- Collect and review concrete teaching materials – lecture slides, assignments, syllabi, learning goals, exams, samples of student work, etc. (see teaching portfolio recommendations below)

- Invite instructor reflection on what the instructor is trying to accomplish, how this will be done, challenges, successes, and adaptation based on experience and student feedback, and future teaching goals.

- Look for evidence of effort: trainings attended; participation in department, college or university-wide teaching programs; submission or success in teaching-related grants or publications; engagement with teaching research and literature; reflective conversations and questions around teaching with mentors, chair, and colleagues.

- Look for evidence of continued growth and improvement – revised materials, additional/challenging courses taken on, or movements in student feedback over time (including evidence of early challenges addressed and overcome)

- Recognize and support pedagogical experiment and innovation – chairs and deans should recognize that changes to long-standing teaching practices may produce mixed or even negative feedback from students in early implementations.

# Core questions

- Overview: 18-20 questions (12-14 fixed response, 6 open field).

- Students would see the core question set + any college/department specific questions + any instructor-generated questions (per college policy).

- Sections: overall, course components, course organization and workload, course support and climate, general reflections and suggestions.

- Questions center on student's own experience, concrete/specific evaluation of course elements, and ideas/suggestions for instructors.

# Some specific features: anchoring in student learning

Q1: How much did you learn in this course?

- A great deal
- A lot
- A moderate amount
- A little
- Nothing at all

# Some specific features: anchoring in self-reflection

Q14: In what ways has this course made you think more deeply about the content, provided new critical thinking skills, or developed new techniques, disciplinary knowledges, or problem-solving skills in this area? Please provide examples.

[OPEN RESPONSE]

# Some specific features: mix of *descriptive* and *evaluative* questions

Q4: How often did you practice skills or apply concepts during class time (small group discussion or problem-solving, responding to polls or instructor questions, completing worksheets, in-class writing, hands-on activities, etc.)?

- Almost every class period
- Most class periods
- Some class periods
- Rarely
- Never

Q3: How useful were lecture/laboratory/seminar/discussion components in supporting your overall learning in this class? [NB: for classes with multiple components]

- Extremely useful
- Very useful
- Moderately useful
- A little useful
- Not useful at all
- Does not apply - course did not involve lectures.

# Some specific features: substantive anchoring vs. Likert scales

## Q6: How useful was the feedback you received on assignments in this course?

- Extremely useful
- Very useful
- Moderately useful
- A little useful
- Not useful at all

Vs.

"The feedback received on assignments in this course was useful"
(strongly disagree – somewhat disagree – neither agree nor disagree – somewhat agree – strongly agree)

# Some specific features: course organization: radial + assessment

Q7: What aspects of course organization, if any, could be improved? (Select all that apply)

- Clarity of course schedule and policies
- Clarity of communication with students
- Clarity of assignment due dates and expectations
- Selection of assigned readings and course materials
- Fairness and transparency of grading
- Guidance on preparing for tests and exams
- Access to and organization of online materials (Canvas, other tools)
- Access to and adequacy of physical space (classroom, labs, etc.)
- Management of Student Disability Services accommodations
- Other [please specify: _____ ]

Q8: Overall, how well organized was this course? (extremely well organized, very well organized, moderately well organized, slightly organized, not organized at al)l

# Some specific features: question on academic integrity

Q9: Are you aware of any violations of academic integrity (e.g., unauthorized copying, plagiarism, unauthorized use of artificial intelligence or online resources, unauthorized sharing of homework, tests, or answer sheets, etc.) or issues with how academic integrity was maintained in this course? Please share your thoughts and experiences:
[OPEN RESPONSE]

# Some specific features: questions on course support and climate

- Q11: How well did members of the teaching team (instructors, TAs, lab techs, etc.) provide assistance in this course through, for example, office hours, online forums, help sessions, in-class or section questions, or other communications with students? (extremely well, very well, moderately well, a little, not at all)

- Q12: How well did members of the teaching team (instructors, TAs, lab techs, etc.) support a sense of belonging in the course for students of different backgrounds, identities and worldviews? (extremely well, very well, moderately well, a little, not at all)

- Q13: Please describe your experiences, positive or negative, of belonging and inclusion in this course.  What are 1-2 examples of things that worked well or things that could be improved? [OPEN RESPONSE]

# Some specific features: open-ended time reporting

Q10: How many hours per week on average did you spend on this course, including scheduled class (or lab, section, etc.) time? (Write in full integer) _____.

*(consider the different histograms that might emerge from this – bell curve? bimodal? – and what we can learn about variable student experiences of workloads)*

# Some specific features: leveraging peer feedback

Q15: What constructive advice would you give to a student who is considering or preparing to take this course in the future?

[OPEN RESPONSE]

*(note that results of this could be vetted and shared back to future/prospective students (made more equitably available to all students); or shared by instructor on first day of class ('here's what past students have said about how best to succeed in this class').*

# Some specific features: concrete design recs from students

Q17: Please describe 2-3 things working well to support your learning in the current form of the course (these could be large or small; please be as specific and concrete as possible).

[OPEN RESPONSE]

Q18: Please provide 2-3 suggestions for improvement that would help support learning in future iterations of this course (these could be large or small; please be as specific and concrete as possible).

[OPEN RESPONSE]

# Important! There is an analogue to an 'overall course score...'

Q16: How would you assess the overall quality of this course?

- Excellent
- Very good
- Good
- Fair
- Poor

# ... but there is no single-question 'overall instructor score'.

~~"What is your overall opinion of your instructor?"~~

~~"How effective was your instructor, in comparison to other instructors you have had at Cornell?"~~

*(research has consistently shown that these are the least accurate and most bias-prone (race, gender, age, appearance, accent, etc.) elements of contemporary SET practices – see 'guidance to chairs and deans' for more information).*

# Note!

- There is no common system for TA evaluation in SETs (but colleges can use Explorance to administer their own TA evaluations)
- Midterm evaluations are not included in SETs (faculty/colleges continue to use CTI and MTEI midterm evaluation programs as desired)

# Strategies for improving response rates:

Summary of course/department/college level strategies:

- Dedicated in-class time
- Small extra-credit for eval completion (new software will make this easier)
- Instructor signaling (see research on this)
- Targeted instructor or automated reminders (new software will make this easier)

** institution level strategies: 'early' grade release upon eval completion **: (to be adopted after implementation of Explorance across all colleges, Fall 26)

# Governance: SETs Advisory Council

- Steve Jackson (VPAI; sponsor)

- Adara Alston (OVPAI; SETS functional administrator)

- Michelle Jackson (CIT Project Manager);

- Sarah Giroux (CALS);

- Michelle Smith (A&S);

- Kathy Dimiduk (Eng);

- Marianella Casasola (CHE);

- Brad Bell (ILR);

- Claire Cardie (CIS);

- Neema Kudva (AAP);

- Cynthia Saunders-Cheatham (JCB);

- Jodi Korich (CVM);

- Mary Loeffelholz (SCE);

- Beth Lyon (Law);

- Carolyn Aslan (CTI);

- Monique Harrison (IRP)

• support for college conversions to Explorance Blue (new software system)

• implementation of updated core question set

• implementation of dashboard and reporting functions (faculty and chair dashboards, output to P&T processes, etc.)

• review of university-wide norms, rules, and policy around privacy and use of SETs data

[+ senate (EPC? CAPP?) and SA reps?]

# Thanks! Questions and discussion welcome.

sjj54@cornell.edu

vpai@cornell.edu

# 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

- **December Resolutions**
  - Resolution 198: Concerning Increased Police and Security Cameras on Cornell's Campus
  - Vote results:   73  Yes, 39  No, 7  Abstain  14 DNV

  - Resolution 199: Concerning Cornell Violations of Faculty Academic Freedom
  - Vote results:   60  Yes, 40 No, 18 Abstain  15 DNV

  - Resolution 200: Concerning the Selection Process for External Reviewers in Tenure Cases
  - **Vote results:**   107 Yes, 3 No, 8 Abstain  15 DNV

- **Spring Faculty Election Ballot: send nominations to Office of the DoF for the N&E committee**
  - Associate Dean of Faculty
  - University Faculty Committee (1 Senator; 2 non-senator)
  - Nominations and Elections Committee (1 opening)
  - Senators-at-Large (1 tenured faculty and 2 RTE faculty)

# Senate Announcements and Updates

- **Evening Prelim Exam Pilot**
    - Based on some modeling of historic data by a doctoral candidate in David Shmoys' lab add two additional evening prelim slots, which are expected to reduce conflicts by approximately 30%
    - All of the current slots would remain, but they would like to add:
        - Tuesday, September 30: 5:30-7:00 PM (a prelim slot would still be offered 7:30-9:00 PM)
        - Tuesday, October 7: 5:30-7:00 PM (a prelim slot would still be offered 7:30-9:00 PM)

- **Road Trip to the AgriTech campus**
    - April 23, 2025
    - Will send invitation to all Senators

# Q&A

# Good of the Order

Senator Bill Katt, Molecular Medicine

Roxanne Marino, Ecology and Evolutionary Biology

*2/12/ 25    Roxanne Marino (Research Prof), Meredith Holgerson (Assistant Prof); EEB*

# Change needed to Travel policy regarding "E-commerce lodging"

## The Problem:

- The University recently changed policies to ban booking a stay at "**E-commerce lodging**" (e.g., **Airbnb, VRBO, camping**) for another individual or group.

- Stated reason is that one person cannot accept risk on another person or group's behalf

- No viable workarounds or other solutions have been proposed to date

## The Implications:

- Field research may become unaffordable or impossible (hotels may be unavailable or untenable financially)

- Conference travel will become more expensive / limit who can attend

- Counter to efficiency in spending grant funds

# Example impacts

**Field Research**

- Field research in destinations where hotels are very expensive and / or limited in availability (e.g., Adirondacks, White Mountains, Cape Cod, Galapagos, Trinidad, remote landscapes)

- Travel to hotels can add hours to the end of a long field day and unnecessary risk

- Processing field samples is possible in rental housing; not practical in hotels

- Graduate student projects may not be possible without shared housing

- Safety: Group travel and work are often necessary at field locations

- Shared housing with kitchen facilities saves on meal costs and allows for more flexibility in work hours

**Conferences**

- For a lab group to travel to a research conference, hotels can cost >$5k more for a week

- Limits student opportunities and stretches limited budgets

# Interested in joining a working group on this issue?

Contact:

Meredith Holgerson   mah543

Roxanne Marino        rmm3

## Next steps:

- We've surveyed our department (EEB); would like to survey faculty in other departments on impacts of this policy and develop a summary report

- Discuss results with University Controller and Risk Management offices to explore possible solutions

- Develop a Faculty Senate resolution to encourage change to the lodging policies

Adjournment

CORNELL UNIVERSITY
FACULTY SENATE

A&S

AAP          BROOKS          BOWERS
             SCHOOL          CIS

CORNELL
CALS

             CORNELL          CORNELL
             LAW              ENGINEERING

CHE          ILR

SC                            VETERINARY
JOHNSON                       COLLEGE

LIBRARY      AT-LARGE

EMERITA/     SPEAKER     DoF
US

#IAMYOURSENATOR