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Type of Action:	Recommendation
Status/Result:	New Business

1 S.A. Resolution #19
2 Recommending Uniformity in Faculty Laptop Policies

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4 ABSTRACT: This resolution recommends that faculty allow greater freedom of student laptop
5 usage in classes that require significant note-taking or online reading access.
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8 **Sponsored by: Noah Chovanec, '18**
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10 **Whereas**, according to Article II of the Student Assembly Charter, the Student Assembly has the “authority
11 and the responsibility to examine any matters which involve the interests or concern the welfare of
12 the student community and to make proposals concerning those issues to the appropriate officers or
13 decision-making bodies of the University;”
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15 **Whereas**, the effective understanding of course material is essential to the academic welfare of students;
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17 **Whereas**, the value of experiential learning and its relation to student autonomy is a fundamental aspect of
18 collegiate development;
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20 **Whereas**, some faculty do not make materials available to students following lectures, and handwritten notes
21 may not allow students to record key course material;
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23 **Whereas**, laptops are one of the most efficient note-taking devices;
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25 **Whereas**, laptop usage is consistent with Cornell’s initiative to reduce its environmental footprint by allowing
26 electronic access to textbooks and readings;
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28 **Whereas**, in February 2016 the Daily Sun wrote: “there has been a growing trend toward a more stringent
29 regulation of [laptop use in classrooms];”
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31 **Whereas**, the Student Assembly acknowledges the distracting nature of extraneous laptop usage on
32 surrounding students;
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34 **Whereas**, professors and instructors can eliminate this distraction through a variety of means that do not
35 hinder the learning of students, such as relying on an “honor system” of self-enforcement or peer-
36 enforcement, enforcing an “airplane-mode” policy, or utilizing teaching assistants to monitor laptop
37 usage;
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39 **Be it therefore resolved**, that the Student Assembly recommends that professors and instructors allow
40 students to use laptops in lectures and discussion sections where note-taking is necessary and/or
41 the reading materials can be accessed online.
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43 **Be it further resolved**, that while we recognize that faculty members retain authority over their classroom
44 policies and have the greatest amount of knowledge of their own course material, we recommend
45 that faculty members consider individual learning experiences and have a discussion about the
46 possible benefits of laptop use;
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48 **Be it finally resolved**, that this resolution be conveyed to the Dean of Faculty and the Faculty Senate.



Cornell University
Student Assembly

- 49 **Respectfully Submitted,**
- 50
- 51 Noah Chovanec '18
- 52 *School of Industrial and Labor Relations Representative, Student Assembly*
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- 54 Zack Schmetterer '18
- 55 *Former Member, Student Assembly Academic Policy Committee*
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- 57 Rachel Marciano '20
- 58 *Member, Student Assembly Academic Policy Committee*
- 59
- 60 Dale Barbaria '19
- 61 *Chair, Student Assembly Academic Policy Committee*
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- 63 *(Reviewed by Student Assembly Academic Policy Committee, (8-0-1), 2/5/2017)*