> *The Assemblies at Cornell, together with the Faculty Senate, are the expression of the university's commitment to shared governance and constituent representation.*

What does this even mean?!

Cornell University
Office of the Assemblies

History of Shared Governance

The assemblies are a part of shared governance at Cornell.

1. Participation in University decision-making by students, faculty and staff in areas of direct and joint concern to them;
2. A forum for discussion of campus issues;
3. Supervision of the campus judicial system.

History of Shared Governance

1955

- The Board of Trustees transferred the responsibility for non-academic matters to the President of the University.

- Prior to this time, it had been the responsibility of the faculty to make decisions regarding academic as well as non-academic policies and procedures.

History of the Assemblies

- Roots in campus events of 1969
- Major overhauls in 1977 and 1981
- EA, SA created in 1981
- GPSA created in 1993
- More prominence for constituent assemblies
- More focused role for the UA

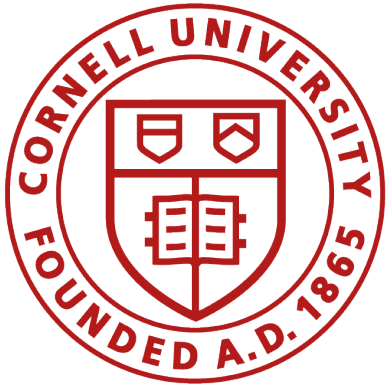
The Assemblies in Action

The Constituent-Elected Trustees

Full voting members of the 64-member Board of Trustees

- Faculty and Staff are elected for four-year terms
- Students (alternating between undergraduate and a graduate or professional student) are elected to serve two-year terms
- The Candidate Forum for Student-Elected Trustees is tomorrow, and voting begins on Friday!

The Cornell Community



8,392 Constituents

Employee Assembly

30 Staff Members

7,932 Constituents

Grad & Professional Student Assembly

18 Graduate & Prof Student Members

16,067 Constituents

Student Assembly

28 Undergraduate Student Members

1,679 Constituents

Faculty Senate

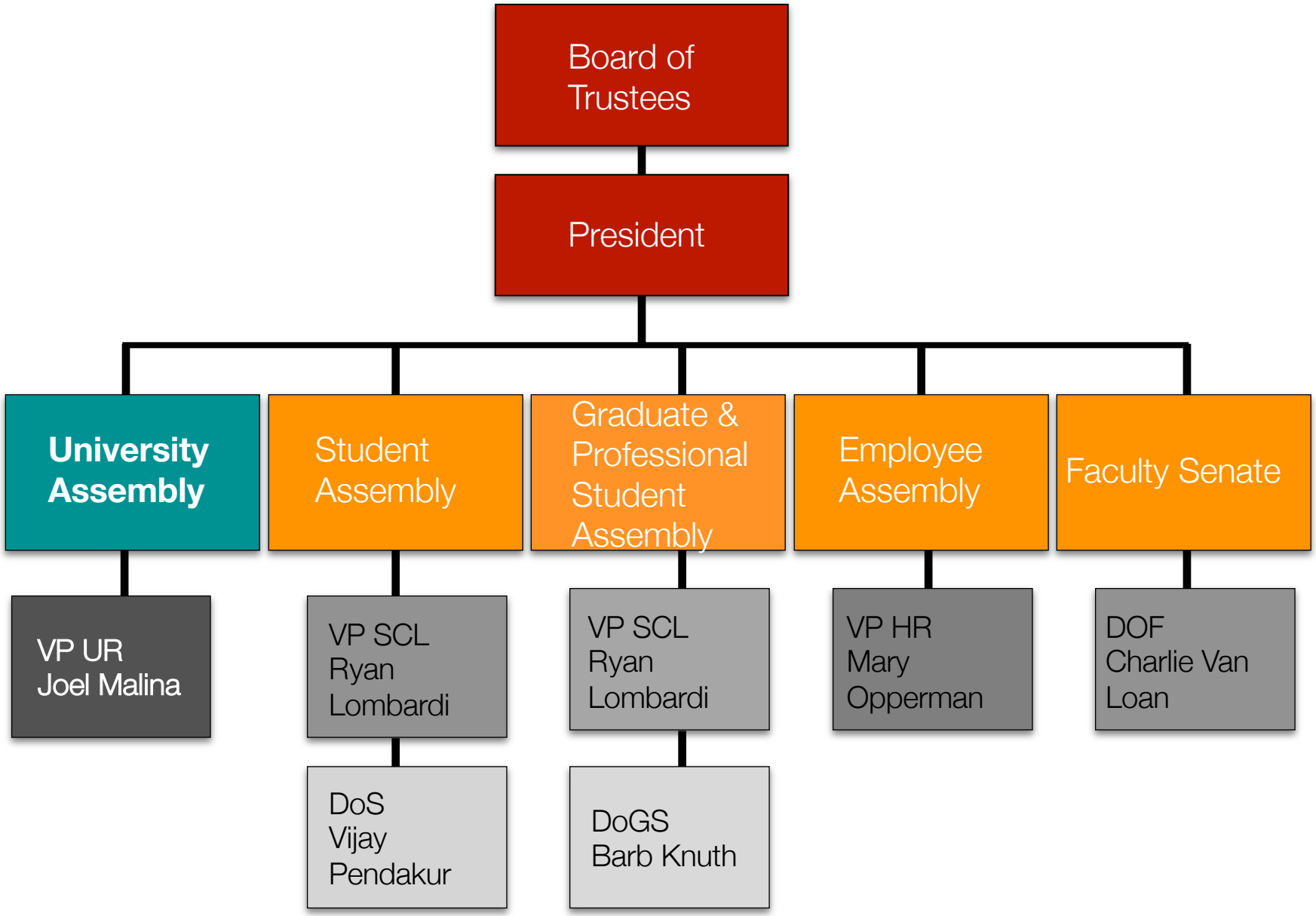
108 Faculty Senators

33,071 Constituents

University Assembly

5 staff, 5 grad/professional students, 5 undergraduates, 5 faculty

ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE



The Office of the Assemblies

32,766	Constituents
919	Roles in the Assemblies
775	Committee members
54	Committees
4	Assemblies

The Office of the Assemblies

The Office of the Assemblies:

- Provides staff for regular assembly meetings with a student clerk who:
  - Prepares documents and meeting packets for the assembly meetings
  - prepares minutes of meetings,
  - prepares audio recordings of meetings, and,
  - posts meeting materials on the assembly's website;
- assists the assembly in reservation of spaces and other resources for regular meetings;
- maintains websites for the assembly and its standing committees, including documents produced by the assembly and its committees, rosters of membership, information about the composition of the committees and how to get involved, and applications for membership

Legislative Authority of the Assemblies

Legislative Authority

- Originates by delegation from the President and Board of Trustees.
- Authority is delegated, not transferred
- Assemblies have advisory authority, subject to approval by President.
- Assemblies make recommendations which are reviewed by the President in consultation with senior staff.

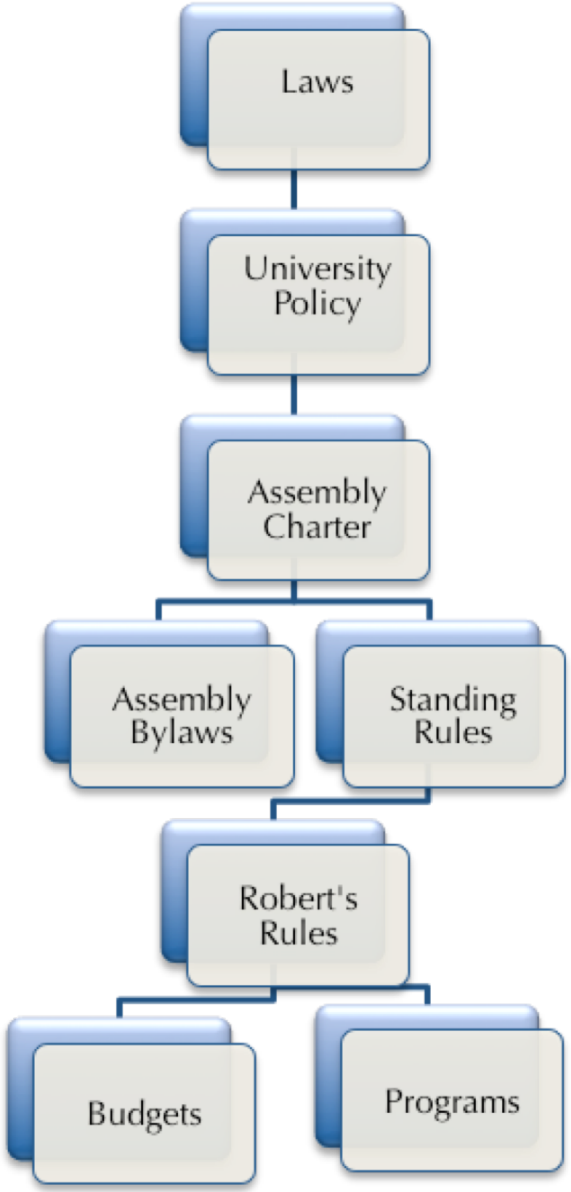
Legislative Authority of the Assemblies

Fundamental Authorities

- All Assemblies have a mandate to represent constituent interests and bring issues of concern to university leadership
- Legislative authority to recommend changes to university policies that affect constituents, subject to approval by the President

Rules & Governing Documents

- **Assembly Charter**: permanent, basic rules; requires affirmative vote of 2/3 of the assembly, and the approval of the university president to amend.
- **Assembly Bylaws**: permanent, detailed rules; requires a majority vote of the assembly to amend.



Going Through the Motions

or

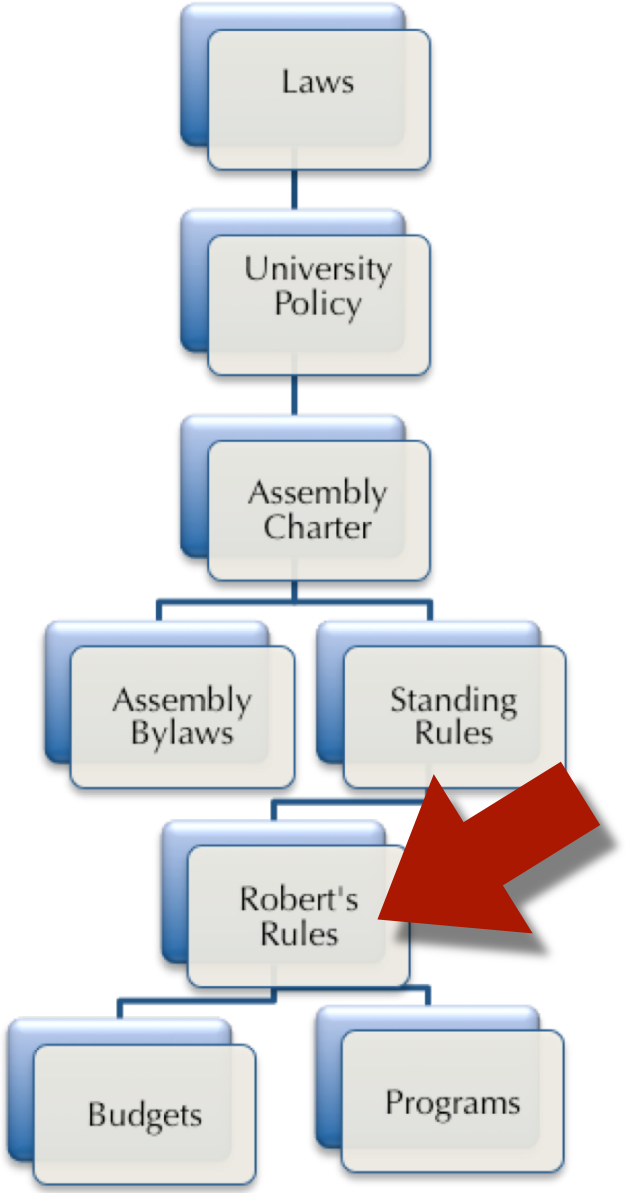
Who is **Robert**, Anyway?!

Rules & Governing Documents

Robert's Rules of Order

Original edition published in 1876 by US Army Brigadier General Henry Martyn Robert after a bad experience leading a church meeting.

We do not want to waste time with excessive formality, but some of our issues may be contentious and we need to ensure everyone gets their fair opportunity to speak.



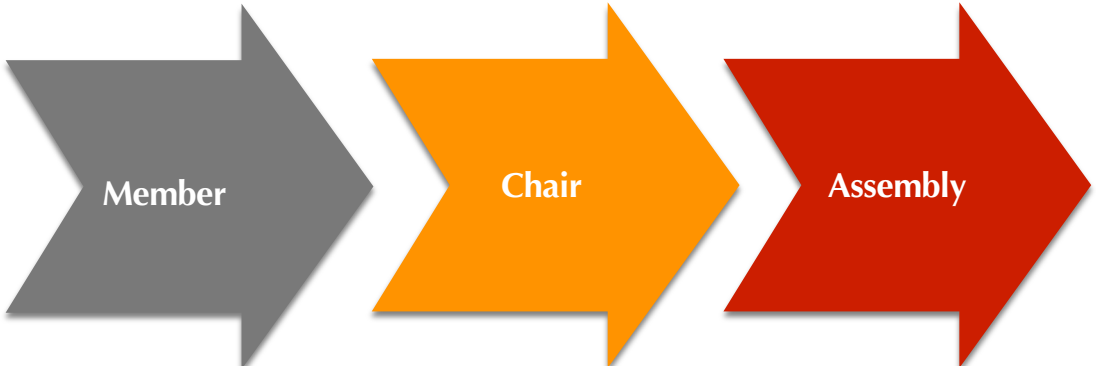
MOTIONS AND RESOLUTIONS

Defining a Motion

- A formal proposal for consideration and action
- Only one subject can be considered at a time
- No main motion can be made while another motion is before the assembly.

To make a motion, say, **"I move that..."**

Seconding motions
Debating Motions
Voting



When Debating Your Motions

- Listen to the other side
- Focus on the issues, not personalities
- Avoid questioning motives
- Be polite!

Voting

- Roll Call Vote (most common)
  - Three responses in which a member may vote:
    - "For" (in favor of the motion or legislation)
    - "Against"(opposed to the motion or legislation)
    - "Abstain"(neither for nor against)
    - Abstention
      - Members may abstain only if there is a distinct conflict of interest

Voting

- Unanimous Consent
  - For certain motions, the chair may simply ask the assembly if there is any objection
  - If no member objects, the chair declares the action has been agreed to
  - If even one member objects, the chair must then state the question and follow the complete voting guidelines.

What's on Your Mind?

(things to do before writing a resolution!)

1. **Develop** the initiative/topic that you want to address
2. **Search** for a legislative history surrounding the issue
3. **Solicit** feedback from assembly members and your constituents
   (Remember, you represent other people!)

4. **Engage** Stakeholders for information
   - Administrators
   - Staff colleagues
   - Assembly Committees
   - Community

Quick Checklist

- ✓ Checked for legislative history
- ✓ Checked with peer institutions
- ✓ Presented at all relevant committees
- ✓ Solicited feedback from relevant university offices
- ✓ Have support from as many members as possible
- ✓ Issue is still unresolved

By this point, you should have a pretty good idea of how the debate and vote will go before your resolution comes to the floor.

THANK YOU!

QUESTIONS?