DATA ACCESS POLICY

NOTE: Refer to Cornell Policy website (http://www.policy.cornell.edu) for most current policy.

According to the bylaws of the university, the “…functions of the University Faculty shall be to consider questions of educational policy which concern more than one college, school or separate academic unit, or are general in nature…”

Responsibility of: Committee on Educational Policy. The legislation of the Committee specifies that it consider matters …including, but not limited to grades and grading policies, preliminary and final examination policies, the academic calendar, and the class schedule and hours of instruction. It reports to the Faculty Senate.

February 11, 1998, Records, pp. 7990-95S

In February 1998, the Faculty Senate discussed matters relating to the adoption of a University Data Access Policy. Marjorie Hodges, Cornell Information Services, addressed the concerns of the Senate.

Following a question and answer session, the Senate adopted the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the Administration intends to take action on a draft Data Access Policy, and

WHEREAS, the Committee on Educational Policy has reviewed the Data Access Policy draft of November 12, 1997, and has come to a unanimous opinion favoring Option 1 in that draft,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Faculty Senate recommends that the policy adopted by the Administration be consistent with the following:

1. Access to restricted university-wide data should be routinely granted only to authorized individuals within the central administration. Furthermore, we urge that legitimate special requests for access to restricted data or custom statistical reports be granted on a case-by-case basis.

2. Access to unit-wide restricted data should be granted only to authorized individuals within that unit. For example:
   - Department chairs should have access only to data for their department.
   - College deans should have access only to data for their college.
3. Access to restricted data within a functional area should be granted to authorized individuals within that area. For example:
   - Faculty members should have access only to records for their own advisees.
   - Department chairs should have access only to records for students in their department.
   - College deans should have access only to records for students in their college.

4. While agreeing that the above restrictions are needed to preserve the confidentiality of individuals, we also urge that access to anonymous or aggregate data be made widely available so that the flow of information needed for planning or other statistical purposes is not hindered.