Proposal – October 28, 2021

Part-time Bachelor's Degree for Non-traditional Students

Executive Summary

The provost charged a committee of provosts, faculty, and a dean to consider whether Cornell should expand access to undergraduate education by offering a path for non-traditional students to earn a Cornell bachelor's degree. By non-traditional, we mean students who are at least four years post-secondary school and for whom a full-time residential experience in Ithaca would not be an option due to their work, location of residence, or other barrier. Examples include working adults, active-duty military service members, incarcerated individuals. The committee members conferred over five months, while examining programs at other universities, consulting experts, and considering the potential for impacting underserved groups of students. The committee recommends proceeding with further planning for a Part Time (PT) bachelor's degree, to be conferred by the School of Continuing Education (SCE). Overall, the committee felt that the advantages of offering a PT bachelor's degree outweigh the disadvantages. The most salient advantage is the opportunity to expand Cornell's historical founding and aspirational ethos of educating "any person" in "any study" by creating a degree for non-traditional students who could not otherwise have such an opportunity and would benefit from access to Cornell. Committee members acknowledge potential concerns and many issues that would need to be carefully considered, but agree that offering a PT bachelor's degree has the potential to further our mission.

To maintain Cornell's excellent reputation and safeguard the future growth of the program, the committee recommend admissions strategies that enhance access for non-traditional students without compromising our selective admissions standards. We must offer a first-rate experience and degree, which includes engagement with faculty, participation in synchronous discussion sections, and high-quality academic and career advising. We suggest starting small and growing the program strategically. Initially, we envision a reasonable starting point to include three broad majors with some minors/concentrations within.

As flexibility and convenience are critically important for non-traditional students, asynchronous online instruction should be the default instruction mode, augmented by synchronous online instructional activities and opportunities to visit the Ithaca campus for in-person instruction. While we believe that a short on-campus residential session would be beneficial for all students and therefore should be highly encouraged, the inability of some students to attend a residential session should not preclude them from earning the degree.

Summary of Recommendations

1) A PT bachelor's degree program provides a compelling and timely way for Cornell to build on its historical founding and aspirational ethos of education – "any person in any study" – by creating a pathway to a first-rate education for those who could not otherwise have such an opportunity and who would benefit from access to Cornell. The School of Continuing Education and Summer Sessions should confer the PT bachelor's degree rather than any one or more of Cornell's seven undergraduate colleges/schools so that the degree program can be more broadly conceived by drawing from the rosters of all existing undergraduate programs.

2) The PT degree program should offer a finite set of focused major options that take advantage of Cornell's institutional strengths where we are confident that we can deliver a first-rate program, and for which there is significant (and growing) student demand. The degree should contain elements of a liberal education and focus on skills for the 21st century; it should offer a small set of

broad tracks such as in the humanities, social sciences, and STEM, with concentrations or minors in and across these tracks. We recommend that the number of concentrations be grown carefully over time. Areas of interest that emerged repeatedly in our outreach and research include: business; data analytics; health-related fields (e.g., global and public health, health policy and management, nutrition); organizational leadership and human resource management; marketing and public relations; global development, international studies; social justice and inequality; environmental and sustainability studies; public policy, government, law; information science, cyber security; public safety and crisis/disaster management. Cornell could opt to offer a subset of these as majors rather than minors to highlight Cornell's distinctive strengths in those areas and/or when strong student demand can be satisfied with available online courses (e.g., business – see Appendix 5). Further consultation with faculty bodies will be critical for determination of the pros and cons of different curricular approaches.

3) As flexibility and convenience are critically important for working adults (the primary audience), asynchronous online instruction should be the default instruction mode, augmented by synchronous online instructional activities and office hours (or in-person instructional activities for incarcerated students). Courses should be developed by Cornell tenure-track and teaching/RTE faculty who would also be the instructors of record and join the class synchronously once or twice a week.

4) Courses should be modularized (I.e., shorter than 15 weeks) to enhance flexibility for students.

5) Students should be strongly encouraged to come to Ithaca for a residential summer session, which would allow us to showcase our beautiful Ithaca campus and strengthen PT degree students' identification with Cornell. Students would have the opportunity to complete an entire course in a condensed time frame (3 weeks) and access world-class facilities that cannot be replicated online. However, for some non-traditional students, a required residential session could be a barrier to completing the degree; therefore, it should not be strictly required.

6) Admissions strategies that enhance access for non-traditional students without compromising our selective admissions standards should be employed, with two dominant pathways into the part-time bachelor's degree:
    a. Direct admission: accepted directly into the program based on prior accomplishments (with or without college-level transfer credits); or
    b. Earn your way in: accepted based on demonstrated commitment and ability in foundational courses (that are pre-identified for this purpose). We recommend that students complete a minimum of 3 or 4 courses, including English writing, Math, and one course related to the major/area of study the applicant is interested in pursuing. Students who meet minimum performance standards in all foundational courses would be guaranteed admission into the program.

7) A critical element of the admissions strategy will be to intentionally exclude students who would normally enter through traditional pipelines into our full-time (FT) residential programs so that a clear distinction can be maintained across the two student populations. Only individuals who have been out of secondary school for four or more years would be eligible to apply.

8) Once students have been admitted into Cornell's PT bachelor's degree program, the expectation is that they would complete their coursework through Cornell. Although external credits would be accepted at the time of admission where appropriate, once admitted there would be a cap on the number of courses that could be taken outside of Cornell.

9) To attract military-affiliated students, we recommend working closely with the educational offices in the military branches to establish MOUs to evaluate and award academic credit for relevant professional military education based on guidelines published by the American Council of Education.

10) Tuition rates should be set following further study by a phase 2 implementation task force. Important considerations will include not only setting a tuition rate that makes sense within the context of the per credit tuition currently charged for courses offered by the School of Continuing Education as well as that of peer institutions with part-time bachelor's programs, but also mechanisms for offering financial aid to expand accessibility to students who are not in a position to pay full tuition (i.e., application waivers, tuition subsidies and other targeted forms of financial assistance).

11) Courses available to PT degree students would be limited compared to our FT bachelor's programs. Students seeking access to Cornell courses beyond those offered as part of the PT program would have to pay the tuition rate of our FT programs (with enrollment contingent on availability). Students interested in transferring into one of Cornell's seven undergraduate colleges/schools would be required to apply via the internal transfer process, and would only be accepted if they meet admissions criteria.

12) There should be clear guardrails in place to limit cross-enrollment between our FT residential and PT degree programs (in both directions) – e.g., a maximum of 9 academic credits. Online courses in the PT degree program could be made available to FT residential students by petition.

13) High-quality academic and career advising will be essential to the success of the students in the PT degree program, but also challenging to deliver given the different needs of our target student populations. The university should invest in student services specialists with experience working with PT adult students and expertise related to our target student populations to guide them from entry to graduation.

14) The committee recommends an aggressive timeline for launching the PT bachelor's degree. Dependent on the approval process by SUNY and NYSED etc., it may be possible to launch in the fall of 2023.

Committee Charge

This committee was charged with exploring the possibility of offering a part-time (PT) bachelor's degree to a population that would not otherwise look to Cornell for a traditional residential undergraduate education. Admission to the bachelor's degree program would be competitive, and the degree would not overlap with the population that traditionally seeks out Cornell for a post-secondary degree. The overarching questions for the committee were: What are the reasons for and against offering this pathway to a bachelor's degree, how does it relate to our mission, who would we serve, and what would it entail? More specifically:

– Advantages and disadvantages of Cornell's offering such a degree
– Who are the intended populations, why, and how many? What is the competitive landscape?
– Would potential students start their degree through this program or come to this program to "complete your degree" (e.g., transfer after associate's degree)? What admissions criteria would be used?
– General education vs. choice of majors; areas of study involved
– Delivery of instruction (who would teach, when, and how), including mix of online vs in-person instruction, synchronous and asynchronous instruction
– Potential for part-time degree students to transfer into one of Cornell's other undergraduate colleges/schools; Overlap, if any, in the courses that residential versus part-time students can take for credit; Potential impact on residential programs
– Advising (including career services) that would be available to part-time students
– What is an appropriate timeline for launching such a degree?

Committee Membership

Committee Co-chairs:
Avery August, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs
Lisa Nishii, Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education
Committee Members:
David Bindel, Associate Professor, Computer Science
Jonathan Burdick, Vice Provost for Enrollment
Kevin Hallock, Professor, SC Johnson College of Business
David Lee, Professor, Dyson School of Applied Economics and Management
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Project support:
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Background

In February 2020, the committee that reviewed the School of Continuing Education (SCE) noted that at some point in the future, the university should consider granting a part-time bachelor's degree through the SCE. However, given the location of the Ithaca campus outside of a major metropolitan area, offering a part-time degree would require expansive online offerings; at the time, this seemed like a longer-term aspirational goal. A great deal has changed in the last year as a result of the pandemic, including the development and successful delivery of hundreds of courses taught online, what seemed unachievable then now feels both possible and necessary.

Intersecting and unprecedented crises around racial justice, a global health pandemic, and a debilitating economic recession have heightened attentiveness to the issue of equity. As one of the foremost educational institutions in the world, Cornell is well positioned to heed calls to promote racial, economic[1] and other forms of equity. A part-time bachelor's degree program provides a compelling and timely way for Cornell to build on its historical founding as a land-grant institution with an aspirational ethos of educating "any person" in "any study."

The assumption underlying the recommendations that follow is that SCE would confer the part-time bachelor's degree, rather than any one or more of the 7 undergraduate colleges and schools. This is so that the degree program could be more broadly conceived by drawing from the rosters of all colleges/schools, and more easily leverage eCornell assets. Such a model would be consistent with our Ivy peers that confer part-time bachelor's degrees (i.e., they tend to be conferred by a separate college, sometimes with slightly different degree names). As is the case with existing Summer and Winter Session courses, the colleges and departments that contribute to the part-time degree program would benefit financially.

Committee Response to Charge Questions

(I)   Advantages and disadvantages of Cornell's offering such a degree

Leveraging Cornell's strengths for larger social good, a part-time bachelor's degree program would create a pathway to a first-rate education for those who could not otherwise have such an opportunity and would benefit from access to Cornell. The target population (further described below) for the part-time degree includes domestic and international working adults who did not pursue a bachelor's degree right out of

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[1] Research suggests that regardless of comparable SAT scores, students from lower-income families under-enroll at elite institutions relative to students of high-income families. If Cornell is committed to enrolling an economically diverse student body and being an engine for upward economic mobility (64% of Cornell students come from the top 20%, 10% come from the top 1%, and 3.8% come from the bottom 20%), developing a part time degree program and expanding our economically diverse student pipeline will help in reaching this aim.

high school, community college graduates, current military service members and veterans, incarcerated individuals, Indigenous communities who lack significant access, farmworkers, and others with non-traditional educational backgrounds and paths to higher education.

Depending on the size and scope of the PT bachelor's degree, the committee anticipates minimal negative impact on our residential degree program with clear differentiation between the two paths to a Cornell bachelor's degree. Comparable part-time programs at peer institutions have not affected the high quality or volume of applicants to their FT residential programs. There are also some advantages for students in the residential program for whom a broader range of online courses would become available to them (though access would be restricted by a petition process, as described in more detail below). In addition, we expect that pedagogical innovations spurred by the creation of a new online curriculum will have positive spillover effects for courses in our FT residential program.

Disadvantages include increased demand on faculty time and accompanying resources, adding another complex entity to an already complex institution, and the startup costs associated with developing a robust (and potentially entirely separate) student services infrastructure. We anticipate that some faculty may express concern about the potential "dilution" of the Cornell brand. An alternative perspective is that offering a PT bachelor's degree has the potential to strengthen our brand as the egalitarian Ivy.

(II) Who are the intended population, why, and how many? What is the competitive landscape?

While several other Ivy League institutions offer part time bachelor's degree programs, the committee believes that Cornell would be a very strong competitor since the marketspace is deep and Cornell's name recognition and reputation will attract many students, both domestically and internationally. Should specific concentrations select to offer a residential component, our picturesque location for taking summer courses, in particular, is appealing, especially for courses that take advantage of our natural areas for unique learning opportunities (e.g., courses in Ecology & Evolutionary Biology (BIOEE), Natural Resources & the Environment (NTRES), Entomology (ENTOM)).

There are many different populations for whom a PT bachelor's degree would be of interest. In addition to the most obvious target population of domestic and international working adults who did not, or could not, pursue a postsecondary education immediately following high school (and might assume a bachelor's degree from an Ivy-League institution to be out of reach), we propose that Cornell also focus on specific under-served populations in keeping with the "any person, any study" motto of Cornell.

The expectation is that financial aid will be offered for those in need and that this will not compete with financial aid resources devoted to full-time residential students. Cornell would seek to enroll enlisted military and veterans, incarcerated individuals, farmworkers (especially of New York State), and Native American/Indigenous communities. We found that thinking about specific populations helped us to consider the issue of tuition and we compare the needs of some of these target populations in Appendix 1.

Benchmarking with other institutions (see Appendix 2) revealed that, not surprisingly, all PT bachelors programs have a focus on non-traditional students and working professionals/adults who cannot easily leave home for prolonged periods or travel to a physical campus outside of a major metropolitan area. Many also focus on veterans, with dedicated veterans support offices or incentives for veterans or active-duty military. Some indicated other niche populations, for example, Oregon State University targets Native American and Indigenous communities. None of the benchmarked institutions indicated a focus on incarcerated populations in an online program, though there are a few notable examples of schools partnering with prisons to offer an in-person associate's or bachelor's degree (e.g. Bard College and Georgetown University).

In terms of total numbers, the committee felt that initially opening the degree to up to 300 students would be possible. Thereafter, the total number of students could be gradually increased. For reference, there are approximately 900 students enrolled in Harvard's part-time bachelor's degree (and an additional 2,749 enrolled in graduate extension degrees).

Working adults – domestic and international
Working adults represent the largest target audience for the PT bachelor's degree.[2] Approximately two-thirds of PT students are 24 or older, with three-quarters of them employed (42% of them are employed full-time). Many of them are more likely to be financially independent and have children or other dependents compared to traditional students.[3] Among community college students, about 80% express interest in earning a bachelor's degree, though less than a third ultimately transfer to a four-year institution.[4] The most significant barriers include competing demands on their time, expense, and uncertainty about whether the potential career benefits justify the costs. A May 2021 poll by Strada[5] showed that over the last year, more than a third of adult learners have changed or cancelled their learning plans because of disruptions caused by the pandemic. A quarter of respondents reported changing their education plans because they did not want to attend in-person courses; instead, they expressed interest in pursuing online degree options.

Internationally, too, the target population is already large and continues to expand rapidly due to the growing middle class in emerging middle income and other developing countries who see a U.S. degree as value added for their own careers. Demand is expected to soon outstrip the supply of available spots in high-quality research universities outside of the U.S., leading interested students to turn even more to the U.S. for alternatives. Given its longstanding global reputation, Cornell is well positioned to take advantage of growing demand.

Casting a wide net – particularly vis-à-vis the enormous international market – would allow Cornell to be highly selective with respect to whom we admit, thereby ensuring that Cornell can maintain its reputation for excellence. Although the demand is expected to be high, the potential for cannibalizing our FT residential program is expected to be low given the reputational preference that traditional residential programs enjoy among students entering college/university immediately after concluding secondary education. Adult learners who transfer into Cornell from other 2- or 4-year institutions could apply to either the FT residential or PT bachelor's degree program, depending on their preference for full- versus part-time and residential versus online education.

Military
Cornell is a recognized leader among national universities in terms of offering educational opportunities to veterans, ranked #4 in 2021 by U.S. News & World Report among Best Colleges for Veterans.[6] However, elite undergraduate institutions are not in the mix of top-ranked online degree programs for military-affiliated students. While the competitive landscape is heated among top graduate business institutions,[7] there is missed opportunity among elite undergraduate colleges/universities to recruit active-duty, guard, and reserve service members and military veterans.

According to our outreach, infantry and army soldiers tend to be the most underserved; therefore, designing a PT degree program in ways that enhance accessibility for them would be important (e.g.,

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[2] Washington Watch: Tough slog for part-time students – Community College Daily (ccdaily.com)
[3] Report: Part-Time Students Overlooked (insidehighered.com)
[4] Tracking Transfer - National Student Clearinghouse Research Center (nscresearchcenter.org)
[5] Strada (stradaeducation.org)
[6] 2021 Best Colleges for Veterans – National Universities | US News Rankings
[7] Poets&Quants | The Military Appeal: MBA Programs Love Veterans, And The Feeling Is Mutual (poetsandquants.com)

offering 7-week vs 15-week courses). Other features of a PT degree program that are valued by the military population include: access to a broad range of areas of study that can assist soldiers with their transition to a civilian career; being able to acquire academic credit for specialized military training; flexibility and convenience, including the availability of at least some self-paced asynchronous courses; and dedicated, holistic support services, from intake through post-graduation employment (e.g., a one-stop Military Resource Center). In addition to there being great interest in PT bachelor's degree programs, there is also significant demand for credit-bearing courses from high-caliber universities like Cornell outside of formal degree programs.

Native American/Indigenous Communities
As a land-grant institution benefiting from Native American and Indigenous lands granted to New York State by the federal government under the Morrill Act of 1862, a PT bachelor's degree would also allow Cornell to better fulfill a role in enhancing access to educational opportunities for these communities. Many of the institutions that have significant Native American enrollments are in the Southwest and Northwest where there are larger populations. Our goal would be to provide an alternative for individuals who would prefer to pursue a degree from home. Providing culturally appropriate advising and support will be essential through partnership with Cornell's American Indian and Indigenous Studies Program, and with student services staff and faculty who could provide opportunities for engagement and social connection.

Farmworkers
Given Cornell's land-grant status, the competitive strength of its agricultural sciences, and history of supporting farmworkers, the committee also considered farmworkers for whom a FT residential program may be unrealistic because of their inability to leave their farms to pursue an education. The children of migrant workers – such as those whose educational interests are supported by Cornell's Farmworker Program – are also of interest and may be a more likely audience for a PT bachelor's degree than farmworkers themselves. Many of them attend community college, a subset of whom could be successful in completing a four-year degree at Cornell to enhance their career choices and social mobility.

Incarcerated individuals
There was significant interest among committee members in extending the existing Cornell Prison Education Program (CPEP) such that the most promising students are able to advance from their associate's degree into a bachelor's degree program. This could significantly affect the recidivism rate, as the Bureau of Justice Statistics reports that the rate at which individuals who are released from prison are rearrested within five years is 76.6%.[8] Incarcerated individuals who participate in correctional education programs had a 43 percent lower odds of rearrest than those who did not.[9] College completion reduces rearrest rates dramatically; one study showed that only 13.7% of those released from prison with an associate's degree, and only 5.6% of those with a bachelor's degree, were ever rearrested.[10] There are approximately 800 incarcerated individuals in New York State currently working towards an associate's degree; according to the current director of CPEP, only a small subset are likely to be a good fit for a Cornell-caliber bachelor's program (estimate 12-18/year). bachelor's programs are much rarer than associate's degree programs, though growth in the market is expected once access to Pell Grants is restored for incarcerated individuals

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[8] Benefits of Prison Education – Northwestern Prison Education Program
[9] Davis, Lois M., Robert Bozick, Jennifer L. Steele, Jessica Saunders, and Jeremy N. V. Miles, Evaluating the Effectiveness of Correctional Education: A Meta-Analysis of Programs That Provide Education to Incarcerated Adults. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2013. https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR266.html. Also available in print form.
[10] Robert Allen, "An Economic Analysis of Prison Education Programs and Recidivism". Emory University, Department of Economics, 2006.

(anticipated ca. 2023). Although Georgetown University recently launched a bachelor's program with this population in mind, because competition is state and location bound, Cornell would not have major competitors in New York State at this time (with the exception of Bard College, which is a fully in-person program and does not have the capacity to offer the same breadth of courses as Cornell, or lower quality online options offered by for-profit universities[11]).

(III) Admissions: Would potential students start their degree through this program or come to "complete your degree" (transfer after associate's degree)? What admissions criteria would be used?

The committee highlighted the need to have multiple ways, or "on-ramps" into the PT bachelor's program, which would increase flexibility and accessibility for different audiences. Our benchmarking revealed three entry lanes into a PT bachelor's degree: "direct admission", "complete your degree", and "earn your way in". The committee discussed the possibility that different entry criteria may be appropriate across populations, but ultimately decided that having straightforward criteria, which can be more clearly articulated, would be the best way forward. Admissions pathways should be easy to navigate, and requirements should be transparent (including details about the length of time to earn the degree, costs, access to financial aid, etc.). For many, a Cornell education is a dream and, even if qualified, potential applicants may underestimate their abilities and not apply. It will be key for Cornell to make it clear that this program is a realistic opportunity for motivated individuals from a broad range of backgrounds with relevant experiences, skills, and qualifications.

Once students have been admitted into Cornell's PT bachelor's degree program, they will be expected to complete their coursework through Cornell. Although some external transfer credits would be accepted at the time of admission where appropriate, once admitted there would be a cap on the number of courses that could be taken outside of Cornell.

We recommend that Cornell offer flexibility in the admissions process without sacrificing rigor by offering both "direct admission" (to include the "complete your degree" option), and "earn your way in" pathways into our program, eventually with multiple admissions cycles each year (e.g., fall, spring, summer). This flexibility is important for appealing to diverse adult learners. The two admissions options include:

(1) *"Direct admission"* for new students with no prior college credits, and direct admission to "complete your degree" for students with substantial transfer credits (or even an associate's degree). These represent ends of a spectrum differentiated by the number of prior college-level courses completed. In this pathway, applicants apply to be admitted into Cornell's PT bachelor's degree program based on their prior accomplishments.

A critical element of the admissions strategy is to intentionally exclude students who would normally enter through traditional pipelines into our FT residential program so that a clear distinction can be maintained across the two student populations. The committee identified years since secondary school graduation (high school or equivalent for international students) as an appropriate criterion. Individuals who have been out of secondary school for five or more years are eligible to apply to Harvard's program; setting our minimum at 4 years could provide a competitive advantage. The delay will help assure that the PT program is not a viable "back door" approach for students who would otherwise seek a traditional residential Cornell education.

Many adult learners may benefit from earning an AA degree first in order to build their confidence for success in a bachelor's program. To appeal to individuals who have earned their associate's degree,

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[11] https://www.opencampusmedia.org/2021/01/18/ashland-universitys-prison-program-sits-at-the-center-of-national-controversy/

Cornell would need to help them understand the benefit of investing additional effort to earn a bachelor's. There are many such benefits, including higher median earnings[12], lower rates of unemployment and higher likelihood of being employed full-time, higher satisfaction with one's job,[13] and career options that would only become available to them if they complete a bachelor's degree (e.g., licensed professions[14]). Of note, according to reports published by Cornell Career Services, in 2019 as many as 80% of undergraduates found jobs outside of on-campus recruiting and other Cornell-sponsored career fairs. This speaks to the power of a Cornell degree in facilitating employment and career growth.

Not surprisingly, universities such as NYU that prefer to recruit PT students from community colleges tend to offer generous allowances for transfer credits. For military-affiliated students, being able to acquire academic credit for their "professional military education" and "advanced and individual training" will make Cornell a more attractive option. We recommend that the university work with the education offices in military branches to develop MOUs to evaluate and award credits based on [American Council of Education (ACE) guidelines](#).

We recommend the following admissions criteria to include:

— Minimum GPA standards (from high school or community college)
— English language proficiency
— Writing proficiency (as assessed through written statement)
⁻ Minimum of 4 years since completing secondary school,[15] whether or not they apply having completed college-level courses elsewhere
— Letters of recommendation

Further, for recruiting students who would come to Cornell to complete their degrees, *we recommend* the following:

— Develop (or enhance already existing) strong partnerships (i.e., articulation agreements) with select community colleges so that when students enter those programs, they already have an eye on Cornell as their final destination.
— Delineate a clear path for students from community colleges to Cornell by specifying which courses will count towards a Cornell degree, and the minimum grades required in those courses to be admissible to Cornell. Align as appropriate with our community college transfer processes into our FT residential programs, including capping the total number of external transfer credits that can count towards a Cornell bachelor's degree to 60 (of 120).
— Not requiring the completion of an associate's degree.

Those who do not meet our minimum admissions criteria but are close would be invited to consider our second pathway, below.

Separate recommendation for incarcerated individuals
For incarcerated students, *we recommend* the "complete your degree" pathway. Upon the recommendation of faculty member(s) as they complete their associate's degree, the most promising students would be recommended for admission into the PT bachelor's degree and moved to a single correctional facility. For Cornell, we believe that the Cayuga Correctional Facility, which is a medium security men's prison, could be designated as our bachelor's program location; however, there may be other appropriate locations within the correctional system. Perhaps more so than for other student

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[12] [Education pays : U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (bls.gov)](#)
[13] [Associate Degree vs Bachelor Degree | Which Degree Fits You? (elearners.com)](#)
[14] [NYS Licensed Professions (nysed.gov)](#)
[15] Exceptions may be made for students who earn their GED at least 4 years after they would have completed traditional secondary school; they would not be expected to wait another 4 years after earning their GED.

populations, organizing students into a cohort is critical for incarcerated college students. In an environment in which they are deprived of connections to the outside world, making and sustaining meaningful connections with incarcerated classmates is essential to their success.

(2) ***"Earn your way in"*** option where students prove their eligibility based on their performance in required foundational courses.

This pathway is attractive because it provides students with an opportunity to demonstrate their commitment and ability prior to being accepted; as such, it reduces risk for both the student and the university. This is especially critical for students who would otherwise assume that they could not be admitted to Cornell, such as military-affiliated and incarcerated students. By providing potential applicants with an opportunity to see whether they can handle the rigors of a Cornell education (and allowing us to do the same), we are more likely to enhance access for many individuals. Even those students who ultimately do not perform at sufficiently high levels to gain entry into Cornell's degree program can benefit by earning academic credits that they can apply to other degree programs.

Harvard has an "earn your way in" option where students take three required courses to demonstrate their commitment and ability prior to applying to the program. Pre-matriculant students take 3 courses at a reduced price, one of which is a writing course. Students are admitted into the degree program based on their performance in these courses, after which tuition increases to their standard rate. University of Pennsylvania offers a similar "earn your way in" path (with 4 required courses) as well as a direct application process.

We recommend a similar approach:

- A minimum of 3 or 4 required foundational courses. For all applicants, courses in English writing and math would be required. The level of the course may vary depending on applicants' prior college-level coursework. The third required course would depend on the major/area of study in which the applicant is interested.
- Minimum performance standards[16] in all foundational courses; if they meet these standards, then they would be guaranteed admission into the degree program. These foundational courses would need to be among the set of courses available when the program is first launched.

Assuming that the for-credit courses that are offered as part of the PT bachelor's program are also open to non-degree students, there may be students who perform well in online SCE courses who become interested in pursuing a PT bachelor's degree. Such students would be invited to apply to the program through either the "direct admission" or "earn your way in" options.

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[16] For reference, the minimum grade required in core courses for admission into many of the majors within Cornell's undergraduate colleges/schools is a B-.

(IV)   General education vs choice of majors; areas of study involved

In our benchmarking, we saw that the majors offered vary significantly across institutions, both in terms of number and focus. Some of our peers offer degrees that are distinct from those offered to full-time residential degree students (e.g., Bachelor of Liberal Arts at Harvard, Bachelor of Professional Studies at Syracuse University, Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences at UPenn) while others (e.g., Oregon State University, SUNY Online, Arizona State University) clearly state that online students receive the same diploma as their on-campus peers.

The committee agreed that Cornell's PT degree program should offer a finite set of focused major options that incorporate general education. Cornell should offer areas of study that take advantage of our institutional strengths and where we are therefore confident that we can deliver a first-rate program, and for which there is significant (and growing) market demand. Ideally, these areas of study would also be ones in which we have a running start based on the number of eCornell courses that have already been developed (Appendix 5). They would also need to reflect topics that can be taught without in-person interaction between instructors and students and/or students access to facilities or equipment available only on the Ithaca campus.

The committee recommends that the degree contain elements of a liberal education as well as a focus on skills for the 21st century and the perspectives we believe all students should be exposed. We expect that most of the students who would be interested in our program are already employed or highly career-focused and are looking to advance their skill sets. Thus, specific tracks or concentrations that teach our students skills for career advancement will be attractive.

Overall, *our recommendation* is that Cornell offer 3 broad tracks or majors in the humanities, social sciences, and STEM, with the possibility of special concentrations or minors in or across these tracks, ideally in areas that both play to Cornell's strengths and in which there is significant market demand. The more broadly the three tracks are defined, the easier it would be for us to guarantee that we will be able to offer the courses needed to fulfill requirements. The more majors offered, the more courses we would need, and thus greater start-up resources. Therefore, we recommend that the number of concentrations be grown carefully over time. In order to capture and grow our market position and preserve Cornell's world-class reputation, whatever areas of study we offer must be excellent.

Using existing major requirements across Cornell's undergraduate schools/colleges as a baseline and looking at curricular pathway comparisons across TC3 and the UPenn (Appendix 4), we offer the following as a rough approximation of what degree requirements could look like:

Courses	Number of Courses	Credits	Total Credits
Distribution Requirements			**34**
Writing	2	6	
Humanities & Arts	4	12	
Sciences	1	4	
Social Sciences	1	4	
Analytical & Quantitative Reasoning	2	8	
Major Courses			**44**
Core Major Required Courses*	5-6	20	
Major Concentration Courses**	6-8	24	
Free Electives			**36**
Courses to provide breadth or depth	10-12	36	
Graduation Project			**6**
Graduation project ***	2	6	
TOTAL CREDITS			**120**

* These provide broad exposure in the major. Having a common set of core courses will reduce the total number of courses that need to be offered.

** Students would choose 1-2 sets of concentrations of 3-4 courses each where they delve more deeply into specific topics.

*** In majors where it makes sense, the graduation project could be a community-engaged project to reflect Cornell's public impact mission.

Committee members expressed enthusiasm about inter-disciplinary concentrations that take advantage of the breadth of Cornell by cutting across its undergraduate colleges/schools. Some of the occupations with the most job growth according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics are in the health-related fields, business focused areas such as management, marketing, and information science, and cybersecurity fields.[17] Initial outreach and research[18] suggest that the following academic areas would be worthy of pursuit:

Data analytics
Health-related fields: global and public health, health policy and management, nutrition, etc.[19]
Business, applied economics
Organizational leadership and human resource management
Marketing and public relations
Global development, international studies
Social justice and inequality
Environmental and sustainability studies
Public policy, government, (pre-) law

[17] https://www.bls.gov/ooh/fastest-growing.htm
[18] Informal outreach survey to 115 soldiers; review of online bachelor's programs that have been ranked as most military friendly (e.g., the 2021 U.S. News list as one example, as well as this list for active duty servicemembers); Veterans – PNPI; observations from CPEP and review of the advanced degrees and careers pursued by CPEP alumni
[19] According to the National Center for Education Statistics, the three largest fields pursued in associate's degree programs are business, health profession, and liberal arts and sciences. Trends over the past decade show a steady interest in business and health professions.

Information science, cyber security
Public safety and crisis/disaster management

It's important to note that compared to our FT bachelor's programs, the courses available to PT degree students would be limited. Some students may be interested in enrolling in courses that are not available through the PT degree program. Students seeking to access other Cornell courses and degree programs beyond those offered specifically for PT majors would have to in residence tuition and participate in the instruction mode in which the courses are offered (which in most cases will be in-residence only). Cornell would not guarantee availability of any of these courses in a fully online or hybrid format. Moreover, there should be a cap on the number of courses/credits that PT program students can take in the full-time residential Cornell curriculum; students could appeal special circumstances.

(V)   Delivery of instruction (who would teach, when, and how), including mix of online vs in-person instruction, synchronous and asynchronous instruction

In examining other institutions' programs (Appendix 3), the committee found that many schools offer a completely online program with some exceptions for a few specific majors. Some have required in-person components (e.g., UPenn requires two in-person weekends), while others simply require a certain number of courses to be taken in-person (e.g., Harvard). At others, the mix depends on the available modality for courses (e.g., Georgetown, where some courses are only offered in person). Overall, Ivy League programs are more likely to offer blended instruction, whereas all online programs are more common among public institutions.

Instruction mode
The part-time degree curriculum would require a high-level of flexibility in instructional access given time zone differences and the competing demands working adults must juggle while taking classes. With international students enrolled from a broad range of time zones, core course content should be delivered asynchronously, following Department of Education guidelines. However, embedded in each course should be many opportunities for students to interact with each other and with the course instructor(s), for example through synchronous office hours and discussion sections, as well as online discussion forums. The visibility of world-renowned faculty in the courses is critical for setting our PT degree apart from the many others on the market. We expect that the development of high-quality asynchronous online courses can be supported by giving faculty teaching relief. The actual facilitation of courses is not expected to be particularly labor-intensive (especially with teaching assistants available to help conduct the work behind the scenes); it could count as a partial teaching load or be incentivized with supplemental pay.

Cornell tenure-track and teaching/RTE faculty would develop high-quality courses with the expert support of instructional designers at eCornell. Ideally, faculty who develop courses would also be the instructor of record and join the class once or twice a week. For core required courses that may need to be offered more often or that might have multiple sections, course materials (including recorded videos) should be developed by multiple instructors so that any one of them could participate in synchronous activities (to distribute the work and because most faculty do not like to teach using other instructors' materials). With appropriate training for the role, graduate TAs could be employed to facilitate supplemental synchronous instruction, moderate discussion sections, and grade assignments.

Special considerations for some student populations:
- *Military:* If, in the future, there is a large enough cohort of enrolled PT bachelor's degree students at a large military installation, it may be possible for a faculty member to travel to the base to teach an accelerated course.
- *International:* Scheduling of supplemental synchronous instruction should be flexible to accommodate students' time zones. Weekend sessions may be popular for working adults who may otherwise find it challenging to participate in course activities during the work week. It may also be possible for faculty to offer in-person learning opportunities during extended stays at Cornell's [Global Hubs](#).
- *Incarcerated:* To date, Cornell has been offering 100% in person instruction for this population (except during COVID). A switch to all asynchronous instruction supplemented by synchronous online interaction would be met with significant resistance and likely lead to perceptions of disenfranchisement rather than inclusion. A mix of asynchronous online and in-person courses, however, could be possible. For example, recorded content can be populated on to computers that have been set up in the computer lab at Cayuga Correctional Facility. If necessary, it would be possible to arrange synchronous participation for special lectures or in unusual circumstances (e.g., snowstorm makes in-person attendance of instructor impossible, lockdown at the prison, etc.). However, some in-person interaction should be built into all asynchronous courses. For example, graduate TA-led discussion sections could be created to accompany asynchronous video content recorded by faculty for a specialty course needed by a student that is only available in synchronous format. Travel to and from the prison would be necessary to drop off and collect materials, including instructional resources and student assignments (incarcerated people are very distrustful of prison guards and will not hand their work to them).

Duration and timing of courses

Semester-long courses (i.e., 15 weeks) should be modularized into shorter sections (e.g., 1.5-2 credits over 7 weeks instead of 3-4 credits in 15 weeks) to make it easier for students to make progress. For military students, for example, there are many disruptions (e.g., deployment, change of station, mandatory training) that could interfere with their ability to stay on schedule in a course. With shorter course modules (e.g., three 1-credit modules vs one 3-credit course), they would not have to wait an entire semester for a chance to pick up where they left off and would have more options for self-pacing their progress through the program. Curricula for majors would need to be carefully planned and frequently offered to accommodate various entry points and degree progress paths.

Military students are not the only ones who would benefit from the flexibility afforded by shorter, modularized courses. If we were to offer multiple admissions cycles each year, all courses (but especially the core required courses) would need to be offered more than once a year to facilitate students' staggered progression through the program. Although the flexibility afforded by multiple admissions cycles each year may be attractive to applicants, we also believe there would be significant benefits associated with creating student cohorts – both for the student experience and to simplify program administration. We estimated that a "standard" pace through the program might be to take 18 credits per year (e.g., 6 each in the fall, spring, and summer). According to the New York State Department of Education, one credit hour is defined as 15 hours of instruction and 30 hours of supplementary assignments. A pace of 6 credits per semester translates into 18 hours/week to complete one 3-credit course in each of two 7-week sessions. Assuming students might transfer in 12 credits, on average, upon entry into the program, the total time to degree would be 6 years. Of course, some students may progress at an accelerated or slower pace, depending on their life circumstances.

Required residential component

The committee carefully considered whether a residential experience could be a required "signature" component of the PT bachelor's degree. A residential summer session would allow us to showcase our beautiful Ithaca campus and surrounding area, and provide access to world-class facilities and faculty in a way that cannot be fully replicated online. This would serve to strengthen PT degree students' identification with Cornell. For some students, employers may be more supportive of allowing time off or even subsidizing travel to attend a residential session if it is indeed a requirement. Ideally, summer session programs for PT bachelor's students would highlight courses that take advantage of our local setting either in the way they are taught or the focus of the content.[20]

However, for working adults, among the three largest barriers to accessing higher education are time, money, and inability to travel or leave home. Therefore, a residential requirement may end up being a barrier to completion for some, including for international students. Active-duty military personnel may find it particularly challenging to get time off for a pre-specified multi-week period, and of course, it would be impossible for incarcerated individuals. If Cornell were to require a residential session, there would have to be an exception process for students who are unable to make it, and financial assistance would likely be needed by many to participate.

Rather than require an in-person instructional experience, most committee members are in favor of proposing this as an expectation rather than a requirement. An exception to this approach could be for concentrations that require courses that can only be taught on the Ithaca campus due to a need for access to physical facilities or laboratories.

Students enrolled in the PT bachelor's program would be invited to take winter or summer sessions courses through SCE at any point. A major advantage of taking condensed winter or summer session courses is that students can complete an entire course in just 3 weeks, thereby accelerating their progress towards degree completion.

(VI) Potential for part-time degree students to transfer into one of Cornell's other undergraduate colleges/schools; Overlap, if any, in the courses that residential versus part-time students can take for credit; Potential impact on residential programs

Data show that students who attend college full-time are twice as likely as their part-time counterparts to complete their degrees.[21] Students who are motivated to accelerate their time to degree by enrolling full-time should be given the opportunity to do so. However, taking a full-load of courses offered through the PT degree program is different from enrolling in our FT residential degree courses. We recommend that there be clear guardrails in place to limit cross-enrollment between our full-time residential and PT degree programs (in both directions) (e.g., a maximum of 9 academic credits). Beyond this maximum, students in the PT degree program who are interested in enrolling in courses that are only taught in our FT residential program could enroll in those courses under the following conditions: (a) space permitting; (b) ability to participate in person; and (c) willingness to pay tuition at residential rates.

There are legitimate reasons why students matriculated in our FT undergraduate degree programs would be interested in enrolling in online courses offered through the PT program, for example while they are away from Ithaca for an internship or a leave of absence. For some students, being able to take online Cornell courses could make study abroad a more viable option. However, students could also be motivated to take PT program courses to save money (i.e., due to the potentially lower per credit cost). We recommend that PT program courses be made available to FT residential students via a petition process so

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[20] Examples include courses offered by BIOEE (Evolution & Ecology), NTRES, BIONB, and ENTOM, such as: Ecology and the environment, Field ecology, Chemical ecology, Plant behavior and biotic interactions, Insect ecology, Ornithology, Behavioral ecology, field biology, and Insect Biology.

[21] Washington Watch: Tough slog for part-time students – Community College Daily (ccdaily.com)

that seats can be prioritized for PT students, and also so the appropriateness of doing so can be evaluated by students' academic advisors (e.g., depending on the type of leave of absence, students should not be taking courses).

Transferring from the PT to FT residential degree program
For some students (e.g., veterans), transferring from the PT to FT program might be attractive, if a change in their life circumstances were to enable them to attend Cornell's FT residential degree program. Transfer into one of the FT undergraduate colleges/schools would not be automatic; PT students would have to apply to transfer, just like any other student, and be accepted through a clear standards-based admissions process. The existing Internal Transfer process for residential students could be used for this purpose.

The committee was clear that we do not wish to imply that the PT degree is a lesser degree, particularly if we are targeting underserved populations. Nevertheless, space and capacity constraints (i.e., course enrollment caps, residence halls, advising loads, etc.) must be considered just as they are for our current internal transfer students. Students would have to understand that, given different degree requirements, transferring into one of the seven undergraduate colleges could mean that they may need to take extra classes to complete their degree.

(VII) Advising (including career services) that would be available to part-time students

The importance – and challenges – of developing the capacity to offer high-quality academic and career advising support to globally distributed nontraditional students emerged early and often in the committee's discussions. Working adults or students returning to school often require extra support as they struggle with balancing competing demands, time management, and the study skills required to transition successfully back into the classroom (e.g., note-taking, reading strategies, study plans, and understanding faculty expectations[22]). Research suggests that non-traditional students are most successful when institutions tailor academic support services to meet their unique learning needs and address pressures from competing personal responsibilities. Services such as in-depth orientation programs designed to familiarize students to campus-specific systems (e.g. Canvas and the University Libraries), early academic intervention strategies to catch students who are struggling,[23] flexibility within a structured learning environment,[17] and social integration[24] all contribute to enhancing non-traditional students' sense of belonging to the University, which can ultimately impact degree completion.

Most adult learners who pursue a bachelor's degree are motivated to enhance their careers,[25] yet their needs will vary based on their life circumstances and relevant labor market. Career services advising and alumni networking need to be hallmark offerings. The newly developed Global Hubs could serve as an excellent mechanism for international students to network with Cornell alumni in their region of the world and to work with career counselors who are well-informed of career paths and opportunities, and connected to employers in the region.

Benchmarking revealed that some institutions appear to leverage existing offices designed for traditional degree path students, while others, like the Penn State World Campus, have student services staff, admissions counselors, career advising, financial aid counseling, and learning support staff dedicated to online, part-time, and/or adult learners. Worthy of note is the substantial investment that some institutions make in providing services beyond the traditional workday, such as 24-hour access to technical support and extended evening hours for advising, writing, and tutoring help. Several institutions (e.g., Syracuse

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[22] https://www.aacu.org/publications-research/periodicals/research-adult-learners-supporting-needs-student-population-no
[23] https://www.aacu.org/publications-research/periodicals/planning-succeed-meeting-needs-adult-students-today
[24] http://www.inquiriesjournal.com/a?id=1377
[25] Strada (stradaeducation.org)

University, Northeastern University) have robust veteran centers that offer "one-stop" academic and support services.

In order to be successful, *we recommend* that Cornell invest in student services specialists with experience working with PT adult students, and expertise related to our target student populations to guide students in the program from entry to graduation. It's essential that their training be grounded in developmental advising and adult development theory, in addition to having a robust understanding of the relationship among employment, family, and academic factors and their impact on student success. Further, the quality of student and career services should be commensurate with the overall quality of the PT program. We recommend that a special group be convened to examine academic and career advising needs and strategies in more depth.

What is an appropriate timeline for launching such a degree?

We recommend an aggressive timeline for launching a PT bachelor's degree. Given the universal adoption of online instruction during the COVID-19 pandemic, we expect the market to expand rapidly. By acting quickly, Cornell has an opportunity to have a significant impact because the market for elite part-time bachelor's programs is not yet saturated.

Timeframe	Primary Goals	Secondary Goals
June – December 2021	− Present to Faculty Senate − Examine phase 2 questions − Draft curricular requirements − Model faculty needs and financial parameters (e.g., balance of full pay and aided students) − Identify set of courses that need to be developed, in order of priority − Explore different models for delivering advising to dispersed student population with diverse needs − Recruit new Dean of the School of Continuing Education and Summer Sessions − Convene cross-college faculty advisory committee	− Map out appropriate staging of course development (courses needed at launch versus 1-3 years downstream) − Draft syllabi for degree program courses; seek approval from relevant college Educational Policy Committees (EPC) − Engage faculty in discussions about modifying eCornell courses for UG audience,[26] to be delivered as 7-week courses − Identify logical pathways to existing online Masters programs
January 2022 – August 2023	− Submit degree proposal to NYSED for approval − Develop critical mass of courses needed for program launch − Increase online offerings (that will later be part of degree) and enrollment in them − Advertise upcoming launch of PT bachelor's degree program − Develop tuition and financial aid model − Make needed investments to revise registrar technologies to support increased complexity − Develop student services infrastructure	− Aggressively develop for-credit online courses[27] − Advertise courses that will satisfy PT degree & concentration requirements for potential students to take prior to official launch of program − Recruit students who have performed well in for-credit SCE courses ("earn your way in")
Fall 2023	− Launch degree program; share timeline of program expansion with students (growth of course offerings)	− Continue developing for-credit online courses
2024-2028	− Increase the number of concentrations offered	

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[26] Most eCornell courses are currently designed in a way that makes them easy to adapt for different audiences. To adapt eCornell courses for degree-seeking undergraduate audiences, the elements most likely to be adapted include course projects (e.g., replace a work-related project with a case study), assigned reading (both type and amount) and assessments (type and rigor).

[27] According to eCornell's experience, online courses take anywhere between 2 and 10 months to create.

Questions for Phase 2 Exploration

In our committee discussions, we focused on overarching questions. Many questions will need to be considered much more carefully, the answers to which will impact both feasibility and the proposed timeline. Details that surfaced in our discussions but which we tabled for consideration by a Phase 2/implementation committee include the following:

1) Organizational structure and leadership
2) Degree name and associated NYSED requirements; accreditation requirements
3) Specific admissions criteria
4) More concrete details about specific majors and concentrations to be offered
5) Faculty workload and compensation
    a. Appropriate mix of tenure-track faculty, adjunct lecturers, postdocs, graduate TAs, etc.
6) Academic and Career Advising – logistics of distributed advising across so many different cultures, labor markets, time zones, etc.
7) Tuition model
    a. Price point for PT credits
    b. Availability of financial aid
    c. Would enrollment in PT credits while studying abroad be included in study abroad tuition or would it cost extra?
    d. Supporting TAs
8) Articulation agreements, transfer credit policies

Closing

The proposed PT bachelor's degree program would allow Cornell to expand its founding mission of "any person" by reaching beyond those who are privileged enough to be able to come to Ithaca for a residential educational experience. Launching such a program would provide an opportunity to capitalize on our strengths and the successes that we have experienced in the pandemic-induced shift to online teaching while staying true to our mission of equity and access. The success of the proposed PT bachelor's degree will be critically dependent strong faculty support, comfort and buy-in to the underlying values and goals. Despite the potential challenges, this degree will allow us to take the lead among elite residential universities by truly expanding access to a bachelor's degree and thus, facilitating upward economic and social mobility. The process for engaging the Faculty Senate should be robust, allowing review of the committee report, discussion, and critical feedback.

Appendix 1: Intended Populations

Student Population	Academic interest areas	Admissions parameters	Financial support required	Pipeline opportunities	Market	Challenges
Domestic and International working adults	Careers are a priority. Varied interests: STEM, business, health-related, applied social sciences, etc.	4+ years post-secondary. Cast a wide-net, but be highly selective.	Many will be able to pay without addition financial support.	Partner with community colleges and multi-national companies for training. Build on Cornell Global Hubs.	Large possible market due to rising middle class. Interest because of Cornell prestige.	Advising, including career advising and retention support
Indigenous communities	Varied interests: STEM, business, health-related, applied social sciences, etc.	May include both those who are 4+ years post-secondary and likely traditional age students coming from a community college.	High level of assistance would be needed.	Partner with American Indian and Tribal community colleges.	Not a known focus of online PT bachelor's programs at top universities.	Advising and retention support
Military	Business, Economics, Information Science, Engineering (Civil and Mechanical)	Based on grades and other work/military experience. Would need a mechanism to evaluate military experience for credit.	There is some government funding available, but they would likely need discounted tuition rates and financial aid.	Military bases (education offices) and branch-specific community colleges.	Competitive landscape, but gap exists for recruiting veterans to elite institutions.	Advising and retention support
Incarcerated	Broad areas: humanities, social sciences and STEM. Possible concentrations in law, public policy, and business.	Based on grades earned pursuing associate's degree. Require nominations from faculty.	High level of subsidy would be needed. However, Pell grants will be restored to incarcerated individuals in 2023.	Would need to closely partner with a prison (e.g., Cayuga Correctional Facility or other appropriate location in the NYS correctional system).	Competition is state bound. With the exception of Bard, no major competitors.	Limited to New York state or facility near Ithaca; Advising and retention support; online access limited.
Farm-workers' children*	Emphasis around vocations as interest areas – business, education, nursing, medicine, law, engineering, animal sciences, agriculture.	The children of farm laborers are likely traditional age students coming from a community college.	High level of assistance would be needed.	Work with CALS and extension office. Existing articulation agreements with community colleges.	This is unclear.	

Though the initial focus was farmworkers, after discussion, what we're really talking about are the children of the laborers who have more literacy.

Appendix 2: Benchmarking Summary

Characteristics	Peers/IVY+ (6)	Land-Grants or Large Publics (6)	Outliers (3)
INSTITUTIONS BENCHMARKED	U. Penn, Northeastern, Syracuse, Georgetown, Harvard	Penn State U., U. Florida, Arizona State U., Washington State U., Oregon State U., Ohio State U., U. Virginia	Southern New Hampshire U., Western Governors U., Empire State College, SUNY Online
INTENDED POPULATIONS	Working adults, some military	Non-traditional, working adults, military	Anyone, adult learners
ADMISSIONS STRATEGY (start degree in program or come to program for Bachelor's after associate's degree)	"Degree completion" focus and upper-class entry for some	Varies extensively by program	Entry at any point
ADMISSIONS CRITERIA (how selective?)	GPA minimum, "earn your way in"	Varies	Open for most programs
DEGREE CONFERRING UNIT (extension/continuing education vs traditional academic unit)	Online degrees offered through separate school or college (Extension Studies, Liberal and/or Professional Studies)	Special "World," "Online," or "eCampus"	Online-focused institutions
DEGREE OPTIONS (General education vs choice of majors/areas of study)	Many of our peers offer separate, distinct degrees (Bach. of Lib Arts, Bach of Prof Studies, Bach of Arts in Liberal Studies) for online degrees	Reflect on-campus offerings which are a mix of liberal arts and applied health	Many offer variations of business, applied health programs; fewer liberal arts offerings
TUITION LANDSCAPE	Comparable or slightly cheaper than traditional degree tuition	Primarily equal to traditional degree tuition	Lower cost
INSTRUCTION MODES	Online and some blended	Mostly all online	Primarily online
AVAILABILITY OF STUDENT SERVICES	Some offer advising specifically for PT students, but others provide a web page with list of links	Yes, most promote special services for online program	Yes, extensively designed for online learners, very personalized
MILITARY-SPECIFIC SUPPORT	Some have veterans' offices, others have well organized information online, some have a designated coordinator	Yes, very focused on veteran support, some have designed military centers	Yes, veteran friendly support and knowledgeable

Appendix 3: Competitive Landscape

Institution	Degree Name	Admission Criteria	Transfer Credit	Major Options	On-campus Component	Price Point
Harvard	Bachelor of Liberal Arts	Extension School: Established pre-Admission criteria, then "Earn Your Way" In by taking a writing course and 2 additional 4-credit program courses	College-level, C grade minimum, 16 test credit max, no credit for military, life exp, vocational or paraprofessional exp	Concentrations in Humanities, Sciences, Social Sciences. Also, Joint BLA/MA option	In person or online	Avg course tuition $1880. Pre-admission courses are $1000 ea.
NYU	Bachelor of Professional Studies	School of Professional Studies (SPS). 2 Admit Options: Direct from HS and post-45 transferrable credits earned, 3.3 gpa preferred	C or better within the last 10 years, no credit awarded for joint service credit or life exp. Defense Language Institute credits evaluated case by case.	Available concentrations vary depending on the number of transferrable credits earned at the time of admission. They include: applied general studies, humanities, social sciences, marketing analytics, healthcare management, leadership and management studies, info systems and management, applied data analytics, real estate, hotel/tourism, a sports management, sciences, humanities or 5 professional areas (Applied data analytics, digital communications, healthcare management, real estate for option 2 admits Div of Applied Undergraduate Studies (DAUS) offers BA in Soc Sciences with 9 concentrations and BS in Leadership and Management	SPS follows modality of residential program. DAUS promotes a "blended" model of both online and on-campus	$13,162 /semester - flat rate charged for 6-10 credits
UPenn	Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences (BAAS)	College of Liberal & Professional Studies. Standard and Earn Your Way In by taking 4 courses in the Gateway Program – Qualitative & Quantitative Analysis, Science, Writing. 2.7 gpa	3.0 gpa from previous institutions. WES or CertiFile/College Net Doc Service for International students. 50% of degree can be met with accredited transfer credit. Preliminary transfer credit eval offered.	Concentrations in: Creative Studies, Data Analytics, Individualized Studies, Leadership & Comm, Literature, Org Studies, Physical and Life Sciences. Accelerated 8-week course "block" system offered BFA – partnership among Penn A&S, LPS, and Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts	BAAS all OL BFA in person	LPS OL - $2,482/crs BFA - $4,020/crs

Institution	Degree Name	Admission Criteria	Transfer Credit	Major Options	On-campus Component	Price Point
Syracuse University	Part-time online degree through University College (UC)	Admission is based on a combination of factors, including having graduated from high school or the equivalent, standardized test scores, transcripts from all previous undergraduate work, a personal statement, and, if requested, letters of recommendation. An admission consultation with a UC advisor is required and is available in-person, by phone, or online.	Bachelor of Professional Studies Required 30 cr general education core, 30 required cr of a professional competencies core, and 30-60 cr of a major with electives. The 90 credits that make up the combination of professional competencies and major requirements and electives is what different from the BA and BS — an intentional coupling of career-focused majors with professional competency and skills courses.	Cybersecurity Admin, Healthcare Admin, Knowledge Management, Computer Programming, Creative Leadership, Liberal Studies	Online	Highly promotes military credit from JST and TA benefits providing full financial coverage for currently serving service members (DOD TA rate for eligible military at the rate of $250 per credit hour, up to 24-semester hours – $6,000 per fiscal year). Otherwise, $695/cr for non-military or $54,270 for full-time.
U. Florida	Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Sciences	UF Online, admission criteria set by class level, allows 2nd bachelor's degree students	2.0 GPA for prior college coursework, standardized test scores for "lower division" students	24 major areas	Online	In-state: $129/cr hr Out of state: $553/cr hr Military may qualify for out of state tuition waivers

Appendix 4. Examples of degree requirements

Curriculum Bucket	TC3 Liberal Arts & Sciences / General Studies	Credits	Cornell / Dyson Applied Econ Mgmt	Credits	Cornell Arts & Sciences / History	Credits	Cornell Engineering / Computer Science	Credits	CHE / Human, Biology, and Society	Credits	UPenn BAAS	Credits
DISTRIBUTION REQUIREMENTS – ENGLISH / WRITING	Engl 100 (Academic Writing)	3	FWS	3	FWS	3	FWS	3	FWS	3	Writing	4
	Engl 101 (Academic Writing II)	3	FWS	3	FWS	3	FWS	3	FWS	3	X	X
	Engl 102 Approaches to Lit	3	X	X	X	X					X	X
	Engl 201/204 (Speech or Interpersonal Comm)	3	Written or Oral Expression	3	X	X	Liberal Studies	>=18			X	X
DISTRIBUTION REQUIREMENTS – HUMANITIES / SOC SCI / STEM	Restricted Elective (humanities, arts, foreign language)	3	Social Sci / Humanities	12-16	Social Sci / Humanities / Foreign Lang / Quant / Bio / Phys Sci (students fulfill 10 categories with a minimum of 8 courses)	35-43	Engineering Distribution	9-11	Humanities / Social Sciences	9-10	Ethical Reasoning / Qualitative Analysis	12
	Math or Science Elective	3	Intro Life Sciences / Bio	6	Social Sci / Humanities / Foreign Lang / Quant / Bio / Phys Sci (students fulfill 10 categories with a minimum of 8 courses)	35-43	Physics and Chemistry	12-21	Physics and Chemistry	17-24	Scientific Process	4
	Mathematics Elective	3 or 4	Quantitative Literacy	3-4	Social Sci / Humanities / Foreign Lang / Quant / Bio / Phys Sci (students fulfill 10 categories with a minimum of 8 courses)	35-43	Mathematics	14-16	Physiology	3-4	Quantitative Analysis	8
	Natural Sciences Lab Elective	3 or 4	X	X	Social Sci / Humanities / Foreign Lang / Quant / Bio / Phys Sci (students fulfill 10 categories with a minimum of 8 courses)	35-43	Computing	4	Biology & Biochem	18-20		
	Other World Civilizations Elective	3	Human Diversity	3-4	Social Sci / Humanities / Foreign Lang / Quant / Bio / Phys Sci (students fulfill 10 categories with a minimum of 8 courses)	35-43			PE		Cross cultural interactions and diversity	4
	History Elective	3	X	X	X	X					X	X
	Psyc103 or Soc101 (intro to psych or soc)	3	X	X	X	X					X	X
	Liberal Arts Elective	6	X	X	X	X						
MAJOR			Major (AEM)	~51-60	Major (History)	~27-36	Major (CS)	>=30	Major	24-27	Concentration	48
ELECTIVE	Unrestricted Electives	21	Unrestrictive Electives	~20-30	Unrestrictive Electives	43-58	Major Electives + Courses Outside the Major	18	Electives	variable	Unrestrictive Electives	40
Total Credits		60		120		120		121		120		120

Appendix 5: Existing for-credit courses available through eCornell that could be applied to the PT degree *(note: this list represents only ~ 1/3 of available eCornell courses for credit)*

eCornell Course	CU Course ID	Credits	Format	Authoring Unit	Degree(s)
Distribution Requirements: Humanities					
Business Ethics	LEGAL 5102	2	Online Asynch	LAW	MSLS
Introduction to the U.S. Legal System	LEGAL 5100	2	Online Asynch	LAW	MSLS
Microeconomics for Managers (parts 1-2)	PAM 5473	2	Online Asynch 1.5 credits, on campus 0.5 credits	CHE	EMHA
Human Rights Obligations of Organizations	LEGAL 5112	1	Online Asynch	LAW	MSLS
Distribution Requirements: Sciences					
Introductory Oceanography	BIOEE 1540	3	Online Asynch	CALS	
Introduction to Spaceflight Mechanics	MAE4060	3	Online Asynch	ENG	
Culinary Science	FDSC 2300	1	Online Asynch	CALS	
Nutrition and Disease	NS4410	4	Online Asynch	DNS	
Distribution Requirements: Social Sciences					
Diversity and Inclusion in Practice	ILRHR 8401	0.5	Online Asynch	ILR	EMHRM
Diversity and Cross-Cultural teams	ILRHR 8407	0.5	Online Asynch	JGSM	EMHRM
Major in Health-related fields: global and public health, health policy and management, nutrition, etc.					
Biotech/Pharma Management	PAM 5113	1	Online Synchronous	CHE	EMHA
Health Care Organizations and Behavior (parts 1-4)	PAM 5353	2.5	Online Asynch 2 credits, on campus 0.5 credits	CHE	EMHA
Health Law for Managers	PAM 5543	1	Online Synchronous	CHE	EMHA
Health Care Finance for Managers Part 1	PAM 5633		Online Synchronous	CHE	EMHA
Health Care Strategy	PAM 5663	1		CHE	EMHA
Health Marketing for Managers	PAM 5773	1.5	Online Asynch + 2 online synch sessions	JCB	EMHA
Comparative Health Care	PAM 5783	1	Online Synchronous	CHE	EMHA
Disruptive Innovation in Healthcare	PAM 5813	1	Online Synchronous	CHE	EMHA
Driving High Reliability Organizations in Healthcare	PAM 5933	1	Online Synchronous	CHE	EMHA
Process Thinking and Quality Improvement in Healthcare	PAM 5963	1	Online Asynch	JCB	EMHA
Health Law and Compliance	LEGAL 6101	2	Online Asynch	LAW	MSLS
Nutrition Communications and Counseling	NS 4250	3	Blended	DNS	
Nutrition, Health and Society	NS 1150	3	Online Asynch	CALS	
Nutrition and Disease	NS4410	4	Online Asynch	DNS	
Medical Ethnobotany	PLBIO2100	3	Online Asynch	CALS	
Major in Business, applied economics					
Business Statistics	PAM 5693	1.5	Online Asynch	DYS	EMHA
Financial Accounting (Parts 1-2)	PAM 5703	2	Online Asynch	JCB	EMHA

eCornell Course	CU Course ID	Credits	Format	Authoring Unit	Degree(s)
Financial Institutions	LEGAL 6102	2	Online Asynch	LAW	MSLS
Microeconomics for Managers (parts 1-2)	PAM 5473	2	Online Asynch 1.5 credits, on campus 0.5 credits	CHE	EMHA
Negotiations Essentials	PAM 5943		Online Synchronous	CHE	EMHA
Negotiation Skills	LEGAL 6100	2	Online Asynch	CCB	MSLS
Managerial Finance Part 1	PAM 5563	2	Online Asynch	SHA	EMHA
Managing Operations	PAM 5583	2	Online Asynch	CHE	EMHA
Business Ethics	LEGAL 5102	2	Online Asynch	LAW	MSLS
Working with Business Contracts	LEGAL 5101	2	Online Asynch	LAW	MSLS
Business Transactions	LEGAL 5111	1	Online Asynch	LAW	MSLS
Business Organizations and Corporate Governance	LEGAL 5104	1	Online Asynch	LAW	MSLS
Business Immigration Law	LEGAL 5114	0.5	Online Asynch	LAW	MSLS
Employment Law	LEGAL 5107	2	Online Asynch	LAW	MSLS
Criminal Liability of Organizations	LEGAL 5110	1	Online Asynch	LAW	MSLS
Privacy Law, Regulation, and Business	LEGAL 5117	1	Online Asynch	LAW	MSLS
Navigating the Intellectual Property Landscape	LEGAL 5103	1	Online Asynch	LAW	MSLS
Quality Improvement for Managers	PAM 5903		Online Synchronous	CHE	EMHA
Startup Funding	PAM 5843	1	Online Asynch + 2 online synch sessions	CREA	EMHA
VUCA Leadership	PAM 5913	1	Online Asynch + 2 online synch sessions	JCB	EMHA
Microeconomics for Management and Policy	PADM5213	1	Online Asynch	CHE	EMPA
Competitive Advantage and Profitability	ILRHR 8101	0.5	Online Asynch	JGSM	EMHRM
Strategic Positioning in Markets	ILRHR 8102	0.5	Online Asynch	JGSM	EMHRM
Understanding Financial Statements	ILRHR 8106	0.5	Online Asynch	SHA	EMHRM
Management Presentations	NBA5680	1.5	Online Synchronous	JCB	
Decision Framing and Analytics	ENMGT 5980	3	Online Asynch	ENG	EMEng
Product Management	ENMGT 5920	3	Online Asynch	ENG	EMEng
Storytelling with Data	ENMGT 5081	1	Online Asynch	ENG	EMEng
Managing a Culture of Innovation & Entrepreneurship	ENMGT 6020	3	Online Asynch	ENG	EMEng
Introduction to Business Management	AEM1200	3	Online Asynch	DYS	
Negotiations in the Hospitality Industry	HADM 4110	3	Blended	SHA	
Introduction to Hotel Operations	HADM 1350		Online Asynch	SHA	
Fundamentals of Corporate Finance	HADM 2250	3	Online Asynch	SHA	
Hospitality Asset Management	HADM 6520	3	Blended	SHA	MMH
Physical Product Entrepreneurship	NBA 6910	1.5	Blended	CREA	
Food Product Development	FDSC 4010	2	Online Asynch	CALS	
Major or minor in Organizational Leadership and HR Management					
Employment Law	LEGAL 5107	2	Online Asynch	LAW	MSLS

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Leadership, Innovation, and Change Management (Parts 1+2)	PAM 5713		Online Asynch + 4 online synch sessions	CHE	EMHA
Human Rights Obligations of Organizations	LEGAL 5112	1	Online Asynch	LAW	MSLS
Compliance Systems	LEGAL 5108	2	Online Asynch	LAW	MSLS
Competitive Advantage and Profitability	ILRHR 8101	0.5	Online Asynch	JGSM	EMHRM
Strategic Positioning in Markets	ILRHR 8102	0.5	Online Asynch	JGSM	EMHRM
Aligning HR Strategy with Organizational Strategy	ILRHR 8105	0.5	Online Asynch	ILR	EMHRM
Strategic Talent Analytics	ILRHR 8107	0.5	Online Asynch	ILR	EMHRM
The Psychology of Getting Things Done	ILRHR 8311	0.5	Online Asynch	JGSM	EMHRM
Leading Strategic Change Initiatives	ILRHR 8307	0.5	Online Asynch	SHA	EMHRM
Navigating Power Relationships	ILRHR 8309	0.5	Online Asynch	JGSM	EMHRM
Getting Results Through Talent Management	ILRHR 8402	0.5	Online Asynch	ILR	EMHRM
Strategic Engagement	ILRHR 8403	0.5	Online Asynch	ILR	EMHRM
Total Rewards Compensation	ILRHR 8405	0.5	Online Asynch	ILR	EMHRM
Diversity and Inclusion in Practice	ILRHR 8401	0.5	Online Asynch	ILR	EMHRM
Diversity and Cross-Cultural teams	ILRHR 8407	0.5	Online Asynch	JGSM	EMHRM
Human Resources Leadership	ILRHR 8601	0.5	Online Asynch	ILR	EMHRM
Coaching Skills for Leaders	ILRHR 8408	0.5	Online Asynch	ILR	EMHRM
Strategic Decision Making	ILRHR 8604	0.5	Online Asynch	JGSM	EMHRM
Negotiation Skills	ILRHR 8603	0.5	Online Asynch	ILR	EMHRM
Using Design Thinking in HR	ILRHR 8702	1	Online Asynch	ILR	EMHRM
Agile Project Management Approaches	ILRHR 8703	1	Online Asynch	ENG	EMHRM
Designing Effective Teams	ILRHR 8406	0.5	Online Asynch	JGSM	EMHRM
Storytelling with Data	ENMGT 5081	1	Online Asynch	ENG	EMEng
Managing a Culture of Innovation & Entrepreneurship	ENMGT 6020	3	Online Asynch	ENG	EMEng
Major or Minor in Public Policy, Government, Law					
Regulatory Policy and Process	LEGAL 5109	1	Online Asynch	LAW	MSLS
Human Rights Obligations of Organizations	LEGAL 5112	1	Online Asynch	LAW	MSLS
U.S. Antitrust Law and Policy	LEGAL 5113	1	Online Asynch	LAW	MSLS
Cross-Border Transactions	LEGAL 5115	2	Online Asynch	LAW	MSLS
Cybersecurity: Policy and Governance	LEGAL 5116	1	Online Asynch	LAW	MSLS
U.S. Securities Regulation	LEGAL 6103	2	Online Asynch	LAW	MSLS
Employment Law	LEGAL 5107	2	Online Asynch	LAW	MSLS
Business Immigration Law	LEGAL 5114	0.5	Online Asynch	LAW	MSLS
Working with Business Contracts	LEGAL 5101	2	Online Asynch	LAW	MSLS
Privacy Law, Regulation, and Business	LEGAL 5117	1	Online Asynch	LAW	MSLS
Negotiations Essentials	PAM 5943		Online Synchronous	CHE	EMHA
Introduction to the U.S. Legal System	LEGAL 5100	2	Online Asynch	LAW	MSLS
Public Administration: A Strategic Planning Perspective	PADM5113	1	Online Synchronous	CHE	EMPA
International Public Management	PADM5453	1	Online Asynch	CHE	EMPA

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Strategic Nonprofit Management	PADM5413	1	Online Asynch	CHE	EMPA
Managerial Statistics	PADM5313	1	Online Asynch	CHE	EMPA
Effective Policy Writing	PADM5442	1	Online Synchronous	CHE	EMPA
Accounting for Government and Nonprofit Organizations	PADM5423	1	Online Asynch	CHE	EMPA
Public Finance and Budgeting	PADM5xxx	1	Online Synchronous	CHE	EMPA
Leadership for Public Service	PADM5119	1	Online Asynch	CHE	EMPA
Program Evaluation	PADM5xxx	1	Online Synchronous	CHE	EMPA
Systems Thinking for Policy I	PADM5443	1	Online Asynch	CHE	EMPA
Translation of Research into Policy and Practice		1	Online Synchronous	CHE	EMPA
Systems Thinking for Policy II	PADM5444	1	Online Asynch	CHE	EMPA
Law and Public Agency Decisions	PADM5133	1	Online Synchronous	CHE	EMPA
Corporate Responsibility	PADM5573	1	Online Asynch	CHE	EMPA
Market Regulation	PADM5173	1	Online Synchronous	CHE	EMPA
Fundraising	PADM5434	1	Online Asynch	CHE	EMPA
Special Topics in Public Affairs 1		1	Online Synchronous	CHE	EMPA
Public Interest Technology	PADM5473	1	Online Synchronous	CHE	EMPA
Strategic Stakeholder Engagement	PADM5414	1	Online Synchronous	CHE	EMPA
Special topics in Public Affairs 2		0.5	Online Asynch	CHE	EMPA
Policy, Politics, and Political Management	PADM 5619	3	Online Synchronous	CHE	MPA
Major or Minor in STEM fields					
Introduction to Python Basics	ENMGT 5080	1	Online Asynch	CIS	EMEng
Introduction to Computing Using Python	CS 1110	4	Online Asynch	CIS	
Finite Element Analysis for Mechanical and Aerospace Design	MAE4700	3		ENG	
Medical Ethnobotany	PLBIO2100	3	Online Asynch	CALS	
Data Analytics for Engineering Managers	CEE 5930	4	Online Asynch	ENG	EMEng
Decision Framing and Analytics	ENMGT 5980	3	Online Asynch	ENG	EMEng
Storytelling with Data	ENMGT 5081	1	Online Asynch	ENG	EMEng
Culinary Science	FDSC 2300	1	Online Asynch	CALS	
Applied and Food Microbiology	FDSC 3940/ 5940	3	Online Asynch	CALS	
Fundamentals of Chemical Engineering	CHEME 5200	2	Online Asynch	ENG	MEng CHEME
Introduction to Wines and Vines	VIEN 1104	3	Online Asynch	CALS	
Creating the Urban Eden: Woody Plant Selection, Design, and Landscape Establishment	LA4910	4	Online Asynch	CALS	