

**Minutes from a Meeting of the Concordia Council on Student Life  
Held on November 26, 2021  
Virtual Meeting on Zoom**

**PRESENT:** Andrew Woodall (Chair), Lauren Broad (Secretary), Gaelle Abou Issa, Malcolm Asselin, Annette Bowen, Thuy Trang Cao, Dianne Cmor, Margaret Colton, Christian Durand, Matthew Fishman, Julie Foisy, Jordan Jerome-Pitre, Rosalie Lafrance, Hemanth Lingraj, Laura Mitchell, Erin Mullins (replacing Temi Akin-Aina), Irene Petsopoulos, D'Arcy Ryan, Masoumeh Zaare.

**ABSENT WITH REGRETS:** Gaya Arasaratnam, Lauren Farley, Cassandra Lamontagne, Elaine Cheasley Paterson, Stephanie Sarik.

**ABSENT:** Marie-Josée Allard, Paul Blouin, Melanie Burnett, Jeremy Daneault, Darren Dumoulin, Katerina Ivanov, Nigel Jonathan Ochieng.

**GUESTS:** Daniel Amico, Joel Dinku, Paige Hilderman (Homeroom), Sandra Mouafo (CSU), Lisa White (Equity Office), Mary Burns (Minutes).

**1. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

The Chair opened the meeting with Concordia's territorial acknowledgement. They explained the procedures for conducting the meeting virtually.

Masoumeh Zaare moved to approve the agenda. Jordan Jerome-Pitre seconded the motion. The motion was put to a vote:

In favour: 11  
Against: 0  
Abstentions: 0

***The motion passed unanimously.***

**2. REMARKS FROM THE CHAIR**

The Chair welcomed the Council to the final meeting of 2021 and remarked that it had been a challenging year so far. They commented that classes were expected to be almost 100% in-person starting in January 2022, and with vaccinations becoming available for children aged 5-11, there was a light at the end of the tunnel. The Chair encouraged all Council members to take time to rest and recharge during the holiday period.

**3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE MEETING OF OCTOBER 22, 2021**

Rosalie Lafrance moved to approve the minutes from the meeting of October 22, 2021 and Malcolm Asselin seconded the motion. The motion was put to a vote:

In favour: 11  
Against: 0  
Abstentions: 1

***The motion passed.***

**4. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF OCTOBER 22, 2021**

There was no business arising from the Minutes of October 22, 2021.

## **5. REPORTS AND ITEMS OF INFORMATION**

### **5.1 Homeroom Project Presentation**

Paige Hilderman (Supervisor, Homeroom), Joel Dinku (Coordinator, Homeroom) and Daniel Amico (Assistant, Homeroom) gave a presentation to the Council about Homeroom, a project initiated by the Dean of Students Office along with Residence Life, the Student Success Centre and Recreation & Athletics. The program began in 2020-2021 as a pilot project and has continued in the current year. The program was a virtual space for first year students to connect with each other and to learn about resources at the university. Small groups met weekly to discuss various topics about university life, led by student facilitators. In the fall semester, there were approximately 250 students registered. Feedback and evaluation indicated that the project was a success and provided an important service for students. The goals for the future were to secure ongoing funding and to increase the number of students who can participate. The Council expressed admiration and enthusiasm for the project and acknowledged that it was meeting an important need at the university. Some Council members expressed interest in collaborating with Homeroom in some way. The Chair thanked the Homeroom team for their presentation.

### **5.2 CSU EDI Advisor Presentation**

The Chair introduced Sandra Mouafo, the new Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Advisor for the Concordia Student Union (CSU). Sandra Mouafo presented to the Council the philosophy and objectives of the new position. They were seeking to learn the needs of the university regarding EDI. Sandra Mouafo believed that core structures were not sacred, but core values were, and they operated from this perspective. Their goal was to listen to students, staff and faculty, and to support cooperation and collaboration between these groups. Another main objective was to advocate for students' well-being. Sandra Mouafo invited the Council to contact them with any questions or suggestions that they may have. The Chair thanked Sandra Mouafo and encouraged them to connect with Council members and to the various departments and resources represented on CCSL.

### **5.3 Equity Office Presentation**

The Chair introduced Lisa White, the inaugural Executive Director of the Equity Office at Concordia. Lisa White informed the Council that the Equity Office was a new office that was created in May 2021, with a current staff of three people. They offer consultation to students, staff and faculty, and assist them in discovering ways to incorporate EDI into their daily work. Lisa White commented that they learn as much as they share. The office would address EDI concerns that emerge from a student, staff or faculty perspective, and look at allyship and power dynamics. They were working on developing partnerships across the university. The office would also work on policy analysis, trying to incorporate an EDI lens to existing policies and how to establish new policies – specifically an EDI policy. They also provided education and training. Future goals included the creation of an accessibility policy, a new development that aimed to be as inclusive as possible. The office included an equity advisor dedicated to students' concerns and an advisor dedicated to staff and faculty concerns. Lisa White invited the Council to contact them with any questions or concerns. Andrew Woodall pointed out that the Equity Office was under the Office of the Provost and that SARC was under its purview now. The Chair thanked Lisa White for the presentation.

## **6. NEW BUSINESS**

### **6.1 CCSL Special Projects Unused Funds Proposal: Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Challenge**

In 2015-2016, the CCSL had a significant amount of unused funds that had accumulated over several years from cancelled projects and unclaimed funding. The CCSL decided at that time to hold a “Big Hairy Ideas” competition, inviting students and staff/faculty to collaborate and present proposals for large-scale initiatives. The goal was to fund projects that were systemic and had a deep impact at the university. Funds of up to \$45,000 were allocated to three projects: the Concordia University Centre for Creative Reuse (CUCCR), the Centre for Gender Advocacy Mapping Project, and Waste Not Want Not. There was currently about \$140,000 of unused funds held in the Special Projects trust account, and the Chair suggested to the Council that it was perhaps a good time to hold another big competition to disburse the funds. The Chair suggested that it could be a good opportunity to focus on projects devoted to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion. The Chair asked the Council for feedback on the idea. Jordan Jerome-Pitre stated that they were in favour of the idea and emphasized that the criteria needed to be rigorous. The Council wondered if it would be more difficult to initiate new projects at the time, due to the ongoing pandemic. It was suggested that a gradual approach might be best. Julie Foisy suggested that the focus of the initiative need not be exclusively EDI, but that it should be a requirement within the scope of the project. The Chair stated that they would consider the feedback and return to CCSL with a proposal in the new year.

### **6.2 Points of Interest:**

- December 16, 2021: Virtual Winter Orientation.
- January 6-14, 2022: Winter Term Welcome, to assist new students.
- Men’s Rugby team was in the national finals.
- Fall convocation will be celebrated in person early in 2022. Dates TBA.

The Chair wished the students good luck on their upcoming final exams.

## **7. NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting was scheduled for January 21, 2022, by Zoom at 10:00 am.

## **8. TERMINATION OF MEETING**

Malcolm Asselin motioned to terminate the meeting. Jordan Jerome-Pitre seconded the motion.

In favour: 11

Against: 0

Abstentions: 0

***The motion passed unanimously.***