

**Minutes from a Meeting of the Concordia Council on Student Life
Held on May 7, 2021
Virtual Meeting on Zoom**

PRESENT: Andrew Woodall (Chair), Lauren Broad (Secretary), Gaya Arasaratnam, Kaeleigh D’Ermo, Juliet Dunphy, Christian Durand, Matthew Fishman, Mel Habib, Misseny Kourouma, Cassandra Lamontagne, Eduardo Malorni, Laura Mitchell, Elaine Cheasley Paterson, Nell Perry, Irene Petsopoulos, Keroles Riad, D’Arcy Ryan, Michèle Sandiford, Stephanie Sarik, Phoebe Tom, Hector Vega.

ABSENT WITH REGRETS: Temi Akin-Aina, Lauren Farley, Rajiv Johal, Dane Yvan Toualeu Dijeukam.

ABSENT: Anjali Agarwal, Marie-Josée Allard, Melanie Burnett, Amelia Candoleta, Darren Dumoulin, Abdul Qadir Ali.

GUESTS: Mary Burns (minutes).

1. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

The Chair opened the meeting with Concordia’s territorial acknowledgement. Juliet Dunphy moved to approve the agenda. Keroles Riad seconded the motion. The Council put the motion to a vote:

In favour: 15
Against: 0
Abstentions: 0

The motion passed unanimously.

2. REMARKS FROM THE CHAIR

Andrew Woodall welcomed the Council to the final meeting of the 2020-2021 year. They recalled that last year at the same time, the Council had attended its first meeting online and were unaware that they would be in the same situation a year later. The Chair expressed their appreciation for the resilience and commitment of the Council throughout the year. Andrew Woodall outlined the many accomplishments of the Council throughout the year, including: awarded \$150,000 to student projects; hosted the Engagement Awards event via webinar; formed the sub-committee responsible for accepting and disbanding student groups; updated the Committee Participation Recognition Program (CPRP) requirements to give the full value of the award to part-time students; expanded the CPRP to include faculty associations as a one-time exception for 2020-2021; approved funding for a pilot project with the Black Perspectives Office to work towards including more BIPOC members on governing bodies. The Chair thanked the Council for their substantive and meaningful efforts over the year.

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE MEETING OF APRIL 9, 2021

Irene Petsopoulos moved to approve the minutes from the meeting of April 9, 2021 and Michèle Sandiford seconded the motion. The Council put the motion to a vote:

In favour: 13
Against: 0
Abstentions: 2

The motion passed.

4. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF APRIL 9, 2021

4.1 CCSL Awards: Motion re: review process

The Chair reminded the Council that at the previous meeting, Stephanie Sarik and Misseny Kourouma had raised a concern regarding the evaluation of graduate student nominees for the CCSL Outstanding Contribution awards. The sub-committee had prepared a motion to present to the Council.

Misseny Kourouma put forth the following motion, seconded by Mel Habip:

MOTION TO EVALUATE UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE STUDENTS SEPARATELY FOR THE CCSL OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION AWARDS

Whereas the CCSL Outstanding Contribution Awards recognize the contribution of students, staff and faculty members at Concordia;

Whereas undergraduate and graduate nominations are currently compared together in the same discussion;

Whereas the CCSL awards sub-committee recognizes that the reality of graduate students is different from that of undergraduates (e.g. age, workload, etc.) and that these factors contribute to different ways of contributing to student and university life;

Whereas there is a recognition that awards are based on merit. However, neglecting the difference between undergraduates and graduates' realities reduces their chance of a fair and equal selection;

Whereas the necessity for inclusion has been highlighted as a priority at Concordia;

Whereas the conversation and actions on inclusion can always be improved and as CCSL is the highest body for student life, it is a necessity to address the issue of inclusion with respect to the awards;

Whereas for the past 6 years, at least one undergraduate has been a recipient of an award, yet it has been two consecutive years that graduates have been absent from awards;

Be it resolved that:

The CCSL Outstanding Contribution Awards guidelines be updated to include the following statement: "In recognition of the difference in social and academic demands facing undergraduate versus graduate student nominees, the review committee will consider undergraduate students and graduate students as two distinct categories in their deliberations."

A discussion ensued. Misseny Kourouma stated that the goal of this motion was to ensure that graduate students would be represented at the awards and to avoid any unfairness in evaluating them the same way as undergraduate students. Stephanie Sarik reminded the Council that there was not a set number of awards given every year; it was strictly based on merit. The average number of awards given was 7-8 awards per year. Nell Perry agreed that since staff and faculty were considered separately from students, graduate and undergraduate students should also be considered through different lenses. Mel Habip asked whether there were different sets of ratings for students with disabilities, or students who were parents. Misseny Kourouma agreed this could be an important

consideration in the future, but for now, focusing on graduate students was a good first step. Lauren Broad reminded the Council that the committee can only consider the information that is disclosed with the nomination. Stephanie Sarik remarked that it would be important to try and seek out the best nominations and to look at additional ways to promote the awards so as to get the most promising nominations. The Chair agreed.

The motion was put to a vote.

In favour: 13

Against: 1

Abstentions: 1

The motion passed.

4.2 CCSL Special Projects: Update to Guidelines

The Chair reminded the Council that at the last meeting the sub-committee had presented a document with changes to the Special Projects application guidelines and the Council had provided feedback on the document. The committee had revised the document and sent it to the Council prior to the meeting for consideration. The Chair read the document to the Council. All changes were approved by consensus, except for the following points:

“CCSL will not fund more than 50% of the project’s total expenses, therefore the budget must show other sources of funding. Exceptions may be made for smaller projects with a total budget of \$1000 or less.”

Stephanie Sarik expressed concern that this might restrict the evaluation process. They proposed that the wording be changed to include all projects, not just projects under \$1000. Cassandra Lamontagne noted that it would be valuable to restrict it to smaller projects, because the purpose is to not require them to do the extra work of looking for other sources of funding. Keroles Riad stated that clarity is important because the applicants need to know before they submit the application whether they require other sources of funding. Gaya Arasaratnam agreed and commented that all applicants may think they are qualified for the exception. Michèle Sandiford added that the guidelines need to provide more guidance for applicants.

Keroles Riad put forth the following amendment, seconded by Michèle Sandiford:

“In the case of projects with a total budget of over \$1000, the CCSL will not fund more than 50% of the project’s total expenses. Therefore the budget must show other sources of funding.”

Michèle Sandiford suggested that the Council increase the amount to 75% of the budget, in order to provide more flexibility for all projects.

The point was amended to the following:

“In the case of projects with a total budget of over \$1000, the CCSL will not fund more than 75% of the project’s total expenses. Therefore the budget must show other sources of funding.”

Stephanie Sarik wondered whether two sets of guidelines might be necessary, for smaller and larger projects. The Chair stated that the wording allows for enough flexibility in evaluation. They noted that larger projects are considered differently by the committee. The Chair reminded the Council that

applications were increasing exponentially every year, while the total amount of funding available remained the same. The purpose of the changes was to allow the sub-committee to follow clear guidelines to help them streamline the discussion. D’Arcy Ryan stated that all projects should demonstrate other sources of funding. Gaya Arasaratnam agreed. Keroles Riad noted that all sources of funding at Concordia were essentially student money and the Council would be doing a disservice to students to make them do extra paperwork for the same money.

The motion was put to a vote to approve the amended point as: *“In the case of projects with a total budget of over \$1000, the CCSL will not fund more than 75% of the project’s total expenses. Therefore the budget must show other sources of funding.”*

In favour: 11

Against: 2

Abstention: 2

The motion passed.

5. REPORTS AND ITEMS OF INFORMATION

There were no reports or items of information.

6. NEW BUSINESS

6.1 Points of Interest

- May 8, 2021: Clean-up Day on campus and in the Montreal community.
- June 17, 2021: CU Celebrate Class of 2021: an online celebration in lieu of Convocation.

The Chair noted that Residence was open and that Kaeleigh D’Ermo was the Manager of Residence Life. Kaeleigh D’Ermo informed the Council that Residence Life was looking for student applicants for the position of Assistant. Andrew Woodall announced that Anjali Agarwal, Kaeleigh D’Ermo and Rajiv Johal had completed their terms on CCSL and would not be returning in the fall. The Chair thanked them and all the student Council members for their participation over the year. The Chair offered congratulations to all upcoming graduates.

7. NEXT MEETING

The first meeting of the 2021-2022 academic year would be scheduled for September 2021, date to be confirmed.

8. TERMINATION OF MEETING

Mel Habip motioned to terminate the meeting. Michèle Sandiford seconded the motion. The Council put the motion to a vote:

In favour: 12

Against: 2

Abstentions: 1

The motion passed.