

2019

Sustainability Ambassador Program Handbook



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8/1/2019



Contents

- Program Structure and Goals..... 2
 - Structure of SAP 2
 - SAP Goals 2
- Important Terminology..... 3
- Defining Sustainability at Concordia University..... 3
- Volunteer Intake Process 4
 - Eligibility..... 4
 - Signing Up 4
 - Choosing Your Position 4
 - Training 4
 - Feedback 4
- Volunteer Scheduling..... 5
 - Time Commitments..... 5
 - Sling Software 5
- Campaign Opportunities 6
 - Concordia University’s Centre for Creative Reuse (CUCCR) 6
 - Sustainable Event Certification (SEC)..... 6
 - The Dish Project 6
 - Residences – Loyola & Grey Nuns..... 6
 - One-Time Events..... 7
- Volunteer Rewards 8
- Adding a Campaign 9
 - To Consider Before Applying 9



Program Structure and Goals

This document should give you enough information to prepare you to join our team of Sustainability Ambassadors. However, if you're feeling hesitant or have unanswered questions, contact the Sustainability Ambassador Program Coordinator at meredith.marty-dugas@concordia.ca

Structure of SAP

The Sustainability Ambassador Program (SAP), physically located in the Office of Sustainability, is a collaboration between Sustainable Concordia and the Office of Sustainability. It houses a network of sustainability learning and engagement opportunities. Students who volunteer with SAP become peer-to-peer educators, known as Sustainability Ambassadors (SAs), working in different roles across Concordia to encourage awareness and develop more sustainable behaviours on campus that align with [Concordia's Sustainability Action Plan](#) (planned release: Fall 2019).

The SAP network strengthens relationships between staff, faculty, students, and community members that are interested in participating in a sustainable future through knowledge-sharing and partnerships. Autonomous sustainability-related campaigns that have signed up to become SAP campaigns benefit from SAP knowledge, networks, and coordination. SAP partners with Campaign Coordinators to oversee volunteer training, coordination, and development so that Sustainability Ambassadors can choose to participate in a variety of campaigns throughout their academic career.

While Sustainability Ambassadors will work more regularly with campaign coordinators on location, the SAP Coordinator will remain their main point-of-contact for scheduling, exploring new options, furthering sustainability education, addressing concerns, enjoying volunteer rewards, and learning to apply skills to future opportunities.

SAP Goals

The Sustainability Ambassador Program aims to:

- Educate our community about Concordia's forthcoming [Sustainability Action Plan](#).
- Prepare students to become leaders in the Concordia community and beyond by teaching them how to express, market, and support sustainable knowledge, skills, and values.
- Provide students with easy and flexible access to current education and volunteering opportunities with sustainability learning outcomes at Concordia and its community.
- Provide students with hands-on learning experiences through the SAP network to prepare them for peer-to-peer education responsibilities, allowing them to teach other community members about sustainability.
- Provide a cohesive network of sustainability-related opportunities through which SAP members can engage, learn, and become future-ready.
- Through a supervised self-reflection process, prepare students to apply their skills and understanding of social, economic, and environmental sustainability into future career opportunities.
- Provide structural support and guidance to student projects, groups, and organizations with sustainability learning outcomes and education opportunities.



Important Terminology

Sustainability Ambassador Program (SAP): Physically located in the Office of Sustainability, the SAP houses a network of sustainability learning and engagement opportunities, to encourage students to educate each other about sustainability data, values, and practices.

Sustainability Ambassador (SA): Concordia students that volunteer with the Sustainability Ambassador Program are referred to as Sustainability Ambassadors to recognize the time and expertise they dedicate to educating our community through peer-to-peer knowledge-sharing.

Campaign: At the SAP, we refer to each group that collaborates with the Sustainability Ambassador Program as a campaign. These groups are autonomous from the SAP, working towards their own sustainability goals. Campaigns can apply to join and to depart from the SAP at any time. Through SAP, you can volunteer with different campaigns.

Campaign Coordinator: This is the designated person within an autonomous group that oversees Sustainability Ambassadors who have joined their campaign. They are the go-to person for SAs, as well as the main contact for the SAP Coordinator in developing opportunities, troubleshooting any problems, and ensuring SAs have a positive experience.

Peer-to-peer education: This is an approach to education in which community members are supported to promote knowledge, values, and behavioural change among their peers. Therefore, students help educate fellow students and community members on Concordia campus about sustainability.

Defining Sustainability at Concordia University

For the purposes of the Sustainability Ambassador Program, the following definitions adopted from Concordia's Sustainability Policy apply:

"Sustainability" at Concordia is a mindset and a process that leads to reducing our ecological footprint and enhancing social well-being while maintaining economic viability both on and off campus. This process of sustainability is developed through a governance system based on shared vision and responsibility that fulfills Concordia's current needs without compromising the needs of future generations. To be sustainable in our decisions and activities is to take a long-term perspective, recognize resource capacities and balance the interconnected nature of our environment, society and economy.

The *"University Community"* includes:

- All registered students
- Faculty members of all categories
- All administrative and support staff
- All members of the executive leadership and governing bodies at the University
- All separately incorporated organizations operating on campus
- All students/faculty members visiting or using University facilities
- Anyone residing on campus



For the purpose of this program, the “*Campus*” is defined as all physical spaces over which the University has operational and/or financial control.

Volunteer Intake Process

The Intake Map: Read the SAP handbook and familiarize yourself with the campaigns > Consulting with the SAP Coordinator (15 mins) > General Training (3 hours) > Training at Campaigns through Mentorship > Ongoing Learning Opportunities > End of Semester Reflections

Eligibility

Concordia University’s Sustainability Ambassador Program is currently open to all students, whether they’re independent or full-time status, pursuing any kind of degree. Since training is provided by the program, we are open to students of all disciplines, interests, and sustainability backgrounds. No experience necessary! With lots of volunteer opportunities, we offer flexible time commitments that will fit with your schedule.

Signing Up

Sign up is through our Google form by going to concordia.ca/ssap or following [this link](#).

Choosing Your Position

After you sign up, the Sustainability Ambassador Program Coordinator will email you to schedule a consultation so you can identify your initial volunteering positions!

The consultation will take about 15 minutes. You’ll have the opportunity to complete a quick survey about your interests and skills before or during the consultation. Then you’ll chat with the SAP Coordinator. By the end of this consultation, you’ll have chosen which campaigns and positions you would like to try out. However, you are always invited to contact the SAP Coordinator to revisit which campaigns and positions you want to pursue.

We currently work with 4 campaigns, each of which offer different types of volunteer opportunities that you can read more about in Section 6 of this document. **We recommend that you become familiar with the options before the consultation.**

Training

Every Sustainability Ambassador must complete our general training before becoming involved in a campaign. This training is 3 hours and will prepare you with the appropriate skills to create community, talk about sustainability on campus, and educate others, no matter which campaign you end up working with. We will also teach you how to navigate the volunteer scheduling software we use across the program.

Once you join a campaign, you will receive additional education and mentorship from the Campaign Coordinator(s) while you are volunteering. With their help, you will continue to learn new skills and prepare yourself for other positions you may be interested in.

Feedback

SAP is a new but growing community of campaigns and people invested in all types of sustainability. This means we are constantly evaluating and updating what we offer. At the end of each semester, you will



be asked for feedback about your experience with SAP. You will also be invited to group sessions where we discuss what we've learned, what we want to learn, and how these skills become relevant to our degrees, resumes, and future opportunities. You are invited at any time to ask for personal feedback from your campaign coordinator.

Volunteer Scheduling

The Sustainability Ambassador Program Coordinator oversees every SA's volunteer schedule and tracks their hours. Although you may negotiate your commitments with your Campaign Coordinator, you must always report to the SAP Coordinator about what decision has been reached.

Time Commitments

We understand that students have busy schedules with classes, exams, work, friends, and other extra-curriculars. The SAP is designed to accommodate all types of students, but you need to be realistic about your availability. We request a minimum of 5 hours per semester to be dedicated to your role as a Sustainability Ambassador.

We offer a variety of commitments, like:

- Drop-In Opportunities** – These positions require no previous time commitment on your part. You just check the SAP calendar and pick a shift that works for you, as you go.
- Scheduled Ahead Opportunities (2-8 shifts)** – You may want to dedicate yourself to one position in advance, but don't have time for weekly commitments. This is great if you know you want to learn more, but will need a break at certain times during the semester.
- Occasional Volunteer (One Time Events)** – These opportunities are not affiliated with any Campaign. Sometimes, other groups ask if our SAs would like to help out. We'll contact you if one of these groups fulfills your interests and you can choose to join for a one day event.
- Long Term Volunteer (weekly hours, 1-2 semesters)** – Once you've already completed hours as an SA, you will have the opportunity to take on more responsibility and leadership. This means you commit to working with 1 campaign in a specific position for the entire semester. In conversation with the SAP and Campaign Coordinators, you'll set weekly hours to volunteer.
- Frequent attendee at events & meetings** – Having fun volunteering at a campaign and want to help them at events and meetings? This may include helping prep for parties, workshops, or giving input at development meetings. Help educate community organizers on the student experience!
- Other** – Know exactly what you want to contribute? We'll talk about it.

Sling Software

The Sustainability Ambassador Program uses an external database (Sling) to organize and schedule volunteers. Sling is popularly used by thousands of companies in North America. When you register, you are asked to agree to Sling's Terms and Conditions, as well as give your permission for the Sustainability Ambassador Program Coordinator to enter your name and email into the Sling Program. This info will only be added after you have had your consultation. Once you attend the SAP general training, you will learn more about how to use Sling.

Read more about Sling's Terms and Conditions here: support.getsling.com/getting-started/terms-and-conditions-of-service



Campaign Opportunities

Concordia University's Centre for Creative Reuse (CUCCR)

CUCCR is dedicated to diverting materials from Concordia's waste-stream and offering them to the general community free of cost. The space features diverse materials coming out of campus offices, departments, studios and labs. A variety of wood, glass, metal, fibers, office supplies, plastics, paper, tools and equipment, and arts & crafts supplies fill the shelves. Located in the Grey Nuns building, CUCCR's new space has material sorting and display, as well as skill-share tables. As a Sustainability Ambassador in CUCCR, you'll educate people both within and outside of the Concordia community.

Volunteering opportunities include educating CUCCR members about sustainability while: welcoming new members; helping them check out items; mentoring newer SAs; promoting donation of reusable items; helping research and plan workshops; creating educational online content; and teaching simple skills.

The SHED space is a new, key component of CUCCR created to facilitate the transformation of reused materials. The space provides access to tools, space to use them, and support. Volunteering opportunities include educating SHED members about sustainability while teaching tool literacy/safety and facilitating a supportive, DIY community.

Sustainable Event Certification (SEC)

This campaign is a collaboration between different Concordia departments, fee levy organizations, and student groups. Its aim is to promote sustainable event organizing by providing a simple sustainable event planning guide and auditing program at Concordia.

Sustainability Ambassadors assist by providing useful feedback about campus resources and briefly attending events to audit the sustainable event certification alongside the event host.

The Dish Project

The Dish Project is a student-run waste reduction initiative that lends out an inventory of reusable tableware to make it easy for the Concordia community to host sustainable events.

Volunteer opportunities include educating members about sustainability while: introducing users to the Dish Project space and working to pack, facilitate, and clean orders; providing resources, tips, and info for organizing a sustainable event; and collaborating on the development of Zero Waste Projects (including workshops and events). These opportunities are currently focused on Concordia's SGW campus but will be expanding to Loyola in early 2020.

Residences – Loyola & Grey Nuns

Opportunities to volunteer with Concordia Residence Life as a Sustainability Ambassador are internal to students already living in the buildings. This campaign promotes knowledge-sharing about sustainability behaviours that are specific to the needs and wants of these small communities. SAs can help by teaching their peers waste education, skill-shares relevant to dorm life, starting their own educational campaign, and helping to promote and implement an end-of-year Reclaimathon.

The Reclaimathon, performed each year in partnership with CUCCR, aims to collect any and all reusable items that residents are leaving behind as they move out in May. This begins with education about the



hazards of single-use consumption and the benefits of reuse. Promotion is followed with a collection period, where SAs help monitor bins, sort items for varying charities, and weigh the donations for metric purposes.

One-Time Events

As Concordia's Sustainability Action Plan will be released this year, groups and departments on campus will be provided with the opportunity to request volunteer help at events from the SAP. These groups will have to fulfill criteria to determine their event's relationship to the Action Plan streams: Food, Waste, Climate, Research, and Curriculum.

Although less directly related to peer-to-peer education, these one-time events will allow SAs to learn about the various sustainability initiatives on campus, as well as to meet and network with like-minded community members.



Volunteer Rewards

It's important to us that we recognize our amazing Sustainability Ambassadors who commit their time and energy to changing Concordia's campus culture through sustainability education. Beyond the skills and community that you will gain during this experience, we also offer volunteer rewards. These rewards are offered only to SAs that are completing their hours on a volunteer basis, rather than through a class project or program internship¹. Rewards are based on a sliding scale, to encourage further involvement and thank those SAs that go above and beyond.

Sustainability Ambassadors who complete 10-14 volunteer hours during the 2019-2020 year receive:

- A SAP Certificate identifying the hours they completed
- Mention on their Co-Curricular Record
- SAP Sticker for their student ID
- SAP button
- Invitation to Appreciation Parties
- Invitation to Team Building activities

Sustainability Ambassadors who complete 15-24 volunteer hours during the 2019-2020 year receive the previous perks, plus:

- Invitations to reserved workshop spots through various groups on campus
- Verification Letter of committed volunteer hours
- Secondary access to paid opportunities through various groups on campus
- Invitations to exclusive Concordia events like the Sustainability Gala, the Sustainability Mixer, and more
- A reusable KeepCup mug

Sustainability Ambassadors who complete 25-34 volunteer hours during the 2019-20 year receive the previous perks, plus:

- Concordia notebook
- Their choice of:
 - o Free tickets to a Stingers game
 - o Concordia Knee High Socks
 - o Concordia Pencil Case
- Reference Letter, upon request

Sustainability Ambassadors who complete 35+ volunteer hours during the 2019-20 year receive the previous perks, plus:

- Concordia Ballpoint Pen
- Personalized support for individual sustainability projects (see "[Adding a Campaign](#)" below)

¹ Some of CUCCR's opportunities are internships that provide course credits and grades. Although these hours will count towards SA hours, interns will not be eligible to collect SAP rewards while fulfilling their internship requirements.



Adding a Campaign

The Sustainability Ambassador Program prides itself on continuing to expand, change, and reflect the needs and interests of the Concordia campus. For this reason, we are always happy to talk with other groups, departments, organizations, and brave spirits with new ideas about collaborating to create a new campaign for the Sustainability Ambassadors to participate in.

Whenever a group seeks to collaborate to create a new SAP campaign, we require a consultation period with the SAP Coordinator. You will be asked to complete a table similar to the one below to provide a complete description of tasks and experiences Sustainability Ambassadors will have when they volunteer with this campaign:

Position	Job Details	Existing Skills	Skills Learned	Existing Passions	Perks	Time	Mentor

To Consider Before Applying

1. How are you going to care for your Sustainability Ambassadors?
 - a. What kind of mentorship and training do you offer volunteers?
 - b. How do you plan to invest in your volunteers?
2. The Sustainability Ambassador Program is a volunteer program that focuses on peer-to-peer education. How will your campaign fill this mandate?

To discuss working with the Sustainability Ambassador Program, contact the Coordinator at meredith.marty-dugas@concordia.ca