



Concordia Student Union – Council of Representatives

**CSU Special Council Meeting – Agenda
Tuesday, September 27th, 2011
Room H-760, Time 6:00 PM, S.G.W Campus**

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Roll Call**
- 3. Vote on Remainder of By-Law and Standing Regulations Changes Referred to Policy Committee on June 23.**
- 4. Presentation of Draft Student Center Report, Recommendations and Findings (Lex Gill/Gonzo Nieto)**
 - a) Motion Regarding Student Center Plan Approval**
- 5. Adjournment**



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CSU Special Council Meeting, September 27, 2011

1. Call to Order

Meeting is called to order at 6:38 pm.

2. Roll Call

Executives:

Lex Gill
Jordan Lindsay
Morgan Pudwell
Chad Walcott
Laura Glover
Hasan Cheikhzan
Gonzalo Nieto
Melissa Fuller

Councillors:

Simon-Pierre Lauzon
Anaii Lee Ender
Renee Tousignant
Michaela Manson
Kyle McLoughlin
Tally Shaaked
April Underwood
Iain Meyer-Macaulay
Andy Filipowich
Ali Moenck
Melanie Hotchkiss
Sabrina D'Ambra
Cameron Monagle
Amero Muiny
Irmak Bahar
Lina Saigol
Anthony D'Urbano
Nadine Atallah

3. Vote on Remainder of By-Law and Standing Regulations Changes Referred to Policy Committee on June 23

Morgan Pudwell: When the agenda was sent out, final reform package was accidentally left out. She moves to table until next meeting.

Seconds.



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Vote:

All in favour of tabling until next meeting: unanimous.

4. Presentation of Draft Student Center Report, Recommendations and Findings

Lex Gill: Members of university administration will be speaking at the meeting: Peter Borella, 2-, Roger Cote, and Andrew Woodall. It can be difficult to think of the administration as something other than an ambiguous monster, but, while we don't always agree, the members present have always acted in their idea of the best interests of the students. They have worked for 7 years on the Student Centre and their thoughts should not be taken lightly.

Presentation by Student Centre User Committee

The objective of the presentation is to update the status of the Student Centre project, and especially the Faubourg option. There has been student/University teamwork since 2004 involving past CSU presidents and their teams; this presentation represents many years of collaborative work.

A Student Centre is a focal point of student activity and contributes to student life. Student needs are taken from the student referendum question in 2003.

2004- Teams established, preliminary space needs, questionnaires to big Canadian universities with Student Centres. They received 8 responses and visited universities including York, MacMaster, and Calgary.

In 2005 they allowed for the construction of a downtown Student Centre that would include lounge, study, eating, auditorium, and office space. Students did not want to increase student fee levy by 2.50\$. Thinking needed to be rebooted. This is the option the administration has come up with.

The building in question is 19,000 square feet, and would cost \$70m. An agreement was reached in May 2009 which gives a planning guide, how to work together (students and administration), how to develop the plan, how to fund the centre, and how to operate it.

Five sites around the downtown core were analyzed. Most of these options would cost between \$4.75- \$6.75 a credit. The option with the best value is the Faubourg at a cost to students of \$2 a credit. The Faubourg option was also the most interesting, strategically located on St Catherine street within the SGW campus while giving access to green space, being large enough to house all space needs, and having 6 floors including parking.

It is presently a commercial building, but when the lease terminates it would be converted. Commercial activities would remain at ground level, but it would be clearly identified as the Student Centre. Main access would bring students to the third floor: a lounge, gathering space, and food court. The Dollarama would be removed and converted into lounge and study space. There is a large sky light, allowing for natural light. There would be a circulation ribbon around the building.

The 4th floor would house student services. The 5-6th floors would be CSU office space and club spaces, with access to terraces which already exist. The basement would be converted into a multi-function room to be controlled by the students. This space would be perfect for student events. It would require major modification. Access would be improved with new connection from the back and a new link from basement to exterior garden.

CSU dedicated space would increase by 58%.

This is a \$54 million project. Renovations would cost roughly \$20 million (infrastructure, converting spaces), and would start in 2012, the first modifications being the multi-functional room, and a new entrance. By 2014, students could move into 5-6 floors. Students would have to borrow \$16



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million. Income and expenses would be split proportionally (retail, government grants, expenses to run building) between the CSU and Concordia. The management structure would be set up in such a way so as to ensure the CSU's autonomy.

There are a few issues with this option. It is only valid until April 2012, and we would have to apply to the government to get approved (the administration is concerned that this could take a while). There is also the issue of phasing out of commercial presences.

The building is big enough, it allows for future growth, it is centrally located, there is access to green space, and it can be renovated and managed at 2\$/credit. Also, the process can start as early as 2012.

The next step is getting government approval, as the option expires April 2012, and the administration would like to purchase the building by August 2012.

This project adds value to the institution and the CSU space increase is substantive. It is an important, complex decision that is difficult decision to make. It is equally important to the university, who has diligently looked it over and feels confident that it is the best decision. We all need to keep sights on the goal- what is it we are trying to achieve?

As student leaders, you have an opportunity to make an important change to student life. This a great aize of space available to students, and is within the 2\$/credit limit. There are no other options available at 2\$. Other options require at least another \$25 million to start from scratch on another project. This, on the other hand, can be realized in the short term. The administration invites you to consider this very carefully. From the senior university administration's perspective, this is of a high level of priority. This can come to fruition in the short term. The administration encourages Council to support this option and consider it carefully. This is a partnership, you have to be comfortable going forward. We will respect your choice.

Cameron Monagle: Thanks the members of the administration for the work they have done. What are the other 5 sites that were available? How is there no alternative to the Faubourg?

Peter Borella: One option is rebuilding the Halls building. The university owns it, but we would have to build a brand new building. At least a couple of dollars more than 2. Renovate the annexes (6.75, most expensive). They simply can't compete with a building that already exists and just needs to be renovated. The campus centre has moved. Used to be Makay and de Maisonneuve, but has changed with the construction of the MB building and is now Guy and St. Catherine. Therefore the Faubourg is very well located.

April Underwood: Question regarding student space. Does the increase in CSU space mean that we would not retain the 7th floor and annexes spaces?

Peter Borella: The CSU offices would definitely move into the new building, along with a lot of the clubs.

2- The Multi-function room is something you don't have right now, this accounts for most of the size increase. In each category there is an increase. Offices, CSU, student space will increase, but the major increase is in lounge, public gathering space, and multi-function room.



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April Underwood: Feels that her question was not answered.

Peter Borella: Most people in annexes would have the opportunity to move to the new building. In the long term, it would be better for them to move to the new building.

Irmak Bahar: There is currently a designated area for the People's Potato in the plan for the Student Centre. They are completely autonomous. What kind of consultations took place with the People's Potato that had them agree to move to the new location?

Roger Cote: There is no doubt that the various organizations on campus add to the value of student's experience at Concordia University. How do we do this within the space that we have today? The CSU has a number of constituents as well who occupy space, they will have to deliberate on how to fit everyone in properly.

The goal is not to have groups abandon space for another space where they can't conduct their activity. The space is a means to contribute to student life. Dialogue will have to take place in order to ensure that proper space can be allocated to different groups.

The administration is mindful of support that people get. We have already moved student groups in the past while trying to accommodate them and their needs.

Irmak Bahar: Were the People's Potato consulted?

Peter Borella: No. There is only one possible location for them. We are not implying that they would even move there. Independent groups are generally supplied their space by the university. There will be a consultation process. Some groups will move and some won't. Hopefully a lot of groups will want to go to the new space.

Laura Glover: Access to green space was mentioned twice. Is there still a plan to expand Grey Nuns over this green space?

Roger Cote: Development plans for Grey Nuns have been made known, we are in support of expanding space for Fine Arts. However, we recognize that the green space that exists there is a jewel, and we want to respect the integrity and value of this space. For short-term access, we are looking at providing access, but we are gradually opening up access because there are still nuns there. For now it is a student residence on the west wing. We will open it up more to the internal community of the university. One of the great values of the Faubourg is that it opens up to this green space. It becomes an area that may not be added to the square metres of student space, but adds value to the Faubourg option, at least during summer months.

Rami: Since the building will be owned by the university, will room bookings be done through Hospitality Concordia?

Peter Borella: There are certain university policies that apply to the Student Centre and certain that don't; I don't think that Hospitality would be one of the ones that applied.

Kyle Mcloughlin: When the fee levy increase was brought up last year, there was a lot of concern



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raised by students concerning the Board of Co-Management. Asks if someone could expand on what this would be, and if any one body of this board would have a final say.

Peter Borella: The management agreement is about 60 pages and includes an order of how to work. The Co-Management Committee is student controlled, with 3/5 members being students. There are some decisions, such as building integrity questions, which require a unanimous vote. The general operation of the building is managed by the students.

Michaela Manson: Question concerning the ideology of the centre. Why do you think it's a student's responsibility to pay for student space and not of the university to provide them?

Roger Cote- It's a partnership between the university and the students. The university has provided space and will continue to do so. The issue is how to grow this space and have students exert more autonomy. The Student Centre has been discussed for at least 25 years. Our resources are limited. The demand for space far outweighs our capacity to support it. When looking at how we can grow student space, a partnership was the way that we could do it. It's not an uncommon model. There are other universities where the students pay for it entirely on their own space. This is what we understand that you are willing to support financially. You own part of a very large asset. You have leverage on the equity, that's part of the investment.

Anthony D'Urbano: Student space is more for the students themselves and not their representatives.

2- The space plan was developed with student representatives, it's not us imposing our idea. We have worked since 2004 with CSU representatives to consolidate student activities including clubs, office space, and activity rooms. The goal has been to create a centre that will bring activities together and connect students.

Simon-Pierre Lauzon: In 2007 the CSU adopted energy policies which should be considered.

Peter Borella: Concordia University has been the most efficient energy consumer of major universities in Quebec for 13 years in a row. The Faubourg is not the most efficient building as is. It's just a starting point. We will make it energy efficient. Part of the cost of infrastructure is to change the envelope of the building (windows, triple and double pane). All our recent buildings are efficient.

Melanie Hotchkiss: Is concerned about the lack of bulletin boards and poster space in Concordia's new buildings.

Roger Cote: There is a special character of Student Centre building being run by students. As many boards are needed will be created. The CSU can have control over this. He doesn't see any difficulty in developing this to the extent that is needed.

Andy Filipowich: Because the space will be owned by the university, there are a lot of concerns about the policies what would apply in terms of student behaviour.



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Peter Borella: The CSU team has already hi-lighted the policies they want removed or adjusted. So far we haven't seen anything we cannot adapt to.

Tally Shaaked: Question regarding hours of operation and security, concern for back alley way (not safe).

Peter Borella: Hours of operation will be determined by the co-management committee which is directed by the students. It is extremely dangerous back there; if we bought it we would implement security measures.

Roger Cote: Any downtown university faces this kind of problem. It would be something we would pay attention to. Opening up to the back would deal with how the two sites interact with each other. It should be addressed.

Lina Saigol: Question regarding the retail space. Is deciding who takes this space up to the students or the university?

Peter Borella: It is the Board of Co-Management's responsibility. There are certain leases there already. Going forward, everyone would have an interest in getting the best tenants.

Cameron Monagle: In signing this contract we are taking a bet that this fee levy will always be there, which is not necessarily, the case. Hypothetically students could decide to lift fee-levy, or, for whatever reason, the CSU might not be capable of paying back its loan. Is there a contingency plan on your part?

Roger Cote: There is a framework around that. If it is no longer viable, the equity is still there. This is a way you can access funds.

Kyle Mchloughlin: In the event that this proposal isn't accepted, are we at risk of losing the space we have now?

Roger Cote: We will respect your decision. We want to support student groups. Will you be able to grow space in the short time? It will be very difficult. There are a lot of people vying for space at the university, and they will need to be addressed by the university. We will try to manage what resources we have, but that doesn't rule out moving things around to accommodate.

Kyle Mchloughlin: How long has the Faubourg been an option?

Peter Borella: Deal was signed December 2010.

AJ West: Who will pay for security?

Peter Borella: It's included in the 2\$/credit.

Lex Gill: Motion for 15 minute recess



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Amero Muiny: Seconds.

All in favour of taking a 15 minute recess: unanimous
No abstentions.

Meeting is called to order at 8:00 pm.

During the recess – Anthony D’Urbano was forced to leave for personal reasons.

Morgan Pudwell: The document being passed out is also available online, it's on the CSU website.

Lex Gill: Tomorrow morning there will be a Board of Governors meeting that will reduce the student representation drastically (1/25). In light of this, and the university is still talking about working in partnership. The university is abandoning students and sending message that student voices don't matter. It is foolish to accept that there is an equal partnership between the students and the administration. It is important to conceptualize the board of co-management for the Faubourg Student Centre in light of this. There is something thematic happening; these issues are fundamentally linked. The same people who are able to purchase buildings, set fees, etc are also taking away our voice. Entering into a 25 year \$54 million business relationship with these same people is not a wise decision. The report in front of you is the result of almost 20 meetings. These findings are representative of just Gonzo and I, and we can't speak on behalf of all students.

Peter Borella and I had lunch because he wanted to talk about the Student Centre, its value to student life, and how it would be a legacy for the CSU. He criticized me frankly by saying that the recommendation we were coming to Council with a type 2 error: making a decision to not decide. People are never criticized for the decisions they don't make. It's easy for them to say no because there are no consequences. I think this is false: there are serious consequences to this decision. It's not a Type 2 error, but rather an extremely complicated choice. The recommendations on the back of the report are because we fundamentally believe that this is the right decision.

Gonzo Nieto: Everyone in this room has a copy of the report. We will go through it section by section, elaborating where necessary.

The report is available at

<http://www.csu.qc.ca/index.php?module=Downloads&func=view&cid=525&start=0>.

Lex Gill: In some ways she is deeply unnerved and in others there is a sense of pride and relief in reading the motion put forward to Council.

Gonzo Nieto: Be it resolved that the CSU Council of Representatives reject the current recommendation for a Student Centre at the Faubourg Ste-Catherine site.

Be it further resolved that the CSU executive send notice to Concordia University and instructions to Scotiabank within 30 days of the date of the adoption of this motion, removing the University as funds



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administrator of the Levy Fund (the “Fund”), and appointing Scotiabank as funds administrator of the Fund, in accordance with the *Funds Administration Agreement*.

Be it further resolved that the CSU executive consult with Scotiabank to investigate possible ethical investment options for the Fund.

Be it further resolved that the CSU executive be mandated to produce a comprehensive study of student space on issues on campus, including, but not limited to, research regarding the goals, visions, and priorities of Concordia students regarding a potential future Student Centre, to serve as a building blueprint for any future student space projects pursued under the *Agreement Regarding the Concordia Student Centre* or otherwise. The cost of this study, which shall be drawn from the Fund, cannot exceed the interest accrued in the Fund for the fiscal year.

Be it further resolved that the CSU executive cease all meetings with the Student Centre User Committee and all negotiations otherwise related to the Student Centre project until further notice from Council.

Irmak Bahar: Seconds.

Lex Gill: Proposes a friendly amendment to change it from 30 days to 7 days to get it out of the way and to send a message.

Gonzo Nieto: Considers the amendment friendly.

Cameron Monagle: Moves to limit discussion on this topic to 2 minutes each per questioner and respondent.

Lina Saigol: Seconds.

Michaela Manson: Proposes a friendly amendment that 20 minutes total be dedicated to speaking about this.

Cameron Monagle: Considers the amendment friendly.

Simon-Pierre Lauzon: considering the complexity of the issue at hand, he is not in support of this restriction.

Nadine Atallah: Calls the question.

April Underwood: Seconds.

All in favour of calling the question: unanimous, no abstentions.

Vote:

All in favour of limiting discussion to a total of 20 minutes: 7

Opposed: 7

1 abstention.



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Motion fails.

Andy Filipowich: Some of the policies which would be implemented in the Student Centre limit student rights, such as the de-computing policy which bans spam and chain letters but also allows for removing, altering, and deleting improper use. could go into computers and do this. He also sees a problem with the current academic plan.

Students are allowed to distribute anything on campus, but they need permission from the University. The University can say no, which means they have control over what is distributed at the Student Center.

He does not feel comfortable going into a business relationship with the university given these policies.

Michaela Manson: Point of information. Can these policies actually be changed without renegotiating the contract?

Lex Gill: No.

Nadine Atallah: Currently, the fee levy groups are housed in Concordia University's space?

Gonzo Nieto: There are three categories of space: the Dean of Students gives space, the CSU gives space, and renting outside also takes place.

Simon-Pierre Lauzon: Administration mentioned legal protection of 51% share, what does this mean?

Gonzo Nieto: The notion of legal protection of proportionate share has never come up.

Lex Gill: Has never heard of this either. As far as we understand there is no legal protection.

Sabrina D'Ambra: Right now, the fee levy groups are not in CSU space?

Gonzo Nieto: Correct.

Sabrina D'Ambra: How will you be transferring administration over the Fund to Scotiabank?

Lex Gill: The university acts as an agent on behalf of the CSU, they collect the money and then reinvests it into the CSU. We will give 15 days notice and send message to our bank to say to put it in the CSU's bank account. The reason why we put this motion forward is that it's important for the money to be in the CSU's bank account and for the CSU to be autonomous over it. We can then take a lower interest rate and know that they money is being invested in more socially invest ways (green energy, ex.).

Sabrina D'Ambra: What can we do about the FIO situation?

Lex Gill: Renegotiating the contract or never buying the building under that agreement.



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Michaela Manson: Proposes a friendly amendment to include a mandate from Council to renegotiate the contract.

Lex Gill: Considers the amendment friendly.

Nadine Atallah: Is there anything in the contract that guarantees the CSU a majority of the space?

Lex Gill: There is a lot in the contract that has somehow been negotiated out of the contract. Nothing that guarantees us a majority.

Nadine Atallah: How would we lose a proportion of that space?

Gonzo Nieto: In Section 1.59 of the contract it says that the CSU is expected to own approximately 63% at the commencement date. Losing space could happen for a variety of reasons.

Nadine Atallah: Can we be cornered into it?

Gonzo Nieto: As I understand it, no.

Simon-Pierre Lauzon: Given that we are going to conduct a survey for a Student Centre, what do you think the chances are that the university would help us conduct this since they want a partnership with us?

Lex Gill: We only want to use the interest on student money to fund this. We can use the money for legal fees, or to fly around the country looking at Student Centres. The CSU has a more direct agenda as the legal representation of undergraduate students to find answers to these questions than the University. Perhaps the University would be interested, but I would be more comfortable seeing the funds come from the CSU.

Morgan Pudwell: Their presentation was their research.

Schubert: The University's ultimate plan for the building is to buy it, whether it be for an academic building or the Student Center. What would stop the university from making their own Student Centre?

Gonzo Nieto: We haven't seen specifics regarding the academic building. Their plan is to purchase the Faubourg no matter what happens in regards to the Student Centre. As for the second question, frankly it's within the realm of possibility for the University to produce their own Student Centre and move organizations without consulting anyone. Practically, I don't think they would do it since we are funding half under this proposal.

Morgan Pudwell: Points out that while we may be getting space in a cool building, there is no guarantee about what that space is going to look like.



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Lex Gill: There are a lot of unanswered questions about who pays, etc.

April Underwood: Gonzo Nieto mentioned the possibility of the university being able to build upward- could this be a way of the CSU losing proportionate space?

Gonzo Nieto: This was one of the requests on the part of the University: that they retain air rights on the Faubourg building. I would also assume that there would be consultation with the students in getting space there if new floors were to be built.

Lina Saigol: There is a clause about mandating the executive to renegotiate or cancel the contract. How would this happen?

Gonzo Nieto: Initially it would come to Policy Reform Committee or Student Space Committee to determine what we find problematic and what we would like to change. We would be working in conjunction with a lawyer and have a clear outline of problems.

Marvin (student at large): Keep in mind that at some point we will have to make a compromise. They won't give us 100% of what we want. Has there been consultation with student groups at all? I think that they would agree with the proposed idea.

Gonzo Nieto: Consultation with fee levy groups have taken place, although they are not complete. what we have been fighting for is that students who are implicated by this change should be consulted. The problem is with the terms of deadlines. Ideally we would like to go and consult every student group, but there was no time provided to do so.

Marvin (student at large): Regarding the last motion (in print), what is the reason for it? Don't you think it would send the wrong message to the administration?

Lex Gill: No. First of all, I have felt an incredible amount of pressure to make some sort of deal. They gave us a deadline and then when told that the recommendation would be NO, they were able to extend these deadlines in an attempt to get the deal accepted. This motion is empowering for Council. There is no sense for meeting with Users Committee without a clear idea of how to move forward. There needs to be a plan, and right now we don't have one. It should come from serious research. The university has set the agenda, which makes it less accommodating for the actual needs of students.

Amero Muiny: If we want a Student Centre, we have to have freedom. From what I see from the presentation, we don't even have the ability to manage student space autonomously.

Irmak Bahar: Calls the question.

Renee Tousignant: Seconds.

All in favour of calling the question: unanimous.

Vote:

All in favour of accepting the motion as it is currently worded: Unanimous (16).



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No abstentions.

Chairperson: Point of personal order. Congratulates Council and students at large on their civility during the course of the meeting.

5. Adjournment

Kyle Mchloughlin: Moves to adjourn.

Ali Moenk: seconds.

All in favour of adjourning: unanimous.

Meeting is adjourned at 10:06 pm.