



Concordia Student Union - Council of Representatives  
CSU Special Council Meeting  
Wednesday, January 27, 2021  
Via Zoom, 18h30

## 1. CALL TO ORDER

The chairperson calls the meeting to order at **18h31**.

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**We would like to begin by acknowledging that Concordia University is located on unceded Indigenous lands. The Kanien'kehá:ka Nation is recognized as the custodians of the lands and waters on which we gather today. TiohEá:ke/Montreal is historically known as a gathering place for many First Nations. Today, it is home to a diverse population of Indigenous and other peoples. We respect the continued connections with the past, present, and future in our ongoing relationships with Indigenous and other peoples within the Montreal community.**

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## 2. ROLL CALL

Council Chairperson: Caitlin Robinson

Council Minute Keeper: Michelle Lam

**Executives present for the meeting were:** Isaiah Joyner (General Coordinator), Sarah Mazhero (Academic & Advocacy Coordinator), Eduardo Malorni (Student Life Coordinator), Victoria Pesce (External Affairs & Mobilization Coordinator), Amy Nguyen (Sustainability Coordinator), Holly Mark-Hilton (Finance Coordinator), Malcolm Asselin (Loyola Coordinator)

**Councilors present for the meeting were:** Tzvi Hersh Filler (Gina Cody School of Engineering), Christopher Vaccarella (Arts & Science), Matthew Benzrihem (Arts & Science), S Shivaane (Arts & Science), Sarah Bubenheimer (Arts & Science), Jarrad Haas (Fine Arts), Nicole Nashen (Arts & Science), Brandon Grimaldi (Arts & Science), Shlomo Tanny (John Molson School of Business), Phineas Ambrose Savchenko (Fine Arts), Harrison Kirshner (John Molson School of Business), Diana Lukic (Fine Arts), Lauren Perozek (John Molson School of Business), Wyatt Niblett-Wilson (John Molson School of Business), Howard Issley (John Molson School of Business), Arie Barak (Independent), Alexander Stojda (Gina Cody School)

of Engineering), James Hanna (Gina Cody School of Engineering), Zachary Williams (Independent), Roman Zelensky (Arts & Science), Sean Howard (Gina Cody School of Engineering), Debra Irabor (Arts & Science), Anais Gagnon (Gina Cody School of Engineering), Marlena Valenta (Arts & Science)

**Executives absent for the meeting were:** Daniel Amico (Internal Affairs Coordinator)

**Councillors absent for the meeting were:** Chelsea Okankwu (John Molson School of Business), Shaun Sederoff (Arts & Science), Margot Berner (Arts & Science), Jeremy Deneault (John Molson School of Business)

**Sarah Bubenheimer** motions to excuse **Chelsea Okankwu, Shaun Sederoff, Margot Berner,** and **Daniel Amico**. Seconded by **Harrison Kirshner**. Motion passes.

### **3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

**Sarah Mazhero** motions to approve the agenda and all items under consent. Seconded by **Sean Howard**. Motion passes.

### **4. CONSENT AGENDA**

### **5. PRESENTATIONS AND GUEST SPEAKERS**

### **6. APPOINTMENTS**

#### **a) Student Mobilization Committee**

**Matthew Benzrihem:** We're trying to increase student engagement with the CSU

**James Hanna** nominates themselves. Seconded by **Tzvi Hersh Filler**

**James Hanna:** I want to get first years more involved and give the next mandate some good ideas such as a first-year council

Matthew Benzrihem motions to appoint **James Hanna** to the **Student Mobilization Committee**. Seconded by **Tzvi Hersh Filler**. Motion passes.

## **b) BIPOC Committee**

**Sarah Mazhero** motions to ratify the appointment of **Debra Irabor** to the **BIPOC Committee**.  
Seconded by **Harrison Kirshner**. Motion passes.

## **7. RETURNING BUSINESS**

## **8. NEW BUSINESS - SUBSTANTIVE**

### **a) Position's Book Referendum Question**

**Harrison Kirsner** presents the following motion. Seconded by **Sarah Mazhero**. Motion passes.

*WHEREAS* the referendum question entitled 'Democratize the Positions Book' passed in the Winter 2020 General Elections, making all positions expire after 4 years;

*WHEREAS* this referendum question led to the removal of positions that uplift racialized communities, religious minorities, environmental issues, Indigenous rights, intersectional feminism and others;

*WHEREAS* positions that protect marginalised students are foundational to the CSU's advocacy and revoting on them every 4 years puts additional burden on those communities;

*WHEREAS* efforts to bring back many expired positions led to a very lengthy referendum ballot in the Fall 2020 By-Elections;

*WHEREAS* majority of the removed positions were re-added and supported by a large majority of students;

*BE IT RESOLVED* that the proposed 'Positions Book Reform' referendum question be sent to the Winter 2021 General Election;

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED* that this question seeks to eliminate the 4-year expiry date for new positions while keeping the current positions book intact;

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED* that the budgetary impact of this motion is nil.

VOTE:

16 YES

5 NO

6 ABSTAIN

*ALEXANDER STOJDA VOTES YES*

*LAUREN PEROZEK VOTES YES*

*CHRISTOPHER VACCARELLA VOTES YES*

*WYATT NIBLETT-WILSON VOTES YES*

**S Shivaane:** On a logistic level, the past by-elections saw an astounding 19 questions, 9 of which were referendum questions that had been removed. And that made for a very long ballot. The majority of the removed positions were re-added and supported by a large majority of students. We don't necessarily need to aim for a Switzerland standard unless it's needed. On a more important note, this question is to protect all positions related to things like racialized communities, religious minorities, environmental issues, Indigenous rights, intersectional feminism etc. Putting these positions up to vote every few years puts into question the CSU's commitment to already marginalized students who already need to discuss and validate their experience in the rest of their student experience and in the rest of their experiences at large. Also further side note, JB has already ruled against geopolitical issues because of the safer spaces policy, there are other protections for that. More can be done to reform the positions for sure, and make it better, but at this moment all the positions are there to protect marginalized students so this referendum question is primarily to ensure they don't expire under any circumstance. Students can still send questions back to a referendum if they disagree with it.

**James Hanna:** We should have a mission statement about anti-racism and other similar positions instead of just the positions.

**Tzvi Hersh Filler:** I feel like this isn't a good idea from a governance perspective. We have a dynamic where we can guide the positions book on the basis of what was passed recently is a good thing. The four years clause might have been excessive but in terms of governance, it should be kept.

**Sean Howard:** The avenue being pursued with this motion is the wrong approach. This motion claims that the positions "protect marginalized students" but it is not a policy and does not protect students. The four-year expiration clause promotes good governance.

**Isaiah Joyner:** Black History Month is around the corner. I urge everyone to be cautious when speaking about marginalized communities. These positions do provide some protection and solidarity with these students.

**Harrison Kirshner:** I believe that we need to have forms of protection in the bylaws as well. We don't have to pick and choose. It is difficult to keep track of when these positions expire and then have to bring back these referendum questions to the students. These positions passed with over 90% support from students and that is something to keep in mind. Our last ballot was long, confusing, and redundant because there were so many positions.

**Sarah Mazhero:** A lot of minorities were upset with what happened. I would stay on the side of caution. It's not a good look for the CSU to be fighting for these positions every four years. The number of emails I get asking why the positions were being voted on again when they already

passed. It's not fair to minorities to think that the CSU put these issues on the backburner. It's hypocritical to vote about not supporting systemic racism every four years when we're advocating to the University about not supporting systemic racism. For students to see 19 questions on a ballot is tiring.

**Victoria Pesce:** We're talking about basic respect. Instead of having white people debate about how to protect marginalized communities, why don't we look at this motion that was brought up by the BIPOC community?

**James Hanna:** Some of the positions that we have are dependent on various factors, such as climate change that is constantly evolving. This is why the four-year clause is beneficial. We should have a two-tiered system instead of just one positions book

**Tzvi Hersh Filler:** The act of voting on these positions give them legitimacy. The administration are experts at finding ways to discount what the students think. If you show them a position that was voted on 7 years ago, they'll think it's too old and students won't want it. I'm also going to ask people to cast doubts on other people's ethnicities.

**Sean Howard:** Some items in the positions book were passed with a slim minority but were enforced in perpetuity. It might make more sense if this applied only to positions that pass with  $\frac{2}{3}$  majorities.

**Eduardo Malorni:** There are two aspects, such as the bureaucratic positions and the racial equality positions, which should never be re-voted on. Saying we'll put everything in the bylaws is a problematic approach, bylaws are not meant for that. If a statement in the positions book is no longer relevant, only then would it be relevant to revote on it but it should not be automatic after four years.

**Lauren Perozek:** My issue is that some positions should be revoted on as students change, and there are also some positions, such as discrimination and racism, that will never change. We can all agree that some positions should be eternal, and some are less factual that need to be voted on. We have no system put in place to determine which positions should be eternal and which ones should be voted on. I would rather have CSU executives and employees working on actionable policies rather than just these positions.

**Sarah Mazhero:**

**S Shivaane:** I appreciate the opponents saying that our hearts are in the right place, and I return the sentiment. More can be done to reform the positions, Harrison and I have been discussing a two-tiered list for months. We decided that at this current moment, in reference to, I will say this in bold, all the positions affirming marginalized students, this referendum question would

primarily be to ensure they don't expire under any circumstance. There is room to reform, and there should be, however, the spirit of our referendum question is to ensure these positions we've been talking about are NOT up for debate. The argument that revoting these lend to their legibility is disappointing and frankly concerning. We absolutely should have more actionable practices to ensure students are protected in tangible ways. For example, having proper and enforced accountability measures for disagreeable discriminatory actions in school and within the council. The Positions Book just like Inclusivity Training, for all intents and purposes, can be performative, yes. However, to deny this at all on the grounds that more can be done is counter-productive. It's a simple action to ensure these affected students know we have their backs. We can do all the things. We can afford to commit to this document and do a lot more simultaneously. We're talking about positions book on its own, and again this is being sent for students to decide on. We can do more in other aspects, nothing wrong with doing this as well.

**Matthew Benzrihem:** When I was campaigning earlier this year, I carried around the positions book and asked students what they thought of it. Almost all positions were well received except for one position. I believe this is because the CSU has a different mindset than the majority of the students and are out of touch with what the students want.

**James Hanna:** I'm open to trying to figure out criteria to determine what positions should be eternal and which ones should be voted on.

**Tzvi Hersh Filler:** This is bad policy. I genuinely believe this is the wrong thing to do. I cannot use my vote to advance this motion that will make it more difficult to achieve advocacy and legitimacy on these issues.

**Sean Howard:** We're asking students to revert a referendum question that they brought forward and passed a year ago

**Harrison Kirshner:** There are ways we can do things better but a lengthy 19 question ballot is not the way. It puts a burden on every racialized and minority community. This is a democratic process. We represent students who have said that this is a problem.

## **b) CSU General Election 2021 Dates**

**Isaiah Joyner** presents the following motion. Seconded by **Jarrad Hass**. Motion passes.

*WHEREAS*, in accordance with the Policy on Elections and Referenda, the mandates of all the 2020-2021 CSU student leaders are set to end in May 2021.

*WHEREAS*, in accordance with the Policy on Elections and Referenda, the Nomination Phase shall conclude immediately before the Winter Reading Week;

*WHEREAS*, in accordance with the Policy on Elections and Referenda, the Nomination Phase shall consist of fifteen (15) University days.

*WHEREAS*, in accordance with the Policy on Elections and Referenda, the Campaign Phase shall immediately follow the Winter Reading Break.

*WHEREAS*, in accordance with the Policy on Elections and Referenda, the Campaign Phase shall consist of six (6) University Days

*WHEREAS*, in accordance with the Policy on Elections and Referenda, the Voting Phase shall immediately follow the Campaign Phase.

*WHEREAS*, in accordance with the Policy on Elections and Referenda, the Voting Phase shall consist of three (3) University Days and occur on a Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday.

*WHEREAS*, the current dates for Winter Reading Week 2021 are March 1st –5th

*BE IT RESOLVED THAT* a General-Election be called with the following seats and coordinator positions open:

3 Fine Arts Council Seats

1 Fine Arts Senate Seat

7 JMSB Council Seats

1 JMSB Senate Seat

13 Arts & Science Council Seats

1 Arts & Science Senate Seat

5 GCSE Council Seats

1 GCSE Senate Seat

2 Independent Student Council Seats

1 BOG Alternate Seat

General Coordinator

Academic & Advocacy Coordinator

Finance Coordinator

Internal Affairs Coordinator

External Affairs & Mobilization Coordinator Student Life Coordinator

Loyola Coordinator

Sustainability Coordinator

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT* the CEO announce the polling Phase no later than Monday, February 8th, 2021;

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT* the CEO announce the policies and directives related to elections no later than Monday, February 8th, 2021;

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT* the Nomination Phase starts Monday, February 8th, 2021 and end Friday, February 26th, 2021

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT* the campaign Phase starts March 8th, 2021 and ends March 15th, 2021 at midnight that day.

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT* the polling Phase start Tuesday, March 16th and ends Thursday, March 18th, 2021 @11:59PM;

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT* the results of the elections be announced no later than Friday, March 19th @12pm

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT* the budgetary impact of this is Nil.

**Isaiah Joyner:** I wanted to be proactive to ensure that we have a seamless election period. These are the arrangements for next year's council.

**Tzvi Hersh Filler:** Is it too late to try to lower the required signatures?

**Isaiah Joyner:** We already worked on that to take into account for COVID

## **9. RETURNING BUSINESS – INFORMATIONAL**

## **10. QUESTION PERIOD & BUSINESS ARISING**

**James Hanna** presents the following motion. Seconded. Opposed by **Sarah Mazhero**.

*BE IT RESOLVED THAT* Policy Committee be tasked with finding a way to delineate positions which should be of permanent nature and those which should not.

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT* Policy Committee's recommendations be delivered to council before the referendum questions are finalized.

**James Hanna:** The goal is to protect specific positions, such as anti-racism ones, and task Policy Committee to look into a two-tiered system and delineate which positions should be kept indefinitely and which ones should be brought back to council

**Lauren Perozek:** Why does Sarah oppose?

**Sarah Mazhero:** I don't think people are without biases on Policy Committee

**James Hanna:** The goal is to keep the anti discrimination positions in the top tier and have Policy Committee find out how to determine which ones are in the second tier

**James Hanna** presents the following motion. Seconded. Motion passes.

*BE IT RESOLVED THAT* Policy Committee be tasked with making recommendations on how to reform the positions book.

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT* Policy Committee's recommendations come back to the council before the General Elections referendum questions are finalized and sent to the CEO.

## **11. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Victoria Pesce:** Please share and write a card for External's campaign

**Eduardo Malorni:** The winter online opt-out period is live.

**Jeremy Deneault:** Space Concordia is having an information session at 6 PM

**James Hanna:** Simping for Space is King shit

**Harrison Kirshner:** Today is International Holocaust Remembrance Day.

## **12. ADJOURNMENT**

**Jarrad Hass** motions to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by **Isaiah Joyner**. Motion passes.

Meeting adjourned at 8:10 PM