

Concordia Student Union – Positions Book

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The CSU Positions Book

The CSU positions book was implemented by the CSU Council in the 2013-14 academic year. A common document in many representative organizations, each of the positions outlined below have been adopted by the membership directly through referendum.

Here are a few excerpts from the Policy on Positions held by the Union which outlines the purpose and function of the CSU Positions Book:

- Positions serve as the basis for the political representation engaged in by the officers of the Union and establish the Union's political discourse and long-term goals. A position should not be confused with a resolution mandating the execution of a specific task or action in a time-limited fashion; they provide the Union with a position on a topic in a general way that establishes the political culture, goals, and stances of the Union on social, political, and academic issues.
- Each position listed in the positions book shall include a reference to the electoral report by which the resolution was adopted.
- Every officer of the Union is expected to be familiar with the contents of the positions book, and to conform the political representation they engage in, on behalf of the Union, to its contents.
- Members and officers of the Union have the clear right to question and challenge any or all positions adopted, and to seek their amendment or removal through formal channels. However, while a position remains in force, officers must conform to them in the political representation that they engage in on behalf of the Union.
- In the case of a conflict or contradiction between a resolution adopted by the members and a position previously adopted through a resolution of the members, the more recent resolution shall take precedence.

Framework

The Concordia Student Union operates within a very specific framework. Where the CSU's activities vary greatly in subject, length, or objectives, the CSU grounds its operations in core values such as anti-colonialism, intersectional feminism, anti-racist practices, and in ways that encourage a broad inclusivity for people of all origins, capacities, and financial situations.

The CSU Positions Book is structured by an intersectional view of systemic oppression. The CSU recognizes that intersectional identities create different marginalized experiences, and that different people experience different barriers based upon class, ability, race, gender expression, religion, ethnicity, etc. As such, the CSU has adopted a broad range of positions that seek to address a variety of issues facing our members and the community at large. The positions within are in no way exhaustive and members should feel empowered to bring forward new positions. As a union, it is important to fight for justice for all members of the student body and be active in struggles outside of campus.

The positions contained have wide-ranging implications for the daily operations of the union (ensuring that events are accessible, respecting the gender identities and expressions of all members, etc.) as well as the union's long-term goals (free education, Indigenous sovereignty, etc.). The CSU's central focus is the global struggle for accessible education and student rights. The CSU has a mandate to advocate for accessible education by opposing tuition hikes and increases in obligatory institutional fees for all student (Quebec, Out-of-Province, and International) as well as, to fight for quality education and programs that provide a diverse range of knowledge and experience. As a union, it is important to work towards justice in struggles outside of campus. Unions, both labour and student, have played a significant historical role in fighting for social justice, partnering with grassroots organizers, and standing in solidarity with marginalized communities at home and abroad. This is not in a spirit of charity, but in solidarity, as we know that other struggles are intimately linked to our own and share the same goals even though we may fight on different terrains.

Finally, the CSU recognizes that its offices are located on stolen territory, as is the rest of the province and country. In order to remind the student body of the reality of colonialism, the CSU begins every meeting of council, executive and the Annual General Meeting with a statement of formal recognition that Concordia University is located on Kanien'kehá:ka (Mohawk) land.

Positions in Effect

1. Education

1.1. Accessibility

1.1.1. The CSU is in favour of Concordia channeling more efforts and resources directly to disabled students, immunocompromised students, students with mental health issues, and students with various accessibility concerns so their learning environments are optimized *[Adopted during the Fall By-Election, 2020]*

1.2. Quality of Education and Tuition

1.2.1. The CSU opposes the privatization of the academic sector. The CSU also opposes any increase in tuition fees and obligatory institutional fees (FIOs) for all students, whether Quebec residents, out of province, or international. The CSU also supports high quality, universally accessible postsecondary education as a human right and believes that the University should formally commit to offering high-quality education to all students at Concordia. The CSU believes that high-quality education includes formal collaboration between the University, student groups and external organizations, including granting credits to students for their hands-on work outside of the classroom. *[Adopted during the Fall By-Election, 2020]*

1.2.2. The CSU opposes the recent tuition hike and is in favour of Concordia University reversing said hike and further reducing tuition for all students. *[Adopted during the Fall By-Election, 2020]*

1.3. Student Parents

1.3.1. The CSU strives to implement policy that recognizes and supports the unique needs of those in unique circumstances, including but not limited to this list: student parents who are single, indigenous, queer, trans, disabled, racialized, of a lower socioeconomic status, and international student parents, due to additional barriers faced by these groups both institutionally and societally. The CSU calls on Concordia University and all levels of government to recognize and address the challenges student-parents face at the university in regards to their academics, financial security, and community involvement. *[Adopted during the Fall By-Election, 2020]*

1.4. Internships

1.4.1. That the CSU be in favour of Concordia University removing the requirement that certain internships be unpaid. *[Adopted during the Fall By-Election, 2017]*

1.4.2. That the CSU be in favour of Concordia University establishing a standardized system and placement protocol for all student internships. *[Adopted during the Fall By-Election, 2017]*

1.5. Learning Environment and Practices

1.5.1. The CSU endorses the implementation of a Fall Reading Week at Concordia University. *[Adopted during the Fall By-Election, 2019]*

- 1.5.2. The CSU opposes Concordia University's use of intrusive online proctoring software. *[Adopted during the Fall By-Election, 2020]*
- 1.5.3. The CSU is in favour of Concordia University implementing a Pass/Fail option for the 2020-21 academic year during the COVID-19 pandemic. *[Adopted during the Fall By-Election, 2020]*
- 1.5.4. The CSU is in favour of Concordia University mandating professors to create a more balanced workload for the 2020-21 academic year during the COVID-19 pandemic. *[Adopted during the Fall By-Election, 2020]*

2. International Students

2.1. Health Plan

- 2.1.1. The CSU endorses the provision of full provincial health coverage to all international students upon arrival in Quebec, and will advocate it to the Government of Quebec. *[Adopted during the Spring General Election, 2019]*
- 2.1.2. The CSU believes that until the Government of Quebec extends full public health coverage to international students, international student health insurance shall be delivered on the principles of democratic student control, choice of provider, transparency and accountability, consultation with international students, affordability, quality, and not-for-profit delivery. *[Adopted during the Spring General Election, 2019]*
- 2.1.3. The Concordia Student Union and Graduate Student Association shall work together to provide an international student health insurance plan for Concordia students, rather than the Concordia administration. *[Adopted during the Spring General Election, 2019]*

3. University Governance

- 3.1. The CSU believes every department at the University should have at least one (1) student association representative sitting on its departmental council; student representatives should have full speaking, voting and moving privileges as full members of council. The CSU will take whatever measures appropriate to ensure adequate student representation on all University bodies. *[Adopted during the Fall By-Election, 2020]*

4. Indigenous Sovereignty

- 4.1. The CSU work with the Concordia University administration towards integrating sustainability and indigenous studies courses in all undergraduate programs. *[Adopted during the Spring General Election, 2017]*
- 4.2. The Concordia Student Union stands in solidarity with Idle No More, its legitimate treaty-based concerns, and its efforts to create change through the facilitation of much needed nation-wide popular education regarding the plight of Indigenous peoples in Canada. The CSU, at all future meetings of Council, must begin with a statement of formal recognition that Concordia University is located on Kanien'kehá:ka (Mohawk) land. The CSU will also work with the Concordia University administration towards integrating sustainability and

indigenous studies courses in all undergraduate programs. *[Adopted during the Fall By-Election, 2020]*

5. Anti-Racism, Diversity and Inclusion

- 5.1. The CSU opposes racism in all forms and rejects all values, structures and behaviors that perpetuate systemic racism. *[Adopted during the Fall By-Election, 2017]*
- 5.2. The CSU actively works to dismantle racist systems, policies, and practices, locally and globally, including within the Union. *[Adopted during the Fall By-Election, 2017]*
- 5.3. The CSU supports anti-racist work on campus and in the broader community by actively identifying and challenging racism, and changing systems, organizational structures, policies, practices and attitudes with the goal of establishing greater equity. *[Adopted during the Fall By-Election, 2017]*
- 5.4. The CSU recognizes that systemic racism differs from individual acts of racism by the presence of systemic policies, practices and economic and political structures which place minority racial and ethnic groups at a relative disadvantage. *[Adopted during the Fall By-Election, 2017]*
- 5.5. That the CSU be in favour of Concordia University refusing to enforce Bill 62 and to support students, staff and faculty who choose to practice their rights to religious freedom. *[Adopted during the Fall By-Election, 2017]*
- 5.6. The CSU calls for respect and kindness towards all religious and cultural minorities in our community and calls on the Concordia University community to foster a safer and more inclusive space for people of all cultures and religions as an act of solidarity internationally and equal opportunity for all. In coherence with this devotion, the CSU opposes the rise of fascism and its current manifestations through white supremacy. The CSU supports anti-racist work on campus and in the broader community by actively identifying and challenging racism, and changing systems, organizational structures, policies, practices and attitudes with the goal of establishing greater equity. The CSU also denounces government legislation such as The Charter of Values, Bill 21, and all other laws which prohibit individual freedoms and the rights of religious and cultural minority groups. The CSU recognizes that systemic racism differs from individual acts of racism by the presence of systemic policies, practices and economic and political structures which place minority racial and ethnic groups at a relative disadvantage. *[Adopted during the Fall By-Election, 2020]*
- 5.7. The CSU opposes antisemitic rhetoric and culture present at Concordia University and within the Montreal community. The CSU opposes Holocaust denial, being the act of denying the existence of the Holocaust. The CSU also opposes antisemitic remarks and harassment and calls on all levels of government to recognise and address the challenges that Jewish people face not only within the boundaries of the school, but within the Jewish community at large. *[Adopted during the Fall By-Election, 2020]*

6. Intersectional Feminism

6.1. The CSU recognizes that intersectional identities create different marginalized experiences and that women and gender non-conforming people experience barriers based upon class, ability, race, gender expression, religion, ethnicity, etc. The CSU respects perspectives and values the representation of women and gender non-conforming folks who are Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour. The CSU shall therefore operate in ways that empower those mentioned above. The CSU also recognises the importance of listening and recognising all identities and recognizing the different barriers that each face. The CSU supports the inclusion of the “Centre for Gender Advocacy” in any University committee, working group, task force, or other deliberative body that reviews or engages with topics of sexual assault, sexual harassment, gender-based harassment or violence. The CSU encourages an intersectional feminist approach towards all future endeavours and therefore supports that priority be given to someone who has lived experience at the intersection of different systems of oppression in roles that demand in. *[Adopted during the Fall By-Election, 2020]*

7. Climate Justice

7.1. The CSU supports the IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5C’s recommendation that “rapid, far-reaching and unprecedented changes in all aspects of society” be pursued to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius. *[Adopted during the Spring General Election, 2019]*

7.2. The CSU support a Green New Deal type climate plan for Canada that would see Canada reach carbon neutrality by 2030 through a large scale mobilization of the entire economy at emergency speed. *[Adopted during the Spring General Election, 2019]*

8. Food Justice

8.1. The CSU supports (through research, financial aid, and campaigns) the Food Autonomy Campaign in their pursuit of the following demands: *[Adopted during the Spring General Election, 2019]*

8.1.1. The emancipation of a space (within the food service provider’s contract) from the Food Services Contract with the goal of creating a student run and student owned food distributor. *[Adopted during the Spring General Election, 2019]*

8.1.2. Increasing the flex dollars given to students in residence from \$200 to \$500 dollars (without increasing the cost of the meal plan), and expand the list of food distributors that accept flex dollars to include Reggies, The Hive Cafe, Le Frigo Vert, and any future student owned and student run food distributors on campus. *[Adopted during the Spring General Election, 2019]*

8.1.3. Shorten the food services contract from 5 years with a 2 year extension to 5 years with no extension. *[Adopted during the Spring General Election, 2019]*

8.2. The Concordia Student Union endorses a university-wide food waste reduction proposal and pursuit of its implementation at Concordia University. *[Adopted during the Fall By-Election, 2019]*

9. Police Brutality

- 9.1. The CSU condemns the police brutality that occurred during the 1969 Computer Centre Occupation which resulted in the death of Coralee Hutchinson and commits to acknowledging the university's role in the violence. *[Adopted during the Fall By-Election, 2020]*
- 9.2. The CSU condemns the police brutality that occurred during the student strike of 2011-12. *[Adopted during the Fall By-Election, 2020]*
- 9.3. The CSU presses the government of Quebec to open an independent inquiry into the police's violent suppression of dissent throughout the course of the student strike during the student strike of 2011-2012. *[Adopted during the Fall By-Election, 2020]*
- 9.4. The CSU stands in solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement in its condemnation of rampant anti-Black, anti-Indigenous police violence resulting in the deaths of Breonna Taylor, George Floyd, Anthony Griffin, Regis Korchinski-Paquet, Bony Jean-Pierre, and Walter Wallace Jr amongst all victims reported and unreported. *[Adopted during the Fall By-Election, 2020]*
- 9.5. The CSU commits to pressuring the administration to remove its relationship with the SPVM to remove police presence on campus *[Adopted during the Fall By-Election, 2020]*
- 9.6. The CSU condemns the police brutality enacted on protestors during the Montreal Black Lives Matter Protest on June 1, and the continuous overbearing police presence for all Black Lives Matter, police brutality and Indigenous rights-related demonstrations and protests. *[Adopted during the Fall By-Election, 2020]*
- 9.7. The CSU calls on the City of Montreal to implement measures by the SPVM that could be used to document and reduce discriminatory police stops of Indigenous and racialized persons. *[Adopted during the Fall By-Election, 2020]*
- 9.8. CSU stands in favour with defunding and abolishing the SPVM, so as to redirect those financial resources to areas such as healthcare, mental health, housing, education, jobs, and restorative-justice models that better suit the needs of our communities. *[Adopted during the Fall By-Election, 2020]*

10. LGBTQIA2S+

- 10.1. The CSU supports equality for members of the LGBTQIA2+ community within our union, the university and the community at large. The CSU opposes any discrimination based on one's sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression. The CSU supports and encourages the creation of government legislation that promotes equality and protects gender minority and LGBTQIA2+ members.

11. Mental Health

- 11.1. The CSU shall work towards the creation of a new service dedicated to supporting the mental health of students. *[Adopted during the Fall By-Election, 2020]*

12. Transport

- 12.1. The CSU is in favour of exploring the possibility of implementing a Universal Transit Pass (U-Pass); a transit pass that gives unlimited access to public transportation (STM, Exo, STL, etc) on a semesterly basis rather than on a monthly basis. The U-Pass program has the objective to: lower public transportation costs for students, reduce the use of single rider vehicles, and improve public transportation around our campuses. The CSU approves negotiating with the various stakeholders (such as the STM or Exo) with the understanding that a U-Pass program proposal will come back to referendum for a vote in the future. *[Adopted during the Spring General Election, 2020]*

13. CSU Governance and Projects

- 13.1. The CSU supports investigating the adoption of an undergraduate representative council distributed proportionally among the faculties with specified seats allocated for minority groups. *[Adopted during the Fall By-Election, 2020]*
- 13.2. The CSU is committed to continue negotiations with Concordia University regarding the realization of a Student Centre/Building. *[Adopted during the Spring General Election, 2021]*