



Concordia Student Union - Council of Representatives  
CSU Special Council Meeting  
Wednesday, June 7, 2023

Via Zoom, 18h30

## 1. CALL TO ORDER

The chairperson calls the meeting to order at **18h41**.

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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. APPOINTMENT OF THE STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE ON THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS: EXECUTIVE REPRESENTATION

**Special Council Meeting called by CSU Executives Alexandrah Cardona and Tanou Bah as per bylaw 6.6.3**

**Alexandrah Cardona:** The Board of Governors are the senior governing body that makes all the legal, financial and administrative decisions in Concordia University. They make big stakeholder decisions. The people who sit on the Board of Governors are often community stake holders themselves, as opposed to students. There are roughly just under 30 people on the board. All this information is very much available. You can look up 'Board of Governors' on the Concordia University website. On the list of the stakeholders, you will notice that the internal members (officers of the university) do not make up many votes on the Board of Governors and that is what makes it different from other types of governing bodies or committees at the university as well. On the Board of governors, there is a mix of internal members, people with big roles in the admin and external stake holders. However, the university permits one student seat on the Board of Governors at Concordia. There is a second seat, an alternate seat, which is a student that is

permitted to sit in on all meetings; including closed sessions and confidential documents. This is a very document heavy board. The Student Representative on the Board of Governors can expect to receive documents of 500 or more pages for every meeting. The CSU usually nominates their Student Representative on the Board of Governors at a June Regular Meeting. If this meeting was not called, we would have used our Regular June Meeting, which is next week, June 14. I do apologise that we had to call this meeting in advance. The reason for that is because this year, the University would not make accommodations for their September meeting. Tonight we must appoint our Student Representative and Alternate Student Representative, so that we can send out that information out to the university. Tomorrow the University will be presenting the students we appoint today to the current Board of Governors, and they require that information so that the appointments can be properly ratified, to ensure that the student body has a proper voting seat by **September**. Between June and September, members of the University will be going on vacation, which is why they have asked us to appoint a student by June 8<sup>th</sup>. I apologize for the inconvenience. Our student representatives will be properly included in the Board of Governors and can be voting members starting in the fall, or in the event that any Special Governors Meetings are called before the fall.

**Alexandrah Cardona** motions to appoint **Harley Martin**, the current General Coordinator to the Board of Governors for 2023-2024.

Seconded by **Michael Lecchino**.

**Motion Passes unanimously.**

**Alexandrah Cardona:** Harley Martin's appointment on the Board of Governors was discussed a few times between the Executive committee, in both formal and informal discussions amongst the team. It is important to choose an executive that would be best suited for the role, one that would be able represent the CSU and its positions book at the board level. One big factor in the consideration is the fact that by large, General Coordinators have always held this seat. In exceptional situations, that precedent has been instructed in small situations, but after discussing this year, we found that there was no exceptional case. So, the Executive would like to move forward with nominating Harley Martin for this seat.

**Harley Martin appointed on the Board of Governors as the Student Representative.**

### **3. APPOINTMENT OF THE ALTERNATE STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE ON THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS: COUNCILOR REPRESENTATION**

Chairperson opens the floor to see if there are any councilors interested in the Alternative Seat.

**Nassim Boutalb** moves to nominate himself.

Seconded by **Kareemn Rahaman**.

**Michael Lecchino** moves to nominate himself.

Seconded by **Maria Chitoroaga**.

Chairperson proceeds to give Nassim Boutalb and Michael Lecchina the opportunity to motivate for themselves.

**Michelle Lam:** Nassim, why would you like to be the Alternate Representative on the Board of Governors?

**Nassim Boutalb:** Thank you very much Michelle. For those who do not know, I am the current Alternative Student Representative. I have worked very hard over the past year in this position. There is a big learning curve in the position. I plan to bring some more continuity to this role and help Harley out in this position. My main objective that I will be working towards is increasing student representation. There are a lot of nuances when it comes to the law, but that is something I want to do because ultimately, in this board you will always be outvoted. So we definitely student voices in this position. The way I act on the board is similar to how I act in council. That is, I tend to adopt a very principle position towards things and that is something that I am proud to have done on the board. There was not one instance where I accepted any individuals that were going against the interest of our students, which I am very proud of. I hope to continue this for the next year. Thank you.

**Michelle Lam:** Thank you Nassim. Michael, why would you like to be the Alternate Representative on the Board of Governors?

**Michael Lecchino:** Thank you very much Michelle. Nassim, it is great to hear from you. I also wanted to give council a bit of context. Last year Nassim and I had both expressed interest in this role. Last year as soon as I realised Nassim also was interested in the role, I decided to step back as the role was for him to take. However this year, I believe it would be an interesting opportunity to share with someone who has not had the role. That is why I am interested in pursuing this role. There are a variety of different things I would like to accomplish in this role on behalf of council and all undergraduate students. The first one is bringing my experience from Academic Senate towards the Board of Governors. I also work really well with Harley Martin so I look forward to collaborating with him if I am given the opportunity to do so. My experience consists of being on the Board of Directors for CASAJMSB, which is the highest governing body at the John Molson School of Business. I am also a board member at my local hospitals foundation, La foundation de l'Hopital LaSalle. Additionally, I am on the Board of Directors for Youth for Youth Quebec, so I do have that experience that Nassim was talking about. There is a learning curve, and I totally agree with him and I look forward to embarking on that. When it comes to what I would like to accomplish on the Board of Governors, it is a variety of different things. The first one being, actually being able to meet the different stakeholders that are pretty much only accessible at the board of governors, so this gives us a great opportunity to meet in

person, shake hands and discuss some of the issues that students have as concerns. Through a variety of different consultation processes, specifically a survey that I handed out on campus and conversations I have had with fellow class mates. I noticed that what really concerns students is the inaccessibility of food on campus, so I definitely want to continue with pushing forward the potential idea of a cafeteria or something that is a sustainable system that will deliver food to students at an affordable price but also that is healthy including foods that are high in proteins, carbohydrates and nutrients. Another interesting idea I have is looking up ways we can have a hybrid delivery of lectures. Hybrid delivery meaning that its in person but it is also recorded, so that students can re-watch the lectures from home. This is important because if a student is unable to attend class, they can watch the lectures online, ensuring that they have not missed any course material. Finally, my last concern is getting more plugs around campus. Many of us have showed up to school with our computer batteries on low percent and have been unable to charge it right away. So I think it would be great to advocate that to the stake holders present at the Board of Governors during conversations, making sure that they are aware of what students really want and hopefully they will implent them. The last thing I will say is that I really want to represent the undergraduate students at Concordia and Council, making sure that I am hearing your opinions. I really enjoyed my time on Academic Senate, all of the councillors bring a variety of different perspectives and unique experiences. I want to be able to take that and use Council's diversity to the Board of Governors. Overall, I am passionate about this role because I want to see Concordia become an alma mater that all of us are proud of. Thank you very much for your time, I look forward to seeing how the continuation of the meeting goes.

**Michelle Lam:** Thank you Michael, I will now open the floor up for any questions that anyone may have for either Nassim or Michael.

**Nassim Boutalbi:** I just wanted to ask if I am able to ask questions?

**Michelle Lam:** Michael, would you be open to accepting a question from Nassim?

**Michael Lecchina:** Go for it.

**Nassim Boutalbi:** By the way, I did not realise that we were able to speak for a long time. That is why I kept my answer so short. However, Michael these are very good points and from our conversation last time, you know I agree with you a hundred percent. The matter of fact is, the Board of Governors is not the place to propose such things. The board is primarily for reviewing policies. From my experience, the concerns your raised would be better for council or senate.

**Michael Lecchino:** I did not necessarily hear a question but Nassim, I appreciate the context. I think what you are pointing to is that the decisions will not be made at the Board of Governors meetings, but the people that can make those decisions will be present. I think it is important that we have someone that is there and is able to advocate for the specific initiative that students

want. You are given the chance to have those one on one conversations with those individuals to make sure that they are aware of what students want.

**Kareem Rahaman:** Hello everyone. Hi Nassim and Michael. Good luck to both of you. My question is for Michael. Nassim made an important point, that this might not be the role to propose new initiatives. You also made an important point, saying that it is not about getting the motion passed but getting it in front of the governors. Would you agree that building a relationship with these governors would be fundamental to doing that, and with Nassim already being there for one year, he has had the time to already build these relationships. Would it make sense to instead of play “catch up” with someone who already has this role, continue what they are doing? Ultimately, council ends up on the same page so Nassim would be putting forward the same things that council deems necessary for students. I would love to hear how you would answer that.

**Michael Lecchino:** Kareem thank you very much for your question, I think you bring up a very good point and I think it comes down to a different approach potentially. Nassim has been there for a year and did a phenomenal job as the Board of Governor Alternate. I think it is a question of giving the role to someone to also come in and try their own approach. I was very fortunate to be on academic senate, where I was able to meet with a lot of the similar stake holders if not the same ones. I think I do already have that relationship with a certain amount of stake holders, and I think I can leverage that at the Board of Governors, to make sure I can continue those relationships to make sure they are aware of the issues students have.

**Alexandrah Cardona:** I forgot to touch on Academic caucus for the new councillors, I do not know if it is productive as a question. I am wondering if I can touch on that for new councillors who might be voting.

**Michelle Lam:** In your opinion would that impact the vote? Just because there is going to be appointments to Academic Caucus at our meeting next week?

**Alexandrah Cardona:** Of course. I just want to briefly explain that the Academic Caucus is made up of both senators and governors. To my understanding, both Michael and Nassim have experience on Academic Caucus. Just in case any councillors are not aware, the Board of Governors Student Representative does not work alone, they work in a team with the rest of the Academic Caucus for the sake of strategy. So just keep this in mind, when we are concerned about moving forward, business or student motions at these high bodies. It might sound very daunting. There is a team work and collaboration with the Academic Caucus just to help move these things along, which may help make anyone's propositions pragmatic in that sense.

**Michelle Lam:** Thank you

Chairperson asks for each of the councilors to **privately message them their vote** for the Alternative Board of Governor seat between Nassim and Michael.

After the Chairperson tallied the votes

**Nassim Boutalbi appointed as Alternate Student Representative on the Board of Governors.**

**Nassim Boutalbi:** Thank you everyone.

**Michael Lecchino:** Congratulations Nassim. Council, thank you for the opportunity to present in front of you. Nassim, I wish you wonderful year as the Alternate Student Representative on the Board of Governors.

**Nassim Boutalbi:** Thank you very much Michael. I really appreciate it. I love the ideas you raised. Let us have a meeting after this because I would like to discuss them further with you.

#### **4. ADJOURNMENT**

**Alexandrah Cardona** moves to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by **Maria Chitoroaga**. Motion carries.

Meeting adjourned at **19h06**.