



Concordia Student Union - Council of Representatives

CSU Regular Council Meeting

Wednesday, March 13, 2024

H-711 OR via Zoom, 18h30

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chairperson called this meeting to order at **18h34**

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. TiohÉá: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.

2. ROLL CALL

Chairperson: Michelle Lam

Council Minute Keeper: Kyla Renee Jallow

Executives present for the meeting were: Harley Martin (General Coordinator), Tanou Bah (Student Life Coordinator), Kareem Rahaman (Finance Coordinator), Maria Chitoroaga (Sustainability Coordinator), Christian Taboada (Internal Affairs Coordinator), Talya Diner (Loyola Coordinator) Alexandrah Cardona (Academic & Advocacy Coordinator), and Hannah Jackson (External Affairs and Mobilization Coordinator)

Executives absent for this meeting were: N/A

Councillors present for this meeting were: Adam Mills (Arts & Science), Giancarlo Laurieri (Arts & Science), Dave Plant (Arts & Science), Salma Hashem (Arts & Science), Salma Abuaysheh (JMSB), Abdullah Al-Kabra (JMSB), Omar Hassanein (Gina Cody), Rohan Kumar (Gina Cody), Nizar Sukah (Gina Cody), Salma Hashem (Arts & Science), Nassim Boutalbi (JMSB), Diana Levitin (JMSB), Riley Cooke (Arts & Science), Noor Al Afranji (Arts & Science), Zina Chouaibi (Arts & Science), Kareem Abdeen (Independent), Michael Lecchino (JMSB), Carleen Loney (Fine Arts), Gabriel Makinde (Fine Arts), Moad Alhjoog (Arts & Science) and Ouswa Ben Rejeb (JMSB)

Councillors absent for this meeting were: Isabella Providenti (Fine Arts), Chana Leah Natanblut (Arts & Science), Salma Bennani Khir (Arts & Science), Guillermo Sebastian Anderson-Diaz (Arts & Science)

Chairperson: Ken Downe (Arts & Science requested an excusal for tonight's meeting)

Dave Plant motions to excuse Ken Downe (Arts & Science) from tonight's meeting

Seconded by Hannah Jackson

Motion passes

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Adam Mills motions to add Seeking Transparency Regarding Relationships with CSU Staff to the agenda for discussion

Adam Mills: A lot of the councillors were wondering what happened during the last meeting, we wanted clarity on the CSU's relationship with its staff.

Chairperson: Is this something that warrants a motion, or is this something that we can accept in good faith that Harley will do at the next meeting?

Harley Martin: I am up for discussing it further with the council today and clarifying anything that anyone wants to understand.

Seconded by Hannah Jackson

Nassim motions to approve tonight's agenda

Seconded by Harley Martin

4. CONSENT AGENDA

Christian Taboada motions for an excusal for the late submission of their executive report

Seconded by Maria Chitoroaga

Motivation: I was in Europe for a tournament and there were a lot of connection issues, so I submitted it late.

In my report, I explained what was discussed at the club's assembly, one club was tabled, and four clubs were approved. I also discussed how the training for councillors went and indicated its completion.

Maria Chitoroaga motions for an excusal for the late submission of their executive report

Motivation: As I am currently campaigning as a candidate in the elections, last week was an intense campaign week. Consequently, I was unable to complete my report on time.

Tanou Bah **objects**

Chairperson calls for a roll call vote

Chairperson: Unfortunately, Maria your report will not be accepted tonight

Alexandrah Cardona motions for an excusal for the late submission of their executive report

Motivation: My report is being submitted late because I have been behind on a few things. However, for Academic and Advocacy, I wanted council to be aware of the things that have been going on in the past month. I am willing to accept the consequences of my lateness, however, I just find it important that council goes over my report.

Chairperson: It does sound like you are willing to accept the penalty without us having to go through a vote. I can distribute your report to council separately via e-mail

- a) Executive Reports
- b) Chairperson Report
- c) Approval of Previous Minutes
- d) Committee Minutes

Kareem Rahaman motions to approve items under Consent Agenda

Seconded by Dave Plant

Harley Martin motions to go for a 10-minute recess

Seconded Christian Taboada

5. PRESENTATIONS AND GUEST SPEAKERS

6. APPOINTMENTS

7. NEW BUSINESS - SUBSTANTIVE

a) CSU Finances at Scotiabank

Motion Presented by Dave Plant

WHEREAS the CSU currently uses Scotia Bank as their bank service;

WHEREAS Scotia bank historically and currently has investments in Elbit systems, Vanguard and Blackrock;

WHEREAS Elbit systems produces weapons for the Israeli Defense Force who are historically and currently engaged in an on-going ethnic cleansing against the Palestinian people;

WHEREAS Vanguard and Blackrock are extensively invested in weapons manufacturing and the residential housing market in North America where there is currently a housing shortage;

BE IT RESOLVED that the CSU changes to Desjardins Caisse Populaire by the end of June 2024 not for profit bank with all current remaining funds not in use in investments which will trigger a penalty if removed;

BE IT RESOLVED that the executive team will provide counsellors with an amount of how much it would cost if we immediately remove all investments from Scotia Bank;

BE IT RESOLVED that the CSU does not use the services provided, buy products or have any form of investment in any company on the BDS list except Google and Microsoft;

BE IT RESOLVED that once any funds become available for removal from the investments currently held in Scotia Bank that they be removed as soon as possible and transferred to the new bank.

Budgetary Impact: If investments stay within their contractual obligations the budgetary impact would be low to nil. If we choose to divest immediately, the finance executive would need to provide a cost of how much those investment penalties would incur.

Seconded by Adam Mills

Motivation: I, along with a lot of students feel that voting with their money is a way to make substantial change. Living in a capitalist society, our funds and where we put them contribute to cooperations and how they work. Scotia Bank has some shady investments, I along with assuming, many students would not be happy with working with this bank based on principle.

Kareem Rahaman: Logistically, we do not have any investments in Scotia Bank, so the budgetary impact would be nil.

Dave Plant: Would it be worth it to keep it in, if there are no investments then it would be an easy report.

Maria Chitoroaga: Thank you for your motion, Dave, the section about divesting from any products does not need to be in the motion, Position 5.8: States that none of CSU's investment portfolio is anything on the BDS list. In support of your motion, Section 7 is on climate justice. Sections 7.1-7.2 are about fossil fuels and climate neutrality. Des Jardins would be a better option for this reason as well. Environmental means would strongly support this motion.

Motion passes unanimously

b) Motion Seeking Transparency Regarding Relationships with CSU Staff

Adam Mills presents motion

WHEREAS the CSU is a justice seeking organization that supports the rights of workers.

WHEREAS several members of council have expressed discontent with being in the dark regarding a poor relationship between the executive and some unionised members of CSU staff boiling over into the last council meeting.

BE IT RESOLVED that the executive report to Council in confidence at the next RCM regarding any matters of dispute or disagreement, official or unofficial, with any bargaining unit holding a collective agreement with the CSU.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the report given should be accompanied by a list of meetings held between the CSU and its staff unions during this executive mandate, including date, topic, and meeting resolutions.

Motivation:

At the last council meeting, a lot of councillors were left very confused. I am seeking some transparency about certain things that may be bubbling under the surface. I was hoping that we could get a brief from Harley and if we need to do that in a closed session, we can do that too.

Seconded by Christian Taboada

Harley Martin motions to enter a closed session

Dave Plant objects

Dave Plant: This is a transparency motion so going into a closed discussion defeats the purpose

Adam Mills: There are some things that may be confidential regarding the CSU's partnerships with certain unions.

Chairperson moves into a roll call vote

Meeting enters closed session

Adam Mills motions to enter open session

Harley Martin seconds

Motion has been withdrawn

8. NEW BUSINESS – INFORMATIONAL

9. QUESTION PERIOD & BUSINESS ARISING

10. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Muslim Student Association (this student has chosen to be anonymous): As the Muslim Student Association we wanted to make CSU aware of the rise of Islamophobia on campus and online. One of our MSA members was approached four times within a week, being called a terrorist as well as other derogatory terms. Members of the MSA are now afraid of being part of the club because of this harassment. In another event, a student wearing the hijab was in the elevator and another student came up to her and demanded, "Debate me, debate me".

Muslim Student Association (this student has chosen to be anonymous): I am a fourth-year student at Concordia, and for the very first time in my academic career here, I have begun to feel unsafe on campus. Wearing a hijab is a marker of my religious background and who I identify as, however, I have been attacked in the classroom setting based on who I identify as. Many of my friends who also wear the hijab have also been called terrorists on campus and online. During the Mosque shooting in Quebec, it was done by people who believed Muslims were terrorists. I am now coming to speak with the CSU directly as a last resort, we want the CSU to stand up for us and speak out. It is unfair that I have to be careful about my choice of words in the classroom simply because of my faith.

Muslim Student Association (this student has chosen to be anonymous): I am also a Muslim student who wears the hijab, and I want to thank you for giving us the opportunity to voice our concerns. It has been tense on campus and there has been a target on our backs. Online, Concordia is being framed for having allowed certain ideologies, making it unsafe for Muslim students. A certain student-run club under CSU has been using openly racist and Islamophobic language on their club's social media account. Startup Nation refers to Pro-Palestine Concordia students as Pro-Hamas, Pro-Terrorist, Pro-Terror mob, and Pro-Hamas aggressors. This language is directed to a majority Muslim group of students. Instagram allows people to delete comments however, the Startup Nation Instagram page allows hateful comments to fester. I found up to eight hateful comments in the last hour on their Instagram page. I have screenshots and am willing to share.

Muslim Student Association (this student has chosen to be anonymous): I am also a Muslim woman who wears the hijab. Pro-Zionists have been targeting Muslims near elevators on campus, trying to start debates about Israel and Palestine. I have stopped taking the elevators on campus because of this harassment. In the classroom setting, I also have stopped speaking during discussions because of the increased Islamophobia on campus. This constant fear of being judged has changed the realities for us who wear the hijab on campus. Last semester, the MSA held a bake

sale for humanitarian aid for several countries. During the bake sale, we had put the Palestinian flag on our table and a man began to take pictures of us without our consent and was using intimidation tactics as well. We called security, however that did not drive the man away.

Ouswa Ben Rejeb: Thank you for speaking up. A huge portion of the student body face these problems. I hope the CSU can address these concerns.

Muslim Student Association (this student has chosen to be anonymous): I am from Gaza and a Muslim woman. I have lost neighbours, friends and family. Seeing how the administration deals with this, there is an anti-Palestinian environment being fostered at Concordia. Administration and clubs have been able to do and say what they want without repercussions. Students have been doxed online because of this environment as well. It has been six months now. I hope the CSU can keep pressuring the administration into taking care of their students. We need to make sure there are consequences for the students who are calling other students derogatory names.

Muslim Student Association (this student has chosen to be anonymous): I forgot to mention, after the bake sale and fundraiser, I received a message from a student who was present during the sale. She was experiencing heavy doxing online to the point that she was mentally and emotionally impacted. Cyberbullying has been at a high for Muslim and Pro-Palestinian students and many are getting away with it. Startup Nation has been labelling the MSA as terrorist for some time now and if you care about Muslim students, I hope you can do something about this. This is greatly impacting our relationship with the CSU because we no longer feel safe. Today we have only provided a few examples because there are so many students who are not comfortable enough to share their stories today.

Maria (The Link): Thank you so much for coming today with your stories. If you want to come forward to The Link, the student newspaper and speak to me in private you are welcome. We are writing a story on Islamophobia and if you would like to speak, please let me know. Your stories deserve to be heard.

Muslim Student Association (this student has chosen to be anonymous): Thank you Maria, we will reach out soon. Hopefully we can all work together to maintain a safe space for all our students.

Dave Plant: Thank you so much for letting us know about this. We will make sure to address your concerns.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Harley Martin motions to adjourn the meeting at 20h10

Seconded by Kareem Rahaman