

End of Mandate Report



2024/25

Prepared by the Executive Team: Kareem Rahaman, Moad Al-Hjooj, Danna Ballantyne, Souad El Ferjani, Leen Al-Hijjawi, Vanessa Massot, Dania Zeitoun, Maria Chitoroaga

General Overview of the CSU

The Concordia Student Union is exactly what it sounds like: a union for undergraduate students at Concordia. The CSU acts on the behalf of Concordia students, defending their interests and offering support through several avenues. The CSU is divided into four primary bodies: the Executives, the Council of Representatives, the Judicial Board, and General Meetings. The CSU also offers many important services to all undergraduate students: the Advocacy Centre, the Legal Information Clinic, the Off-Campus Housing & Job Resource Centre, the Recovery and Wellness Community Centre, EDI, the Daycare & Nursery, the Hive Free Lunch at Loyola, the Health & Dental Plan, free sanitary products, and over 100 different student-run clubs. These services are there to help you during your time at Concordia University, as well as to assist you with upholding your rights under the law and handling the challenges of living and working in Montreal. The CSU's services are available to all undergraduates, so take advantage!

Council Of Representatives

The Council of Representatives is the CSU's legal board of directors. It is composed of a maximum of 30 students respectively representing each department (as well as independent students) and directly elected by their peers. Elections for the Council take place in March each year and in November as necessary. The Council oversees the work of the Executives and ensures that the interests of students are represented. It also has the responsibility of overseeing and directing the Union, while respecting the mandates of the Membership.

Judicial Board

The Judicial Board is the judiciary branch of the CSU. It is responsible for ruling on conflicts that occur in the interpretation of the Union's Bylaws and Regulations and has the final word on how to interpret our rules. The members of the Judicial Board are appointed through the CSU's Appointments Committee.

Introduction to The Executive Team

Academic & Advocacy Coordinator

Hi there, my name is Vanessa (they/them), and I am the current Academic and Advocacy Coordinator. In this role, I serve as the CSU's primary student representative on all academic governing bodies at Concordia University. Additionally, I oversee key services such as the

Advocacy Centre, Legal Information Clinic, Off-Campus Housing and Job Resource Centre. My focus is on advocating for students through participation in Senate and University committees, as well as engaging in policy work with the goal of advocacy.

External Affairs & Mobilization Coordinator

Hi all! My name is Danna Ballantyne and I'm this year's External and Mobilization Coordinator. In my role as External, I am the CSU's liaison to all student associations and organizations outside of the University. I also oversee the CSU's Campaigns department and handle mobilization of students for participation in various CSU approved campaigns. I chair both the Community Action Fund (CAF) and External committees and sit on the Inter-Organizational Table for Feminist Affairs (ITFA) and the board of directors of the CSU Daycare. Throughout my mandate, I've also taken on several additional projects including advocating for student representation on various administrative bodies and committees and sitting on multiple hiring committees within the CSU.

Sustainability Coordinator

Hello everyone, I'm Maria, the Sustainability Coordinator. In this role, I am responsible for ensuring the environmental, social, and political sustainability of the Union. I support student initiatives on campus and within the Concordia community, overseeing the distribution of bursaries, awards, and funding for sustainability and community-related projects. My involvement spans various committees, including the Library Service Fund Committee (LSFC), PUSH Fund, Concordia Council on Student Life (CCSL) and Senate.

Loyola Coordinator

Hi everyone, I'm Leen, the Loyola Coordinator. My role involves ensuring the visibility of the CSU across both campuses, fostering ties between them, and promoting a united university community. I sit on the Loyola Committee, BIPOC committee, CCSL, LSCF, and Fee Levy committee. My goal is to give back to the students of the Loyola campus, strengthen the presence of the CSU at the Loyola campus, creating more opportunities for involvement, and fostering a stronger sense of community. I'm also dedicated to improving the shuttle bus service.

Student Life Coordinator

My name is **Moad**, and I have served as the **Student Life Coordinator** for the Concordia Student Union during this mandate. In this role, I was responsible for organizing the CSU's major campus events, such as Orientation, with the goal of enriching students' university experience beyond the classroom. My objective throughout the year was to provide inclusive and engaging opportunities for learning, connection, and community building. A key focus of my mandate was to actively promote diversity within the union's events and practices, ensuring that all students felt represented and welcomed in our programming.

General Coordinator

Hello everyone, I'm Kareem, the General Coordinator. In this role, I oversee the daily administration of the Concordia Student Union, representing the 35,000+ students at the highest level. My focus includes supporting students, increasing student engagement, streamlining union processes, and creating continuity from the previous year's mandate.

Finance Coordinator

Hi everyone, my name is Souad EL Ferjani, and I am the Finance Coordinator. I oversee the CSU's Finances. I prepare the annual budget, present the previous year audited budget and monitor it through the year. I also assist clubs and any CSU member regarding their financial concerns alongside working on Finance initiatives.

Internal Affairs Coordinator

Hi everyone, I'm Dania, the Internal Affairs Coordinator. I am responsible for all the CSU's internal processes and support CSU clubs in engaging the Concordia community. My tasks include improving student space on both campuses and serving as the Union's bookkeeper. This year, I plan to encourage engagement through the clubs and create an active Concordia community.

Representation On University Bodies

Board of Governors

Written by Kareem Rahaman, General Coordinator

The Board of Governors (BoG) is the senior governing body of the University and is responsible for establishing the legal and administrative framework for the University. It has superintending and reforming power over all decisions affecting activities held at the University or connected with the University. It is composed of 25 voting members and one non-voting observer. The CSU has one of the 25 voting seats, which I hold this year, and the non-voting observer is a position reserved for a CSU Councilor, currently held by Ali Salmaan

BoG is an important forum for us as students to voice our opinions on large-scale decision making relating to the University and is also a place to gather information that can be communicated to students. As we are only one voting member of 25, much of the work at BoG is centered on the information gathering aspect, in addition to ensuring student's rights are protected at all levels within the University.

BoG meetings this year have centered on two topics: events in Israel and Palestine and their effect on campus life; and the Quebec government's announcement of changes to the tuition framework for out-of-province and international students.

Senate and Academic Caucus

Written by Vanessa Massot, Academic and Advocacy Coordinator

The Senate is the highest academic decision-making body at Concordia, and acts as the final authoritative body in all matters pertaining to the academic realm of the university such as approval of the spring and fall graduation lists, approval of curricula and new academic programs, establishment of academic standards and regulations. Senate can also make recommendations to the Board of Governors. These suggestions then become an object of discussion at the Board which has final authority over them. While the Board oftentimes approves recommendations by the Senate; Senate cannot compel the Board to do anything against its own judgment. The highlight of Senate this academic year was the approval of Quebec's first minor in Black and African Diaspora studies.

The Senate is made up of 53 voting and 11 non-voting members from all of Concordia's communities (staff, faculty, students, and administrators), as well as representing each faculty.

There are 12 undergraduate students on the Senate, and to be most effective on the Senate, we all come together at Academic Caucus meetings where we strategize and plan for meetings. I am the

Chair of the Academic Caucus, and I am happy to share that the Caucus had the opportunity to convene prior to every Senate, for a grand total of six caucuses. Caucus is meant to bring together student representatives that sit on the highest decision-making bodies of the University, Senate and the Board of Governors, representing over 37,000 undergraduates and almost another ten thousand graduate students. It is crucial that this body remains well-informed and operates in a collaborative manner to succeed in its mandate. This year, we had an awesome group of students appointed to senate, and I am pleased to report that our Academic Caucus meetings were filled with rich discussions regarding the Senate Agenda and academic year. It was important to me to create a space where student senators could freely voice their opinions and experiences, in hopes that as a group we could come to a well informed and nuanced understanding of how different faculties and student's may be affected by the decisions made at senate. Our goal is student senators was to always represent the various student voices that we represent as a group of students from different backgrounds, and I was constantly in awe of how compassionate and intelligent my fellow student senators continue to be.

Concordia Council on Student Life

Written by Maria Chitoroaga, Sustainability Coordinator

The Concordia Council on Student Life (CCSL) is the highest body in the university dedicated to student life. Equally made up of students, staff, and faculty, CCSL meets to discuss various student life topics, disperse funding to student-led initiatives, and recognize outstanding individuals at Concordia. The student members this year were Maria Chitoroaga, Moad Alhjoog, Leen Al-Hijjawi and Elsa Younes. We met once a month to review funding applications and discuss other relevant matters that have to do with bettering student life at Concordia. CCSL has three sub-committees that meet on a need-to basis. These committees are the Student Groups sub-committee which reviews new student groups and club applications, the Awards sub-committee which reviews student, faculty and staff award nominations and finally, the Special Projects Fund sub-committee which grants around 60 000\$ to various student-led special projects that better student life at Concordia. At this point in the year, all monthly meetings have convened (the next meeting is in September with the new cohort of student representatives), all the club applications have been approved (there were about 4 new applications total this year), all the outstanding contribution awards have been given out at a gala on April 22nd, and all the available funds have been distributed towards student projects. In addition to everything this year, the members of CCSL have also decided to use an auxiliary fund of extra money that they get throughout the years (accrued through surplus that doesn't get claimed by the pre-approved

projects) to give out about 25 000\$ to CUCCR (Concordia University Centre for Creative Reuse) so that they can stay open through 2026.

Inter-Organisational Table for Feminist Affairs

Written by Danna Ballantyne, External Coordinator

ITFA is an organization comprising the Concordia Student Union, the Graduate Student Union, Concordia Research & Education Workers Union, Concordia University Support Staff Union and Concordia University Library Employee's Union, united together for the purpose of boycotting the Standing Committee on Sexual Misconduct and Violence. We are workers, unionists, and students of the Concordia Inter-Organizational Table of Feminist Affairs (ITFA) who have no confidence that the university management, nor the Quebec or Canadian governments, are capable of addressing sexualized abuses of power. We understand that addressing these abuses at their root will require worker, student, community, and survivor-led processes of justice that take power away from the management and into our hands, power they use to exploit and oppress us. The CSU initiated its formal boycott of the SMSV in October 2022, when the two CSU representatives resigned, and ITFA distributed their demands to the Concordia administration. After the demands were ignored, all ITFA members renewed their boycott in November 2023 and again in 2024. The demands for ITFA are in the process of being edited to reflect the current conditions, but as stands are the following:

- **Student-led solutions:** Concordia must recognize a new autonomous, student- and worker-run Standing Committee on Sexualized Abuses of Power that operates as the decision-making rather than advisory body presiding over all sexual violence policies and procedures. The law, under Chapter 2.7 of Bill 151, requires the University to have a standing committee that is “made up of students, officers and personnel members” and “that [members] and their respective associations and unions are consulted during the policy development or review process”. We contend that the University management’s SMSV Committee to date has not meaningfully consulted us, and as such must be replaced. For such a committee to produce survivor-centric and stand-alone policy, it has to be run by students and workers themselves through their democratic organizations (i.e. GSA, CSU, TRAC union, and the other Concordia labor unions) and not be superseded by other interests, documents, or regulations.
- **Transparency:** Concordia must immediately commit to prospectively and retroactively applying the protections of the recently updated Bill 151, which allows survivors to know the outcome of the sexual violence arbitration cases that they have submitted. Applying this bill on a “case by case basis” is not sufficient to provide closure for survivors and increases uncertainty in an already opaque process; nor is it in accordance with what has been mandated by the provincial government.

- **Gender Equity:** Concordia must further rescind recent structural abuses of power that harm women and gender diverse people in our community. Concordia management must permanently guarantee an on-campus space for the Concordia CPE daycare center, beyond the current extension of their lease until August 2025, and commit further resources towards the expansion of affordable daycare provision on both campuses. Concordia must remove all cameras from student bathrooms, especially those in the gender-neutral bathrooms on the 6th floor of the Hall building, and commit to expanding the availability of safe, private, gender-neutral bathrooms on both campuses. Concordia must immediately stop asking employees to declare their “sex assigned at birth” during the process of signing contracts or at any other juncture.

ITFA convened for the first time this academic year on November 15th with members from CREW, the GSA, CSU, and CSSU (Concordia University Support Staff Union). This meeting primarily served to bring new members up to speed on the history and objectives of ITFA and how to address the University’s SMSV Committee (Standing Committee on Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Violence).

Investment Transparency Committee:

Written by Souad EL Ferjani, Finance Coordinator:

Due to the rising concerns of the students about the university’s investment we reached out to DOS to set up a committee between CSU and some administration members to raise those concerns and work on pushing the University to be more transparent. Initially it was the General Coordinator and the External Coordinator who sat on this committee but then eventually the team decided it would be me, the Loyola Coordinator and the Campaigns Coordinator. We had our first meeting on January 9th, and we met 5 times after that.

The main members on this committee on Admin side are

- Marc Lafrance: Associate Professor of Sociology, Special Advisor to the Provost on Campus Climate.
- Charmian Harvey: Executive Director University Communications Services.
- David Newton: Associate Professor, Finance.

Other members of Admin who assisted one or two meeting:

- Marc Gauthier: University Treasurer and Chief Investment Officer.
- Anne Whitelaw: Provost and Vice-President.

Our main goal during those meetings was to ensure that the university publishes their investments in a transparent way that students can digest, so then students can pinpoint what funds or what companies the university should divest from.

These are the key takeaways:

- The latest Report that the university published only covers 50% of their investments.
- According to them the other 50% is already sustainable.
- They have currently around 30 Portfolio manager but only 4 are mentioned in their previous report.
- This is the complete list that they supplied as of January 2025:

<u>Managed internally</u>
www.brighterinvestment.com
https://addendacapital.com/en-ca/
https://www.barings.com/guest
https://jflglobal.com/en-ca/home/
https://cyclecapital.com/
https://www.blueowl.com/
https://www.fondaction.com/
https://www.manulifeim.com/institutional/global/en/viewpoints/private-markets/timberland-and-farmland--real-assets-with-complementary-investme
https://www.mirova.com/en
https://www.learn.vc/
https://www.gwlrealtyadvisors.com/
https://www.manulifeim.com/institutional/global/en
https://mesawestcapital.com/
https://www.mkbandco.com/
https://rpia.ca/home
https://www.teralyscapital.com/en/
https://www.ubs.com/ca/en/assetmanagement.html
https://www.ecotierra.co/
https://www.westbeckcapital.com/
https://www.carbon-cap.com/
https://www.inerjys.com/
<u>Columbia Threadneedle Investments - Asset Management - Funds</u>
<u>Janus Henderson Investors United States</u>

https://www.swisslife-am.com/en/home.html
https://www.aresmgmt.com/
https://www.auspicecapital.com/
Managed externally
https://jflglobal.com/en-ca/home/
https://www.gfiic.com/
https://www.desjardins.com/ca/business/investment/global-asset-management/index.jsp

- We sent them suggestions of certain policies to include that prevent investment in weapon manufacturing.
- They have investment in publicly traded funds and in privately traded funds: meaning that they can only publish the details of the publicly traded funds and not publish the privately traded funds as only the portfolio managers know the component of those funds.
- They assured us the university has no investment in Black Rock and no investment related to weapon manufacturing, but because the recent report just got published, we are in the process of verifying that.
- We presented to the committee examples of transparent reports that students would love to see that disclosed the individual stocks (companies) that the university in invested in.
- Because stocks within funds change frequently, we urged the administration to publish quarterly reports that represent a Snapshot of all their funds at ounce.

A more transparent Report:

On April 22nd the university reached out to us to let us know that their investments holding are officially out:

<https://www.concordia.ca/inter-generational-fund/reports.html>

The full **detailed list of holding** is available on the website under CUIF holdings.

As well as their **investment policy** that up to this point was never published before:

<https://www.concordia.ca/content/dam/common/docs/policies/official-policies/CFO-11.pdf>

We are currently still in the process of reviewing the level of transparency of this report and we will be having a follow-up meeting with them in early May.

Partnership with Economic Sense:

During one of the meetings Dr Newton explained that if the students are not satisfied with the way the university is reporting its investments, we create a paid student position that takes care of this. The role of this position would be to use programs like Bloomberg to dive into the component of the publicly traded funds.

He then suggested to talk to Economic Sense (<https://www.economicsensejournal.ca/home>) a group of students who run a research program and who look for projects like this. Due to the nature of the task the student must have a strong financial and economic background so partnering with Economic Sense made the most sense to us.

We set up multiple meetings with the president of Economic Sense and he was very open and excited about this. These are key take aways of those meetings:

- Economic Sense will base themselves off the fund codes and information the university will be publishing on their website.
- The recruitment of students within economic sense starts in Fall semester more precisely in October. The CSU will be sitting on a hiring committee with Economic Sense to choose the students that will be working on this project.
- Depending on the application either one student will be picked or 2 (one takes care of the research, and one will take care of the writing and illustration of the report)
- Economic Sense will be having the full support of the CSU this includes but not limited to:
 - *Financial compensation for the student(s) working on this project.*
 - *Support from the Finance Coordinator and the External Coordinator.*
 - *Help form the CSU researchers.*
 - *Help form he CSU graphic designers for illustrations.*

- This agreement was put in writing between CSU and Economic Sense, and it will start next academic year.
- When the report will be ready it will be published on Economic Sense Journal and on the CSU website.
- This report will include the individual stocks in the funds (companies), socio-political implications of those companies and the growth of the investments (if Economic Sense want to include this).

Conclusion:

The existence of this committee is the fruit of effort of students who have been advocating for transparency since years now and the fruit of effort of the student body for organising sit ins and protests to make their voice heard. I am very grateful for being one of the few people who got the privilege to sit on this committee and make the student voice heard on the administration level. But the work is still not over, so here is the key components that the incoming slate should work on:

Continue to pressure the university to be transparent.

Accept suggestion from the student body for their investment policy.

Make sure to Cooperate with Economic Sense and help them as much as possible.

Cooperative Support Memberships

Reggie's Solidarity Cooperative

Written by Kareem Rahaman, General Coordinator

Reggie's is Concordia's student bar, and is a solidarity cooperative located on the Hall Mezzanine. From 1984 until 2016, Reggie's was directly managed by the CSU in the form of CUSAcorp, a for-profit subsidiary of the CSU. CUSAcorp was in essence the business wing of the CSU, meaning that in addition to all their other tasks, CSU executives were in charge of overseeing the business operations of the bar. As you might have guessed, this had its problems, and Reggie's struggled financially for years. While closed for renovations in 2013, the decision was made to transition Reggie's into a solidarity cooperative. A solidarity co-op is also referred to as a multi-stakeholder or hybrid co-op, which describes its function more effectively. Most simply, these types of co-ops have two or more types of members that have different functions, but each have a shared interest in the enterprise. In the case of Reggie's, there are worker

members and community members, in addition to a category called support members which is where the CSU comes in.

Co-ops are managed by an elected board of directors, and in the case of Reggie's this consists of nine members split between the three categories of members described above (not evenly split however). The other representatives are elected at an AGM, whereas the CSU is guaranteed a seat that is taken by one of the executives. The reason for this is that the CSU has put a lot of effort and money into Reggie's, both when it directly managed the bar and since it has become a solidarity cooperative. The space Reggie's uses is managed by the CSU, and the renovations which have taken place over the years were paid for using money from the SSAELC fund (approved by council).

In August 2023, the CSU Council took decisive action by approving a \$120,000 funding package. This support came with a formal Memorandum of Understanding between the CSU and Reggie's Board of Directors, establishing clear parameters for the funding's use and expectations for improvement. Throughout the year, CSU representatives have worked closely with Reggie's management to implement these changes and identify additional opportunities for operational enhancement.

This report examines the results of these interventions through fiscal year 2023-2024, showing substantial improvements across key financial measures.

Profitability Improvements

Net income improved by \$161,803, shifting from a loss of \$63,303 in 2023 to a profit of \$98,500 in 2024.

Cost Management Success

Operating expenses have been significantly reduced through strategic cost management initiatives. Total operating expenses decreased by \$228,170, from \$420,663 to \$192,493, representing a 54.2% reduction.

Grant Funding

The cooperative successfully increased its grant funding by \$88,381, from \$60,000 in 2023 to \$148,381 in 2024, representing a 147.3% increase. This achievement in securing additional funding has provided crucial support for operations and development.

Liability Reduction

The cooperative has substantially improved its debt position by:

- Reducing total liabilities by \$119,747 (from \$135,406 to \$15,659)
- Fully repaying the \$40,000 CEBA government loan
- Decreasing accounts payable by \$82,998

Improved Equity Position

The cooperative's equity position has strengthened considerably:

- Total equity improved by \$98,790, moving from a deficit of \$22,780 to a positive \$76,010
- Retained earnings increased by \$98,500 to reach \$69,260
- Members' equity grew by \$290 to \$6,750

Enhanced Liquidity

- Cash and cash equivalents increased by \$21,113 to \$61,429
- Term deposit value increased by \$198 to \$5,267
- Working capital ratio improved to 5.4 from 0.77

Cash Flow Improvements

- Increased overall cash position by \$21,113
- Achieved a strong year-end cash position of \$61,429

Hive Solidarity Cooperative

Written by Moad Alhjoob, Student Life Coordinator

The Hive is a solidarity cooperative café founded in 2014 that serves as a key food and coffee provider on both the downtown and Loyola campuses. It has long been an important student-run institution and a venue for student-led and community events. I was approached by Robert, the CSU's General Manager, who provided information regarding The Hive's taxes and lease agreement. These topics were later formally discussed during The Hive's meeting, where the organization's finances and space lease were reviewed in greater detail.

Woodnote Housing Cooperative

Written by Maria Chitoroaga, Sustainability Coordinator

In 2015, the CSU partnered with UTILE to build a major student housing project. In 2020, the building was finally ready to open its 144 doors to Concordia students. Ever since it opened, the Woodnote has been completely filled as it provides affordable housing in the Plateau for students. The Woodnote provides subsidized rent with a guaranteed 10% (at least) below market value.

With the success of the first Woodnote building, the CSU has partnered with UTILE again in 2022 to start working on a second student housing project. As of this summer, we have secured the location of the new building, which will be in Pointe-Saint-Charles. UTILE is currently working on getting all the building permits. Everything so far has been going according to the timeline. The Rivernote is set to start getting built in September 2025! This project is set out to reach rents 25% below market value. This building is projected to have more units than the first Woodnote. There is also a recognized want for apartments with more than one bedroom from current tenants so that it could accommodate roommates, so we have accounted for that as well.

Student Centre Building

Written by Kareem Rahaman, General Coordinator

In May 2022, the CSU bought a three-story building located at 2045 Bishop Street with the intent to eventually transform it into a student center. Buying a building has been the dream of many CSU teams, and the Student Space, Accessible Education, and Legal Contingency (SSAELC) Fund was initially set up to realize this ambition some 20 years ago. The 2021-2022 team managed to make the purchase after a great deal of work in reviewing similar buildings within the downtown core using the help of consultancy firm Deloitte. Members of the 2022-2023 Executive and Council, along with other relevant student and community groups, then

began the work of envisioning what the building could and should contain. The goal is to create more space for students on the downtown campus, for as we are all aware, Concordia operates on a growth model in terms of student enrollment and SGW's physical infrastructure fails to keep pace. But beyond this, CSU members have long wanted to have a student space that is entirely controlled by students and free from any potential interference from the University administration. The CSU currently controls many spaces on campus, such as the CSU offices and the spaces rented by the Hive and Reggie's, but ultimately these spaces belong to the University. This means that the University's space use policies still apply and if they really wanted, they could take back those spaces. In other words, it is great (indeed necessary) that we have these spaces, but there is still a degree of university control over them that has its drawbacks. The student center will become the first space on campus that is a student space entirely owned and managed by students.

The building was purchased for approximately \$5 million, paid for using the SSAELC Fund. The CSU then decided to take out a long-amortized mortgage on a percentage of the cost and return some of the funds to the SSAELC Fund. I believe this decision was made as the interest made on the money placed back within the SSAELC Fund was greater than the amount of interest to be paid on the mortgage. The cost of renovations is projected to be between \$5 - \$5.5 million. Last year the CSU applied for two large grants that, if received, would have covered the cost of the renovations. Unfortunately, the CSU did not receive these grants, in part due to the funding agency mistakenly viewing the CSU (a not-for-profit) as directly connected to the University, an issue we have since clarified. We have since applied to other funding bodies and are awaiting their response. Additionally, we have worked with Deloitte to put together a package that their consultants are now bringing to various lending agencies. The financing we receive through these avenues will allow us to fund the renovation required on the building. As for the costs of maintaining the building once completed, we will have to wait and see. It is hard to predict the associated costs and the CSU tried for a \$0.90/credit fee-levy in the March 2024 elections for the purpose of aiding in the cost of renovations and for the long-term goal of having a fund to be used to maintain the building. The levy was rejected, and I would note that all levy applications were rejected by students in both elections this year, pointing to student precarity rather than any opposition to our building in particular. The CSU's General Manager, Robert Henri, will be putting together a better campaign for this levy and working with the executive team to bring this to the November 2024 by-elections.

The building is directly across the street from the Bishop entrance of the Hall Building. It has two commercial spaces on the ground floor which are not in use, and the remaining two floors have six apartments apiece. Because of this, the building will require large-scale renovations to accommodate our needs. The 2022-2023 mandate determined that what was needed was an outline of what the space would look like ideally, and began working with an architecture firm to determine what could realistically be achieved. The 2022-2023 Council voted to create an ad-hoc Student Center Steering Committee which oversaw the visioning process for the building. The executive chairing this Committee hosted two town hall sessions, inviting the faculty associations and fee levy groups to give their input for the plans. This information was combined with the opinions of the members of the Steering Committee and compiled into a report that was then submitted to Aedifica, the architecture firm in charge of the renovations. In the spring of 2023, Aedifica used this information to create several draft proposals which were then sent to the CSU.

In June of 2024 we picked up where the old team left off. Maria and I have been the main executives immersed in this project, along with Robert, the CSU's general manager. We have met with the team from Aedifica to finalize the plans. As it stands, we have hired all the necessary architects and engineers to finalize the plans and oversee the project.

We have also decided to pursue the gold standard in both WELL and LEED certifications in the renovation process. As described by the US Green Building Council, “the WELL Building Standard is a performance-based system for measuring, certifying, and monitoring features of the built environment that impact human health and wellbeing, through air, water, nourishment, light, fitness, comfort, and mind.” In essence the WELL checklist aims to ensure that buildings are built or renovated so that the built environment, in which we spend so much of our time, is most accommodating to our needs. The LEED (leadership in energy and environmental design) certification, as described by the Canada Green Building Council, “is an international symbol of sustainability excellence and green building leadership...[that] helps virtually all building types lower carbon emissions, conserve resources, and reduce operating costs by prioritizing sustainable practices.” Pursuing the LEED certification will ensure that the renovations produce a building that aims to be as sustainable as possible. We hope that the end result is a building which fits the needs of students and is environmentally responsible within the limitations we are working with.

When completed the building will be a combination of mixed-use space, study space, offices, and bookable working rooms of various sizes. Le Frigo Vert will move into the former Depanneur space which takes up about 25% of the ground floor. The former restaurant space which takes up the remaining 75% of the first floor will be converted into an open student lounge and multipurpose area that can accommodate the hosting of events. The second floor will contain the offices of Mosaic and QPIRG, with additional offices to accommodate a yet to be determined third mental health service to be offered by the CSU. The mental health services will have office space and enclosed therapy rooms, and QPIRG will have office space and a larger conference/workshop space. The remainder of the second floor will host a lounge and reading area, a kitchenette, a small library, quiet study areas, and bookable group working rooms. The third floor will look similar, though a large AV-equipped multipurpose room and connecting lounge will replace the office space. We also will have access to the roof. The roof will be able to be used with or without tables and chairs, we have approved the installation of a new staircase and elevator which increases the roof's capacity, as well as that of the building generally.

Recently however, there have been some problems identified within the building by Aedifica which has significantly delayed the delivery of the project. We have had meetings with the city of Montreal as well as our consultants at Deloitte to find the best way to move forward as these issues were not able to be identified prior to the beginning of construction.

CSU Services

Advocacy Centre

Written by Sophie Stone, Advocacy Manager

Mandate

The Concordia Student Union (CSU) Advocacy Centre (AC) provides students with information and consultations (consults) on their rights as students within the framework of the institution they attend, helping students navigate Concordia's bureaucracy, and representing students in disciplinary interviews and hearings in the application of Concordia's Academic Code of Conduct (ACC) and Concordia's Code of Right and Responsibilities (CoRR). It also provides support and helps in nearly all the endeavors that students may have to engage in within the University. Our student advocates are experts in the University's structure, procedures, policies and bureaucracies and can help students in navigating through them. **Consults that become cases – i.e. they require several steps and follow-up** – are grouped into six (6) case categories: Academic Misconduct, Code of Rights and Responsibilities, Hearings, Student Requests, Complaints, and General

Consultations. Complex Consultations are cases that directly involve 3 or more students or that involve a student with 3 more active case types at once.

Fee-Levy Increase

The AC proposed a referendum question for a fee-levy in both the CSU 2024 By-Elections and the GSA 2024 By-Elections. The former passed and the AC fee-levy for undergraduate students increased from \$0.50 per credit to \$0.60 per credit, effective as of the Winter 2025 semester. The latter did not pass. The AC proposed a referendum question for a fee-levy increase for GSA members again in the GSA 2025 Elections. The question passed pending final results. The increase in revenue is needed in order to maintain operations at the current capacity, given exceptionally high case numbers last academic year and again this academic year. The AC, thanks to increased revenue, has never had to turn away any undergraduate or graduate student needing assistance so far.

Outreach

The AC continued its practice of class presentations in the Fall 2024 semester and Winter 2025, focusing on undergraduate classes in Fall and graduate classes in Winter. We visited a total of 19 classes in Fall 2024 and 7 classes in Winter 2025. The AC hopes to increase class presentations to 50 per semester in the 2025-2026 academic year now that revenue has increased and there is more staff available to give the presentations, despite the beginning of semesters also being a busy period in the office. The AC also participated in tabling during Fall Orientation. The AC also continues to collaborate with Concordia Homeroom as well which has been a very useful outreach initiative.

Hiring

In order to keep up with high case numbers, especially given unprecedented high CoRR case numbers, the AC has hired a second full-time Lead Student Advocate in order to maintain operations with so many more complex and demanding. CoRR cases are often too complex for part-time staff who can manage one max 2 with their work hours and experience level.

Projects

- The CSU AC is part of Concordia's Student Service Station – a Concordia run weekly drop-in meeting allowing students to meet multiple university offices and departments at once. Throughout the 2022-2023 academic year, the CSU AC has had an advocate present every week at Student Service Station to answer student questions and refer them to the Advocacy Centre when a case needs to be open.

- The Academic Code of Conduct (ACC) was meant to go under review in 2020. This was delayed due to the Covid-19 pandemic. This process had finally begun in Winter 2023 and the CSU AC was on in the subcommittee for its review, but the new ACC has still not come into effect.

Support for Graduate Students

Since Fall 2022, graduate students have been paying a fee-levy directly to the CSU AC in order to have continuous support like undergraduate students. However, more support is needed as graduate student cases made up 20% of the total case load this academic so far, yet total fees contributed by graduate students only account for max 14% of revenue from student fee-levies for the CSU AC, meaning that graduate students benefit from support paid by undergraduate students. With high case numbers and increasing demand by graduate students, the AC is hoping with the current GSA 2025 Election results, that funds will balance more and the AC will be able to meet the increased demand by graduate students without diminish support for undergraduate students. This is on top of the fact that graduate student cases are also much more complex than undergraduate student cases.

Cases

- Case numbers have been consistently high every semester since last academic year. We attribute this to both students' increased awareness of CSU services and various events on campus and in student politics that have made it necessary for students to have access to independent representation.
 - ❑ Fall 2022 - **89**
 - ❑ Winter 2023 – **187 (record high at the time)**
 - ❑ Summer 2023 - **131**
 - ❑ Fall 2023 – **127**
 - ❑ Winter 2024 – **192 (record high since beginning of service)**
 - ❑ Summer 2024 – **136**
 - ❑ Fall 2024 – **152**
 - ❑ Winter 2025 - **186 and counting (record high will likely be beat by end of semester)**
- Before 2023, the AC on average handled around 100 cases per semester, give or take, with Winter semester typically being the busiest semester each year. Every semester as of 2023 onwards has consistently had over 125 cases, often pushing close to 200 in Winter.
- Record high number of CoRR cases this year - **59**

<p>Academic year 2024-2025 as of April 25th (ending soon on May 9th)</p> <p>Consults (total): 728</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Cases: 475 ➤ Inquiries : 253 <p>Monthly case average: 40</p>	<p>Calendar year 2024</p> <p>Consults (total): 763</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Cases: 478 ➤ Inquiries: 285
<p><u>Total number of Summer 2024 Cases: 136</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Case count highest in May as usual (77) ➤ Case count lowest in July this year (17) ➤ Case count unusual high in August (33) when most University staff go on vacation 	
<p><u>Total number of Fall 2024 Cases: 152</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Case numbers very high this September (51) ➤ Case count in November and December high (37 each) ➤ Case count lowest in October this Fall (28) 	
<p><u>Total number of Winter 2023 Cases as of April 25th (ongoing until May 9th): 186</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Case numbers very high this April (52), but expected as graduation approaches ➤ Case count lowest in February this Winter (26) 	

CASE TYPE	NUMBERS as of April 25th (out of 475 total in 2024-2025) (ongoing until May 9th)
Academic Misconduct	73
Code of Rights and Responsibilities	59
Hearing	16
Student Request	112
Complaint	16

General Consultation	194
Complex Consultation	5

The Legal Information Clinic (LIC)

Written by Walter Chi-Yan Tom, LIC Manager

Mandate

The CSU Legal Information Clinic (LIC) is a free service that provides legal information, referrals, and accompaniment in both French and English to undergraduate and more recently, graduate Concordia students. The LIC offers information related to issues on immigration, discrimination, human and civil rights, fines, sexual violence, consumer protection, small claims, contracts, business and many other areas of law.

The LIC's mandate of access to justice also encompasses community outreach and collaborative projects with community organizations or other CSU departments to address systemic racism and discrimination.

Survivor-Centered, Trauma-Informed Approach

The LIC dedicates a significant amount of time to each case, ranging from 2-8 hours for simpler cases and more extensive time for more complex cases. On average, clients require multiple consultations, appointments, and follow-ups for legal information and assistance with complex and sensitive issues. The LIC works with Sexual Assault and Resource Centre (SARC) to facilitate training for staff and volunteers at the LIC, which is trauma-informed and survivor-centered, particularly for cases involving sexual violence, discrimination, and trauma.

Wellness and Empowerment Model

The LIC uses a wellness and empowerment model to check the well-being and safety of the student clientele and to take the necessary time and care to listen to them, their questions, their frustrations, their confusion and to help them arrange their thoughts. With the assistance of supervising lawyers and law students, we initially meet and help clients to organize their documents and the facts pertaining to their situation, to understand their various needs and issues, both legal and non-legal, such as stress, trauma, academics, mental health, immigration

status or other difficulties affecting them in their immediate lives. The LIC carefully explains and educates students through legal information, research and examples on all their possible options so that they can come to a fully informed decision themselves on which choices are best for them, especially since they will ultimately bear the consequences of their decisions.

Enhanced Clinic Accessibility through Hybrid System

Following structural modifications to enhance student accessibility to the LIC during the pandemic, the LIC implemented a hybrid system. During its open office hours, the LIC's administrative assistants maintain a physical presence at the LIC to facilitate walk-in bookings. The remaining LIC team members operate virtually or in person throughout the week. Typically, appointments and meetings are conducted via Microsoft Teams from Monday to Friday; while allowing students the option of scheduling in-person consultations, should they request them. This transition to a hybrid system enabled students to access LIC services from the convenience and safety of their homes, accommodated mobility-challenged clients, and extended services to students residing overseas or outside of Montreal.

Legal Network, Legal Fee Fund, and Legal Representation

Although the LIC and its law student volunteers cannot act as lawyers for clients, the LIC does offer legal representation and legal advice to students through our Legal Network list. We refer students to qualified and experienced lawyers and advocates who are community-oriented and engaged. The LIC has an annual budget line of about 18000\$ for Legal Fee Funding which the Clinic provides to clients who, in addition to our legal information services, truly need a lawyer for legal representation and advice, especially if they do not qualify for government legal aid which pays for their lawyer's legal fees and costs.

Of the cases that benefited from the LIC Legal Fee Fund from May 2024 to April 2025, legal representation and fees were provided for twelve grad and undergrad students on the following matters:

- Assisting and defending student protestors with criminal and litigation lawyers particularly those involved in the Gaza humanitarian crisis.

- Sexual & racial discrimination and harassment in the workplace.
- Reviewing Concordia policies on sexual violence following a lawsuit by a survivor of sexual violence on campus.
- Pursuing a civil lawsuit against the City of Montreal for police brutality and racism towards Black students, despite the Quebec Human Rights Commission's refusal to proceed.
- Filing a lawsuit against Concordia and the City of Montreal police for gross negligence by a survivor of sexual violence on campus.
- Providing legal defense for a Black student criminally charged and assaulted by a racist Concordia security guard during a sports activity on campus.
- Assisting a Palestinian refugee with Immigration Canada's overly restrictive Special Measures for Gaza to reunite with his wife, who was at risk in Gaza, and successfully joining him in Montreal.
- Assisting a student pursue an employer for discrimination based on religion in an employment case.
- Ongoing legal representation for racial profiling and victim of police gunfire case.
- Assisting a student for an online intimidation and sexual harassment case.
- Assisting a transgender student for a RAMQ discrimination and gender identity case.

All of these complex cases involved clients who were traumatized and at risk, and whom the LIC has consistently supported, in addition to providing them with legal representation. In total, the LIC provided \$24,951.27 dollars in legal fee funding to 12 Concordia students' legal cases to cover the costs of their legal representation. Of these 12 students, 8 were undergraduate students, 2 were graduate students, 1 was a community member, and 1 was an undergraduate alumnus.

Statistics

Number of Cases Handled (311)

From May 2024 to April 2025, the LIC has handled a **total of 311 cases**. These cases involved **231 undergraduate** students, **58 graduate** students, 3 undergraduate alumni, 6 graduate alumni,

10 community members, and 3 Concordia staff members. This figure does not include the multiple appointments and follow-ups required for each case.

Number of Hourly Appointments (497)

Due to the complexity of their cases, many students require more than one appointment to address their concerns. From May 2024 to April 2025, the LIC had approximately 497 appointments, with an average duration of 1 hour per appointment.

Research, Case Management, and Student Communications (at least 1000 hours)

In addition to the time spent during appointments, volunteer law students and supervising lawyers allocate approximately 2-4 hours per case to legal information research, case management, and communication with students.

Fields of Law for All Student Categories

The LIC handled cases in various legal fields, including **immigration (approximately 29%)**, **criminal/civil penal infractions and fines (approximately 24%)**, with the remainder of the cases dealing with; harassment, discrimination, sexual violence, family law, business, contracts, intellectual property, and civil disputes. This figure excludes community outreach and collaborative projects with community organizations or other CSU departments.

Anti-islamophobia Campaign

In collaboration with Concordia's Muslim Student Association (MSA), the LIC developed a questionnaire and successfully launched a contest and campaign against Islamophobia during Fall Orientation 2024. Over 200 students responded to the questionnaire whose goal was to sensitize and encourage Concordia students and community about the nature and impact of Islamophobia and to encourage the reporting of Hate Crimes and incidents. The LIC also worked with the MSA to lobby the University to be more inclusive in its consultative committee on Campus Security, and to allow a place for the voices of Muslim students who are a particularly vulnerable group at Concordia.

Defense of Student Protestors

Since May 2024, the LIC has spent much time assisting and defending student protestors particularly those involved in the Gaza humanitarian crisis. Whether it be the McGill Encampment or the multiple protests held at Concordia, Concordia students have been continuously intimidated, harassed, detained, and arrested by the police or Concordia security. In particular, the LIC has examined how Concordia Security guards, who are not legally law officers such as the police, have exceeded the legal limits of their powers for citizen's arrest. In this context, the LIC provided several info sessions on *Citizen's Rights vs Police and Private Security Guards* over the past year to student and community groups at Concordia, such as GSA-CREW International Students and Workers Know your Rights info session, Discordia, CJLO and the Link. Moreover, the LIC provided Know your Rights tools such as its Police and Rights Card educating students on their Civil Rights, and how to deal with Concordia Campus Security guards and the legal limits of their powers for citizen's arrest.

Immigrations Changes and Info Sessions

The LIC provided ongoing support and information to international students on the many confusing, arbitrary and unfair applications of federal and Quebec immigration policies and procedures to their immigration files. However, the main focus of the LIC from May 2024 – April 2025 was dealing with the new provincial immigration reforms implemented in November 2024 and how the new rules unfairly discriminated against non-francophone international students studying in English educational institutions and excluded them from immigrating to Quebec. Two immigration info sessions on the changes in Quebec immigration law as well as federal immigration law were given by the LIC with a renowned immigration lawyer, Me Ho-Sung KIM, who answered the questions and concerns of the many undergrad and graduate students who participated (more than 100).

Special Immigration Measures for Gaza- CBA Pro Bono Initiatives

One of the community initiatives continued from the previous year to this year was the LIC's collaboration with the Canadian Bar Association to provide legal assistance to individuals affected by the dire and urgent situation in Gaza.

Community vigil, outreach and grief counselling for Filipino Lapu-Lapu Day Tragedy

Following the horrible Lapu-Lapu Day tragedy on Saturday April 28, 2025 in Vancouver where a young man with serious mental health issues drove a SUV car through a crowded Filipino festival killing eleven people and injured dozens of others, the LIC had been asked by members of the Filipino community in Montreal to assist with the organizing of a community vigil on Monday April 29, 2025 along with the outreach and provision of grief counselling resources to Filipino youth and families. This tragedy underlines the horrible problems and consequences that could result from lack of appropriate social service resources for people with serious mental health issues. Unfortunately, some politicians were trying to use this tragedy for their tough on crime and increased policing platforms.

The Off-Campus Housing and Jobs Resources Centre (HOJO)

Written by Leanne Ashworth, HOJO Manager

Mandate

The CSU off-campus Housing & Job Resource Centre (HOJO) empowers Concordia students by guiding them through the complexities of local housing and job markets. HOJO aims to educate and support students on Quebec's tenant and worker rights, provide insight into provincial and municipal regulations, and help them navigate workplace expectations, and the intricacies of the rental environment. We help students when they are searching for housing and jobs and with issues they may face while renting & working.

HOJO assistants are Concordia students trained to deliver our services through one-on-one consultations, workshops, and outreach events across both campuses, ensuring personalized support and knowledge to meet students' needs.

Expanding Job Search Resources

In response to the rising cost of living, including increased grocery and rent prices. HOJO has seen that a substantial number of students struggling to seek employment in Montreal. To address this, we streamlined our employment and housing search processes internally. Additionally, with funding from CCSL, we have enhanced our HOJO classifieds website by outreaching to local employers to promote our job search platform.

Over the past year, we have conducted 367 1-on-1 meetings with students to help with their employment search. We also hosted 12 workshops on job search and labour standards. Notably, we collaborated on four of these workshops with Youth Employment Services (YES) to address students' difficulties in reaching employers directly, as applying online for any job becomes the norm. Many send dozens of resumes for entry level work and receive no response. YES educated HOJO staff and workshop attendees on the widespread use of Applicant Tracking Systems software which filters cover letters and resumes. YES supplied many useful strategies to get through the pre-screening process, including how to correctly format these documents for greater success, which can make all the difference.

Successful Refuse Your Rental Increase campaign

The high cost-of-living crisis many students are struggling with has been exacerbated by the government of Quebec's proposed average rental increase of 5.9%. In response, HOJO launched a 3-month long series of weekly info-sessions both in-person & online to educate and engage with students who were questioning proposed increases. We also tabled at both campuses to reach out to students and let them know the process to refusing or negotiate their lease renewal.

Improvements to Internal Processes

This year we worked to make our intake process more efficient. As a result, the tracking and reporting of students' concerns is now more detailed and we have been able to reduce back and forth scheduling emails. We also adapted our office workflow to prioritize walk-in meetings as opposed to scheduled meetings. This has allowed students to meet with us on a first-come first-serve basis. Students have responded extremely well to this initiative, and we see this continuing in the future.

HOJO Activities

- **2,147 Total new cases** from June 1, 2024 - April 25, 2025.

- **Email correspondence:** We responded to 4,778 **emails** from students seeking assistance with off-campus housing and part-time job inquiries.
- **Classifieds website moderation:** We reviewed **1,510 new user accounts and ads** for *HOJO Classifieds* (classifieds.csu.qc.ca). The busiest time for our website has been the spring, summer and beginning of the fall semester.
- **On-campus Outreach** We spoke with **779 Students** at **24** Outreach Events on SGW and Loyola campuses to inform students about HOJO's services including our Refusing your Rental Increase campaign and Job Search project

Individual Student Consultations

- Tenants' Rights: 1053
- Job Search 32
- Housing Search 220
- Workers' Rights: 150

Assistance via E-mail:

- Tenant Rights Issues: 2,377
- Housing Search: 204
- Job Search: 369
- Worker Rights Issues: 108
- Other: 172

Outreach & Workshops

- On-campus outreach events: 24
- Housing Search & Tenant Rights Workshops: 27
- Job Search & Worker Rights Workshops: 12
- Total students reached through tabling & workshops: 1455

Key Challenges Addressed:

- **Engaging Students through in-person outreach events-** Due to current limitations in marketing our services online, our office has focused successfully on connecting with students through tabling & other outreach events.

- **Insalubrity of affordable apartments-** we worked with many students in pushing for the maintenance of their units as it is more affordable for students not to move if possible, during their studies due to large increases when new leases are signed.
- **Housing precarity due to affordability** this year we continued to meet with students facing emergency housing need and referred many to the CSU transitional housing project, for short-term housing relief. The project again maintained full occupancy throughout the year.

Daycare

Written by Angela Meo, Daycare Manager

The CSU Daycare and Nursery is located on Bishop next to the LB Building, between St-Catherine and De Maisonneuve. A high-quality, inclusive daycare service is offered to student parents' children as well as families in the community.

Investing in our high-quality program remains a huge priority to us. This year we will receive a 2.50\$ fee-levy from all GSA members which will be implemented in fall 2025. There is also the potential to receive a fee-levy increase from the CSU members. This extra money will help in the general maintenance of the daycare, ensuring staff pay increases and refreshing our materials.

The staff has been stable for the past year, all educators that hold a position are permanent employees of the center. They benefit from the CSU health/dental plan as well as a retirement savings plan set up last year.

The Victorian style building that the daycare calls home need major renovations and will be placed on a 3-year plan with Concordia facilities management. The roof, back façade and stairs inside the daycare need to be repaired.

CSU DROP-IN DAYCARE

The drop-in daycare is in full operation since fall 2023. This pilot project that was supposed to end May 31, 2024, has been extended for an undetermined period. To date the CSU has received almost 200k in financing from the Family Ministry to support this initiative.

Since the project was off to a slow start (low enrolments) the Board of Directors have decided to suspend the commercial lease of the current location (1800 de Maisonneuve) and find an alternative on the Concordia campus. Discussions have been had with the Observation Nursery (dept. of Education) to move into their space located at the Grey Nuns annex. Being on campus will allow the center to charge parents less per blocks and help the Observation Nursery recruit families. If everything goes as planned, the drop-in will move in September 2025 and have an infant and toddler classroom.

The CSU Daycare and Nursery alongside the CSU Drop-In center hope to continue to complement each other and help parents find the support they need to study all while managing a family.

Reception

CSU Space Usage

The CSU provides event, meeting and tabling spaces for the Concordia community at-large.

Conference Room

The **Modular Conference Room** (H711.4) is located within the main CSU office space, to the left of the reception area when walking in.

This private space is used for meetings held by CSU staff, executives, council and committees. It is also open to any registered student groups and fee-levy groups at Concordia. Apart from meetings, it can also be used to host workshops, presentations, trainings, interviews, and operates as a screening center for health service pop-ups.

In the current year, there have been **359 reservations** made for the Modular Conference Room. Predominantly, it has been utilized for meetings, accounting for 85% of its usage.

MODULAR CONFERENCE ROOM	NUMBER OF BOOKINGS		
	2022-2023	2023-2024	% Change
TOTAL	245	359	47%
TYPE OF EVENTS			
Event	3	43	1333%
Meeting	183	307	68%
Lecture or Workshop	59	9	-85%

Information Tables

The **Mezzanine Information Tables** are a set of four tables located on the second floor (mezzanine) of the Hall Building. Each table is separated by a corkboard display cases, so that multiple groups can make use of the space at once.

The tables can be booked by student groups, University departments or offices, and students conducting class projects or surveys. During the CSU elections, these tables are particularly useful for candidates to disseminate their electoral platforms to students in a casual and friendly setting.

Throughout the year, we've recorded a total of **571 bookings** for the Mezzanine Information Tables. The most prevalent activities hosted were club activities, constituting 87% of the total usage.

CSU MEZZANINE INFORMATION TABLES	NUMBER OF BOOKINGS		
	2022-2023	2023-2024	% Change
TOTAL	333	571	71%
TYPE OF ACTIVITIES			
Bake Sale	27	28	4%
Club Activity / Event Promotion	223	498	123%
Class Project / Research Study	34	2	-94%
Elections	46	31	-33%
Other Fundraising	3	12	300%

The **Kiosk** is located on the second floor of the Hall building. It is the large, V-shaped table made of wood and rooted firmly in place, in between the freight elevator and the Mezzanine tables, to the left of the Hive Café. It is used for small local businesses to market their wares, non-profit organizations to fundraise, or as an information booth for members of the Concordia community. Internal reservations are made at no cost, whereas external ones are reservable at a rate tailored to the type of business wishing to book the Kiosk.

Throughout the year, we've recorded a total of **63 bookings** for the Kiosk, marking a substantial increase of nearly 5 times compared to the previous year. The most prevalent activities hosted were club activities, constituting 79% of the total usage.

CSU KIOSK	NUMBER OF BOOKINGS		
	2022-2023	2023-2024	% Change
TOTAL	11	63	473%

TYPE OF ACTIVITIES			
Club Activity / Event			
Promotion	7	50	614%
Sales	4	13	225%

Event Spaces

The **Large Lounge** (H701) is located on the seventh floor of the Hall building, to the left of the entrance to the main CSU office space. It is a large, open space that can be delegated into sections by movable cork boards, but still remains public and not private. The Lounge is open to registered student groups, and any recognized body at Concordia. Groups can book the space for rehearsals, events, meetings, talks, workshops, etc.

This year saw a notable increase in activities within the Lounge, with **179 bookings**. We are nearing the average booking numbers from pre-pandemic periods. Among these bookings, social events, make up a significant portion, accounting 43% of the bookings. These consist of a wide array of social gatherings, including religious gatherings, lunches, dinners, parties, and promotional events for clubs.

CSU LOUNGE	NUMBER OF BOOKINGS		
	2022-2023	2023-2024	% Change
TOTAL	134	179	34%
TYPE OF ACTIVITIES			
Dance	14	10	-29%
Fair or Exhibit	7	3	-57%
Meeting		5	
Practice	16	60	275%
Social	75	77	3%
Speaker Event	22	24	9%

The **Cafeteria** (H718) is located on the seventh floor of the Hall building, across from the CSU Comms Room (H725). It is a medium-sized, open space that provides more privacy than the Large Lounge, but remains public. The Cafeteria is open to registered student groups, and any recognized body at Concordia for rehearsals, events, meetings, talks, workshops, etc.

This year saw a notable increase in activities within the Cafeteria, with **17 bookings**. The Cafeteria's low popularity is attributed to its small size and location in a low-traffic area; it

does not attract as many bookings as the Lounge, which is larger and located in a high-traffic area. However, the Cafeteria has a lot of potential for growth and expansion.

CSU CAFETERIA	NUMBER OF BOOKINGS		
	2022-2023	2023-2024	% Change
TOTAL	5	17	240%
TYPE OF ACTIVITIES			
Information Session		3	
Meeting		1	
Practice	1	10	900%
Social		3	
Speaker Event	4		

The **Art Nook** is located on the seventh floor of the Hall building, outside room number H725. It is the small, open space directly in front of the Comms Room, situated between the CSU main office and the Legal Information Clinic. What makes the Art Nook unique is the open access to art materials, making this space art-friendly, and a good resource for preparing signage for events, art installations, protests, demonstrations, etc. The Art Nook can be reserved by registered student groups, or members of the Concordia community at-large to hold meetings and workshops. Please note, however, that priority is given to student groups.

This year, we had **33 bookings** in the Art Nook, with meetings and social events dominating the schedule. The Art Nook is an essential space for small-scale events. Despite its relatively lower frequency of bookings, it stands out as an excellent last-minute option due to its lenient booking requirements compared to those of the Lounge and Cafeteria.

	2022-2023	2023-2024	% Change
TOTAL	31	33	6%
TYPE OF ACTIVITIES			
Exhibit		1	
Meeting	3	17	467%
Social	25	15	-40%

Speaker Event

3

CSU Emergency Food Fund

The CSU Emergency Food Fund program was launched in January 2022, initially offering food vouchers in the form of gift cards valued at \$75 for each individual's case. Students had the opportunity to apply for up to two vouchers per semester. Our process changed due to the pandemic and inflation. The funds are now distributed by means of an interac e-transfer in the amount of 75 dollars. Students may apply once per semester.

The food vouchers we provide are for currently enrolled students facing emergency circumstances, requiring proof of ID and class schedule upon application. Among those who access this service are young student parents, people with precarious living arrangements or lacking permanent address, and members of other marginalized communities.

We emphasize that students are not obligated to disclose their personal financial situation to CSU staff. Our goal is to establish a non-judgmental, safe environment for all students in need. However, we ask that when students access this service, they fairly evaluate their own needs and the needs of others, given the limited resources of the fund and the increasing demand for this service.

EMERGENCY FOOD FUND	NUMBER OF REQUESTS		
	2022- 2023	2023- 2024	% Change
TOTAL	35	28	-20%
TYPE OF ACTIVITIES			
Arts and Science	15	14	-7%
Fines Arts	7	3	-57%
Gina Cody School of Engineering and Computer Science	8	8	-
Independent	1		-100%
John Molson School of Business	4	3	-25%

Pick Up Location for HIV Self-Testing Kits

The CSU office is proud to be a pickup location for the *I'm Ready* research program, a program we believe could be a game-changer in putting an end to the HIV epidemic in Canada.

I'm Ready is a national HIV self-testing research program that is distributing 50,000 free HIV self-testing kits and offering support to Canadians. The self-test kits can be ordered via the *I'm Ready* app, which aims to collect anonymous data to improve HIV testing and care. As for resources and peer support, they can be accessed on the sister app, *I'm Ready Talk*. All Concordia students are invited to register through the app and get access to up to 3 HIV self-testing kits.

HR/EDI Services

Written by Kareem Rahaman, General Coordinator

The Concordia Student Union has selected TROIS Collective, a Toronto-based HR consulting firm, as its human resources partner after years of searching for an HR firm. Following a thorough review process, TROIS Collective demonstrated the experience and capabilities needed to strengthen the CSU's HR operations.

The firm's co-founders bring complementary expertise valuable to our organization. Isabelle Morin holds both CPA and CPHR designations, offering insight into financial and human resource considerations. Jasmine Cumberland contributes significant experience in organizational development across various institution sizes. Their combined background positions them to understand the specific needs of a student union environment.

TROIS Collective will guide in several key operational areas:

- Performance management systems
- Policy development and implementation
- Employee training programs
- Organizational development
- Recruitment and retention strategies

The firm's experience working with both small organizations and larger institutions demonstrates their ability to develop scalable solutions. Their approach emphasizes practical implementation methods that align with existing operational structures. Additionally, their capability to work in both English and French supports effective communication across our organization.

This partnership represents a measured step toward strengthening the CSU's organizational framework which has long been referred to as a weakness of the organization.

Health and Dental Plan

Written by Kareem Rahaman, General Coordinator

After careful evaluation of insurance providers at the beginning of the mandate, the Concordia Student Union has secured a two-year rate guarantee with Desjardins Financial Security for our student health and dental coverage. The decision to conduct this RFQ was made so that the CSU would not have to run a fee levy to increase H&D plan fees and the outcomes of this project resulted in significant savings for students in the coming years.

Cost Analysis

The total projected annual plan cost for 2024-2026 will be \$218.90 per student, comprising \$114.64 for health coverage and \$104.26 for dental coverage. With the CSU's administrative fee of \$3.00, the total required amount comes to \$221.90 per student. This represents a slight decrease from our current plan fee of \$225.00, resulting in a reserve of \$3.10 per student.

Desjardins Financial Security was selected as our insurance provider for several compelling reasons. First, their two-year rate guarantee offers important stability in student fees during a period of broader economic uncertainty. Second, their base rate for combined health and dental coverage is competitive within the student insurance market.

The plan maintains comprehensive coverage while introducing enhanced services, including:

- Travel insurance at \$9.72 per student
- Student Assistance Plan (EmpowerMe) at \$7.56
- Gender Affirmation Care coverage at \$9.00
- Accidental Death & Dismemberment coverage at \$1.68

Maple (Virtual Telemedicine)

During the 2023-2024 academic year, the Concordia Student Union's virtual care program served 3,462 primary account holders and 274 dependents, delivering 3,165 primary care consultations with an average satisfaction rating of 4.65 out of 5 stars.

The platform maintained excellent service standards with an average wait time of just 20 minutes and consultation duration of 15 minutes. Most consultations (72.07%) occurred on weekdays, with substantial weekend availability (20.28%) and overnight access (5.94%), ensuring comprehensive coverage for students' varying schedules.

The program effectively addressed various healthcare needs, with prescription services being the primary reason for visits (55.5%), followed by skin problems (13.9%) and cold/flu symptoms (13.2%). The service processed 2,088 prescriptions and issued 396 lab requisitions, demonstrating its capability to handle both routine and complex medical needs.

Survey data revealed that without this service, 38.37% of users would have visited walk-in clinics, while 22.97% would not have sought care at all. Additionally, 17.70% would have consulted family doctors, and 10.18% would have visited emergency rooms, indicating the program's success in reducing pressure on traditional healthcare services.

Health and Dental Insurance Plan Challenges

Written by Kareem Rahaman, General Coordinator

Historically, the University has provided administrative support for the CSU's Health and Dental Insurance Plan since its inception in the 1990s. This arrangement included transferring necessary student data to insurance providers. However, in August 2023, the University abruptly ceased this data transfer, citing privacy concerns related to Law 25, which took effect on September 22, 2023.

This sudden policy shift created an urgent situation, as students would be unable to use their insurance despite paying for it. Despite the University's limited cooperation, representatives from the CSU and Studentcare developed a workable, if imperfect, solution to maintain coverage for members.

The University's decision appears linked to an ongoing class action lawsuit in which Concordia University is named as a defendant alongside Desjardins and the Alliance pour la Santé Étudiante au Québec (ASEQ/Studentcare). On July 27th, Concordia's senior legal counsel informed us of this lawsuit, which alleges non-compliance with applicable laws regarding student health and dental plans. Similar legal actions have emerged at other Quebec institutions, with more likely forthcoming.

While the CSU isn't named as a defendant, we were notified due to clause 5.1 in our Memorandum of Agreement with Concordia, which establishes that the CSU bears sole responsibility for administering the insurance plan, with the University performing only administrative functions. Upon receiving this notification and consulting with legal counsel, we've initiated a thorough investigation.

Since last year however, we have now been able to come up with a workable solution going forward with the university to ensure the transfer of data. Though this process took many months, all parties feel comfortable with the solution and can all agree that it is in the best interest of the students.

The Core Issue: Opt-Out vs. Opt-In

The fundamental issue in this lawsuit concerns how student insurance plans operate in Quebec. Currently, eligible students are automatically enrolled (opt-out model) but can withdraw and receive a refund regardless of alternative coverage. The plaintiff contends this system violates students' rights and proposes an opt-in alternative.

The lawsuit includes all CEGEP and university students automatically subscribed to health, medical, or dental insurance plans. Specifically, the plaintiff claims the defendants acted illegally by:

1. Enrolling students in group insurance without obtaining consent
2. Billing students without consent and without clearly stating the optional nature of the coverage
3. Setting arbitrary opt-out deadlines not based on legislation, regulations, or member consent
4. Failing to provide policy documentation to members

For clarity, the CSU negotiates the plan while ASEQ administers it. Concordia collects fees from qualifying students and transfers both funds to the CSU and necessary data to ASEQ. Students can opt out and receive refunds to their student accounts. All relevant information is available on the CSU website, and students can contact Studentcare directly with questions.

Implications of an Opt-In System

The plaintiff essentially advocates for replacing the current opt-out system with an opt-in model, which would likely undermine the viability of student association insurance programs. The affordability of these plans depends on widespread participation to distribute risk and lower per-student costs.

An opt-in system would likely fail for three key reasons:

1. Financial constraints: Students without immediate health concerns would likely decline coverage to save money
2. Administrative overload: Students juggling multiple responsibilities at semester start might forget to enroll
3. Adverse selection: Only those with existing or anticipated health issues would opt in, increasing risk for insurers and driving up costs

The combined effect would likely be minimal enrollment and substantially higher premiums, effectively ending affordable student insurance.

Protecting Student Benefits

Access to affordable health and dental coverage represents a crucial benefit during post-secondary education. As education and living costs rise, ensuring students can access reasonably priced healthcare becomes increasingly important.

The current domestic student plan offers good value, especially compared to international student coverage. The CSU has been working to negotiate lower-cost options for international students, who currently must accept university-provided plans at non-negotiable rates without opt-out provisions.

Although the CSU isn't named in the lawsuit, we have a significant stake in its outcome and have been actively investigating this issue while collaborating with organizations sharing our position throughout the year.

Appointments Committee

Written by Moad Alhjoog and Maria Chitoroaga

The Appointments Committee is responsible for making recommendations to Council for appointments to all University bodies and/or committees, as outlined in the CSU Standing Regulations. Each CSU committee includes at least one seat designated for a student-at-large, and it is the Appointments Committee's role to receive and review applications for these positions. Once reviewed, the committee makes recommendations to Council, and if approved, the students are officially appointed to their respective committees. A similar process is followed for appointments to the University Senate, the Concordia Council on Student Life (CCSL), the Student Tribunal, and numerous other university-level bodies that reserve one or more seats for undergraduate students.

While the Appointments Committee typically reviews applications prior to each Council vote, this year we met less frequently due to a significant drop in the number of applications received. Despite this, the committee fulfilled its mandate whenever possible by ensuring transparency and accountability in the selection process.

Judicial Board

Written by Kareem Rahaman, General Coordinator

The duty of the Judicial Board is to settle disputes that may arise between Union members, officials and/or constituted bodies through the interpretation and application of the relevant Union bylaws, regulations, and policies and provincial/federal law. More specifically, the Judicial Board shall, upon the written request of any member, or member association, convene to: Interpret the CSU's bylaws and the validity of regulations and resolutions enacted by the Council; declare invalid any act of any member who through his or her action derogates from these bylaws or from the constitution of any member association of the Student Union; settle disputes on matters concerning the Student Union between its members, officials and/or constituted bodies. Additionally, it is the duty of the Judicial Board to act upon any violation to

bylaws and constitutions of member associations that comes to light stemming from an ongoing investigation, even if such violations are not directly related to the original complaint.

The Judicial Board is composed of a minimum of three, and a maximum of nine, undergraduate students who are members of the Union. Members are appointed for a term of two years or until their resignation/graduation or removal from office. A Chair is elected from the Judicial Board members, by the Judicial Board, as is a Secretary. Additionally, the Judicial Board has a Legal Adviser, appointed for a five-year mandate, who is responsible for overseeing the procedures detailed in the Judicial Board Code of Procedures and the CSU bylaws and standing regulations. The legal adviser must be a member of the Quebec Bar and is responsible for providing training to members of the Judicial Board on an annual basis related to procedure and pertinent legal doctrines including the rules of natural justice. The legal adviser also serves as a non-voting chair to hear appeals to the Judicial Board related to Annual General Elections and direct the procedure for such appeals.

Throughout the mandate there have been many attempts by the executives to staff this committee as it is necessary for the union to be governed properly. However, despite many efforts and presenting candidates, only one person has been appointed to the judicial board, still rendering it unusable at the moment.

Student Life Coordinator

Written by Moad Alhjoor, Student Life Coordinator

Fall Orientation

Written by Moad Alhjoor, Student Life Coordinator

Fall Orientation was a major undertaking and a highlight of my mandate. Planning began in the summer with the hiring of an Orientation Coordinator to support the operational load and provide linguistic support for French-language logistics. The orientation program was designed with inclusivity and engagement in mind, aiming to create a dynamic welcome for both new and returning students. Key events included:

- **Semester Kickoff at Air Commune** (September 7): Featured DJs, food, drinks, and vendors, including a guest hairstylist. It attracted large crowds and set a positive tone for the semester.
- **Soccer Tournaments at Loyola Campus** (Sept 7 & 14): In collaboration with All Star Xperience, these events encouraged sportsmanship and community.
- **Clubs and Services Fairs:** Held across both campuses to introduce students to engagement opportunities and available resources.
- **Final Party at New City Gas** (September 21): A marquee event featuring DJ Twinsick, this celebration served as the energetic closing to the orientation period.

Custom-branded CSU merchandise—tote bags, water bottles, crewnecks, picnic blankets, and bento boxes—was designed to increase CSU visibility and enhance student connection to the union.

End-of-Year Event

Written by Moad Alhjoor and Dania Zeitoun, Student Life Coordinator and Internal Coordinator

The End-of-Year Party was one of your flagship projects for the winter term, scheduled for early May. Planning began as early as January and February with consistent progress in the following areas:

- **Secured venue** and discussed budgeting and logistics.
- **Contacted DJs** and began promoting the event to ensure a lively and engaging celebration.
- Collaborated with **student clubs and individuals** to encourage participation and create a space that reflects the diversity of the student body.

The event was designed as a culminating celebration, providing a fun and inclusive space to recognize student achievements and bring the community together at the close of the academic year.

Communications Team

Written by Moad Alhjoor, Student Life Coordinator

One of my ongoing priorities throughout the year was the **restructuring and strengthening of the CSU's Communications Team**. Key milestones included:

- Hiring **two social media Directors**, who significantly enhanced the CSU's digital engagement across platforms.
- Recruiting a **Graphic Designer** to maintain visual branding and create content for campaigns, orientation, and events.
- Initiating the hiring of a **Communications Department Manager**, a new leadership role envisioned to streamline team operations and establish consistent workflows. Which will be finalized before the end of my mandate.
- Posting job calls, reviewing applications, and collaborating with other executives to ensure transparent and strategic hiring practices.

These structural improvements were part of a broader vision to build a robust communications department capable of supporting CSU campaigns, events, and student engagement more effectively.

Student Life Committee

Written by Moad Alhjoor, Student Life Coordinator

As chair of the Student Life Committee, I worked to:

- Organize meetings to establish goals and coordinate annual plans for CSU's student engagement programming.
- Oversee CSU events and campaigns under the committee's mandate.
- Collaborate with other student leaders and university departments to ensure that Student Life activities were aligned with broader campus engagement efforts. Like Collaborating with CASA for the Halloween party.

- As well as distribute bursaries for Special Project Funding.

While my focus in the fall was primarily on executing orientation, I returned to this portfolio later in the year to guide student-led projects and ensure the CSU was responsive to emerging needs

Student Handbook

Written by Moad Alhjoor, Student Life Coordinator

The Student Handbook (Agenda) was one of the most successful projects of the year in terms of student engagement, planning, and execution. This year, **7,500 physical agendas** were printed and distributed, the majority of which were picked up by students within the first few weeks of the fall semester. To support visibility and reach, the handbook was promoted both online and in-person, including through **orientation tabling events** and posts from the CSU communications team.

In preparation for the handbook, a **callout for student artwork and poetry submissions** was launched in late June. Students were invited to contribute original pieces, with the selected submissions featured inside the agenda and recognized with prizes. A total of **12 submissions** were received, and this artistic contribution helped enrich the agenda's design and make it feel like a reflection of the Concordia student body. One key outcome from the submissions was selecting a **student-designed cover**, which gave the agenda a unique and community-centered identity.

Planning began early in the summer, which ensured the agendas were ready by late August—just in time for Orientation. Despite some last-minute challenges from the printer, the **design team worked tirelessly** to meet production demands, and their efforts were essential to the agenda's success. The CSU also **set aside a batch for Winter Orientation**, anticipating continued demand in the new semester. Feedback from students has been overwhelmingly positive, with a **constant stream of pickups** reported at the CSU office in the first few weeks of fall.

Concordia Council on Student Life (CCSL)

Written by Moad Alhjoaj, Student Life Coordinator

As the Student Life Coordinator, I served as one of the undergraduate representatives on the **Concordia Council on Student Life (CCSL)**, a university-wide committee composed of faculty, staff, and students. CCSL plays an important role in shaping the student experience by reviewing and recommending initiatives related to student life, well-being, and co-curricular engagement.

Throughout the year, I participated in **monthly CCSL meetings**, where I contributed a student perspective to discussions around funding allocations, program development, and university-wide student services. One of the central responsibilities of CCSL is the **allocation of Special Project Funding (SPF)**, which supports student-led initiatives across both campuses. In this capacity, I worked with the subcommittee to **review and evaluate 64 student applications**, ensuring fairness, diversity of programming, and alignment with the Council's funding priorities.

The projects we reviewed ranged from academic conferences and student publications to cultural celebrations and mental health initiatives. Each application was carefully assessed based on its feasibility, potential student impact, and contribution to the university community. As a student representative, I made sure that proposals reflected student needs and that funding decisions were accessible and equitable.

In addition to funding responsibilities, CCSL serves as a forum for student input on various university policies and emerging student issues. I ensured that the voices of Concordia undergraduates were heard during discussions related to campus spaces, student services, and support programming.

This work was carried out in close collaboration with **representatives from the Dean of Students Office**, faculty members, and other student leaders. Our collective goal was to foster a student-centered approach to decision-making and ensure that **resources were allocated in a way that reflected the diverse needs of Concordia's student body**.

Finance Coordinator:

Financial Update

Written by Souad EL Ferjani, Finance Coordinator

The CSU is a huge organization which operates almost entirely from the fees provided by levies on student tuition. In return, the CSU provides students, its members, with a wide variety of services, student life initiatives, and representation.

The CSU has eight main budgets: Operations, Clubs, Student Space, Accessible Education, and Legal Contingency Fund (SSAELC), Advocacy, HOJO, LIC, EDI, and the Mental Health Office. All together, these various levies managed by the CSU account for approximately \$4.3 Million.

Each fee levy is assigned to a specific service that is provided by the Union. The exception to this is the Operations budget which covers the Union's day-to-day expenses such as executive salaries and expenses related to the Council.

This summer I worked to create a yearly budget that can help us face the financial hardships of this year. Due to the province's political climate and tuition increase Concordia faced a drop in enrollment which affected us as we also rely on the money from student tuition.

The initial Deficit we were facing before I started working on the budget (before I worked on reducing our expenses) was around \$460,000 which is terrible and would have been catastrophic for the CSU financial health and stability. Through the Summer I worked on minimising our expenses and cutting off any unnecessary expense while prioritising initiatives that directly help students. Alongside my finance Team I was able to reduce the deficit to \$170,000. And this budget was presented to council and ratified.

In my Summer Report I mentioned that I was going to spend the year monitoring the budget and making sure we avoid actually falling into a deficit and now I am very proud to announce that as of end of March 2025 we are officially in a **\$582 K SURPLUS** despite all the unpredicted expenses we faced.

SUMMARY				
TOTAL REVENUES	3,778,013	3,635,085	142,928	4,052,680
TOTAL EXPENSES	- 3,195,696	- 3,251,113	55,417	- 4,223,608
SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	582,317	383,972	198,345	- 170,928

The picture above depicts that actual Surplus (Revenue less expenses) vs the budgeted Surplus

- Simply put this means that we expected a annual deficit of \$170K but as of end of March we are currently at a \$580 K of Surplus.
- All the surplus money will be reinvested in CSU to ensure its future financial stability.

This huge gap can be explained by:

- Certain staff going on leave
- External funding coming in (by transferring from Scotia bank to Desjardin we incurred around \$100 K in gain due to interest)
- Delays in hiring
- Initial overbudgeting of expenses

2023-2024 Audited Statements:

Our budget gets audited by MNP; they will also be our auditors next year as we have a 3-year contract with them. I already presented this to council in November but here is a summary of it:

Concordia Student Union - Syndicat des étudiants et étudiantes de Concordia Non-Consolidated Statement of Operations

For the year ended May 31, 2024

	<i>Student Space, Accessible Education, and Legal Contingency Fund</i>	<i>General Fund and Invested in capital assets</i>	2024 Total	2023 Total
Revenues				
Student membership fees	-	3,851,043	3,851,043	3,532,944
Student space fees	330,726	-	330,726	303,223
Health and dental plan fees (Note 7)	-	3,762,753	3,762,753	3,773,981
Deferred contributions related to capital assets (Note 6)	66,044	-	66,044	66,044
	396,770	7,613,796	8,010,566	7,676,192
Expenses				
Administrative	42,541	3,774,190	3,816,731	3,282,177
Financial	-	4,234	4,234	5,681
Amortization	256,477	288,100	544,577	546,041
Health plan premiums (Note 7)	-	3,989,986	3,989,986	3,728,426
Other expenses	257,230	-	257,230	760,251
	556,248	8,056,510	8,612,758	8,322,576
Deficiency of revenues over expenses	(159,478)	(442,714)	(602,192)	(646,384)
Other revenues and expenses	288,523	267,349	555,872	522,275
Deficiency of revenues over expenses	129,045	(175,365)	(46,320)	(124,109)

Concordia Student Union - Syndicat des étudiants et étudiantes de Concordia Non-Consolidated Statement of Changes in Net Assets

For the year ended May 31, 2024

	<i>Student Space, Accessible Education, and Legal Contingency Fund</i>	<i>General Fund</i>	<i>Invested in capital assets</i>	2024 Total	2023 Total
Balance, beginning of year	11,357,740	1,823,143	473,617	13,654,500	13,778,609
Deficiency of revenues over expenses	129,045	87,125	(262,490)	(46,320)	(124,109)
Capital asset acquisitions net of internal allocation (Note 8)	(45,615)	42,853	2,762	-	-
Balance, end of year	11,441,170	1,953,121	213,889	13,608,180	13,654,500

According to our auditors we had a deficit of \$175K in our operational fund and we had a total net asset of 13M

Finance Committee

Written by Souad EL Ferjani, Finance Coordinator

The Finance committee is responsible for overseeing the financial operations of the CSU. It also works as the committee which overviews the expenditures and the revenues of the union. The committee was convened multiple times this year's either to discuss finance initiatives or to approve big CSU projects.

Finance Initiatives: Small Business Bursaries:

This year in Fall, in collaboration with the councillors on this committee, we launched bursaries specifically for Concordia students running small businesses. Concordia students are known for their innovation—many successful businesses in Montreal were founded by our students. So, we thought, why not support and invest in the next generation of entrepreneurs. We received around 17 applications and 15 came to present Infront of the Finance Committee. Failure to present made the application ineligible. Students were asked to present themselves, their business and how the bursary would help them. Based on their needs the amount of the bursary was allocated. The amounts ranged from \$750 to \$1500.

In Winter we had meetings mainly to go through Projects such: Enuf, Loyola Luncheon program and funding to support CUCCR.

This is the summary outcome:

- Enuf Contract was renewed for a yearly 30 K to fight food waist on campus and to provide students with internships and work opportunities. Enuf presented us a support Letter from CASA, ASFA and FASA urging the CSU to renew their contract.
- Free Luncheon Program contract was also renewed for around \$25K to provide free lunches for Loyola students. They were rejected for a dinner Project that amounts to \$35K and a grocery program for \$60K. The reasoning behind this is that I paid off the Luncheon program all the money they were promise in the previous years, that they never got the amount totaled to around 50K.

- I personally encouraged the person responsible for this program to run to become a fee Levy group, so they stop relying on contract renewal and on Execs making sure to send them their money.
- For CUCCR, we were approached by ASFA finance Exec who was collecting funds to save CUCCR, and we accepted in contributing with \$15K.

BIPOC Committee

Written by Souad EL Ferjani, Finance Coordinator

I co-chair this committee with the Loyola Coordinator. The BIPOC Committee is composed exclusively of BIPOC students, and is responsible for helping and facilitating the planning, preparation, execution, and financing of BIPOC events and initiatives supported and/or organized by the CSU. When we started, we had only one Councillor sitting on this committee, so we were not able to convene but by the end of the Fall semester new councillors joined in and we were finally able to meet.

We had a budget of \$10,500. In the first meeting we decided to allocate most of the money as BIPOC bursaries and save some to organise a BAZAR where BIPOC groups and business could come together and table.

All the funding for the bursaries was voted on and given out by the councillors. We prioritised individuals who were going through financial hardships or health problems over events organised by clubs (we had some BIPOC clubs apply to this bursary). But we were still able to accept most submission that fit into the criteria. The bursaries are already sent through ADP. As for the Bazar due to constraints from administration we were not able to use spaces that are under DOS such as the Mezzanine and the Loyola Quad. We also reached out to hospitality to see if we can rent the grey nuns garden but there was no availability before May 20th (it is too late to do any event as there is no more classes).

Our last hope was to use the Terrasse on the 11th floor in EV that is run by Milieu institute, but they did not respond to our numerous emails.

So, we sadly had to cancel this event.

Standing Committee on Student Financial Insecurity

Written by Souad EL Ferjani, Finance Coordinator

The Standing Committee on Student Financial Insecurity is a 15-member Committee and I hold the one undergraduate seat. This committee is new as of this year and is tasked with developing guidelines and protocols to address student financial insecurity with a holistic approach focused on student academic success and well-being. This year, one councillor in our September Council meeting brought concerns about the contract we signed with Student Care (our insurance broker) that got accepted by Council in June. Due to his motion including a lot of mistakes and misinformation council sent this for review to the standing committee. I tried multiple times to convene this committee but the councillors sitting on it failed to fill in their availabilities or even answer the numerous emails I sent. So, after 2 months of trying the committee never convened and the subject never got brought back to council.

Fee-Levy Review Committee

Written by Leen Al Hijjawi, Loyola Coordinator & Moad Al Hjoog Student Life Coordinator

The Fee Levy Review Committee is responsible for reviewing applications from campus groups seeking funding through student fee levies. The Committee ensures that all applications meet the procedural and documentation requirements outlined in CSU policy. This year, the Fee Levy Review Committee was successfully staffed in the fall semester with four councillors. After the graduation of one member, a replacement was promptly found to ensure the committee remained fully operational.

Fall 2024 Fee Levy Applications

In Fall 2024, the Committee reviewed five fee levy applications for the by-election:

- **The Link** (non-CSU group) requested an increase of **\$0.11 per credit**. Although financial statements were submitted, a required audit was missing. As per policy, the committee rejected the application. Students later rejected the increase in the by-election, with **58.96% voting No**.
- **The Concordian** (non-CSU group) requested an increase of **\$0.10 per credit**. The application was missing a published annual report and was rejected by the committee. Students also **rejected** the increase, with **57.56% voting No**.

- **People's Potato** (non-CSU group) requested an increase of **\$0.16 per credit**. After submitting missing officer information, the application was approved by the committee. However, students rejected the increase, with **56.51% voting No**.
- **Advocacy Centre (CSU service)** requested an increase of **\$0.13 per credit**. As a CSU service, only a preamble and draft question were required, which were submitted. The committee approved the application. Students rejected the increase, with **50.73% voting No**.
- **Recreation and Athletics** requested the creation of a new fee levy of **\$1.50 per credit**. After further clarification through a representative, the application was approved. Students approved the Recreation and Athletics fee levy in the by-election, with **65.95% voting Yes**.

Winter 2025 Fee Levy Applications

In Winter 2025, the committee faced challenges convening due to communication difficulties. As a result, fee levy applications were reviewed and voted on directly at a Council meeting. The applications reviewed were as follows:

- **The Link**: Requested an increase from **\$0.21 per credit to \$0.40 per credit**, to be annually adjusted according to the Consumer Price Index (CPI), effective Winter 2025.
- **The Concordian Hockey Club**: Requested a new **\$0.30 per credit** fee levy to support Concordia's hockey programs.
- **Queer Concordia**: Requested their **first fee levy increase in over 10 years**, from **\$0.02 per credit to \$0.27 per credit**, to expand community programs, fund a gender-affirming care loan program, offer artist bursaries, and establish a full-time coordinator position.
- **HOJO (Housing and Job Bank)**: Requested an increase from **\$0.30 per credit to \$0.45 per credit** (an increase of \$0.15), to be indexed annually to the Consumer Price Index, effective Fall 2025.
- **CSU Daycare and Nursery**: Requested an increase to **\$0.50 per semester** from all CSU members to help support and sustain the service.
- **The Concordian**: Requested an increase from **\$0.19 per credit to \$0.29 per credit** (an increase of \$0.10 per credit), effective Winter 2025.
- **Electrocon**: Requested the creation of a **new \$0.39 per credit fee levy**, to be implemented with registration for Summer 2025 (2251 term) and subsequently indexed annually to inflation.

All the above applications were approved by Council and forwarded to the CEO for a Special Fee Levy Election process.

The results of the Winter 2025 Special Fee Levy Election are pending and are scheduled to be presented to the Board of Governors on May 23, 2025. If approved, the new and adjusted fee levies will be implemented starting Fall 2025.

All of this work was carried out with consistent communication and collaboration with the **Chief Electoral Officer (CEO)**, the **Chair of Council**, and the **Dean of Students (DOS) Office**. These partnerships were essential in ensuring that every step of the fee levy process from application reviews to election logistics was completed in full compliance with CSU policy and in alignment with **university-mandated timelines and procedures**. This coordination helped maintain transparency, procedural fairness, and accountability throughout both the Fall and Winter fee levy cycles.

Sustainability Coordinator

Sustainability Portfolio

Written by Maria Chitoroaga, Sustainability Coordinator

One of the Sustainability Coordinator's main responsibilities is to oversee the distribution of bursaries, awards and funding for sustainability and community related projects. The coordinator and their committee, at their core, exist to ensure that every endeavor that the CSU enterprises is as neutral for the environment and as beneficial for its immediate community as possible. At the beginning of my mandate, I have decided to sit on various committees. These committees are: The Library Service Fund Committee (LSFC), CCSL, Senate, the PUSH Fund. When time permits, I have also gotten involved in various CSU-related administrative tasks, such as hiring committees. It's important to delineate the fact that the Sustainability Coordinators' mandate can be interpreted quite liberally. Our portfolios give us the opportunity to be a support member when other coordinators have their plates full, and as Sustainability Coordinator I have tried my best to act on that whenever time permits. Lastly, throughout my mandate I have been working on various Sustainability Initiatives to better the life of Concordia Students.

Sustainability Committee

Written by Maria Chitoroaga, Sustainability Coordinator

Bursaries

Each year the CSU out 40 bursaries valued at 650\$ each. Standing Bursaries: Arts & Science, Gina Cody, Fine Arts, Independent student, JMSB, Student athlete, Outstanding contribution to Concordia Student Life, Outstanding Academic Achievement, Outstanding contribution to an external community, Student-Parent Bursary. In addition, we are distributing all 10 of Ben's Sustainability Scholarships valued at 300\$ each to students who applied for bursaries and were enrolled in a Sustainability class or Geography class.

Lastly, from all the student bursary applications, we will choose 2 recipients to give out the Indigenous Student-Parent Bursaries worth 1000\$ each. In total, by the end of May, the Sustainability committee will give out 31 000\$ worth of bursaries and scholarships.

I have already started the vetting process, but to move along the vetting process, I've created a master excel spreadsheet with the best candidates. This spreadsheet will be sent to the committee, and they will be able to review (and rate from 1-5) the candidates in their own time. I will then average everyone's scores and that's how we will determine the bursary recipients.

Committees and Portfolios

Written by Maria Chitoroaga, Sustainability Coordinator

Concordia Council on Student Life (CCSL)

I sat on this committee as a student representative. Our main mandate was to discuss student life topics, disperse funding to student-led initiatives and recognize outstanding individuals at Concordia. There are typically 7 meetings in every academic year, held once a month during the semester. I have been present at every meeting, and I have been a part of every sub-committee and been present every time they met as well. Knowing that I am sometimes the only student in the room during any given sub-committee meeting I tried my best to make my voice heard and speak up for what I thought the student body would want us to advocate for.

The Library Service Fund Committee (LSFC)

The Library Service Fund Committee was established between the Concordia Student Union and Concordia University in 2010 for the purpose of providing additional or improved library resources at the Webster and Vanier libraries. This year the executives that were involved with this committee were the Loyola Coordinator as well as me. The two other students were 2 members of the CSU council. This year the committee has been working on adding more original artworks in both libraries. Last year, the committee chose 3 pieces to display, and because they were well liked and the project was successful, we have decided to add 3 more (2 in the Webster Library and 1 in the Vanier Library).

Another initiative that the committee has introduced last year that got a “revamp” is the leisure space. This space was initially designed to encourage students to take a break and rest in-between study sessions. This space has various books, magazines, music, and board games available for students. In the Webster library, the leisure corner wasn’t in the most accessible/visible place, and it felt a little crowded, so the committee reenvisioned it. Now, the leisure space is in front of the Course Reserve room and it is much bigger and the furniture much cozier. That is also the place where one of the new original art pieces is now hanging.

This year, the committee was also tasked with updating and approving the purchase of new technology. The library will now have new iPads (with apple pens), tablets, laptops, drones, podcast equipment, 3D Camera and 3D microphones as well as VR equipment. This equipment will be available for students to loan out so that they can have all the tools they need to succeed in their courses.

Another project that is in the works (still in the early stages though) is a children’s corner. The idea behind it is to have a designated space where student-parents can come with their children and supervise them while studying. There will be children's toys, books and activities available for kids in this section.

A project that has been in the works for almost two years now are the study pods. The pods have finally been approved by Facilities, and 3 of them will be installed shortly (if they haven’t been already). These pods will offer students soundproof individual study spaces in both libraries. This committee meets quarterly, and the CSU (both councillors and executives) representatives remained committed to keep pushing ideas to make the students’ library experience better! Our last meeting of the year is on Thursday, May 1st.

Senate

This year I have also been a student representative on Senate. I have also tried to be present at as many meetings as possible (I did miss one, in February). Most of the discussions that were happening at Senate this year revolved around Concordia's Strategic Directions and how they needed to be updated to better reflect Concordia's ever-changing nature. Senate has also approved an array of new minors and certificates this year. There were some heated debates and discussions that have happened in closed sessions regarding the current political landscape, tuition hikes and, more recently, whether professors should be the ones deciding if a student can record lectures or if this right should be passed on to the accessibility centre.

PUSH Fund BoD

The PUSH Fund was founded in 2015 to transform how student housing is financed, developed, and managed in Quebec. The Fund was cofounded by the CSU, UTILE and the Chantier de l'économie sociale. The CSU has a permanent seat on the BOD of the PUSH Fund. They meet quarterly and discuss how to help student associations across Quebec create their own student housing projects. They also discuss updates of ongoing projects, policy, and governance improvements. And, recently, changes regarding PUSH Fund BOD membership which is set out to grant yearly seats to student associations that have invested into student housing with UTILE.

Sustainability Initiatives

Menstrual Equity Project

Written by Maria Chitoroaga, Sustainability Coordinator

As of 2021, the CSU advocates for accessible and sustainable menstrual products on campus. The aim of this project is to pressure Concordia University to participate in the menstrual equity movement and to encourage them to provide free menstrual care products in every women's and gender-neutral bathroom on both campuses. While this goal hasn't been entirely achieved yet (only about 10% of bathrooms have free menstrual product dispensers), the CSU has provided students with menstrual products. Since its inception, the CSU has made available: pads, tampons, diva cups, reusable pads, and period underwear for students. To make the CSU more inclusive on matters regarding menstrual and reproductive health, I have added pregnancy tests to the long array of free products that are available to students. Another product that I have

added due to popular demand is menstrual discs. I have also replenished our inventory and stocked it with as many products as I could.

Transitional Housing

Written by Samuel Helguero, Transitional Housing Project Manager

The CSU Transitional Housing Project is a unique university service in Canada for people experiencing homelessness. The CSU owns a building at 2045 Bishop whose empty units are being used to temporarily house Concordia students and community members. A Housing Project Director assists users of the service with finding permanent housing and with other financial, psychosocial, or employment needs.

Within its first year and a half of activity, the program has housed **twenty (20)** people including children and students' partners, consistently filling up the entirety of the CSU's **three (3)** units allotted to the program. **Eighteen (18)** people have already successfully graduated from the program into permanent housing with another **two (2)** expected to graduate in the next month.

The Housing Project Director not only assists new residents on a weekly basis, but coordinates with other people ineligible for the program but who still require assistance.

Number of People Using Housing Director Services: The Housing Project Director meets with people who have contacted the Housing and Job Resource Centre (HOJO) or the CSU. These people are students or community members who live in housing precarity. Either they are likely to soon lose their homes, but more commonly, have already lost their homes and are sleeping outside, in the library, in shelters, or staying temporarily with friends. The Housing Project Director has handled cases with **thirty-one (31)** different people. **Twenty (20)** people have been housed in the units of the Concordia Student Union. **Six (6)** other people were prepared to be housed in a unit but successfully found an apartment beforehand. Finally, **five (5)** people have used the Housing Project Director's services without being accepted into a unit.

Nature of the Experience with Being Unhoused: Of the thirty-one people who have used the Housing Director service, 48% were in situations where they could sleep momentarily or for a few weeks at a friend's apartment, **sixteen (16) people or 52% were sleeping in more precarious spaces and lacked social networks: sleeping in their car, the library, unsafe apartments, shelters, or outside.**

Demographics: 77% of the people who have used the services of the Housing Project Director are people of colour. Of people who ended up living in the units who are neither children or

partners (“primary users”), nearly half have been from a country found in the Middle East, and 20% from a country in Africa. This is a dramatic variance from Concordia's student demographics and contributes to an already robust body of data suggesting systemic racism and disadvantage of racialized people in Montreal and at Concordia.

Student ratio: Of primary users, ten (10) or two-thirds were students at Concordia. The other five (5) people were non-students ready and willing to have roommates. A non-student’s use of the program has never interfered with students accessing the program.

International students: Of students, six people, 60%, have been international students. In five of these six cases, it was the experience of recently arriving to the city that was directly linked to their inability to have stability in their housing: whether from the lack of a lined up apartment, or the renting of unsuitable housing which develops into an experience of abuse, inability to afford rent, or fraud.

Boundaries to Housing and Employment: Of primary users, 27% face serious boundaries to employment through the lack of a work permit or disabilities, while the rest are limited by their inability to speak French (only a third of primary users speak French) or due to their mental or physical health. As an example, one person currently in the units does not speak French, does not have work experience in Canada and is unable to work full-time due to her studies.

Graduation from Transitional Housing: The average length of stay in the transitional housing units is less than the initially projected three (3) months when the program was created.

Eighteen of the twenty people who have used the transitional housing service have successfully moved out to permanent housing! The two (2) others are currently finishing their second months in the unit and are expected to move out in the next month. The longest anyone has ever stayed in the units were two different primary users, both coming from situations of chronic homelessness, who stayed for roughly five (5) months.

Timeframe for Receiving Housing: The average estimated time for the Housing Project Director

to arrange for housing in urgent or semi-urgent situations is less than a week.

A Rapid Start: The program got off its feet quickly. The building has already received twenty (20) individuals since July 2023 and each unit is quickly filled upon re-furnishing.

An Overview of How the Program Works

The CSU’s building at 2045 Bishop has three units available for the transitional housing program. More units will become available as tenants in the building leave in October and

November.

Eligibility for the program is assessed according to an evaluation sheet. In broad strokes, the rubric assesses whether a participant is

- In a situation of urgency due to a lack of stable housing
- Lacking in support systems or housing alternatives
- Likely to no longer need transitional housing within 3 months of the program
- Tied to the Concordia community or student body
- Likely to have good relations with CSU staff

Entering the program involves:

- Disclosing a need to HOJO
- Filling out an initial intake form with a HOJO Assistant
- Filling out a second intake form at an appointment with the Housing Project Director
- Being invited into the program because of eligibility as defined by the evaluation sheet
- Signing the Transitional Housing Service Legal Agreement with the CSU & accepting the Social Code and Building Regulations
- Being introduced to the furnished unit, provided with keys, and assistance with shopping and groceries if necessary
- Weekly check-ins with program participants

Students learn about the program through using HOJO services. If a HOJO Assistant sees a student is potentially eligible for the program they describe the program and ask the student a series of questions in the HOJO Assistant Transitional Housing Intake Form. The HOJO Assistant then connects the person to the Housing Project Director. The Housing Project Director meets with the person as soon as possible to fill out the Housing Project Director Intake Form. Both intake forms include questions designed to situate the student's needs on the evaluation sheet.

The program is not advertised publicly. Although, social workers at Concordia's Bartimaeus service, some nurses, and the university's library staff are aware of the program. Without advertisement, the program has been consistently full, with the vacancy of any single unit never reaching above two months' time.

Students or community members who are determined to be eligible by the Housing Project Director based on the evaluation sheet are accepted following the Housing Project Director's

consultation with the Sustainability Coordinator and the HOJO manager.

Participants accepted into the program are invited to visit their future apartment, are read the building code, and sign a legal agreement with the Concordia Student Union under which they recognize the temporary nature of the housing and their obligations to engage in the process of transitioning out of the unit and abiding by the building's social code.

A new element to the program, introduced in the Fall 2024 semester, is the encouragement of a monthly contribution to the program of \$200 - \$300 among users to help ensure the program's stability, encourage participation from users, and to help in grant eligibility.

Weekly check-ins have allowed the Housing Project Director to continually assist students with finding employment and housing.

The Development of the Program

Starting the project included:

- Studying existing academic literature on successful transitional housing projects
- Interviewing existing organisations in and outside of Montreal
- Connecting with service providers on campus
- Development of the intake process and related forms
- Furnishing units so that they could be ready to receive students and community members

Academic Literature Review: In building a transitional housing program from scratch, it was important to study the best practices suggested by studies of transitional housing services.

Here are services that transitional housing services typically provide:

- Budgeting skills
- Job training
- Leadership skills
- Networking
- Housing referrals
- Counselling
- Needs assessment upon entry
- Periodic reassessment and progress monitoring
- Group meetings
- Resident enrollment in community-based service programs
- Housing location services
- Training in household management
- Prevocational training

- Prenatal care
- Medication monitoring
- Detoxification
- English as a second language
- Physical therapy
- Sheltered workshops
- Parents Anonymous

Criteria for acquiring housing in a situation of domestic abuse typically include:

- Being able to work toward economic self-sufficiency
- Being motivated
- And having a desire to terminate the relationship

In many programs, participants are required to:

- Open a savings account and initiate a savings plan
- Request a copy of their credit report as soon as they enter the program
- Participate in education, job training, or employment services
- For clients with mental health disabilities, receive mental health services as recommended by a mental health professional
- For clients in recovery, participate in drug and alcohol programs

The ability for people to permanently leave transitional housing and chronic homelessness often

rely on internal motivation, and the services provided by the transitional housing service:

- Staying focused on progress, feeling positive, and avoiding temptations or bad presences in their lives
- Alumni events and counselling
- Conceiving of the transitional housing as a stepping-stone

Other successful services, noted in a broad literature review, include

- Community events between tenants that decrease isolation
- Discussion of problems
- Transitional housing services should be withdrawn over time
- A good sleeping schedule (sign of improvement)
- Involvement in the development of rules (sign of improvement)

- Improved relationships with staff and others (sign of improvement)

Substance abuse and a criminal record have traditionally been reasons for denying services to applicants.

Interviewing Existing Organisations in and outside of Montreal: The organisations interviewed included:

- Comm-un
- Logifem
- Bartimeus
- Auberge sous mon toit
- Y des Femmes de Montr.al
- PAQ (Projets Autochtones du Qu.bec)
- La Maison du P.re
- Safe Housing Program, University of Alberta
- Refugee Centre

Although some organisations were not interviewed, a wealth of existing transitional housing intake and evaluation sheets were also consulted when formulating standardised questions for potential participants.

Key insights retained from these services included:

- Sample intake forms already in use
- Sample social codes for governing the use of transitional housing
- Social worker practices such as weekly check-ins, and orienting participants towards goals and methods to reach those goals
- Allowing participants to spend their first week in the transitional housing
- The need for a scoring system in the assessment of evaluation criteria
- The rapidity of the Alberta Safe Housing Program: The ability to meet a student in housing insecurity, intake them, and onboard them into housing within a day's time

The Concordia Student Union's transitional housing is meeting a core need of students and the external community. Through the program, the union has ensured that students are not forced to sleep outside, in the library, or in other circumstances that entail financial or personal precarity. The program has addressed the housing insecurity of students in a rapid, and efficient manner that has led to results of permanent stable housing in a short time period, all while being standardized according to fixed criteria and intake forms. In a short period of time, the student union has developed, implemented, and experienced success in its transitional housing program.

The continuation of the program marks a significant improvement for the student union's ability to meet student needs, particularly for students who are poor, POC, and non-citizens; improve its reputation; and enable it to advance forward in an intensifying housing crisis.

External Coordinator

Written by Danna Ballantyne, External & Mobilization Coordinator

Get Radical

Written by Julianna Smith, Campaigns Coordinator

Get Radical is an annual workshop series run by the Campaigns Department with the goal of politically educating students and encouraging them to play an active role in student organizing. The series consisted of 10-weeks of a weekly 2-hour workshop on a variety of topics covering everything from how to recruit & mobilize members for your campaign, security culture & tech security and Indigenous Solidarity. We had a solid group of students who came on a regular basis and were able to connect several students with their departmental associations or other avenues of community involvement.

We also worked with the Campaigns team at SSMU (CSU equivalent at McGill) to share skills and our experience from organizing the series so they could carry out a similar version of the workshop series on their campus during the Winter 2025 semester.

Anti-Capitalist Week

Written by Julianna Smith, Campaigns Coordinator

- Anti-Capitalist Week is an annual week of workshops run in the Winter semester by the Campaigns Department with the goal of engaging students in collective learning outside of the classroom setting to fuel their appetite for change. Formerly known as Anti-Consumerism week, the Campaigns team in collaboration with the External committee, opted to change the name to better reflect the material conditions faced by students today and to better address the root of systemic harm. The series featured 6 workshops that addressed several topics ranging from Food Sovereignty and Indigenous Solidarity to Burnout Prevent and Abolition. The series was a huge success, and we look forward to expanding upon the series in the upcoming year.

Campaigns

Written by Julianna Smith, Campaigns Coordinator

Dissolution of the Annual Campaign Structure

In May 2023, CSU Council voted to dissolve the Annual Campaign structure that the department had previously adhered to. The reasons outlined in the motion were:

- It is ineffective to develop sustainable mass mobilization from a top-down approach
- Campaign demands are rarely reached within one academic year, and they require ongoing support
- It has been proven that grassroots mobilization builds meaningful relationships in community that engages members in significant action
- For a campaign to be effective, it must be led by those most affected by the issue. For these reasons, the Annual Campaign dissolution motion determined that:
 - that the CSU no longer focuses their mobilization efforts on an annual campaign
 - that the CSU prioritizes supporting grassroots campaigns that are in alignment with the positions book. Decisions on which campaigns to support shall be governed in conversation between the campaigns department, external committee, and external and mobilization coordinator.
 - that the Campaigns department budget includes lines for relevant past campaigns in order to provide continued support.

Since the dissolution motion passed at the very end of the 2022-2023 mandate, this was the second full year since the annual campaign structure was dissolved. As such, it was still a relatively new way of operating but once again, the choice to dissolve the annual campaign was re-affirmed as it brought the department increased flexibility when it came to supporting student-led initiatives.

List of Ongoing Campaigns

Stop Tuition Hikes (Positions 1.2.1, 1.2.2, 1.4.1)

The campaign stands in opposition to the Québec government's plan to mandate increases of out-of-province tuition to a minimum of \$12 000/year and to impose a \$20 000 fee on universities for

each international student. These changes were first announced October 13, 2023, and the CSU campaigns department mobilized rapidly to oppose these changes during the previous year. As a continuation to this campaign, a report was written by the Campaigns Researcher highlighting the political conditions that allowed for the tuition hikes to be proposed. The report can be found on the CSU under the Campaigns Research section and has been widely circulated amongst student organizers. The report's analysis also includes predictions about future issues that may call for student mobilization against tuition hikes such as the expiry of the Act to Limit the Indexation of Several Government Tariffs, a law that currently limits tuition increases for Quebec residents to 3% annually, at the end of 2026. This was also done in conjunction with a feasibility study of joining the joint Concordia-McGill lawsuit against the provincial government that sought to overrule the Quebec government's budgetary rules which legislates the 2023 tuition hikes. In the end, the CSU chose not to join the lawsuit as we felt that the university's case was sufficient in representing the core issues around the tuition hikes and joining would be an unnecessary expenditure of student resources. As of April 2025, the Concordia-McGill lawsuit has won part of its case and the Quebec government has been ordered to redo its higher education budget to remove the tuition hikes for out of province students, as well as eliminating the francisation requirements. It is worth noting that the component regarding the increases and re-regularization of international student tuition did not succeed in court.

As a continuation of this campaign, the CSU facilitated several conversations amongst student organizers from the previous year to explore whether students wanted to continue this campaign. In the end, the decision was made to direct energy towards supporting the Academic Solidarity coalition to address increasing austerity and to allocate resources to mobilize against the reduction of the Loyola shuttle bus service.

Housing & Labour (Positions 1.4.1, 1.4.2, 1.6.1)

During the 2024-2025 mandate, the Campaigns team remained steadfast in our support of on and off campus union. In September, we collaborated with ASFA & FASA to publish a statement in solidarity with CUPEU workers on strike at the beginning of the academic year. In March, we published a statement in solidarity with CREW-CSN during their strike. In both cases, the team met with union leadership and offered to share resources, this included but was not limited to sharing crucial information to undergraduates about the impact of the strike, circulating printed materials in solidarity with the striking workers, and helping the striking unions access resources such as printing and art supplies for various initiatives.

Leading into the March 2025 by-elections, the campaigns team also drafted 3 referendum questions on the subject of worker solidarity to strengthen our existing beliefs around worker solidarity. All 3 positions passed with over 79% of members voting in support. One position is a general worker solidarity position, the second is explicitly in support of CREW-CSN and the third is against anti-union sentiment and union busting and endorses the Boycott Amazon campaign.

Climate Justice & Divestment (Positions 7.1, 7.2, 13.1, 13.2)

This campaign is a continuation of the 2017-18 Divestment annual campaign, and the 2019-2020 Climate Justice campaign. The Campaigns team provided support to ASFA student organizers from Pedestrianize Mackay for a community fair that took place on the street in September before the annual climate justice march. We supported by providing art supplies and banner painting materials. We also included several workshops that incorporated elements of sustainability into this year's edition of Anti-Capitalist week which will be discussed in depth in that section.

JSIAC (Joint Sustainable Investment Action Committee), the body responsible for overseeing the university's progress regarding divestment, did not meet during this year. Despite multiple attempts by the Sustainability Coordinator, the official CSU representative on the committee, to inquire about an upcoming meeting, no meeting was held citing internal policy changes of the CUiF (Concordia University Inter-Generational Fund, Concordia's Endowment Fund). Despite this, it was a very busy year of Divestment mobilization as part of the apartheid divestment campaign which will be discussed in a subsequent section.

The campaign to restore the shuttle bus service was a marriage of our historic climate justice campaign and our newer anti-austerity campaign. Both a petition and survey were circulated by the Campaigns team in collaboration with ASFA and CREW, amassing over 1,000 responses. Testimonials from the survey were compiled and presented to VP of Services & Sustainability Michael Di Grappa. In the Fall By-Elections, we ran a referendum question advocating for free and accessible public transportation and the restoration of the previous year's shuttle bus hours to better facilitate accessible transportation between campuses.

Apartheid Divestment (Positions 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.8, 5.9)

After months of student advocacy against Israeli apartheid and the siege on Gaza, the CSU decided to adopt an official campaign against war, colonialism, apartheid and genocide (all in alignment with the positions referenced above). This campaign was decided on in consultation with the External committee and the CSU council, as well as many campus groups and community organizations. At the end of September, the CSU held a campaign launch where students were invited to discuss the campaign, and the Campaigns team solicited feedback on a set of demands that had been drafted over the summer in consultation with campus groups and community organizations. The launch was held on September 25th at the Hive Cafe and was a huge success. We had a great turnout of 50-60 students. We were able to successfully solicit feedback on the plans for the campaigns. Particularly, we printed off copies of proposed demands for the campaign and students had the opportunity to leave feedback which was incorporated. Following the launch, we held a meeting where attendees were invited to participate in group visioning around what could be done to meet the campaign goals.

Following these conversations, several student organizers brought motions forward at departmental general assemblies to mobilize for strikes in solidarity with Palestine for November 21st and 22nd. The Campaigns department worked alongside student organizers from several different departments to share resources around organizing & facilitating general assemblies and later mobilizing for the strike. We were able to share invaluable lessons learned during past student strikes, such as the previous year's strikes against tuition hikes, with student organizers.

Following the strike, during a strike debrief, the idea to call a CSU wide Special General Meeting (SGM) to vote on a BDS position was proposed. Following the meeting, 3 students wrote a petition to call an SGM that was circulated widely and quickly gained more than enough signatures which were then validated, and the petition was submitted to council shortly before the winter break. After the break, the SGM was ratified at council and the Campaigns department quickly took over preparation for the meeting. Quorum for a CSU SGM is 450 members, and since no such meeting had been held in over a decade, the team utilized every tool at our disposal. This included a robust social media campaign, including the launch of our new Instagram page (@csu_campaigns), several newsletters, collaborative outreach and promotion by other student associations, clubs and campus groups, tabling, flyering, posters, and class announcements. It was at this time that we also launched a new collaboration with The Link to take advantage of advertising space that had been allotted to the CSU and its services, and we

published several ads for the SGM in The Link. We also produced several resources to help foster active participation in the SGM including a synthesized explainer of Robert's Rules of Order. We worked closely with Hospitality Concordia to arrange a space and consulted with CSPS to ensure the meeting would be conducted in a safe and respectful manner. Thanks to collaboration with a number of volunteers, including grad students who acted as scrutineers during the votes, the meeting was a huge success. Over 1,000 members attended the meeting, necessitating an overflow space to be set up before the meeting could commence to accommodate the students who could not be present in the auditorium due to the room's capacity. The vote passed with 94% of attendees voting in favour.

Following the vote, Graham Carr released a statement condemning the SGM and the BDS vote that made several misinformed and incendiary comments which the Campaigns department challenged in our February 6th statement. Around the same time, the administration launched an investigation into the CSU over alleged breaches of policy surrounding the SGM resulting in the suspension of the CSU's booking rights. Due to the baseless nature of these claims, the CSU is currently engaged in a legal battle with the administration over the arbitrary investigation whose process remains unclear to the CSU and is another example of the administration's lack of good faith and weaponization of university policy to squash dissent.

Feminism & LGBTQ+ Rights (Positions 1.4.1, 6.1, 11.1, 1.1.2)

This campaign reflects the strong commitments to feminist and LGBTQ+ values and activism, and works to advocate for creating a safe, just and supportive environment on campus for women, queer people, and all Concordia students who are oppressed for issues relating to their gender and sexual orientation. The massage clinics have continued to be a huge success with appointments filling up quickly. As a result, we've created a waitlist so people can be notified if there are any last minute cancellations. The body workers running the clinic have been collecting feedback and it has been unanimously positive and the project has been extremely well-received by those accessing the services. During the Winter 2025 semester, we met with university stakeholders from Health services to discuss future collaborations between this program and their department. We are currently in negotiations to establish a funding model in which the CSU and Health services would share the cost of subsidizing this service rather than the CSU being the sole organization subsidizing the clinics.

Campaign Against Sexual Violence (Positions 3.1, 6.1, 11.1, 11.2)

This campaign is carrying-forward the 2018-2019 anti-sexual violence campaign, and reflects the role of the CSU as a leader in the boycott of Concordia's Standing Committee on Sexual Misconduct and Violence, as well as the creation of the Inter-Organisational Table on Feminist Affairs. The boycott, which began in Fall 2022 and was renewed in Fall 2024, consists of the CSU, GSA, CREW, CUSSU, CULEU and CUSS-TS associations not providing seating representatives on the SMSV until the ITFA demands to improve the university's policies on sexual violence are met.

Anti-Racism & Anti-Colonialism (Positions 1.6.1, 4.2, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.6, 5.7, 5.8, 9.1, 9.4, 9.5, 9.6, 9.7, 9.8)

This campaign is both a carrying-forward of the 2020-2021 Black Lives Matter Annual Campaign, and a continuous commitment to act in ways that align with the wide diversity of racial justice and anticolonial issues reflected in the Positions Book. Our commitment to solidarity with struggles against white supremacy and colonialism are reflected in the CSU team's collective statements: Statement against the celebration of 'Canada Day' and in solidarity with Indigenous resistance movements globally, Students accuse Concordia of Police Brutality and Racial Discrimination, Statement on recent student strikes and the events of December 3rd.

In October, following 2 separate student protests on campus where there was an insanely disproportionate police presence and police brutality on campus, the CSU called an official press conference to address growing concerns for student safety following repeated instances of police and CSPS brutalizing and profiling students on campus. This violence, which systematically affects marginalized students, had increased exponentially since October 2023 alongside widespread student protests calling for universities globally to divest from Israel. At this press conference, the CSU highlighted the following demands:

- The immediate removal of all cops from campus.
- That the university publicly commits to prohibit police presence on campus
- That CSPS (Campus Safety and Prevention Services) formally sever their relationship with the SPVM
- That CSPS (Campus Safety and Prevention Services) publicly commit to abolishing these five practices:

- following students off of campus;
- conducting citizen's arrests;
- physical apprehension and detainment;
- preemptively coordinating response with police prior to political demonstrations;
- and
- facilitating police brutality and arrest instead of engaging in de-escalation

Numerous CSU representatives and fellow students from different student associations, met repeatedly with the university administration to address these issues and brainstorm solutions that would keep all students safe. The External Coordinator attended the CSPS Campus Safety Advisory Group meeting in November where similar concerns were brought forward by the Center for Gender Advocacy as well as the GSA and several faculty representatives.

Unfortunately, there has been little to no action on the administration's side to protect Concordia students from weaponized security and police violence. The situation was exacerbated when it was discovered that Concordia had spent more than 30k on an External security firm, Percentage, with ties to the Israeli occupation forces. Percentage agents were documented to use physical force against students during student protests that were part of the November strike.

The university's demonization of student protest has contributed to a climate of repression and violence against marginalized community members. This was exemplified when a Palestinian student was physically assaulted on campus in December in what the SPVM has deemed a racially and sexually motivated assault. The university took no action to materially address concerns brought forward by the student and the CSU following the attack.

The work regarding the Cops off Campus campaign was reaffirmed by two positions that were passed during the Fall 2024 by-elections. The first position affirmed that the CSU was standing in solidarity with student protestors and condemned the weaponization of academic penalties against student protestors. The second called on CSPA to use de-escalation strategies and to provide reports that outlined de-escalation efforts during interventions.

As a continuation of the CSU's anti-colonial work, the Campaigns team has partnered with the Mohawk Mothers on an initiative to build an Indigenous-led archive in Kahnawake. We assisted the collective in writing a CAF application to acquire funding to purchase a restored Sea Can to house the archives. We also facilitated a connection between the collective and Concordia

Special Collections to allow the collective to gain access to equipment for the digitization of physical materials. We are now in the process of working with the group to create a partnership with Information Studies students at McGill to develop an archival protocol. Last but not least, we are exploring ways to continue to support the project and ensure the project can flourish in the years to come and one day to facilitate the repatriation of ceremonial materials to the community.

Migrant Labour Justice (Positions 9.1, 9.2, 9.3, 9.4, 9.5, 10.1)

Historically, the CSU has stood in solidarity with migrant communities, most notably through campaigns to improve international student conditions (whether it was campaigning against tuition hikes or advocating for better international student health insurance) and collaborations with the Immigrant Workers Centre and Solidarity across Borders. However, due to changes in the positions book 5 years ago, there wasn't a specific position affirming this support. As such the Campaigns team drafted a referendum question in solidarity with migrants and international students which ran during the General Elections in March of 2025 and passed with a huge margin of success.

Food Justice (Positions 8.1, 8.2, 8.3, 8.4, 8.5)

Over the summer and into the Fall semester, the Campaigns team worked with the Concordia Food Coalition and student organizers from the FedUp to bring forward a referendum question to support replacing Aramark, Concordia's current food service provider, with a student-owned food cooperative, as well as to better empower the CSU to advocate for access to good food on campus. We had several meetings to discuss campaign strategy and collaborated on the writing of an endorsement letter. The campaign was successful with the referendum question passing with 83% of students voting in favour. One of the lead organizers from Fed Up was elected as the Sustainability Coordinate and the Campaigns team is looking forward to promoting more food justice projects over the upcoming year.

The Community Cravings Community Fridge & Pantry has continued to flourish. Our partnerships with Coop Cultivaction and Innovation Assistance continue to run smoothly. People's Potato and the Hive has also contributed to the fridge when they have surpluses. We have changed the stocking procedure to spread out products to enable more restocks.

Annual Speaker Series

Written by Danna Ballantyne, External Coordinator

SADAC Panel

In mid-August, the CSU co-sponsored a Speaker Series Panel event organized by the South Asian Diaspora Action Collective and nearly 20 other collaborators. The event, titled *The Struggle Must Continue: Hindutva fascism in India and in the Diaspora, and its impacts on minorities*, was a resounding success that touched on CSU positions on anti-racism, diversity and inclusion, and international student policies.

Where the Pine Needles Fall

In September, we co-sponsored and aided in organizing the official Montreal launch of Ellen Gabriel's book *Where the Pine Needles Fall*. The book provides an account by Katsi'tsakwas Ellen Gabriel of the 1990 siege of Kanehsatake (otherwise known as the 'Oka Crisis'). The book focuses on Gabriel's life leading up to the 1990 siege, her experiences as spokesperson for her community (during the time of the siege), and her work since then as an Indigenous land defender, human rights activist, and feminist leader.

During the event, Gabriel spoke on a panel facilitated by Samir Shaheen-Hussain (pediatrician, professor at McGill and author of a book on medical colonialism in Indigenous communities) alongside fellow contributor Sean Carleton (historian at the University of Winnipeg) and Wanda Gabriel, a resident of Kanehsatake, who was present during the siege. The event served to promote greater awareness of what transpired during that moment and the lessons for ongoing injustices and dispossession and the pathways forward for attaining justice.

Politics & Care

In November, the CSU offered funding and promotional support for the Politics and Care Authentic Dialogue and Connection training series. The series offers workshops, collective circles, discussions and more, with the aim of building strength of activist groups and collectives. Politics and Care works directly with precarious, vulnerable and oppressed communities, with special attention to implementing inclusive practices that align with CSU positions on Anti-Racism, Diversity, and Inclusion Intersectional Feminism and Mental Health among others.

A Girl Named Abigaël

On February 28th, the CSU co-sponsored the first ever film screening and panel discussion on 2x award winning short documentary A Girl Named Abigaël, directed by Concordia undergraduate student Ahana Murumbi. Falling on the last day of Black History Month, the documentary follows the journey of Abigaël, a young Congolese girl who navigates the challenges of migration and education in Burundi, exploring themes of resilience, empowerment, and identity.

Resilience Amidst War

On March 7th, In collaboration with Academics for Palestine Concordia, the CSU co-sponsored a guest lecture by Gazan Palestinian professor, Ahmad Shaban. The event, titled Resilience Amidst War: Scholasticide and Food Crisis in Gaza, dove into the profound resilience of Gaza's population in the face of two interconnected crises: scholasticide—the deliberate destruction of educational infrastructure—and a weaponized food system.

Media and the Movement Workshop

On February 3rd, following the CSU's Special General Meeting where students voted in favour of the motion on Palestine, we coordinated a workshop on the relationship between mainstream media and the Palestine movement. This workshop brought about very inspiring engagement from the audience and allowed for attendees to learn about different ways to engage with mainstream media and analyse coverage relating to the Palestine movement.

Community Action Fund (CAF)

Written by Danna Ballantyne, External Coordinator

The CAF Committee is allocated approximately \$40,000 annually to fund various on and off-campus community-based initiatives in line with the CSU Positions Book. The committee is composed of 4 representatives elected by various fee-levy groups with similar mandates to the CAF, 1 elected CSU councillor, the External Coordinator (non-voting), and a student at large appointed by the BIPOC committee.

Membership, Training and Appointments

The CAF members for the 2024-2025 academic year are: Alexandra Tsigaras (Concordia Food Coalition), Shyam Ragi (QPIRG), Adam Jivraj (Centre for Gender Advocacy), Paige Keleher

(Sustainable Concordia) and CSU councillor Salma Hashem. The only member not selected for CAF is a student at large who is meant to be appointed by the BIPOC Committee.

The Committee met for the first time in September 2024 for training, and to open the funding JotForm to new applications and officially closed the JotForm in April 2025. Since our first meeting, the committee has successfully met every month to review Project, Operational, and Strike funding applications and was able to extend the budget for the entire year academic year.

Organizations Granted Funding

We have received a total of 29 applications and successfully allocated \$47,000 of the \$48,000 annual CAF budget.

Month	Type	Applicant	Amount
September	Project	DefundFest	3000
September	Project	Where the Pine Needles Fall	2000
October	Project	NSBE	1000
October	Project	Politics & Care	2000
October	Project	Culture Shock	1150
November	Project	Voulez Vous	1065
November	Project	The Refugee Center	2000
November	Project	Press Start	3000
November	Project	Chinatown Roundtable	3000
November	Operational	Peak Society Studio	2000
November	Strike	GUSS	1000
November	Strike	WSSSA	1000
December	Project	Sudan Solidarity Collective	1750
December	Project	SLAM	1500
December	Project	Palestine Solidarity	1000

December	Project	BHM Series	2500
December	Project	Gaza in Focus	400
December	Operational	Bar Milton Park	1000
February	Project	Regards Noirs	800
February	Project	De Lege Ferenda	1500
February	Project	CGA	1000
February	Operational	L'Achoppe	2500
February	Operational	Tlachiuk	2500
March	Project	Divinart	1500
March	Project	Front Rose	750
March	Project	Fungi Fest	1000
March	Project	Mohawk Mothers	3000
March	Operational	Plant Wisdom	2500

External Committee and Fund

Written by Danna Ballantyne, External Coordinator

Membership, Training, and Appointments

The External Committee is composed of four elected councillors, the CSU Campaigns Coordinator (non-voting) and External Coordinator (chair, non-voting). We arranged our first meeting and training session before the start of the Fall semester in early August where each councillor was trained on the responsibilities of the committee and voted on the organizational structure of the committee for the 2024-2025 academic year. We opened our funding in August and have successfully met every month since to review External Fund applications and Campaigns initiatives before closing the application JotForm in April of 2025 .

Finances

The External committee has done an exceptional job of staying within our budget for this

academic year. As of April 30th 2025, we have spent 70% of our Campaigns budget of \$68,000, and 55% of our Speaker Series budget of \$36,000 with most of our Requisition Forms left to be submitted by grant recipients during the month of May.

Organizations Granted Funding

The External Committee can grant up to \$2000 to different applications received in alignment with the CSU positions book. Since opening the External Fund to applications in early August, the External Committee has approved and processed 31 funding applications up to a total of \$45,615 split across both the Speaker Series (\$24,400 or 68%) and Campaigns (\$21,215 or 31%) budget lines.

Month	Budget Line	Applicant	Amount
August	Speaker Series	SADAC	750
September	Speaker Series	When the Pine Needles Fall	600
October	Campaigns	Falastin	350
October	Campaigns	Politics and Care	2000
November	Campaigns	The Refugee Center	2000
November	Campaigns	Showpao	750
November	Speaker Series	A Girl Named Abigaël	1500
November	Speaker Series	Economic Engine	300
January	Speaker Series	SLAM	1000
January	Speaker Series	The Bald Soprano	500
January	Campaigns	Off Record	1000
January	Speaker Series	Academics 4 Palestine	2000
January	Campaigns	Gaza in Focus	2000
February	Campaigns	Woman Revived	1315
February	Campaigns	RIPA	2000
February	Campaigns	Refugee Stories Research	2000
February	Campaigns	ReKindle	1800
February	Campaigns	JMAS Tax Clinics	2000
February	Speaker Series	Housing Justice Convergence	1000
February	Speaker Series	Community Healing Circles	1250
February	Speaker Series	CASA Cares Fundraiser	500
February	Speaker Series	ASN Iftar	2000
March	Campaigns	Anti Pipeline (PRGT)	2000
March	Speaker Series	Community Dance Classes	2000

March	Speaker Series	Divinart	2000
March	Speaker Series	Econ and Ethics	1000
March	Speaker Series	Community Iftar	2000
March	Speaker Series	Prisoner Correspondence Project	2000
March	Campaigns	Solidarity Across Borders	2000
March	Speaker Series	SCORE	2000
March	Speaker Series	Towards Trans Joy Conference	2000

Hiring Committees

Written by Danna Ballantyne, External Coordinator

This academic year, I had the privilege of sitting on 7 hiring committees for the following positions:

- Receptionist (CSU Administration)
- Interim Lead Advocate (CSU Advocacy Center)
- Interim Advocacy Assistant Manager (CSU Advocacy Center)
- Student Insurance Administrative Specialist (CSU Administration)
- Campaigns Researcher (CSU Campaigns)
- Campaigns Assistant (CSU Campaigns)
- Temporary Advocacy Administrative Assistant (CSU Advocacy Center)

External Relations

Written by Danna Ballantyne, External Coordinator

CRUES Congresses

This year, I attended two CRUES congresses. The first was at the beginning of my mandate in May 2024 at Université de Laval in Quebec City and the second was at Concordia in February of 2025. Both congresses served as valuable networking opportunities and offered the chance for the CSU to brainstorm alongside the many different student associations across Quebec on how to best advocate for our members and the causes that they support. The CRUES officially adopted a position in solidarity with Palestine at the February congress this year and we look forward to seeing the benefits that come from our shared resources within this campaign.

CASAQ Congress

I have been invited to speak at the Coalition of Anglophone Student Associations of Quebec which will be taking place at Dawson College on May 8th. This is another wonderful opportunity to build connections with anglophone universities across the province particularly as the CAQ government continues to impose heavy restrictions and budget cuts on Anglophone higher education institutions.

Media Relations

Over the course of this academic year, I have interviewed with countless media outlets and student researchers on various topics extending from tuition hikes to food and housing sovereignty to Palestinian activism and university repression of student political movements. I spoke at two press conferences, the first on November 1st where, alongside several of my colleagues, I spoke out against the uptick in police and CSPS brutality and surveillance being weaponized against student activists. The second press conference took place in mid-April of 2025 alongside my counterpart from the Student Society of McGill University where we both addressed the weaponization of legal proceedings and university bureaucracy by our respective administration in suppressing student democracy.

Les Pipelettes

Alongside the SSMU and AFESH (the UQAM student association) the CSU was able to launch a pilot project called Les Pipelletes. This project, which held its first session in January of 2025, is the first of its kind to offer Francophile students networking opportunities and professional skills development workshops in French! I look forward to expanding this project next year to facilitate political collaboration between both Anglophone and Francophone higher education institutions in and beyond Quebec.

Academic and Advocacy Coordinator

Written by Vanessa Massot, Academic and Advocacy Coordinator

Academic Initiative

Written by Vanessa Massot, Academic and Advocacy Coordinator

This year, I had \$5000 dollar budget to go towards an Academic Initiative. I decided to put this \$5k budget towards a project spearheaded by Concordia's 2SLGBTQ+ coordinator Belen Blizzard. This project is by and for trans students and community members, who are putting together a program for a Trans Studies conference at Concordia. I am very much looking forward to attending this conference and will be sure to pass along the info to those interested in attending.

Advocacy Initiatives

Written by Vanessa Massot, Academic and Advocacy Coordinator

One of my goals as the Academic & Advocacy Coordinator for 2024-2025 was to lean in to the "Advocacy" element of the role. As a certified history nerd, one of my favorite parts of being a Concordian is the strong legacy of fighting for social justice amongst Concordia Students. This academic year was certainly one for the history books, along with 1968 (Computer Occupation in protest of Anti-Black Racism) and 2012 (Quebec Student Strikes).

Cops Off Campus

Written by Vanessa Massot, Academic and Advocacy Coordinator

With an increase in political activity and protesting on campus, came an increase in police presence on campus. Unfortunately, this resulted in an increase in police brutality experience by student protestors. Considering section 9 of the CSU's position book which takes a strong stance against police brutality, I felt very strongly about participating in a Cops Off Campus initiative alongside other student leaders, such as the Fine Arts Student Alliance (FASA) and the Arts and Science Federation of Associations (ASFA). This started with meeting regularly with the two associations to discuss strategies to combat the rise in police brutality on campus, which was

largely being justified by the University administration. Alongside with the increased police presence and violence on campus, there was similarly an increase in security presence. With this in mind, the group of associations and student leaders came up with the following demands from the Cops off Campus initiative

- The immediate removal of all cops off campus.
- That the university publicly commits to prohibit police presence on campus
- That CSPS (Campus Safety and Prevention Services) formally sever their relationship with the SPVM
- That CSPS (Campus Safety and Prevention Services) publicly commit to abolishing
- these five practices:
 - following students off of campus;
 - conducting citizen's arrests;
 - physical apprehension and detainment;
 - pre-emptively coordinating response with police prior to political demonstrations; and
 - facilitating police brutality and arrest instead of engaging in de-escalation.

As we continued to try to set up meetings with Campus Safety and Prevention Services and DoS, it became very apparent that we had to come up with a new strategy. This was when we decided to pursue a press conference to bring more awareness to the situation. An initiative taken on by Danna and the campaigns department, we prepared statements along with another student representative from ASFA and a Concordia professor calling on the University administration to meet our demands. Please see articles from The Link with more information below.

Student sit-in protest marked by fencing and heavy police presence

Anonymous group accuses university of suppressing student activism, calls for boycott and divestment

NEWS **BRIEF** Zita Berger — Published February 22, 2025 0 minutes



Police officers followed protesters to the Guy-Concordia metro station. Photo Asa Kohn

A group of anonymous students occupied Concordia University's Henry F. Hall Building mezzanine in a sit-in on Feb. 20.

["Student sit-in protest marked by fencing and heavy police presence"](#)

Concordia campus security under growing scrutiny

Heightened security measures and allegations of targeted surveillance raise questions about students rights and safety

NEWS Safa Hachi — Published November 5, 2024 ⏱ 6 minutes



Students advocate for police to stay off campus. Mixed Media Panos Michalakopoulos

In light of escalating student-led protests and the increasingly assertive actions of Concordia's Campus Safety and Prevention Services (CSPS), some students, particularly those from marginalized communities, report feeling surveilled and at times mistreated by campus security.

"Concordia campus security under growing scrutiny"

Editorial: The press pass will never be enough

OPINIONS **EDITORIAL** The Link — Published March 17, 2025 4 minutes



Andraé Lerone Lewis holds up a peace sign at the Anti-Police brutality protest on Saturday, March 15. Courtesy William Willson

On Saturday, March 15, Montreal police physically assaulted *The Link's* photo editor, Andraé Lerone Lewis.

["Editorial: The press pass will never be enough"](#)

Special General Meeting

I was one of three endorsers for a petition calling for 1. Concordia University to Disclose, Divest, Defend, and Declare their investments in funds that are complicit in militarized violence, war, colonialism, apartheid, and genocide; and 2. to mandate the CSU executive team to bring motion 1 to the Board of Governors (BoG) to be voted on. As this petition mandated the CSU to conduct a special general meeting, the CSU campaigns department quickly got to work on coordinating the SGM. The meeting was attended by so many students, that we had to make an overflow space for students to watch and vote, as we filled H110.

The students voted overwhelmingly in favour of both motions we endorsed, specifically, 885 students voted *for*, whereas 58 voted *against*.

[See the article covering the SGM published in The Link here.](#)

Academic Researchers

Written by Vanessa Massot, Academic and Advocacy Coordinator

The Academic Researchers assist the CSU in its mandate to conduct research, develop argumentation, and produce education materials for its members on issues relevant to students and academic affairs. Under the supervision of the Academic & Advocacy Coordinator, the Academic Researcher is responsible for researching issues, writing reports and developing argumentation. These are utilized in the production of argumentation, reports, and popular education documents relevant to representation on academic bodies within the University and other academic issues.

Some of the projects undertaken by the researchers during the 2024-2025 academic year can be seen in the following table:

<u>Academic Affairs Research</u>	<u>Semester</u>
Tuition Hikes Press Review	Summer 2024

Tuition Hikes and Immigration Policies	Summer 2024
Academic Notations Guide	Summer 2024

Curriculum Database	Summer 2024
Board of Governors Research	Fall 2024
CSU Press Review	Fall 2024
Academic Researchers Events Calendar	Fall 2024
HOJO Research	Fall 2024
GOC Cap on International Students	Fall 2024
Positions Book Comparison	Fall 2024
Senate Guidebook	Fall 2024
Shuttle Survey Data Review (ASFA)	Fall 2024
Annual Undergraduate Survey	Winter 2024

Academic Caucus

Written by Vanessa Massot, Academic and Advocacy Coordinator

This year, Academic Caucus was able to convene prior to every senate. These meetings typically happened the same week as Senate (which always takes place on a Friday) when the Senate agenda is released. The purpose of the Academic Caucus is for all the student senators to come together to discuss our role and plan of action as representatives of the undergraduate student body. Caucus is an opportunity for student senators to flag any concerns or important points from the agenda that they would like to discuss, and how our diverse student body may respond to potential changes. The role of the Academic Caucus is crucial to holistically represent the student voice within Concordia's governing bodies, and I am proud to report that with a group of passionate, thoughtful, and inquisitive student senators we were able to bring a strong voice to Senate.

Policy Committee

The Policy Committee is responsible for maintaining the CSU's by-laws and standing regulations. It may make reports and recommendations to Council regarding any proposed amendments to the by-laws or standing regulations. The current by-laws and regulations need constant improvement; a great deal of work goes into revising and correcting them as needed.

At the beginning of the Mandate, every single policy document was long overdue for review. This left the policy committee with a huge task ahead – a complete overhaul and review of policy. I am happy to report that we were able to review a total of 8 policies, as well as recommend and overwhelmingly pass 5 new positions at referendum. Below are the policy documents that we were able to review this year.

- Policy on Executives, Council and Committees
- Positions Book
- Policy on Annual Undergraduate Survey

- Policy on Positions
- Code of Conduct
- Policy for Policy Development and Review
- Sexual Violence and Safer Spaces Policy
- Food System SPF Policy

Senate Steering Committee (University Body)

Written by Vanessa Massot, Academic and Advocacy Coordinator

Along with being a student senator, I also sat on the Senate Steering Committee. This is the committee that discusses the upcoming agenda points and are tasked with discussing and recommending the agenda that will be sent to all senators prior to the upcoming senate. The Steering Committee is made up of the following members:

- The President and Vice-Chancellor Chair
- The Provost and Vice-President, Academic
- The Vice-President, Research and Graduate Studies
- Two faculty Senators who are full-time faculty members from the Faculty of Arts and Science
- One faculty Senator who is a full time-faculty member from each of the Faculty of Fine Arts, the Gina Cody School of Engineering and Computer Science, the Faculty of Arts & Science, and the John Molson School of Business
- One faculty Senator who is a part-time faculty member
- Two undergraduate student Senators
- One graduate student Senator

President-Provost Meetings

Each month, President Graham Carr and Provost Anne Whitelaw meet with the General Coordinator and Academic and Advocacy Coordinator of the CSU to discuss large scope issues affecting student groups or the university at large. Nine regular meetings were convened during the 2024-2025 academic year.

CRUES

Written by Vanessa Massot, Academic and Advocacy Coordinator

CRUES is a coalition of student associations across all corners of Quebec. While CSU attended the founding congresses and numerous meetings since the coalition's founding in Winter 2023, the CSU officially remains unaffiliated and does not hold a voting seat among the coalition.

During the 2024-2025 mandate, I attended one CRUES congress, in Quebec City during May 2024.

For further context, we are in regular conversation with voting member associations both from within Concordia and other institutions. These connections were reinforced particularly due to the tuition hikes cross-collaborations because of Concordia student groups bringing the issue of tuition hikes to the forefront of CRUES.

Management (Human Resources)

Written by Vanessa Massot, Academic and Advocacy Coordinator

As the Academic and Advocacy Coordinator, I directly oversee four services of the CSU: the Advocacy Centre, The Off-Campus Housing and Job Centre (HOJO), and the Legal Information Clinic (LIC). In practice, this means that I oversee the managers and/or assistant managers that operate the services on a day-to-day basis, and that I am available on-call to support them with whatever I can help with. This might look like approving decisions, assisting with outreach, problem solving, bringing concerns to administration, liaising between services and student groups/organization, and assisting with fee-levy referenda.

Additionally, I am responsible for ensuring that the hours worked by the management team are accurate and appropriate and I approve change of hours or temporary position transfers for all service staff.

Hiring Committees

Written by Vanessa Massot, Academic and Advocacy Coordinator

This academic year, I had the privilege of sitting on six hiring committees for the following positions:

- Administrative Assistant (CSU Advocacy Centre)
- Interim Assistant Manager (CSU Advocacy Centre)
- Campaigns Researcher (CSU Campaigns)
- Campaigns Assistant (CSU Campaigns)

Annual Undergraduate Survey (AUS)

Written by Vanessa Massot, Academic and Advocacy Coordinator

The Annual Undergraduate Survey was the last big project taken on by myself and the Academic Research team. This project was the focus of the academic researchers work for the Winter 2025 semester. Together, we came up with an extensive list of survey questions concerning demographics, cost of living, CSPS, residency status, familiarity with CSU, and more. We also manually designed the survey using JotForm.

The team learned a lot during the process of completing the AUS, specifically about how to do successful outreach, what strategies work best, how can surveys be designed to optimize results, what types of demographics were over or underrepresented in the survey and how we can balance this in the future.

Since then, I have implemented policy changes (passed at council) to the Annual Undergraduate Survey Policy in hopes of making the policy more accessible and flexible for Academic & Advocacy Coordinators to come. Please not that there will also be a more detailed report on the survey findings during the AGM.

Annual Undergraduate Survey Report

Written by Maia and Maria, Academic Researchers

I. **Introduction (methodology, dissemination, demographics)**

The role of the Concordia Student Union (CSU) is to represent and advocate for the students' needs, concerns and interests. The aim of the Annual Undergraduate Survey (AUS) is to gather student feedback on a wide range of topics, in order to update the limited available data on undergraduate students at Concordia. As a union that represents over 35,700 students, the AUS will keep the CSU up to date on students' experiences and issues at the university. The survey focuses on seven general areas: student demographics, housing and financials, experience in academia, health and drug use, campus experience, accessibility, and CSU services and student participation.

A total of 330 undergraduate students responded to the survey, in which the data will serve to:

- Inform us on student demographics,
- Support CSU advocacy and projects,
- Improve CSU services and resources,
- Provide evidence to the university on what changes need to be made to improve undergraduate students' experiences,
- Create a longitudinal data set to see how the data changes over time.

Methodology Survey Questions

The survey consisted of 125 questions. Certain questions were conditional and not visible depending on the response. 103 questions appeared to all respondents, and most of these were mandatory. However, in most of them there were options such as "I prefer not to say" or "I don't know." At the beginning of the survey, respondents were asked their names and student numbers solely to verify that they were undergraduate students at Concordia. The responses to this survey remain anonymous. Only the Academic and Advocacy Coordinator and the Academic Researchers at the CSU had access to responses to write this report.

Dissemination and Outreach

The survey was active for 23 days, from February 17 to March 11, 2025. The dissemination and outreach for the survey consisted of posterizing all Concordia Sir George Williams poster boards, sending information through the CSU newsletter and social media platforms, and

some class announcements. In addition, there were incentives for 10 gift cards with \$50 each for the Hive to incentivize students to participate in the survey.

Disclaimer: this year there were no posters or tabling in the Loyola campus. Due to a limited number of responses, the claims made in this report may not reflect the student body as a whole.

II. Demographic Information

The first section of the survey focused on demographic data of the undergraduate body at Concordia. This is important for the CSU to know given the diversity of backgrounds our students present, since needs vary depending on various factors. Questions in this section included age, gender identity, sexual orientation, race and ethnicity and languages spoken by respondents.

The majority of the students who responded to this survey were between the ages of 20-24 (68%), identified as cisgender women (62%), identify as white (54%), are heterosexual (45%), and are Quebec residents (48%).

Most respondents are 21 years old (18%). There were only a handful of students who reported being under 20 or over 24 years old. Further, most respondents identify as cisgender women (62%), followed by cisgender men (15%). About half respondents are heterosexual, followed by 18% bisexual, 15% queer, etc.

Almost half of the respondents are of White European descent, followed by 8% East Asian, 8% Latin American, 8% South Asian, 8% Middle Eastern (Southwest Asian), 7% Black (African descent), 3% Indigenous (First Nations, Inuit, Métis), and 2% North African. Over half of the respondent speak the following languages most often at home: English (55%), followed by French (24%), Spanish (4%), and others.

III. Residency Status, Housing, Insurance and Financials

This section of the survey focused on students' residency status, housing, insurance, and financial situation. This relates to the recent changes in immigration legislation in Quebec and Canada, the hikes in tuition implemented for out-of-province students, and the housing crisis. Additionally, there were questions about living arrangements and reliance on public transit in reference to the reduction of the Shuttle bus hours between Loyola and Downtown campus.

Questions on financial status included whether respondents have jobs, how it impacts their time to study, and if they receive financial aid.

Residency Status

Almost half of the respondents (48%) are Quebec residents, followed by a 38% being Canadian citizens or permanent residents. 13% of respondents are international students.

74% of respondents report they will not be affected by the recent changes in immigration legislation and 55% report they have not been affected by tuition hikes. However, 16% of respondents claim they “don’t know” if they will be affected by changes immigration legislation and 15% don’t know if they will be affected by tuition hikes.

Housing

45% of respondents live with a roommate, partner, or child, and 38% live with family. Almost half of the respondents live with 1 other person.

84% of students rely on public transit to get to and from school. Additionally, almost all students (91%) report that easy access to public transit affects where they choose to live.

Financials

In terms of financial aid, 35% of respondents are supported by family, 21% receive student loans, and 20% claim they receive no financial aid. Only 19% have scholarships and/ or bursaries.

Further, 48% have a part-time job during the academic year. 15% report that they have looked for a job and have been unable to find one. Only 4% say they have a paid internship, research assistant or co-op position. Most students who have jobs work 15 or 20 paid hours.

Most respondents claim they have 10-20 hours a week to do schoolwork.

Out of a scale from 1 to 5 (1 being never and 5 being always) 31% of students say financial stress is part of their realities as students.

IV. Experience in Academia

This section of the survey included questions about experience in academia. This section examines students’ experiences in the classroom and what they think about their program curriculum.

Almost half of respondents (46%) believe that the teaching methods of their professors have been beneficial to their learning experience. A majority of 30% of responders feel somewhat equipped to enter their related workforce or pursue further education. Additionally, 39% think that only sometimes the amount of coursework assigned is appropriate and proportional to the number of credits they receive.

More than half of the respondents feel like they have no say in the syllabus, teaching methods, and evaluation format at Concordia. They also feel like they have no say in the decision-making and the campus environment (renovations, construction work).

Out of several options of things students want Concordia to implement, 29% of students say they would want a choice in the evaluation format of a class. 25% of students state they would like to have more opportunities to learn outside the classroom and in the Montreal community. Another 24% say they would like to have a way to give feedback to professors half-way through the semester for professors to improve their pedagogical tools.

V. **Health and Drug Use**

The fourth section of the survey focused on healthcare and drug use by students. Questions were focused on the accessibility of healthcare for students in Montreal and whether students took advantage of health insurance provided by the CSU. Furthermore, questions assessed whether schoolwork affected negatively the respondents' mental health and the link to substance use and abuse.

When asked about the accessibility of healthcare, 54% of respondents stated that healthcare is not accessible for students in Montreal: with 45% stating that it is. Although, in terms of financial situation, a majority of students (54%) stated that their economic situation is not a factor that deters them from accessing healthcare.

When asked about being enrolled in the CSU Health and Dental Plan, 60% of respondents said yes, 28% said no, and 11% don't know: although only 284 students responded to this question and 46 other respondents did not input an answer.

The most used insurance service was dental insurance (25%) followed by general Health Insurance (24). 15% of the respondents stated that they have not used any insurance services, despite being covered. Vision coverage and Maple (telemedicine) had the least amount of usage with 11% and 11% respectively.

The responses to the satisfaction with insurance services questions were quite minimal: with only 75 responses to the question *How satisfied are you with the Health Insurance?* Leading to an average of 3.6 out of 5. Satisfaction regarding dental insurance showed identical results. The *Empower Me* satisfaction question was only answered by 18 students, leading to a 3 out of 5 on the satisfaction scale. Travel Coverage only received 11 responses, with a 4 out of 5 on the satisfaction scale. Vision Coverage received 35 responses, averaging 3.8 out of 5 on the scale. Gender Affirming Care received only three responses with a 3 on the satisfaction scale. And lastly, Maple telemedicine received 34 responses with a 3.7 on the satisfaction scale. The lack of responses in this section could be a consequence of these questions not being mandatory, or

the demographic of respondents not having used these services/not being eligible for certain insurance coverage.

When questioned on the process of opting out and self-enrolling in the CSU insurance, results showed that only 13% had issues opting out, while 60.5 had never attempted to opt out in the first place. Regarding self-enrolling, only 9% of students had issues with this process.

Furthermore, 51% of students did not face any issues when activating their insurance account. Followed by 18% who were not eligible in the first place. 15% faced problems when obtaining their StudentCare ID and PIN, 8% had issues registering an account with Desjardins, and 9% had trouble with both.

Regarding international students, out of only 43 responses in this question, 67% of respondents were satisfied with their BlueCross insurance, and 33% were not. Furthermore, out of the 43 international students that responded to this question, 39% of them were not aware that they could enroll in the CSU Dental Insurance Plan. 37% of them were aware of it but not enrolled, and only 12% were aware and enrolled. Leaving 12% of the students not interested in enrolling in the CSU Dental insurance.

Lastly, when asked if the students had any other comments related to the CSU Insurance and telemedicine, most comments stated that it should be easier to opt-out of Student Care, and the costs and coverage of medical appointments were not covered. There were also many comments discussing the need for better practitioners, especially in the mental health field, as well as a more easily accessible way to make appointments. Most of the comments spoke to the lack of clarity and transparency from Student Care as well as accessibility issues through the website, especially when filing claims online. Furthermore, some international students addressed the financial strain that the Blue Cross Insurance causes due to its policy of students having to self-pay first and then wait for reimbursement. This applies to all medication, walk-in appointments, and tests. Most comments addressed the limited coverage provided by both Student Care and BlueCross in terms of accessibility and disability rights: stating that the frameworks followed by the insurance companies fall under the assumption that all students are able bodied, young, and completely healthy. There seems to be a lack of funding and information regarding gender affirming care as well. 51% of students have a private insurance plan that they rely on, 7% an international insurance plan, and 34% of students rely entirely of the CSU insurance plan. Only 2% of students depend on the RAMQ.

Mental Health–

Following this, the students were asked how often schoolwork negatively affects their mental health, with 46% of students stating that their mental health was only affected when they have

a deadline coming up, 26% every other day, 18% were negatively affected every day, and only 10% if students were almost never or never affected by schoolwork negatively.

In relation to this, in the last 12 months students report consuming substances for academic purposes, such as to help with concentration, memorization, alertness and motivation. With 27% having consumed over three cups of coffee, tea, or energy drinks in a day. 11%, reported consuming stimulants such as Adderall, Vyvanse, or Dexedrine. 8% consumed Marijuana, and 6% consumed alcohol. A total of 45% of responses stated they did not consume any of these substances for academic purposes, yet, the possibility of these being consumed for recreational purposes outside of the scope of the survey still stands.

When asked if they had used any of Concordia's mental health services to address substance use and abuse, only 4% stated yes. Coincidentally, only 4% of respondents believed that Concordia is appropriately equipped to deal with substance use and abuse concerns among students.

As it had been proposed through the creation of the CARE center (formerly RAWCC), the students were asked if they believed it to be necessary to have a harm reduction initiative within the university (A judgement free space, peer support network that can aid in easing the transition into recovery). 53% of students responded yes, with the other 43% responding I don't know, and only 4% no.

Lastly, with regards to the CSU Campaigns holistic health clinic initiative, students were asked which services should be made accessible through the clinic. The results showed that 28% would like to see menstrual and hormonal consultation and education to support irregular and painful periods, 27% for menstrual and hormonal consultation to support conditions such as PCOS, endometriosis and fibroids. Furthermore, 21% wanted to see the initiative working towards scar healing to support healing after uterine surgeries such as hysterectomy, endometriosis and myomectomy, and 20% wanted support with scar healing after gender affirming surgery, such as top surgery.

VI. Campus Experience

The section on campus experience assessed whether students had experienced acts of discrimination on campus. These questions sought to understand the nature of the discrimination, the responses from students, patterns on perpetrators, etc. Furthermore, this section sought to examine the role of CSPS in these interactions (whether positive or negative). When asked if they had experienced identity-based discrimination on campus, 60% of students reported no acts of discrimination. Nonetheless, 9% reported racism based discriminatory experiences, 9% experienced gender-based discrimination, 5% ableism, 4% homophobia, 4%

transphobia, 4% classism, 3% ageism, and 2% xenophobia. Out of these responses (106 responses), 57% experienced harassment (making unwelcome remarks or jokes, threatening or intimidation, unwanted physical contact. 41% experienced systemic discrimination, and 3% experienced violent physical contact. Most of these experiences happened either on campus or in the classroom. A small percentage occurring at a student event, in residence and online. Out of these responses, most acts of discrimination were perpetrated by another student, followed by unknown people or strangers. Only a small percentage of these acts were perpetrated by professors, Concordia Staff, and CSPS.

In regard to contacting CSPS when feeling unsafe on campus, 83% have not tried to report these incidents to security, while only 17% have. When rating the efficacy and quality of service provided by CSPS on a scale from 1-5 (from insufficient to sufficient), the average was between 2-3 stars: positioning these services closer to the unsatisfactory end of the scale.

When asked if the increased presence of security on campus affected the students negatively or positively students reported the following:

- A. **Negatively:** Students report feeling constantly surveilled, racially profiled. They argue it is being used as a scare tactic by the university against the students speaking out. They are against the university's financial resources being used for the hiring increase. They report being hyper vigilant of their surroundings, more stressed out, and less welcome on their campus. Students are concerned about the university policing and controlling them. There is a large general concern regarding the on-campus arrests perpetrated by CSPS, as well as the push for the removal of facemasks for "identification" purposes. Additionally, students report being personally harassed by CSPS if wearing certain garments (Keffiyehs, medical masks, sunglasses, head-coverings) during days where protests were taking place on campus. Students report feeling afraid of campus security to the point of not coming to school on days where political mobilization is taking place because of the interventionist approach from CSPS, and the physical detaining of students.
- B. **Positively:** Students report feeling safe on campus or being impacted positively by the increased security. Most of these responses did not have any further elaboration.
- C. **Indifferent:** Some students reported not being affected by the increased presence of security on campus at all.

VII. Accessibility

This section looks at accessibility for students with disabilities (both physical and learning disabilities), students' experiences on campus, and how accessible they find campus to be.

27% of respondents identified themselves as having a disability, with a high percentage being registered with the Access Center for Students with Disabilities. With regards to accessibility in the academic context, 29% of students stated that professors are not adequately trained to ensure students with disabilities are supported and not discriminated in the classroom, whilst only 12% believed the professors are trained adequately, and 59% responded "I don't know." Moreover, only 11% of students have had to drop a course due to it being inaccessible.

Regarding classroom environments and physical needs, most students are satisfied with the accessibility of these with only 9% stating that classrooms are inaccessible or not properly equipped. Furthermore, when asked if Concordia buildings in general are accessible to the physical needs of students with disabilities, 78% stated that it does not apply to them, 12% find it accessible, and 10% find it inaccessible.

Regarding COVID-19 safety precautions, 65% of students feel satisfied with the university's measures. With suggestions regarding the re-implementation of mask dispensers on buildings, encouraging students to stay at home when sick, hand-sanitizer stations, and not prosecuting students for masking. Furthermore, some students suggested less crowded classrooms, installation of air purifiers, mandated masking in heavily crowded areas, providing the students with free COVID tests, vaccination campaigns, and updates on the spread of the virus.

VIII. CSU Services and Student Participation

This section focused on evaluating CSU services, gaining insight from the student's perspective on the accessibility and efficacy of these, and getting suggestions on how to improve student participation in CSU elections and initiatives. Furthermore, exploring the CSU services that the students are familiar with, and which ones need more outreach.

When asked which resources the students knew about before filling out the survey, most of the responses highlighted HOJO, the CSU advocacy center, funding to student groups, the Legal Information Clinic, and the CSU Daycare. The lesser-known services were the Legal Care Program, Food Vouchers, and Woodnote. Furthermore, 83% of students are either not enrolled or unaware of the StudentCare Legal program. Half of the students stated having opted out of the program.

40% of students find the CSU resources only somewhat accessible, with a close 33% stating that they are fully accessible. 21% of students stated not being familiar with CSU services before the survey. Furthermore, 70% of students did not know about the Legal Information Clinic's work since 2007.

When asked for suggestions on how to improve CSU services and resources, the students suggested the following:

- A. **Visibility:** better advertising on campus and on social media, making services known, increasing staff in the Loyola Campus, as well as a daycare in the Loyola campus. Another suggestion was having CSU members drop in to classes at the beginning of the term to introduce themselves and the services. More campus presence outside of the hall building. Being clear regarding the organizational structure of the CSU, and the role and responsibility carried within each position, as well as how the CSU operates. Making meeting minutes promptly available, publicizing committee meeting minutes. Push for more hands-on initiatives that involve students within student governance instead of the election period being the key time of the year student participation is encouraged.
- B. **Services:** Focusing on strengthening key resources before expanding outwards onto new initiatives or projects. Providing clearer guidelines on how to access services (e.g. location for services, opening hours, etc.). Expanding bursaries and vouchers to take financial pressure off the students. Making it clear which services are independent from Concordia. Students having more protection on campus from the administration: pushing for institutional open university transparency.
- C. **Complaints:** Engineering students: complaints regarding BDS and search for divestment. Lack of transparency. The CSU council is a concern in terms of transparency and efficiency. Complaints were also raised in relation to the implementation of StudentCare without the consent of students, as well as the pushing of the Legal Program when resources for this already exist. Students also complained about a lack of response from CSU executives through email and various communication channels.

Moreover, 56% of students reported having voted in CSU elections, with 22% stating they don't vote, and 21% stating that they sometimes vote. When asked why they don't vote in elections the students responded:

- A. Lack of knowledge of the candidates: what their positions entail, length of their mandate. Students don't feel educated enough on the election process as well as the proposals and ideals of the candidates.
- B. Strict deadline: many students reported missing the voting deadline due to the elections taking place at the same time as exam period/end of the semester.

- C. Visibility: Loyola students report not being aware of the elections and not feeling a connection to the CSU due to the lack of presence on the campus. A lot of people did not know you could vote online and complained about the voting being only in person.
- D. Lack of interest: A wide number of students reported not being interested in student politics, elections, or being involved in student life. This disinterest was expressed strongly.

An overwhelming 96% of students have never run in the CSU Elections for CSU Executives, Councilors, or Senators. Furthermore, 55% of students are not involved with any student run group on campus, with only 18% being involved in a student association, 16% with a student club, and only 3% with the CSU.

Finally, when asked if the students would use a mental health service implemented by the CSU, 70% stated that they would, and 30% stated that they would not.

Loyola Coordinator

Loyola Committee

Written by Leen Al Hijjawi, Loyola Coordinator

The Loyola Committee plays an important advisory role within the CSU, helping ensure that the unique needs and priorities of Loyola students are reflected in the union's work. The committee is tasked with offering thoughtful guidance on how to enhance student life at Loyola and regularly presents reports and recommendations to Council regarding all CSU-related events, programming, and initiatives based at the campus. Through this work, the committee helps shape decisions that directly impact the Loyola community. The Loyola committee met twice, in the first meeting we approved funding for two events taking place at Loyola, the first was a career fair that took place, and the second was a football tournament that will be taking place at Loyola in May, in this meeting I also had explained to my councillors the situation with the shuttle bus and briefed them on my meeting with Michael Di Grappa. The second meeting was to approve the Loyola bursaries; it is always nice to be able to give back to the students and help take some

of their financial burdens off them, the amount was split evenly for the ones who were accepted by the councillors.

Loyola Initiatives

Written by Leen Al Hijjawi, Loyola Coordinator

Over the course of my mandate, I focused my efforts on revitalizing Loyola campus engagement, broadening collaborations, advocating for transportation improvements, and representing students across multiple university committees and initiatives. My work this year was diversified across event planning, institutional advocacy, and committee service, all with the goal of strengthening student life at Loyola and ensuring greater visibility of student needs at the administrative level.

Campus Events and Community Engagement

This year, I collaborated with the CSU Student Life Coordinator to organize the All-Stars Football Tournament, a significant and highly successful event that took place on Loyola campus. This tournament brought together students from various faculties, boosted foot traffic at Loyola, and created a lively, energetic atmosphere that highlighted the importance of student-led initiatives on this campus. Events of this nature are crucial at Loyola, where community engagement can often be challenging due to the smaller number of students compared to SGW campus. The tournament demonstrated that when well-advertised and supported, sports and recreation-based programming can serve as an effective tool for fostering school spirit, encouraging collaboration between student groups, and helping students build connections outside of an academic setting.

In addition to the tournament, I hosted an Upcycled Artmaking and Breathwork Workshop. This initiative was focused on combining creativity, sustainability, and mental health. The upcycling portion encouraged students to engage in sustainable practices by using discarded or unused materials to create new artistic works, addressing growing concerns about environmental sustainability. Meanwhile, the breathwork session was introduced to promote mindfulness and offer students practical tools for managing stress, particularly important given the mental health challenges many students face. This interdisciplinary approach to event planning bridging sustainability, art, and wellness was well received and pointed to the

importance of offering diverse programming that addresses multiple aspects of student wellbeing.

Furthermore, I coordinated a Career Fair at Loyola, in collaboration with a student initiative. Career-oriented events are critical for Loyola students, many of whom expressed a need for greater access to employment resources without having to travel downtown. This event brought together employers, career counselors, and students on the Loyola campus and helped bridge the gap between academic learning and professional development. Initiatives like this underscore the need for continued investment in career services at Loyola and demonstrate that localized programming can have tangible benefits for students outside of the SGW network.

Advocacy for Transportation Services

Recognizing the critical importance of reliable transportation between campuses, I worked extensively this year to address concerns related to the Shuttle Bus Service. I held a series of meetings with Michael Di Grappa, Vice-President of Services and Sustainability, to advocate for improved shuttle bus reliability, frequency, and accessibility. Students had long voiced dissatisfaction with inconsistencies in the shuttle schedule, long wait times, and a lack of clear communication regarding delays or changes. My work involved gathering student feedback, presenting proposals for service enhancements, and pushing for more transparent communication from the administration. Although these conversations are ongoing and major systemic changes take time, significant groundwork has been laid to make transportation a major priority for Loyola students moving forward. Ensuring regular, accessible transportation is essential for maintaining Loyola's integration into broader university life.

Food Security Initiatives

Throughout the year, I explored avenues to address food insecurity at Loyola, particularly by trying to implement a Free Dinner Program and a Grocery Program based out of the Hive Café. Unfortunately, after thorough budgeting and discussions with the Hive administration, it became evident that both programs were financially unfeasible under the current CSU budget constraints. Despite the inability to implement these programs, the feasibility studies conducted during the planning process provide valuable groundwork for future initiatives. I strongly recommend that future Loyola coordinators, the CSU executive, and the Hive

leadership continue conversations around sustainable funding models for food security initiatives, perhaps exploring external grants or partnerships to support long-term food assistance programs at Loyola.

Loyola Committee Bursary Distribution

This year, I also coordinated the Loyola Committee bursary distribution, an important initiative aimed at providing direct financial support to students based at Loyola campus. Through this program, the committee awarded 13 bursaries, each valued at \$1,166, to students facing financial hardship. This process involved promoting the bursaries, reviewing applications, coordinating committee meetings to assess the submissions, and ensuring a fair and equitable distribution of the funds. Providing these bursaries helped alleviate some of the financial pressure many students experience, especially those who are primarily based at Loyola and often face fewer campus-based resources. Supporting students through these bursaries was a key part of strengthening the Loyola community and ensuring that financial barriers did not prevent students from fully engaging in their academic and extracurricular pursuits.

Committee Work and Student Representation

Throughout the year, I also dedicated significant time and energy to several committees:

- **BIPOC Committee:** I sat on the CSU's BIPOC Committee alongside the Finance Coordinator. We worked on distributing bursaries to BIPOC students, offering crucial financial assistance aimed at reducing systemic barriers to education. The bursary program is an important initiative for improving equity and access at Concordia, and I am proud to have contributed to its success this year.
- **Fee Levy Committee:** As a member of the CSU Fee Levy Committee, I helped review and assess applications related to Concordia's fee levy system. Fee levy groups play an essential role in providing student services, advocacy, and engagement opportunities. My participation involved careful analysis of budget proposals, strategic planning documents, and program reports to ensure that student funds were being used responsibly and transparently.
- **Concordia Council on Student Life (CCSL) - Special Projects and Student Groups Subcommittees:** I also served on two subcommittees under CCSL. Through the Special Projects Subcommittee, I reviewed grant applications for student-led initiatives aimed at

improving campus life. In the Student Groups Subcommittee, I participated in the assessment and recognition of student clubs and groups, ensuring that new and existing organizations had the support they needed to thrive.

- **Investment Transparency Committee:** Lastly, I was an active member of the Investment Transparency Committee, where we pushed for greater accountability and clarity regarding the university's financial investments. This work aligns with growing demands from students for ethical investment practices and a divestment from industries harmful to communities and the environment. Though investment policy is complex and progress can be slow, this work is critical for creating a university environment that aligns its financial practices with its stated values of sustainability and social responsibility.
- **Library Services Fund Committee:** I also sat on the Library Services Fund Committee, where I contributed to discussions and decisions regarding the allocation of student library fees toward service improvements, study space upgrades, and accessibility initiatives.

Reflection and Recommendations

Overall, my mandate focused heavily on revitalizing student life at Loyola, improving essential services, and strengthening student representation at both the union and university levels. While some initiatives faced challenges due to financial constraints or administrative delays, significant groundwork has been laid for future coordinators to continue building a more connected, supported, and empowered Loyola student body.

I am grateful for the opportunity to have served as Loyola Coordinator this year. I hope that the work accomplished during my mandate will serve as a foundation for continued growth, advocacy, and engagement at Loyola for years to come.

Internal Coordinator

Internal

Written by Dania Zeitoun, Internal Coordinator

As Internal Affairs Coordinator, I was primarily responsible for supporting CSU clubs in their efforts to enrich the Concordia community. I managed the club spaces on both campuses and served as the acting Secretary of the Union. During my term, I worked closely with two Club Administrators: Alice Anderson, who has been in the role since Summer 2022, and Daniela Beltran Jimenez, who joined in March 2023 and remained until December 19th.

At the start of my mandate as Internal Affairs Coordinator, I faced a number of challenges due to limited training. I met with my predecessor, Christian Taboada, only three times before he left on vacation, which left me without the same preparation as the rest of my team. This lack of guidance made it difficult to support clubs effectively, particularly when it came to resolving issues with the CSU portal. However, with the support of Club Administrators Alice Anderson and Daniela Beltran Jimenez—both of whom were extremely knowledgeable—I gradually learned how to navigate these systems and provide the assistance clubs needed.

As acting Secretary of the Union, I also encountered difficulties early on. While the former General Coordinator, Harley Martin, helped me set up internal calendar reminders, his attention was soon redirected toward training the incoming GC, leaving me to manage many aspects independently. Despite these setbacks, I adapted quickly, took initiative, and sought help where needed.

Executive Retreat

Written by Dania Zeitoun, Internal Coordinator

The Executive Retreat was planned for a weekend getaway in November. We rented a cabin in Mont-Tremblant. The group did some bonding activities and played games. The retreat helped us understand the positions a bit more and form the relationships necessary for the upcoming year.

Council Retreat

Written by Dania Zeitoun, Internal Coordinator

Initially, we had planned to organize a council retreat to foster better communication and collaboration between the councillors and the executive team. However, as the months went by, I had a couple of councillors express that they would not be comfortable with the retreat. It became clear that there was a lack of strong rapport and a disconnect between the two groups. Given these concerns and the ongoing challenges in building a more cohesive relationship, I have decided to table the retreat for now. It seems more productive to focus on addressing these underlying issues first before attempting such an event in the future.

Council Training

Written by Dania Zeitoun, Internal Coordinator

So far, Roberts Rules and Anti-Oppression Training has been completed on January 15th.

Clubs

Written by Dania Zeitoun, Internal Coordinator

Clubs Department Budget

The allocated budget for all the Clubs has been \$366,979. Only 70 Clubs under the CSU umbrella had applied for budgets this year. The actuals now are \$190,656, which is 52% of the budget for the Clubs. The Clubs all have until April 30th to submit their reimbursements, and my estimate is that we will be hitting 85-90% of the total Clubs Budget when everyone is reimbursed.

Description and comments	BUDGET 2024-2025
ACSioN NETWORK-CONCORDIA	\$ 1,500.00
AFRICAN STUDENT ASSOCIATION (ASAC)	\$ 20,509.46
ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE SOCIETY (AISC)	\$ 750.00
BEST BUDDIES CLUB	\$ 4,000.00
BRASA	\$ 4,000.00
CONCORDIA BUSINESS REVIEW	\$ 2,130.00

CONCORDIA CANADIAN ASIAN SOCIETY (CCAS)	\$ 5,200.00
CHESS CLUB	\$ 1,725.00
DRAGON BOAT CLUB (CDBC)	\$ 7,000.00
E-SPORTS STUDENT ASSOCIATION	\$ 4,000.00
FASHION BUSINESS ASSOCIATION (CFBA)	\$ 7,000.00
GAME DEVELOPMENT CLUB	\$ 2,000.00
GAMES CLUB	\$ 2,020.00
IMPROV CLUB	\$ 750.00
MOOT LAW SOCIETY (CMLS)	\$ 10,500.00
MYCOLOGICAL SOCIETY	\$ 10,730.00
OUTDOORS CLUB	\$ 8,500.00
SKI AND SNOWBOARD CLUB	\$ 16,118.19
STUDENT EXCHANGE ASSOCIATION	\$ 1,835.00
CONCORDIA STUDENTS FOR PARKINSON'S	\$ 1,725.00
CUTAM-TAMIL	\$ 12,000.00
TENNIS CLUB	\$ 1470.00
CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY CATHOLIC STUDENT ASSOCIATION (CUCSA)	\$ 8,600.00
CONCORDIART CLUB	\$ 1,870.00
FOCUS	\$ 22,500.00
HAITIAN STUDENTS ASSOCIATION OF CONCORDIA (HSAC)	\$ 7,500.00
HILLEL	\$ 7,700.00
INTERVARSITY AT CONCORDIA	\$ 6,500.00
JEUX DE LA COMMUNICATION (JDLC)	\$ 13,131.00
LEBANESE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION	\$ 2,000.00
MEDSPECS CONCORDIA	\$ 2,500.00

MUSLIM STUDENTS ASSOCIATION	\$ 22,540.00
MYCOLOGICAL SOCIETY (CMS)	\$10,730.00
MEDLIFE CONCORDIA	\$ 1,550.00
NANOSTRIDE	\$ 7,000.00
NIGERIAN STUDENTS ASSOCIATION	\$ 4,500.00
OTAKU	\$ 750.00
POWER TO CHANGE	\$ 1,000.00
SEX AND SELF	\$ 1,725.00
SHIDOKAN KENDO	\$ 6,325.00
COMMUNIST REVOLUTION	\$ 2,300.00
STRONGER THAN STIGMA	\$ 6,000.00
SYRIAN STUDENT ASSOCIATION	\$ 2,000.00
TURKISH STUDENT ASSOCIATION	\$ 4,500.00
ULTIMATE FRISBEE	\$ 1,423.80
VIETNAMESE STUDENT ASSOCIATION	\$ 7,200.00
K-POP	\$ 1,247.00
NAGINATA	\$ 2,300.00
RECREATIONAL SPORTS CLUB	\$ 2,300.00
C. U. TEA ENTHUSIAST ASSOCIATION	\$ 9,350.00
THAQALYN MUSLIM ASSOC (prev SAMA)	\$ 1,910.00
SCORE ASSOCIATION	\$ 1,800.00
CONCORDIA MARKTING AID CLINIC	\$ 3,100.00
CONCORDIA RELAY FOR LIFE	\$ 3,000.00
BUSINESS LAW COMMITTEE	\$ 750.00
ASCEND UNIVERSITY CHAPTER	\$ 750.00
BLACK STUDENTS CAREER DEVELOPMENT	\$ 2,000.00
HEART FOR AFRICA	\$ 1,500.00
EGYPTIAN ASSOCIATION	\$ 1,000.00
GOOGLE DEVELOPER STUDENT CLUB	\$ 760.00

IMPROV CLUB	\$ 750.00
PAKISTANI STUDENT ASSOCIATION	\$ 1,000.00
PALESTINAIN CULTURE CLUB	\$ 750.00
SELF-DEFENSE CLUB	\$ 750.00
CONCORDIA FLAF FOOTBALL	\$ 750.00
ISLAMIC RELEIF	\$ 750.00
SUSTAINABLE FASHION AND THRIFT CLUB	\$ 32.00
QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH AND COMPETITIONS CLUB (QUARCC)	\$ 750.00
iGEM	\$14,000.00
AIESEC	\$3,000.00
ELECTROCON	\$ 750.00
NORTH AFRICAN STUDENT SOCIETY (NASS)	\$ 750.00
ARAB STUDENT NETWORK	\$ 750.00

The Clubs and Spaces Committee approved 17 new Clubs this year.

NEW CLUBS 2024-2025
HOCKEY CLUB
QUARCC
ASIAN EXPERIENCE ORGANIZATION
CODA
BIOMEDICAL ENGINEERING CLUB
SUSTAINABLE FASHION AND THRIFT
PALESTINIAN CULTURE CLUB
PAN AFRICAN STUDENT UNION
CLIMBING CLUB
SELF-DEFENSE CLUB
NASS
180 DEGREES CONSULTING
FILMMAKING CLUB
AMANA
RCM
FINDAC
SLAVIC STUDENT ASSOCIATION

The variety of the new approved Clubs allows for another year of different experiences for new students to come in. While some new Clubs may be approved by May under the new Internal Affairs Coordinator, we are happy to have seen many great events by the new clubs thus year, as hope for many more.

I have devoted my time to communicate and ensure that the Clubs feel like the CSU is present, as the role of the Internal Affairs Coordinator should be to demonstrate a commitment to these groups. The harder aspect of the position is on the Secretary of the Union side, as the position is so broad that Executives understand it as the role that will do the tasks, they do not feel like taking on. I would suggest that the position is cleared up, rather than remain ambiguous, because it can be overwhelming alongside all the tasks that are required by the Clubs side already.

1. Events

Fall Clubs Orientation

Clubs Orientation was held on two separate days for both clubs and services offered in Concordia on September 9th, and 12th, 2024. The event itself had a solid turnout, it was more informative, so it was not necessarily the most exciting event.

The Club Orientation was planned by me and the Student Life Coordinator, Moad Alhjooj.

2. Finances

The financials for the clubs are tracked using an Excel sheet that was created by the previous Internal Affairs Coordinator. This sheet serves as a crucial tool for monitoring and managing the budgets allocated to each club. I have continued to use this spreadsheet throughout my mandate to ensure that the clubs' financial activities are accurately documented and that their budgets are being used effectively. By maintaining this record, I can track expenditures, monitor adherence to budget limits, and provide detailed reports when necessary, ensuring transparency and accountability in the clubs' financial management.

Clubs Special Projects Fund

This year, we introduced the club's bursary with a budget of \$20,000, aiming to support clubs in organizing events and initiatives. Six clubs have already applied for the bursary, which is a notable increase compared to last year's applications. This rise in interest is encouraging, as it shows that more clubs are taking advantage of this opportunity to fund their activities. However, our goal is to see even more clubs applying each year, which would not only allow for a greater variety of events on campus but also help foster a more vibrant and engaged campus community. By continuing to promote the bursary, we hope to see increased utilization of these funds, benefiting both the clubs and the wider Concordia community.

5. Clubs & Space Committee

Since the RCM of May, the Clubs and Spaces Committee had 4 consistent Councillors: Ali Salman, Omar Hassanein, Salma Abuaysheh, and Mussa Hafyana. We currently do not have a student at large on our committee.

The Committee has met for a total of 8 times. The Committee has voted on Club Budgets, as well as approves/rejects new club applications. It is encouraging to hear about the various projects that clubs have planned, and I hope to see them materialized.

6. *Clubs Complaints Form*

As the Internal Affairs Coordinator, I am responsible for resolving disputes between clubs. Our centralized form where clubs can fill out a JotForm with their complaint has thankfully not been filled out by any clubs.

7. *Trainings*

The Executive Team is currently organizing the necessary trainings that will take place in May for incoming executives.

Conclusion

Clubs remain the vital backbone of campus student life and are representative of our association. This is why managing clubs is not for the faint-hearted and demands patience, tenacity, and a strong sense of fair yet subjective judgement when necessary.