



Concordia Student Union – Council of Representatives

CSU Special Council Meeting – Agenda
Sunday, February 9, 2020
CSU Conference Room, 17h00, S.G.W. Campus

Updated Agenda

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Democratise Positions Book
4. Adjournment

Meeting officially called by CSU Councillors Sean Howard, Mathew Kaminski and Mitchell Schecter, as per By-Law 6.6.3.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Patrick Quinn calls meeting to order at **17h26**.

Chris Kalafatidis moves to appoint **Patrick Quinn** as Temporary Chair for Special Council Meeting. Seconded by **Lauren Perozek**.

Unanimously approved.

Sean Howard moves to excuse all executives. Seconded.

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

2. ROLL CALL

Council Chairperson: Caitlin Robinson

Council Minute Keeper: S Shivaane

Executives present for the meeting were: Chris Kalafatidis (General Coordinator), Patrick Quinn (Academic & Advocacy Coordinator), Marin Algattus (Internal Affairs Coordinator),

Councilors present for the meeting were: Menachem Israily (Independent), Tzvi Hersh Filler (Gina Cody School of Engineering & Computer Science), Sean Howard (Gina Cody School of Engineering & Computer Science), Peter Zhuang (Fine Arts), Mitchell Schecter (John Molson School of Business), Mathew Levitsky-Kaminski (John Molson School of Business), James Hanna (Gina Cody School of Engineering & Computer Science), Hannah Jamet-Lange (Arts & Science), Christiane Sakr (Arts & Science), Elizabeth Tasong (Arts & Science), Jeremy Deneault (John Molson School of Business), Jarrad Haas (Fine Arts), Lauren Perozek (John Molson School of Business), Salman Fahim Syed (Gina Cody School of Engineering & Computer Science).

Executives absent for the meeting were: Isaiah Joyner (External & Mobilization Coordinator), Désirée Blizzard (Finance Coordinator), Celeste-Melize Ferrus (Loyola Coordinator), Eduardo Malorni (Student Life Coordinator).

3. DEMOCRATISE POSITIONS BOOK

Danielle presents the following. Seconded.

The Positions Book is a document that establishes the political goals and stances of the Concordia Student Union. All positions that are described in this document must be upheld by the people who work for the CSU, regardless of their relevance, context, or if the employees agree with the positions.

There is no requirement that these positions be sent to referendum to be voted on by students, so many positions are placed into the book without any student body input. These positions then remain in the book indefinitely, as there is no expiry date.

Question: Do you support the Council of Representatives modifying the Positions Book so that all positions are ratified by referendum and, once ratified, expire after four (4) years?

All positions that are in violation of this new process will no longer be included.

The following are the positions that would be in violation of this new process and no longer included: 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5.1, 1.5.2, 1.5.3, 1.6, 1.7, 2.1, 3.1, 4.1, 5.1.1, 5.1.2, 5.1.3, 5.1.4, 5.1.5, 5.1.6, 6.1.1, 6.1.2, 6.1.3, 6.1.4, 7.1.1, 7.1.2, 7.1.3, 7.1.4, 7.1.5, 7.1.6, 7.1.7, 7.1.8, 8.1, 8.2, 9.1, 9.2, 10.1.1, 10.1.2, 10.1.3, 10.1.4, 10.1.5, 10.1.6, 10.1.7, 10.1.8, 10.1.9, 10.1.10, 10.1.11, 11.1.1, 11.1.2, 12.1, 13.1, 14.1, 15.1

Any position can be added again to the Positions Book via referendum.

Lauren Perozek: How much more work will be done, and who will be charge of this considering the executive team is already overworked?

Danielle: We can decide on who later. It's not that tedious of a process.

Lauren Perozek: What happens if some of these positions expire?

Danielle: The student body changes every four years. A lot of the values are not maintained. Some are ten years old and I don't know if those values are upheld. If people want to defend the positions, they will defend them.

Hannah Jamet-Lange: I have a big issue with this. We should not have to vote on positions like feminism, or indigenous solidarity. They should stay there. It's important to be able to add positions in a context relevant at a specific time. I see why it might be weird to keep them, but if the university decides again to rise tuition, and we can't have a stance on that, it's an issue.

Peter Zhuang: My concern with this is that with everyone leaving, we're not able to do this every year. It's hard to have the position book renewed every four years. Do you want to bring all positions to the referendum or just some, and then leave others?

Danielle: Only positions that would need to be voted on are the ones that violate these processes. The expiry date is after four years. Anything new will go through the process.

Elizabeth Tasong: My understanding is that Positions Book is a living document. Why should things applicable to events 2013 not be there?

Danielle: Our student body changes every 4 years. We have different groups people we're representing. They may have different values. There's a lot of positions in there. It's hard to fight 100 battles, we could maybe pick just 10. This might be a better method.

Elizabeth Tasong: Why four years? Why is this a blanket for all, instead of just specific positions?

Danielle: That's your opinion, that they're general. We have to respect those opinions. I think this is the best way to do that.

Elizabeth Tasong: I mean general positions like those not about a specific topic or year. Things like indigenous solidarity. That's what I mean by general. Those weren't specific positions, those were put in to stay in.

Danielle: This document represents our political beliefs, and this represents our student body. In 10 years, maybe that won't be a general statement. We can't assume things like that.

Tzvi Hersh Filler: The positions on feminism and fighting tuition increases. These will be sent in every four years, and they almost definitely will pass. We're fighting the administration on what students want. The administration have the upper hand if the position was voted in way back in 2013.

Hannah Jamet-Lange: I believe the CSU should advocate for the most vulnerable students at all times. We have to represent all students. We need to pay attention to those who have the least privilege.

Salman Fahim Syed: This isn't by council of representatives, it's by a student at large, Why is the first question phrased as such?

Danielle: I want to mandate councilors to have to do this.

Salman Fahim Syed: Shouldn't this go through by a council representative?

Danielle: Students are allowed to mandate the council to do things.

Salman Fahim Syed: Then it should be the decision of council.

Danielle: But students are telling you to do this.

Salman Fahim Syed: Then shouldn't this go through referendum by students to get council to do this?

Chris Kalafatidis: Students can't modify by-laws and policies. The only way students can get anything done is to mandate council to do so. Students are being asked if they support council being told to do this.

Chairperson: The CEO will recommend correcting the wording if they don't agree with its current form.

Salman Fahim Syed: Everything in the Positions Book will only last four years unless ratified by students?

Danielle: If it's before last four years, it expires.

Salman Fahim Syed: Why not we now validate all the positions, not just last four years. They weren't put there for fun, they were put there for some reason. They have represented students for years. This isn't good.

Lauren Perozek: A lot of the positions support minorities. The majority would outvote those minority positions. If students vote yes to cancel the aboriginal positions, could we choose to follow or deny that? What's the failsafe if the student body votes for the wrong things?

Danielle: The failsafe is you believe in your students.

Jeremy Deneault: Every year there's a new body and there's a new issue. Why not we do this every year?

Danielle: Students graduate in four years. If we do this every year, its redundant. You still have 3 years of students who have been there.

Jeremy Deneault: If we all start different and end the same...

Danielle: Each student will be able to vote at least once.

Alex: Students can already remove positions. There's already a framework for that. How is that not sufficient?

Danielle: I believe it's much more difficult to remove them than to put them in.

Alex: In essence, this will be powerful because the will be able to say 'look, our members decided this is an issue'.

Patrick Quinn: There are a number of positions like indigenous solidarity, accessibility, free education. How would this work? Four years later positions would be voted on again. If it gets voted in again, it's in the positions book. What you're saying is this would give it more power.

Danielle: Different positions at different elections .

Patrick Quinn: This gives people more reason to vote. It will add more legitimacy for feminism, indigenous rights. This is an interesting initiative. The Positions Book is a historical document that should be remembered.

Mathew Levitsky-Kaminski moves to exhaust Speakers' List. Seconded by **Chris Kalafatidis**.

Peter Zhuang: You should collect signatures before this presentation, not just from one faculty. If there are people who don't care or know about Positions Book or CSU, you should talk with them and make sure they know what's going on. I suggest reducing to 2 years.

Jarrad Haas: This is a practical question. Right now, positions with other sub-positions under it, would it be voted on at a separate time or same? If ratified, would the one under be ratified?

Danielle: Council would probably say subsections get voted on first.

Jarrad Haas: Could they just not keep adding positions under that to avoid the main position from going to referendum?

Danielle: It's up to the next mandate.

Christiane Sakr: How many signatures have you collected so far? Have you collected any opinions?

Danielle: I haven't collected anything so far, and I can't until after I present this.

Hannah Jamet-Lange: The writing, 'democratise' is problematic. It's biased writing. That should be amended.

This would be a lot more work. Would it be brought to referendum automatically or would it need signatures?

Danielle: That's up to council.

Hannah Jamet-Lange: All positions would be removed. Those positions should all be listed in the question, so people know what they're voting on there. Removing a position is a position in itself.

Elizabeth Tasong: If this question passes, positions on police brutality, indigenous affairs, migrant justice, climate justice, intersectionality amongst others would go away. Have you considered that these affect the most disenfranchised students dealing with structural

discrimination? These are people who don't tend to get representation in council and administration. Are these positions only legitimate if the majority gets to decide they are? What is the concept of legitimacy?

Danielle: Legitimacy is being able to back your students.

Elizabeth Tasong: That's an assumption. This is based on the assumption that you get backed by administration. Why is that so important? Shouldn't the Student Union stand for you regardless?

Mathew Levitsky-Kaminski: Council is supposed to listen to recommendations of students. It may fall on us to follow the interests of our student body; even if it goes against the recommendation of students.

Patrick Quinn: The by-laws state that we have to.

Mathew Levitsky-Kaminski: If this passed, would it be stated in what years the positions has passed and how many times it has passed?

Danielle: Its possible.

Salman Fahim Syed: What's the reason you're leading with the four years. Positions Book was implemented in 2014, which makes the Positions Book seven years old. Why not we just consider all seven years ratified. Why are we just deleting positions from before four years?

Danielle: If this passes, it would be invalid and would be removed no matter what. You can bring it back to referendum.

Salman Fahim Syed: Positions Book says that it represents the organization and the values of the organization. It doesn't represent students who come and go.

James Hanna: Last year, I suggested a change in the Positions Book because it does not mandate action. Maybe a policy book that would mandate change and action would be better. But it doesn't mandate action. The document involves random motions beginning in 2003. Actual indigenous solidarity is much more meaningful than just some statement. We need actionable policy.

Tzvi Hersh Filler: We just heard that Council as an institution has nothing to do with the students. We have nothing to do with the students. This is a problem. This is a serious institutional problem.

Marin Algattus: How do you ensure they aren't just dismissed after four years?

Danielle: That's up to council.

Marin Algattus: Every four years someone has to remember to do it.

Danielle: That's not the spirit of this, it depends on how council choose to do this.

Marin Algattus: Do you think you can add it to someone's mandate?

Danielle: Council should deal with this. It's in their line of duty.

Marin Algattus: I don't think councilors will remember to do that. You need someone dedicated to do this. The way the question is worded, every four years, it sounds like it just expires and nothing is mandated to be done.

Patrick Quinn: Things to do with Positions Book is mandated for the executive to do.

4. ADJOURNMENT

Jarrad Haas motions to adjourn. Seconded by **Tzvi Hersh Filler**.

Council adjourns at **18h14**.