

# Ethics & Sustainability Policy

**Oversight Body:** CSU Sustainability Committee, Council of Representatives, CSU Executive Team

**Date Passed by Council:** 2021-05-25

**Date of Next Review:** March, 2023

**Related policies, bylaws, legislation:** CSU By-Laws, CSU Code of Conduct, Positions Book, Concordia Undergraduate Admissions, other Policy Books in Standing Regulations.

## Definitions

“Council” means the Council of Representatives of the Student Union; “Executives” means a member of the Executive of the Student Union;

“member” means a person who fulfills the conditions of membership under section 3.1 of the By-Laws;

“Position” means a resolution that provides a binding directive to the officers of the Union on what the Union’s stance is in regards to an issue or topic of importance to its members;

“Student Union” means the Concordia Student Union;

“subsidiary” means any company operated by the CSU and its various operations;

“Sustainable community food-system” means a collaborative network that integrates sustainable food production, processing, distribution, consumption and waste management in order to enhance the environmental, economic and social health of a particular place;

“Sustainability” refers to a mindset and a process that leads to reducing our ecological footprint and enhancing social well-being while maintaining economic viability both on and off campus based on shared vision and responsibility that fulfills Concordia's current needs without compromising the needs of future generations. Decisions and activities must take long term perspectives, recognize resources capacities, and balance the interconnected nature of our environment. The 3 pillars of sustainability are: Economic – Being profitable while maintaining compliance, proper governance, and risk management; Environmental – Reducing carbon footprint, packaging waste, water usage, and overall effect on the environment; Social – Supporting employees/workers, stakeholders, and the communities in which an organization operates;

“University” means Concordia University.

## Purpose

As a Union representing more than 30,000 students, the CSU recognizes the importance of being responsible to those it currently serves while protecting the planet to ensure the viability of future generations. This policy will guide the day-to-day functioning of the Union with the long-term vision and goals set by the University's Sustainable Action Plan. The Concordia Student Union recognizes it exists as part of a larger regional, and global community and has a responsibility to uphold the same high standards in each. In all instances, the Concordia Student Union will make every possible effort to respect the research and standards of the University as well as third-party organizations when applicable. This policy is also a tool to enact the positions taken by the Union through both council and student-wide referendums.

The CSU recognizes that sustainability is the process and outcome of achieving social justice, economic equality, and environmental health by reducing our environmental footprint and empowering communities. Through this definition, it is an ongoing process that never ends, therefore the Union must always strive to do better each year. To this end, this policy must be updated on a regular basis to reflect innovations in technology and methods to better achieve regenerative processes. The CSU also recognizes the need to take an intersectional approach to sustainability, meaning rather than using a pillared model of environmental, social and economic domains, we use a nested model. This translates into taking into consideration all aspects of an action's impact rather than focusing on one at a time. As important as all 3 domains are to a better future, the focus of this policy is on the economic and environmental spheres. This is not to say that societal issues were not considered by this policy, they are just not outlined in detail.

Although policy is a useful way to guide an organization through change and to achieve long-term goals, the CSU recognizes that the most effective way to combat issues of sustainability is still the commitment of financial and human resources toward a cause. Therefore, this policy has been written by keeping in mind the tradeoff between the commitment of abiding by each clause and what is actually feasible for the Union to commit to.

## Scope

1. This policy applies to Concordia Students, events and opportunities hosted by the CSU, any material used or published by the Union, environmental and economic sustainability.
2. Any ordinary motion, resolution or regulation that deviates from these regulations can only be adopted with a clause stating that the motion operates regardless of the Code of Standing Regulations. The clause must state which article(s) are not to be applied towards the motion. Such a motion requires a 2/3 majority vote and will cease to have effect four months following its approval.
3. The following is a list of general provisions to apply to this policy:
  - 3.1. English and French can be used equally in any Student Union Meetings and elections materials.

- 3.2. Any individual, club or student association who wishes to use the Student Union logo must get permission from the CSU.
- 3.3. In the case of any discrepancy between these regulations and the By-Laws, the latter shall prevail.
- 3.4. In the case of any discrepancy between these regulations and any other regulations, these regulations shall prevail.

## Policy Statement

### Section 1: Food

- 1.1. The CSU shall attempt to seek products carrying the eco-logo certification.
- 1.2. The CSU shall attempt to purchase organic foods that carry organic certification from, including, but not limited to the following agencies: OCIA (with regulation number); Quebec Vrai; Demeter; or Garantie Bio.
- 1.3. The CSU shall seek products that are fair-trade certified.
- 1.4. The CSU shall seek products that are as local as possible—meaning Quebec and its surrounding provinces and states.
- 1.5. The majority of the food offered by the CSU must be vegetarian and at least two options must be vegan.
- 1.6. The CSU will respect the dietary needs of its members and those who attend CSU events as much as possible.
  - 1.6.1. When offering online ticket sales for events with catered food, purchasers will be asked a question whether they would like a meat option available.
  - 1.6.2. When offering online ticket sales for events with catered food, purchasers will be asked to identify any allergies they have.
- 1.7. The CSU will support a student run food provider for each request for proposal by Concordia University.
- 1.8. The CSU will prioritize the procurement of food from Concordia student food groups.
  - 1.8.1. The CSU will collaborate with student food groups on sustainable food targets and how the Union can help them achieve the targets.
- 1.9. The CSU will track each food purchase as local or non-local & certified sustainable to track progress of local sourcing and create future connections.
  - 1.9.1. At the end of the school year, the CSU will produce a ratio of local/sustainable purchases per semester.

- 1.10. The CSU will follow the Food and Beverage section of the Sustainable Events Guide as much as possible when doing, but not limited to, the following: hosting events requiring food services, contacting food caterers for any reason, looking for food certifications, and serving alcohol.
- 1.11. The CSU and its members will at all costs stay away from single use plastic packaging when making food and beverage purchases. This includes plastic water, soda, juice, coffee, tea, etc. containers.
  - 1.11.1. The CSU will look for the following material alternatives containing to contain liquids of any type: Aluminum, glass, paper.
  - 1.11.2. Members who are able to stay away from single use plastic must be willing to do so as well as help others who struggle to do so.
- 1.12. The CSU will strive to move towards plant based and culturally inclusive foods at their facilities and events.
- 1.13. The CSU will aim to meet the current proportion of local/sustainable food in reference to the sustainable food stream.
- 1.14. The CSU will label foods at events as to whether they are local, sustainable, vegetarian, culturally sensitive, gluten free, sustainable seafood, fair trade, and Aliment du Quebec if it is made of 50% or more of Quebec ingredients.
- 1.15. The CSU will donate leftover food from events through La tablée des chefs or a similar organization.
- 1.16. The CSU will spread awareness about sustainable, fair trade, and local food through social media and the promotion of events and education on the topics.
- 1.17. The CSU will advocate for improving food sustainability and student related food issues by having a member sit on sustainable food related groups.
  - 1.17.1. Food Advisory Working Group.
- 1.18. The CSU will include questions that pertain to the food stream on the yearly CSU Sustainability Survey – Appendix B.

## **Section 2: Research**

- 2.1. The CSU shall keep track of milestones, accomplishments, and examples, issues, and needs of sustainability integration in the CSU – Appendix A.
- 2.2. Concordia sustainability groups, initiatives, and research-oriented bodies (research centers, institutes, etc.) at the University will be contacted in regard to any of the following:
  - 2.2.1. Directing arising ideas and projects related to sustainability to sources of funding;
  - 2.2.2. Bridging the gap between Concordia researchers and the needs of undergraduate students who will benefit from the research;

- 2.2.3. Increasing CSU stakeholder engagement with sources that help provide solutions;
  - 2.2.4. Helping the CSU identify pathways to best align themselves with the University's sustainability goals;
  - 2.2.5. Collaboration between the CSU community and researchers;
  - 2.2.6. Learning and knowledge sharing opportunities regarding the University's sustainability goals;
  - 2.2.7. Other useful resources to consult about these issues.
- 2.3. The CSU will continuously engage with the following internal stakeholders to create better solutions and foster a sustainability-oriented environment. This list is subject to change and shall be updated when necessary.
- 2.3.1. Loyola Research Center;
  - 2.3.2. Center for Zero Energy Building Studies;
  - 2.3.3. Concordia Institute of water, Energy, and Sustainable Systems;
  - 2.3.4. Concordia Living Labs Initiative;
  - 2.3.5. Sustainability Action Fund;
  - 2.3.6. Sustainability Hub;
  - 2.3.7. Concordia Greening Committee;
  - 2.3.8. Any additional sustainable initiatives related to the 5 streams of sustainability.
- 2.4. The CSU will consult with at least 1 representative from any group or organization that will be directly affected by Union actions. Secondary impacts should always be kept in mind as well as groups that can impact the actions of the Union.
- 2.5. Gather information pertinent to physical locations before the CSU holds an event somewhere.
- 2.5.1. Identify possible positive and negative impacts to the communities settled in these locations.
- 2.6. The CSU will provide support for conferences and events that increase the visibility of sustainably research at Concordia.
- 2.6.1. Example: advertising, volunteering (non-financial support).
- 2.7. If a Sustainable Event Certification program exists at Concordia, the CSU will strive to reach the highest level of certification for all of its events.
- 2.8. The CSU will use and advocate for the Concordia Sustainable Research Guide when information about sustainability is needed.
- 2.9. The CSU will send out a sustainability survey at the beginning of each year to the students of each faculty to better understand the sustainability needs of students from each faculty and to provide researchers with this information – Appendix B.

- 2.10. The CSU Sustainability Committee will engage in sustainable projects with not-for-profit organisations at campus or in the Greater Montreal Area.
- 2.11. Sustainability projects can include but are not limited to tree planting, greenifying alleys (or other spaces), planting shrubs/flowers, green roofs, etc.

### **Section 3: Climate**

- 3.1. The CSU shall campaign and advocate for the use of electric power for Concordia vehicles and for electric parking on campus.
- 3.2. The CSU shall encourage biking between campuses, whenever possible.
- 3.3. When sponsoring the travel of CSU members to events in other cities, the CSU shall encourage the use of train and bus transportation, whenever possible.
- 3.4. The CSU will favor the use and purchase of non-fossil-fuel-burning forms of transportation for the work-related travel of its members.
- 3.5. The CSU will have a budget line dedicated to the full or partial carbon offset of its travels and miscellaneous activities through Tree Canada or a similar organization.
- 3.6. The CSU will consider the feasibility of adopting formal policies, plans, and procedures to support reductions in campus emission.
- 3.7. The CSU will consider the impact of organizations it works with (especially for procurement) on the environment and prioritize working with suppliers that measure and attempt to minimize their environmental impact.
- 3.8. Members of the CSU will have options to work remotely unless in-person attendance is crucial.
- 3.9. The CSU will promote the benefits of sustainable transportation methods to its members and all undergraduate students.
- 3.10. The CSU will constantly be considering the feasibility of transitioning to alternative methods of lower-energy usage and any general methods to lower the amount of emissions emitted by the CSU.
- 3.11. The CSU will find ways to increase vegetation in the environments in which it operates.
- 3.12. Current and anticipated impacts of climate change will be considered in regard to the needs of the community and in the future projects and endeavors of the Union.

### **Section 4: Waste**

- 4.1. The CSU will be mindful of the amount of paper resources that it consumes.
  - 4.1.1. When official or certified paper is required, the CSU will use and buy paper from Forest Stewardship Council Certified Paper or any other eco-friendly paper supplier.

- 4.1.2. When unofficial paper is required, the CSU will attempt to use and second hand-paper or paper from local sources. (Concordia Center for Creative Reuse, Cascade Paper).
- 4.1.3. Whenever possible, the CSU shall print all documents that are more than one pages double- sided.
- 4.2. The CSU will track the amount of paper it buys each year and try to reduce purchasing and printing.
- 4.3. The CSU will aim to transition to a digital workplace:
  - 4.3.1. Request documents electronically whenever possible;
  - 4.3.2. Scanning and emailing documents instead of printing and copying;
  - 4.3.3. Refrain from printing documents for one-time use;
  - 4.3.4. Verbally encourage CSU members to go digital rather than use paper.
- 4.4. The CSU shall provide space for various recycling bins at the reception of its head office, including for batteries, printer cartridges etc.
- 4.5. The CSU shall provide space for compost bins within their offices and will continuously encourage the university to increase compost bins on campus and on-site processing.
- 4.6. When organizing events, especially during orientation week, the CSU should use the Sustainable Concordia, Sustainable Event Guide, as a blueprint to reducing the events' impacts. All events should eliminate single use items such as plastic cutlery and dishes, paper napkins, and packaging through use of the Concordia Dish Project or other similar service and buying in bulk.
- 4.7. The CSU will try to offer as much of its promotional material as eco-friendly as possible.
- 4.8. The CSU shall make extensive use of online resources and social media, for promotion and event registration.
- 4.9. The Sustainability Coordinator of CSU, with the help of Sustainable Concordia, will provide sustainability workshops to CSU executives, clubs and councilors by the last day of August.
- 4.10. The CSU shall have dedicated staff for waste education throughout orientation.
- 4.11. Apart from dedicated staff, the CSU will reach out to groups and people within Concordia to collaborate on educational training with. This list can include but is not limited to the following.
  - 4.11.1. Zero Waste Concordia members;
  - 4.11.2. Anyone in the Sustainability Ambassador Program.
- 4.12. The CSU will make an effort to work with vendors with responsible waste programs. This may include but is not limited to vendors that:
  - 4.12.1. Do life-cycle assessments;
  - 4.12.2. Have extended producer responsibility;

- 4.12.3. Participate in equipment loan programs;
- 4.12.4. Offer low/zero packaging;
- 4.12.5. Use local/sustainable materials.
- 4.13. The CSU will limit non-recyclable, non-reusable, non-compostable materials.
  - 4.13.1. The CSU will examine spending patterns and find ways to improve purchasing habits.
- 4.14. The CSU will restrict the following critical activities that have an immense impact on reducing waste.
  - 4.14.1. Purchasing plastic #6.
  - 4.14.2. Purchasing hazardous waste materials.
  - 4.14.3. Bottled water sales.
- 4.15. The CSU will effectively communicate the benefits and consider the feasibility of any zero waste beverage programs currently operating at Concordia:
  - 4.15.1. Container-sharing programs;
  - 4.15.2. Bottle less vending machines;
  - 4.15.3. Bring-your-own-mug incentives.
- 4.16. The CSU will aim to lower the overall waste produced by/inside its offices through the following but not limited to:
  - 4.16.1. Low waste office configurations:
    - 4.16.1.1 Eradication of desk-side trash bins with the replacement of labeled personal waste sorting bins.
    - 4.16.1.2 Providing access to compost.
  - 4.16.2. The CSU will increase office waste education and engagement initiatives as the number of “Zero Waste Concordia Initiatives” are increasing by doing the following:
    - 4.16.2.1 Promoting the Sustainability Ambassador Program and/or similar programs.
    - 4.16.2.2 Sharing Zero Waste Concordia Procedures with the office at the beginning of the year.
    - 4.16.2.3 Continually seeking new Zero Waste Initiatives to partner with.
- 4.17. When hosting events, the CSU will create a plan for collecting and reducing waste before and after the event (see food donation plan).
  - 4.17.1. Before events, organizers should look at CUCCR for materials to be used as décor to prioritize reused materials instead of buying from discount stores for items like decorations, banners, merc, nametags, etc.



- 4.17.2. Whenever possible, branding should be done without the year and that year's sponsors so it can be reused.
- 4.17.3. After events, the organizer will go to CUCCR to dispose of any materials than can be reused before trashing anything.
- 4.18. At the start of the year, the CSU will establish at least 1 metric-based waste target to measure and improve upon by the end of the year.
  - 4.18.1. The CSU will consult with the Institutional Planning and Analysis Office and Campus Sustainability Engagement Committee to this end.
  - 4.18.2. The CSU will use a market-based approach to setting targets and collaborate with Zero Waste Concordia in setting and reaching culture change goals around waste.
- 4.19. The CSU will strive for low-waste events by:
  - 4.19.1. Providing clearly labeled garbage, recycling, and compost bins at all events.
  - 4.19.2. Training and giving sustainability courses to all parties involved in the event planning. Sustainability ambassadors from Zero Waste Concordia can aid in this process.
  - 4.19.3. Encouraging polices to exclude non-recyclable and non-compostable packaging.
  - 4.19.4. Adhering to the use of the Sustainable Events Guide as much as possible or any sustainable events guide at Concordia.
  - 4.19.5. Providing volunteer opportunities post-event to help sort/dispose waste and for leftover food donation.
  - 4.19.6. Sustainable purchasing of décor, banners, and merch that is made ethically, can be reused, or will have a long lifespan past the event date.
- 4.20. The CSU Sustainability Committee invest and continue to expand recycling bins for the 7 different types of recyclable plastics throughout the downtown and Loyola.
- 4.21. The CSU Sustainability Committee invest and expand composting bins throughout the downtown and Loyola campus (as per motion passing October 14th, 2020).
- 4.22. Plastic items that are recyclable will be cleaned and given to the Concordia Precious Plastic Project (CP3) to be repurposed into new items.
- 4.23. The CSU banner used during orientation week should be able to be reused year after year.
- 4.24. Reusable materials will be donated to the Concordia University Center for Creative Reuse (CUCCR) rather than be disposed of in landfill bins.
- 4.25. The CSU will make sure to check-in with Zero Waste Concordia initiatives at the beginning of each year for new initiatives to work with.
- 4.26. The CSU would be in a supportive position to participate in a feasibility study and launch phase of a material sorting center.

- 4.27. The CSU will demand that student clubs attain sustainable events certification for their events in order to be reimbursed.

## **Section 5:** Curriculum

- 5.1. The CSU shall, in collaboration with the University's Sustainability Coordinator and University Senate, work to improve integration of the concepts of sustainability and First Peoples studies into the University curriculum for all undergraduate students.
- 5.2. The Chair of the Sustainability Committee will work with members of the CSU executive to promote sustainable living to CSU members through:
- 5.2.1. Supporting and promoting Sustainable Concordia's Organizing Sustainability workshop series to student Union members at the beginning of each academic semester as well as providing opportunities for education on sustainability throughout the year.
- 5.2.2. Educating the CSU membership through a Campus Sustainability section in the annual Member Handbook and Day planner.
- 5.2.2.1 Promote sustainability related classes at all facilities.
- 5.2.2.2 Promote sustainability minor to JMSB students.
- 5.2.2.3 Promote sustainability related student run organization groups.
- 5.2.2.4 Initiatives under Zero Waste Concordia.
- 5.2.3. Disseminating information on collaborative projects and events between the CSU, student groups, and the University and community organizations through the website, newsletter, posters and other methods of outreach.
- 5.3. Every semester, the CSU will recognize a Concordia student that champions sustainability and showcase the work they have done to earn it.
- 5.4. The CSU will create and advertise volunteering opportunities related to sustainability on-campus at Concordia University.
- 5.5. The CSU will use the Sustainability Survey to identify opportunities to integrate sustainability into new or existing curricula or courses as well as emerging themes that can be incorporated into the sustainably curriculum.
- 5.5.1. The CSU will nominate or advocate for more education in areas that are apparently highlighted by Concordia Students from the results of the sustainably survey.

## **Section 6:** Miscellaneous

- 6.1. The CSU shall encourage small companies to flourish whenever possible.
- 6.2. The CSU shall actively encourage the University to adopt an official comprehensive strategy regarding Sustainability that includes Divestment from fossil fuels.
- 6.3. Events held and collaborated with the CSU must be accessible in cost or free.
- 6.4. Whenever possible the CSU will collaborate with internal Concordia student groups rather than external companies.

- 6.5. The CSU no longer use single use menstrual pads or tampons that are not eco-friendly.
- 6.6. The CSU will use the Sustainability Integration Log to document important events, decisions, and accomplishment that relate to the Union's efforts to be more sustained. This will be reviewed once a year to update the policy in an efficient manner. (See: Appendix B).
- 6.7. The CSU will annually appoint one of its members to participate on Concordia governing bodies related to sustainably, such as through the Sustainability Governance Framework.
  - 6.7.1. (list)?

## Appendix A – CSU Sustainability Integration Log

Documentation of sustainability at the CSU:

This appendix will contain a log of all important events, decisions, accomplishments, etc. having to do with sustainability that involves the CSU. The goal is to update the policy annually based on what is documented here. This way, no changes or milestones are forgotten. **IMPORTANT NOTE** – when adding or deleting clauses, always add them at the end of a stream so as to maintain correct numbering. For example if you refer to clause 3.7 in the integration log and then add a clause above it, that clause will now be 3.8.

Date	Pertinent stream, clause, section	Decision about/ Accomplishment in/ Example of sustainability	Special notes	Amendment to be made?
04-16-21	Food 1.7	Concordia will vote to change their food supplier in the next year	Conc U is deciding to renew contract with Aramark or not	None
04-16-21	Waste 2.8	Start using sustainable events certification when developed	It's being developed right now but I think JSEC has one currently	the CSU will strive to reach the highest level of certification for all of its events" (or major events, if all is not feasible
04-16-21	Education 2.3.7	Take out if greening committee isn't created	Faisal said it is currently being made and CSU sus cord will sit on committee	Just remove
04-16-21	Waste	4.16.2 & 4.11 can probably be combines	Both deal with education and the same groups	
4-16-21	Waste	Revisit strategy 2 of CSU sustainably policy	See if CSU will set up a pay what your product model - the CSU or its subsidiaries would have their waste quantities monitored through a sensor in a waste bin	

			and would then receive a bill based on how much they produced. (highest price for landfill, less for recycling, even less for compost, and possibly even a charge for other streams (e-waste, reuse)). – see if it can be exploring elsewhere within the university, such as labs or student associations and/or groups	
4-16-21	Waste	Insert clause about asset reuse program	This is being developed by Zero waste Concordia currently	
4-17-21	Preamble	Add inclusion of EDI policy to underlined section to clarify why social sustainability is not mentioned in this policy	EDI policy is soon to be made	Add: details of social sustainability are outlined in the EDI policy
4-17-21	Food 1.17	Get CSU reps on the following food groups 1-Fair trade steering committee (not yet) 2-Concordia Greenhouse House (not yet)	The CSU should have a rep on these groups to help with sustainable food management	turn 1 & 2 into 1.17.2 and 1.17.3 in the clause

## Appendix B – CSU Sustainability Survey

Gathering student data:

This section will hold the questions to the annual sustainability survey done by the CSU. It will be sent out to all undergraduate students at the beginning of each academic year. Its purpose is to facilitate communication between Concordia student's needs, desires, expectations, etc. about sustainability at Concordia University. This information can be used by the Union as well as other departments at Concordia to better enhance sustainability efforts at the university and create a better overall experience for students.

Stream	Topic	Questions	Why measure
food	Dietary choice	Do you have any dietary restrictions	Inclusion, optimize food demand, etc.
Research	Curriculum needs	What topics of education would you like to see your faculty offer more of	For hiring new teachers, for engaging with students, etc.