

CONCORDIANS AGAINST TRIBUNALS

—
a primer guide



What is CATS?

In 2015, Concordians' Against Tribunals (CATS) formed and fought a successful campaign against the tribunals of dozens of student activists, who had ORR complaints launched against them by professors for picketing classes during the 2015 anti-austerity student strike. The charges against all the protestors involved were dropped. In response to Concordia's repression of pro-Palestine movements and student activists through ORR complaints and suspensions, **the CATS are back.**

The university is weaponizing ORR complaints, tribunals, and suspensions to attempt to frighten and deter student activists in an increasingly militarized campus. At a recent student strike for Palestine, the university brought in some fresh faces: a private security organization with direct links to the Israeli Defense Forces, who proclaim themselves as specialists in "countering threats like terrorism and hate crimes." Concordia's own CSPA guards show up to pro-Palestine demos with cameras on their chest and with zip ties in hand, and have repeatedly enacted violent 'citizens arrests,' and turned university spaces into temporary detention centres. As private security guards hand off protesters to state policing agents, the university proves again and again it would rather arrest its students than divest.

In order for our movements to grow and win, we must be able to navigate surveillance and protect student activists from repression. **Concordians Against Tribunals are one piece of a broader struggle. The students united will never be defeated!**

Have you received an email about an ORR complaint?

An ORR (Office of Rights and Responsibilities) complaint represents any alleged(!) breach of the Concordia Code of Rights and Responsibilities. It can be launched against someone by a fellow student, a professor, or by Concordia Security and Prevention Services themselves. If an ORR complaint is made against you, you'll receive an email from the administration.

If you receive an email about an ORR complaint, the first thing to do is make an appointment with CSU Advocacy. Email them as soon as you can at advocacy@csu.qc.ca, with your name, student ID number, and a copy of the email you received from administration. Make an appointment, and they will guide you through the entire process. The next step is to write to us, at concordians.against.tribunals@gmail.com. We can connect you with other resources and help support you!

In some instances, particularly for ORR cases involving confrontation with CSPA agents, student activists face immediate suspension and are banned from campus. In cases where criminal charges are being laid, tribunals are being withheld until after the resolution of criminal proceedings. **These are two practices CATS are committed to fighting.**

In most cases, there is the option for informal mediation and resolution. If informal mediation is not an option, an advocate will help you prepare for tribunal. In either case, you will likely have a meeting with a representative from the ORR. Contact your advocate, and have them present with you for all meetings with the ORR representative or other members of admin. **Your advocate is your new best friend.**

Timeline of Repression and Resistance at Concordia Fall 2024

**Sep
12**

SPVM officers come into the school to break up a protest for Palestine, picketing engineering classes in the MB building. Later in the evening, the SPVM used 30 SIS intervention officers in an attempt to evict a discussion circle on the Gaza solidarity camps. The eviction was successfully resisted and the conversation continued.



photo credit wiliamwilsonphotgraphy

**Sep
25**

Student hold a walkout to demand Concordia cut ties with Israel and kick cops off campus, protesters march through the tunnel leaving posters and painted messages. CSPS detains a protester and the police violently arrest 3 people, 2 of whom are suspended indefinitely.

**Oct
7**

Students hold a massive protest against a year of genocide in Palestine, and in response, the provincial police (SQ) and SPVM put on a huge show of force. Despite this thousands march to McGill and break through police lines.

Timeline of Repression and Resistance at Concordia Fall 2024

**Oct
8**

In response to the crackdown on the movement in solidarity with Palestine, people wheat paste the campus with pro-Palestine posters, and are detained by CSPS and taken for interrogation by the SPVM.

**Oct
31**

Students hold a protest against student repression, calling for an end to political tribunals and for cops off campus. CSPS tackles a protester in a "citizen's arrest." 2 students are arrested and later suspended indefinitely.



photo from Maria Cholakova

**Nov
21**

Thousands of students at Concordia go on strike, calling for divestment from genocide. A massive rally is held, and students occupy the Hall building. Security guards attempt to detain a protester by putting them into a chokehold, but other protesters de-arrest them and no one is arrested.

Have you witnessed or experienced a security guard being violent or aggressive?

Report it! It is crucial that we have clear records of all of the instances of security abuse, harassment, unnecessary or inappropriate surveillance, racial profiling, and/or physical violence. Administration and CSPS are hiding behind the fact that there are limited official complaints about their abuses: it's time to change that.

1) Go to the **Concordia Security 'Compliments and Complaints' Form**: this form is specifically for making complaints against security guards. Use it!



2) Go to **Concordia Security Incident Reporting Form**: reports can be made anonymously, if you give your name and contact information, they are obligated to follow up and inform you of the results of your complaints.

3) Go to the **CSU Incident Reporting Form**: this is to ensure that we have our own records of the complaints that are being made. **If you report an incident about security abuses to CSPS, please report it here too.**



Keeping Safe & Counter Surveillance

We know that Concordia is surveilling student activists through an expensive camera system and many on the ground security guards. Be mindful of your identity, mask up and take precautions. Concealing identity does not indicate any particular intentions, it creates a culture of anonymity and solidarity among protestors: we let our collective voice be heard above our individual identities. Collective anonymity keeps us all safer, and prevents particular protestors from being singled out.

Counter-surveillance is the practice of turning the gaze back onto those in power, to reverse the flow of knowledge and challenge the dynamics of surveillance on campus. Some way to do this are:

- filing access to information requests
- filming cops and security guards
- asking security guards to see their ID

Through their repression of student activism Concordia has chosen to protect its financial interests, its partnerships with war profiteers and its complicity in global systems of oppression over listening to its students.

We reject all attempts to criminalize and repress political action and we encourage everyone to take part in subversion and resistance.

scratch back! meow! scratch back! meow!scratch back! m
scratch back! meow! scratch back! meow!scratch back!

**AN INJURY TO ONE IS AN
INJURY TO ALL**

**DROP THE SUSPENSIONS
AND DEFEND THE RIGHT TO
PROTEST!**

CATS