

GENERAL ASSMBLY PACKET

GSA GA – 5:30pm on Friday, April 1, 2016.

Room EV - 1.605 (1515 Ste-Catherine Street West, Montreal)

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PROPOSED AGENDA

Adopted by the GSA Council on March 22, 2016.

0. Plenary to explain/ask questions about agenda items

1. GA business

1.1 Call to Order

1.2 Appointment of Chair and Secretary (Chair's report on procedure)

1.3 Approval of the Agenda

1.4 Approval of the past GA minutes ([LINK to January 29, 2016](#))

2. Business arising

2.1 BYLAW CHANGES (20 mins)

a) BYLAW CHANGE: Clarifying Representation on Council

b) BYLAW CHANGE: Abolishing Advocacy Manager

2.2 President's Report (10 mins)

2.3 Financial Statement Update (20 mins)

2.4 Elections (30 mins)

3. New business

4. Other business

5. Adjournment

Details for “Business arising” (p. 4) and “New business” (p. 8) are below.
Followed by “Useful Links” (p. 9).

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY (AND YOU)

PLEASE READ: <http://gsaconcordia.ca/governance/what-is-a-general-assembly/>

BEST PRACTICES FOR GA PARTICIPANTS

1. Arrive promptly and prepared

Read the packet. Send any questions or amendments in advance to the Chair. Show up 30mins early with a device or printed copy of the packet. Use this time before the meeting to consult and prepare for the meeting.

2. Line up at the microphone and practice self-facilitation

All motions, amendments, and debate will only be allowed at the microphone and your comments must be directed to the Chair. You may interrupt the Chair only to ask from your seat for points of information or order.

You are requested to self-facilitate, keep your comments relevant to the motion and direct your comments to the Chair. Also, if you find yourself at the microphone more than once on any issue, consider requesting to speak at the end to sum up your points thereby yielding priority on the list to other 1st time speakers.

3. Do not talk during the meeting unless called on by the Chair

If you need to consult, take the conversation outside or ask for a caucus (60 secs) or motion for a plenary (5 mins).

4. Refrain from asking questions or requesting to motivate during voting procedure

The Chair will repeat the resolution and ask for questions before the calling the vote. All points and questions should be raised before entering voting procedure.

5. Disciplinary action can be taken

Jokes, commentary, or side-conversations will not be tolerated. If any members(s) persist, they may be asked to leave. NOTE: THE GSA Council passed the following Motion ([CO-20141118-16](#)) as Amended: *Be it Further Resolved That the Graduate Students' Association shall remind every GSA GA participant of the Assembly's right, as per Robert's Rules of Order, either by a rule or by a vote, to eject any one from its place of meeting, and that "it is the duty of the chairperson to enforce the rule of order, using whatever force is necessary" to eject the party.*

6. Motions made in GA

If we are already discussing another motion that has nothing to do with yours, wait after it is dealt with. If you are not sure of the writing, ask for drafting time. Make sure that the motion written by the Secretary is what you had in mind.

SAMPLE MOTION

BIRT the GSA fund the purchase of 5000 reusable mugs GSA promotions;
BIFRT the GSA giveaway these mugs at all events for GSA members.

Amendment – Changing 5000 to 3000 reusable mugs;

Call for a seconder on the amendment, then debate/discussion/questions, followed by a vote on the amendment (For, Against, or Abstain). If approved as an amendment, we still have to vote on the entire motion as amended.

BIRT the GSA fund the purchase of 3000 reusable mugs GSA promotions;
BIFRT the GSA giveaway these mugs at all events for GSA members.

Call for any additional debate/discussion/questions or amendments, then call for a vote on the main amended motion (For, Against, or Abstain).

7. Counting the vote

Simple majority votes are 50% +1 as required in bylaw. So if 6 vote for and 6 against and 1 councillor abstains, the motion does not pass. If 7 vote for and 6 against, the motion passes.

For a supermajority or two-thirds (2/3) vote to pass, this would mean that any number of votes equal to or greater than 2/3 (67% or more) of votes would mean a pass. Conversely, any number of votes less than 67% would mean a fail. Therefore, if 8 of 13 members (61.5% of members) vote in favor, the motion fails.

Abstentions do not count in the final tally, so for example, if a vote is called and there are 8 votes for, 7 votes against, and 3 abstentions (or 8:7:3) the motions carries by a simple majority of 8 to 7, abstentions are not included. Also, if the vote result is 7:7:4, the motion fails as it did not receive a simple majority.

You can request that your vote (For, Against, or Abstention) be noted in the minutes.

BUSINESS ARISING

2.1 BYLAW CHANGES

2.1 a) BYLAW CHANGE: Clarifying Representation on Council

Motion CO-20150926-06

WHEREAS Bylaws article V-5 states "... Directors shall be elected **within their respective faculties,** namely John Molson School of Business, Arts & Science, Engineering & Computer Science, Fine Arts **and Interdisciplinary/SIP...** "so clearly stating that Interdisciplinary/SIP are treated in the GSA as its own different group.

WHEREAS some committee compositions are phrased in the bylaws in a not so clear way that gives the illusion of being inconsistent with previously mentioned article and seem to only consider that there are only four groups as opposed to five. Furthermore, while the intention of these compositions is to be inclusive and to ensure diverse representation they can also give the illusion to be exclusive. Those committees are: Budget committee (article XII-2.4) Appointments committee (ARTICLE IX-5.2), Hiring committee (article XI-3.2).

Be It Resolved That article XII-2.4 of the bylaws to be changed to "at **least four current** council directors representing separate faculties and groups and appointed by Council".

Be It Further Resolved That article XI-3.2 of the bylaws to be changed to "At least four members of Council comprised of one member from each faculty and group".

Be It Further Resolved That article IX-5.2 of the bylaws to be changed to "Chair, and be a voting member on, an Appointments Committee of councillors who interview and consider applicants **for non-elected representation on university bodies (including sub senate committees), excluding the actual Senate and Board of Governors,** and present recommendations for approval by Council. Council will appoint **at least four councillors,** one per faculty and groups, to the Appointments Committee, at the beginning of their term".

Be It Further Resolved That the bylaws committee resumes its mandate from last year of completely rewriting the bylaws so as they become more cohesive and ensure an efficient and effective governance structure of the GSA" and have a draft ready for approval of council so that it can be presented to the first GA in the winter semester.

Moved by: Mathilde

Seconded by: Keroles

For: Keroles, Nirmal, Vivek, Carine, Sapandeep, Aria, Pempho, Rahul, Stephi, Mathilde, Jasneet, Amandeep.

Against: --

Abstention: Ashley.

Adopted

2.1 b) BYLAW CHANGE: Abolishing Advocacy Manager

Motion CO-20150926-07a

WHEREAS Council motions (CO-20150913-10) and (CO-20150913-13) and discussions during council for these motions.

WHEREAS GSA is establishing an advocacy center eliminating the need for an advocacy manager.

WHEREAS most tasks associate with service manager are no longer required (such as maintaining computer labs) or can easily fall under the responsibility of VP internal.

WHEREAS Staff budget line is the biggest in the whole budget and that staff resources require significant restructuring so that they are optimally and efficiently used.

Be It Resolved That articles XI (6 (advocacy manager)) be stricken from the bylaws.

Be It Further Resolved That Conditioned on ratification of this bylaw change by a GA, the position should be abolished.

Moved by: Rahul

Seconded by: Stephi

For: Amandeep, Jasneet, Mathilde, Stephi, Rahul, Pempfo, Ashley, Aria, Sapandeep, Vivek, Carine, Nirmal, Keroles.

Against:

Abstention:

Adopted Unanimously

2.2 President's report

GSA President's address to the April 1, 2016 General Assembly

It has been a great pleasure and honor serving as President for 2015-2016. I have been working towards improving our association. I have been doing my best to help GSA to fulfil its objectives. During my tenure I have managed to achieve what I could, considering the present work environment, and several unpleasant experiences. I have stayed on because of the best interest of the association.

I have exactly two months left in my mandate. Despite the work that has been accomplished, there is still a lot left to be done. I greatly appreciate the support of my fellow executives. I thank the GSA directors who have supported us, as well as the GSA staff, volunteers and graduate students. There are things that cannot be achieved without the executives, council, staff and students working together.

GSA 2016 Elections

We hope to have successful elections and look forward to welcoming a new team.

Advocacy Center

Last semester we established an advocacy center in the GSA house. It has been a challenge to recruit GSA advocates for the advocacy center. We presently have a job posting for the position and hope to recruit someone this month.

One of the bylaw changes on the agenda for today's GA is to abolish the advocacy manager position. This position is protected by our bylaws. The present reality of having an advocacy center means that the advocacy manager will be replaced with GSA student advocates. This position also needs to be protected, and protecting this position needs to be addressed.

Protecting Advocacy services is very important. One of the main objectives of the GSA is to represent, promote and defend the individual rights of the association's members. The advocacy center is meant to preserve the rights of graduate students at Concordia University, and help students who find themselves in difficult situations. The center will also support the advocacy initiatives of the GSA.

Audit for the 2015-16 financial year

At the last General Assembly, our bylaws were changed from having a compulsory review to a compulsory audit, which will be presented to GSA members. The compulsory review of the financial statements was not performed in the past. We hope to complete the review of the 2013/14 and 2014/15 financial statements. This is required by our auditor to validate the opening balances for the 2015-2016 audit. A compulsory audit is important because it helps to increase transparency, and also helps ensure that GSA meets its obligations.

Departmental Associations

The GSA supports several departmental associations who also host social and academic events. We are trying to reach out to a few departmental associations who have not registered this year. We want all active associations to apply for their allocation before the funding deadline. We are planning to host an Arts and Science Congress and a Fine Congress next week, on April 7 and April 8, 2016.

GSA Academic Survey

Last semester we conducted an academic survey whose results will be released soon.

GSA clubs and student groups

This year we encouraged graduate students to form clubs or student groups, and budgeted for this. We registered one GSA student group and wish to register more.

GSA Lounge

This summer we renovated the GSA lounge to make it more welcoming and to help improve the experience of students. All graduate students are welcome to use the lounge, which serves as a central meeting space for relaxation and study. This winter semester, we started serving free coffee to graduate students in the lounge.

Fall 2015 Orientation and winter 2016 Orientation

We had a successful fall 2015 and winter 2016 orientation. There were 22 events over 2 weeks during the fall 2015 orientation and 11 events over 1 week during the winter 2016 orientation.

GSA Services

This year we have been working towards improving the services that we provide.

We reviewed and improved our French language classes using feedback from students. We installed new PCs and projector screens in the classrooms for audio visuals.

We reintroduced subsidized printing and copying services this semester. The low priced (5c) prints will help reduce the printing costs for graduate students.

We have hosted several events from June 2015 to date and will host a few more events before the end of our mandate.

Anti-Austerity

At the last GA we passed an anti-austerity motion. I strongly encourage any student who wants to get involved in our campaigns to join our campaigns committee.

Conclusion

Early this year we provided a list of projects which we had set out to complete. Some of these projects have been completed, while some have been suspended. We made some equipment purchases to use for our operations, and to save the cost of borrowing items, such as the projector we use for our meetings.

GSA has been operating successfully since we began our mandate, despite the challenges, barriers, and staff shortages we encountered. There has been a disturbing precedent, which needs to be challenged, for the best interest of our association. I will issue a statement on the “possible suspension” and “impeachment” on a later date.

I hope that you all enjoy the rest of the semester. I wish you good luck in your exams and all the best for the future.

2.3 Financial Statements Update

Budget ([Link](#)) & Financial Statements ([Link](#))

2.4 Elections (30 mins)

- **Director A&S: 2**
- **Director INDI: 1**
- **Director JMSB: 1**
- **Vice-President Academic & Advocacy**

NEW BUSINESS

3.1

USEFUL LINKS

GSA Bylaws ([Link](#))

Robert's Rules ([Link](#))

Companies Act of Quebec ([Link](#))