



## **Executive Bursaries Policy**

Graduate Students' Association  
Concordia University

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**Modifications:**

Date of the modification	The Body who adopted the change and the motion concerned	Article-s affected
May 23 <sup>rd</sup> 2014	Motion CO-20140523-03	Adoption
August 27 <sup>th</sup> 2014	Motion CO-20140827-16	Addition of a new Article 5
October 9 <sup>th</sup> 2014	Motion CO-20141009-13	Change Article 4b by raising the bursary amount.

## **Rationale for this policy**

### **Action plan**

Every year the GSA members elect a new executive who will run the organization for one year. The managers and staff members, in running the GSA's day-to-day duties and in accomplishing the organization's mandate, then support this new executive. The GSA mandate may refer to the continuation of resolutions decided by the previous year's Council of directors and General Assembly as well as new resolutions proposed by the new term of executives and councillors. In order to ensure that these mandates are accomplished, *Action Plans* must be prepared by executive member and approved by Council.

In previous years, the executive were overwhelmed with work as well as organizing many events and providing many services, but the *purpose* of these events and services were not guided by an *Action Plan* that could have helped in aligning the executives' work along with the GSA mission.

### **Oversight**

This past year and in years prior, Council has experienced difficulties in tracking and maintaining oversight of the work of the executives. According to the GSA bylaws, executives are obligated to produce monthly reports and present them at Council. These reports are essential in following what the GSA executive is up to. In the past year, the importance of GSA work being translated to council was not seen as a priority to the executives; One reason being the lack of interest by Council toward these reports that were consequently tabled in many meetings and secondly, due to the fact that the executives did not respect calendar deadlines for submitting their reports and consistently submitted their reports late.

### **Volunteering and Compensation**

GSA recognizes that being elected to the Executive Committee is a political involvement and as such should be considered as a volunteer position. However, GSA also recognizes that students may live in precarious financial situations and that political involvement should not be a privilege, this is why the GSA offers compensation in the form of bursaries to executives members. This policy put forward here offers a new formula to strengthen both the oversight and visioning of GSA's executives as well as a new method for awarding bursaries based on accountability.

## 1) ACTION PLAN AND FOLLOW UP ON PROJECTS AND TASKS

- A. A member of the Executive Committee who wishes to obtain a bursary must first provide to the Council, no later than the beginning of July (for summer semester) no later than the beginning October (for fall semester), and no later than the beginning of February (for the winter semester), an *Action Plan* for the semester at hand. The form of the action plan is left to the discretion of the executive member but it must state the following:
  - a. Projects and tasks on which the executive member will focus on, projects and tasks that fall under their position in the by-laws, and any resolutions relevant to the executive's mandate set by the General Assembly, the Council and the Executive Committee;
  - b. Where appropriate, the objectives related to each project and each of these tasks, with a proposed methodology for achieving said goals as well as a supporting schedule of events.
  - c. Any and all indicators the executive will be using in order to measure their success in achieving their goals (eg: attendance to events, amounts fundraised, waste output reduced, etc.)
- B. There is no specific requirement vis-à-vis the number of projects and the number of tasks to be presented. The reasoning is simple; within the Executive Committee, obligations and responsibilities vary from one position to another and the time that executive members may allocate in their projects and their tasks differ according to their academic and family commitments as well as their employment situation.
- C. An executive member who comes into office after a round of *Action Plans* have been submitted remains eligible for bursary. If he or she was elected before mid-July, mid-October or mid-February, he or she must transmit his or her *Action Plan* to the Council as soon as possible. After mid-July, mid-October or mid-February, the *Semester Report* will suffice in the assessment of the executive member.
- D. *Action Plans* must be made available to members at least ten (10) days before the second General Assembly (GA) meeting held in the semester at hand.
- E. A special Council meeting will be called, no later than the last week of July (for summer semester), no later than the last week of October (for fall semester) and no later than the last week of February (for the winter semester) to assess the *Action Plans*. During the meeting, the Council may issue recommendations regarding the content of the *Action Plans*.
- F. Throughout the semester, at the request of Council, an executive member may be asked to provide a verbal summary of the progress of his or her projects and tasks.

## 2) REPORTS

### A. *Monthly Reports*

For the months spanning July to November, inclusively, as well as January, February and March, the executives must individually submit reports to Council for their approval. These reports are a tool for Council to monitor the progress of executives according to their semester *Action Plan*. Upon acceptance by Council, the executive reports will then be made available to members by no later than the end of each month.

### B. *Semester Report*

In order to receive a semester's bursary, individual executives must present an executive summary based on their *Action Plan* to the Council in the form of a *Semester Report*. Subject to the completeness of the individual report and the adequacy of effort put forward by the executive member to achieve their goals, Council will decide if the executive member will receive the entirety of the bursary, half of entire amount, or no bursary. Should Council accept the report, it will be made available before the second General Assembly of the semester at hand, where GSA members will be given the opportunity to follow-up on the semester reports.

### C. A report is considered "complete" by containing or adhering to the following criteria:

1. A follow-up on the current progress with regards to the *Action Plan* of the individual executive explaining all actions taken to pursue the objective(s), the number of hours spent pursuing the objective(s), and any significant events with regards to the objective(s).
2. An evaluation of their *Action Plan*, all actions that were put in place to realize their goals and the results of these actions.

### D. *Semester Report* submission

The *Semester Report* is initially presented to the members of the Executive Committee and then to a special meeting of Council held in the semester at hand. The report must be submitted to the directors electronically two (1) weeks in advance of the special meeting of Council in order to allow directors opportunity to examine the report and ask for clarifications. A special meeting of Council must receive the *Semester Report* in the last month of the semester at hand.

### E. Letter of assessment from other executive member

A member of the executive can decide to annexe to his or her *Semester Report*, submitted to Council, an addendum that evaluates the work of other members of the executive. This addendum is will not be published with the author of the report attached to protect their identity. The purpose of this addendum is to allow executives a method to make known if the report of another executive is fraudulent or untruthful and to allowing members of the Council to help provide more information in Council's assessment of an executive's right to a bursary.

### 3) EVALUATION OF *SEMESTER REPORTS*

- A. The Council is responsible of the evaluation of the *Semester Reports* and for rendering any decisions as to the amount of the bursary awarded to each individual executive. The rationale for Council reserving these powers are that:
  - a. The Council is a permanent committee held throughout the entire term year;
  - b. The Council is composed of representatives from every faculty that constitutes the GSA membership;
  - c. The Council is the GSA body responsible following-up on tasks and mandates of executive members through their *Monthly Reports* and are the body that receives the executives' *Action Plans*; they are therefore familiar with the work of executives and adequately knowledgeable enough to assess it.
- B. A special meeting of Council will be called specifically for the evaluation of *Semester Reports*. Executive members may volunteer or be asked to provide an oral presentation to accompany their written *Semester Reports* and to address questions brought forward by Council.
- C. The agenda point of Council that concerns the deliberation of the amount rewarded to the executives will be done through closed session, where, in addition, executive members will be asked to leave. In the event that an executive member provides an evaluation of other executive members assessing their work, Council may only address these evaluations in the absence of any and all GSA executives.
- D. The attribution of a bursary is contingent to the evaluation of the *Semester Report* of an executive member and any executive evaluations, if they were provided. The criteria through which Council evaluates the *Semester Reports* are based on:
  - a. The overall quality of the *Semester Report*, the details given, and the auto-evaluation of the executive member in achieving their mandate and performing tasks related to his or her *Action Plan*, provided that such a plan was submitted by the executive [refer to section 1.C]
  - b. Progress in following and in accomplishing goals set by Council [refer to section 1.E], provided that the executive member voluntarily agreed to champion a goal of Council that was not initially outlined in their *Action Plan*. Executive members may choose to not pursue an objective put forward by Council, except when that objective targets an issue judged important for the GSA, (ie: the goal relates to a binding motion voted by General Assembly or Council).

#### 4) ALLOCATION OF THE BURSARIES

- A. Council reserves the final decision on the awarding of the executive bursaries. An executive member cannot appeal the decision of Council rendered on the attribution of his or her bursary. Subject to the *Semester Report* and the end of semester evaluation, Council may decide to allocate the entire amount of the bursary, half of the amount of the bursary or none of the bursary. Council must render a decision with a majority vote while the rationale supporting the decision must be documented and made available to the GSA body through Council minutes.
  
- B. The bursaries are to be allocated by semester. The amounts for each semester represent an amount of 1100\$ per month which goes as follows:

Summer Semester (June to August): 3300\$  
Fall Semester (September to December): 4400\$  
Winter Semester (January to May): 5500\$

**5) MONTHLY BURSARY OPTION**

Allow for executive who choose to request monthly bursaries be awarded if councils accept their monthly reports.

In case, of not being able to have a council meeting because of not achieving quorum, the applicant would get paid without any assessment, because of the above mentioned reasons.