

## **General Assembly 6 March 2012 – Minutes**

### **The GSA is on Strike**

The GSA General Assembly on 6 March 2012 voted to go on strike as of Monday 12 March 2012. The exact text of the motion is reproduced below with explanatory annotations.

### **GSA Strike Motion of 6 March 2012**

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Graduate Students' Association of Concordia University hereby calls an open-ended strike, meaning the collective cessation of class attendance, to begin on 12 March 2012 until such time as the government of Quebec rescinds its proposed increases to the Quebec tuition rate and freezes out-of-province and international forfaitsaires;

- The strike begins on Monday 12 March
- The strike consists of “the collective cessation of class attendance” – not going to class
- This does not mean stopping research
- The strike will end when the government agrees to not raise tuition or out-of-province and international “forfaitaire” fees or until members vote to end the strike in a general assembly
- The strike does not apply to TA or RA duties

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the GSA call upon the government of Quebec to review its funding policies for university education, which include, but are not limited to, increasing reliance on private funding;

- The GSA wants the government to review its funding policies for universities in whole
- The GSA is especially concerned about an increased reliance on private funding
- Private funding means funding from non-government sources, such as industry and other corporate sources, privately directed funding agencies, and individuals including large donors, alumni, and students

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT General Assemblies shall be convened every Monday following the strike to confirm the will of the members to remain on strike;

- Things are moving quickly, so the members of the GSA will be able to vote as to how to proceed on a weekly basis

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Graduate Students' Association of Concordia University shall provide aid and assistance to any and all associations and individuals who are on strike, to secure their rights and freedoms, and to ensure the integrity of their persons.

- The GSA is committed to the safety of our members, and of the University Community
- The GSA will seek to ensure that those on strike remain safe in their rights
- The GSA does not condone the use of violence, nor does the GSA tolerate violence against our members

### **Important Information**

#### **Solidarity.**

Strikes only work when people work – actually *stop* work – together. If classes go on as usual, the strike will not work. If classes are emptied right away, the strike will have teeth. The emptier our classrooms, the sooner the government will back down. If you continue to go to class as usual, you are acting against the interests of your fellow students.

#### **Tactics**

The General Assembly voted to empty classes, not to prevent them. Any individuals or groups who want to use more aggressive tactics such as blocking classes should keep two things in mind:

1. Aggressive tactics may alienate more students than it will win over
2. Aggressive tactics, and especially preventing instructors from teaching, will alienate more faculty, even sympathetic faculty, than it will win over

Those who are striking as well as those who are not should also keep in mind that aggressive behaviour may result in disciplinary action by the University under the [Code of Rights and Responsibilities](#) if someone decides to file a complaint. For example, if you are picketing, you do not have the right to impede someone's movement. On the other hand, if you are being prevented from entering a class, you do not have the right to shove someone out of the way.

That said, the GSA does not have a right to order any individual member or member association what to do, and we will, of course, provide the usual advocacy and other services to all members whatever their views on the strike, on tuition hikes, or anything else. This also does not mean that we should be passive in asserting our rights, only that we should do so with due respect for the rights of others, and with possible consequences, both personal and collective, in mind.

### **Safety**

Free speech has limits: harassment or threats are not free speech.

In any case where someone is becoming aggressive, withdrawing is not only the intelligent choice, it is your legal duty. If you feel threatened, leave the area.

If a situation is becoming tense, do not escalate the situation. Rely on dialogue to settle problems and avoid physical confrontations.

**Security should not be called unless there is an imminent threat of violence or some other emergency.**

It is illegal for security personnel to physically remove students. If situations escalate, police may be called, at which point we will all lose control over what happens next.

### **What Next?**

The GSA as a body has voted to go on an unlimited general strike, as discussed above. However, how this strike is implemented is a decision that is up to departmental and/or faculty associations. We strongly suggest that graduate students within each department (or in some cases, faculty) meet as a body to discuss how they will honour the strike vote. The GSA can send a representative to answer questions or help with booking a room, etc. An update on what other associations, undergraduate and graduate, have done to implement their strikes will be available on the GSA website tomorrow, and we hope to create or link to a site that will keep track of all the strike actions at Concordia.

ADDENDUM April 4th 2013 – Full Minutes of this meeting are now available in a non-redacted form.

They have been placed online for members.

GSA General Assembly

Tuesday, March 6, 2012

H-110 1455 de Maisonneuve O., Montreal, QC

### **Meeting Agenda**

-

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of Agenda

3. Information Session on Tuition
4. Vote on Student Strike
5. Information Session on By-law Change
6. Vote on By-law Change
7. Information Session on CLASSE Membership
8. Vote on CLASSE Membership
9. Other Business
10. Adjournment

**Total Members Present:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Quorum met**

**1. Call to Order**

Meeting called to order at 12:27 pm

- a) Welcome by GSA President, Robert Sonin
- b) Presented for approval:
  - 1) Presence of non-voting, non-members
    - i) **PASSED**
  - 2) Appointment of Alternate Chair
    - i) **PASSED**
  - 3) Appointment of Daniel Simeone as Chair
    - i) **PASSED**
- c) Meeting to be guided by *Roberts' Rules of Order*

**2. Motion to Approve Agenda**

Approval of Agenda moved by Eric Chevrier, Humanities; seconded by Lisa Montgomery, Poli

Sci

All in favour

Motion of Approval of Agenda **PASSED**

**3. Information Session on Tuition**

Presenter: Holly Nazar, VP, External, GSA

- a) Tuition presentation waived for later discussion
- b) General Strike information presented
- c) Q & A Period

**4. Motion to support International Students' Day of Action, March 13, 2012**

Approval of Support moved by Holly Nazar, VP, External, GSA; seconded by Robert Sonin, President, GSA

- a) Q & A Period

Vote to approve Motion

All in favour

Motion to support International Students' Day of Action, March 13, 2012 **PASSED**

**5. Resolution concerning Student Strike**

Approval of GSA participation in open General Strike beginning March 19, 2012 moved by Eric Chevrier; seconded by Lisa Montgomery

a) Motivation: Robert Sonin, President, GSA

b) Amendment to Resolution #3 moved by Eric Chevrier; seconded by Faisal, Engineering

i) Amendment: *BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT General Assemblies shall be convened every Monday following the strike to confirm the will of the members to remain on strike.*

ii) Discussion, Q&A

iii) Vote to approve motion of Amendment to Resolution #3

*All in favour*

*Motion of Amendment to Resolution #3 PASSED*

c) Amendment to Resolution #1 moved by Andrea Mihaj, Engineering; seconded by Faisal, Engineering

i) Amendment: *BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Graduate Students' Association of Concordia University hereby calls an open-ended strike, meaning the collective cessation of class attendance, to begin on 12 March 2012 until such time as the government of Quebec rescinds its proposed increases to the Quebec tuition rate and freezes out-of-province and international forfaitaires;*

ii) Discussion, Q&A

iii) Vote to approve motion of Amendment to Resolution #1

*All in favour*

*Motion of Amendment to Resolution #1 PASSED*

d) Clarification questions

i) Respondent, Robert Sonin, President, GSA

e) Amendment to Resolution #1 moved by Anna-Lyse, Geography; seconded by Annie Lalauncette, Geography

i) Discussion, Q&A

ii) Friendly amendment moved by Roya, EGSCA to add a fourth Resolution instead of changing Resolution #1

*Resolution #2: BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the GSA call upon the government of Quebec to review its funding policies for university education, which include, but are not limited to, increasing reliance on private funding;*

iii) Vote to approve addition of Resolution #2

*All in favour*

*Motion of Amendment, adding Resolution #2 PASSED*

f) Further Amendment to Resolution #1 moved by Natalie, Humanities; seconded by Carry Foster, Creative Arts

i) Amendment: *included in 5 (c)*

ii) Discussion, Q&A

iii) Vote to approve motion of Amendment to Resolution #1

*All in favour*

*Motion of Further Amendment to Resolution #1 PASSED*

- g) Further Amendment to Resolution #1 moved by Nadia; seconded by Anna-Lyse, Geography
  - i) Amendment: included in 5 (c)
  - ii) Discussion, Q&A

- Clarification of CLASSE position by Frank \_\_\_\_\_

- iii) Vote to approve motion of Amendment to Resolution #1  
All in favour

Motion of Further Amendment to Resolution #1 **PASSED**

- h) Clarification questions
- i) Further Amendment to Resolution #1 moved by Feras, Economics; seconded by Caitlin
- i) Motion withdrawn
- j) Vote to approve GSA participation in open General Strike, as per Amended Resolutions, beginning March 12, 2012

- i) GSA Strike Motion, March 6, 2012:

*BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Graduate Students' Association of Concordia University hereby calls an open-ended strike, meaning the collective cessation of class attendance, to begin on 12 March 2012 until such time as the government of Quebec rescinds its proposed increases to the Quebec tuition rate and freezes out-of-province and international forfaires;*

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the GSA call upon the government of Quebec to review its funding policies for university education, which include, but are not limited to, increasing reliance on private funding;*

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT General Assemblies shall be convened every Monday following the strike to confirm the will of the members to remain on strike;*

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Graduate Students' Association of Concordia University shall provide aid and assistance to any and all associations and individuals who are on strike, to secure their rights and freedoms, and to ensure the integrity of their persons.*

*All in favour*

*Motion to approve GSA participation in open General Strike beginning March 12, 2012 **PASSED***

## **6. Information Session on By-Law #3 (Article 11) Change**

Presenter: Holly Nazar, VP, External Affairs

## **7. Vote on By-Law #3 (Article 11) Change**

Approval of change to By-Law #3 (Article 11) moved by Holly Nazar, BP, External Affairs; seconded by Matthew Brett, Poli Sci.

- a) Vote to change By-Law #3 (Article 11)
- i) BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Bylaws are hereby amended by adding the following Section to Article II:

3. The General Assembly shall be the highest decision-making body of the G.S.A.

- ii) Motion **PASSED** by more than 2/3

## **8. Information Session on CLASSE Membership**

Presenter: Frank \_\_\_\_\_, CLASSE

- a) Discussion, Q&A

## **9. Vote on GSA joining CLASSE**

Approval of GSA membership in CLASSE moved by Rushdia; seconded by Andrea, Engineering

a) Amendment to Resolution to Join CLASSE moved by John ; seconded by Robert Sonin, President, GSA

i) BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Graduate Students' Association of Concordia University hereby mandates the Executive Committee to pursue membership in the Coalition large de l' Association pour une solidarité syndicale étudiante (CLASSE).

[BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the GSA calls for a public reinvestment in post-secondary education [and the] eventual elimination [of tuition fees ] for all students regardless of their background

ii) *Vote to approve motion of Amendment to Resolution*

*All in favour*

*Motion to amend Resolution to Join CLASSE PASSED*

c) Further Amendment to Resolution to Join CLASSE moved by Doug, Hispanic Studies; seconded by Rushdia

i) Vote to approve further motion of Amendment to Resolution

Motion to further amend Resolution to join CLASSE **FAILED**

d) Vote to approve GSA membership in CLASSE

All in favour

Motion to approve GSA membership in CLASSE **PASSED**

#### **10. GSA General Election 2012-2013**

Approval of General Election 2012-2013 to be held April 3, 4, 5, 2012 moved by Robert Sonin, President, GSA; seconded by Holly Nazar, VP, external

a) Vote to approve General Election 2012-2013

All in favour

Motion to hold General Election 2012-2013 on April 3, 4, 5, 2012 **PASSED**

#### **11. Other Business**

a) Presentation by Eric Chevrier re altu.ca: free education

b) Call-out by Nadia Hausfather for strike assistance and involvement

c) Request from GSA member that pictures taken during strike vote be destroyed

#### **12. Motion to Adjourn**

GSA General Assembly Adjournment moved by Andrea, Biology; seconded by David

a) Vote on Motion to Adjourn

All in favour

GSA General Assembly adjourned at 2:50 pm.