

Sustainable Concordia

Constitution

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Article 1: Mandate

1. Name:

The organization shall be known as “Sustainable Concordia” (aka “SC”) and, in French, as “Concordia Durable.”

2. Defining Sustainability:

Sustainability is the process and outcome of achieving social justice, economic equality and environmental health by reducing our ecological footprint and empowering communities.

3. Vision:

Sustainable Concordia envisions a university which teaches and demonstrates sustainability principles of ecological health, social justice, and economic equality. We envision a university which is run non-hierarchically by students, staff, faculty, and administration in a process based on transparency and maximum participation. This wide-spread participation will foster a ‘Living Laboratory’ in which all members of the community are encouraged to bring forward ideas and projects to further the shift to a more sustainable society. Through its partnerships, this university would advocate publically in solidarity with global sustainability issues to become an agent of change.

4. Mission:

We are an organization that builds and measures culture and practices of sustainability at Concordia University in solidarity with the global community.

We believe that fundamental changes need to be implemented. We assess and address challenges of the existing economy based on unlimited growth and exploitation of natural resources and the political system that excludes key stakeholders from participating in decision-making.

By acting locally and networking globally, we aim to achieve sustainability by exploring, creating, and institutionalizing models that function within the earth’s carrying capacity.

We aim to enact an expanded political mission for the university, and redirect decision-making through a multi-stakeholder approach based on transparency and maximum participation.

5. Code of Conduct:

We strive to maintain and promote:

- Open participation
 - Transparency
 - Leadership by example
 - Respectful interpersonal interactions
 - Collaboration and cooperation
 - Consensus model based decision-making
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- Non-hierarchy
 - Creativity and innovation
 - Adaptability to change
 - Inclusiveness

- Sharing of ideas and experiences
- Tolerance and patience
- Resilience

We do not accept any forms of oppression, including but not limited to:

- Homophobia
- Racism
- Classism
- Ageism
- Sexism
- Ableism

5.1. Internal interactions:

In recognition of SC's goals and values, it is important that one be aware of one's own personal capacity, limitations, and strengths. Acknowledgement of variation in these areas amongst team members should be carried out through active support, encouragement, as well as the sharing of responsibilities. One is expected to respect others through self-regulation of speech. We are viewed as a collective whole, therefore one must be accountable to the group. Proposals must gain consensus approval before being recognized as an SC initiative.

5.2. External Interactions:

The above-mentioned qualities are also expected in group members when dealing with external interactions. Reference to the constitution or other group members is always encouraged and positions officially taken by Sustainable Concordia must be referenced when members are responding to any inquiries. Support of groups with similar values and objectives is imperative.

5.3. Violations and Disputes:

In the event that any SC member violates the code of conduct, a complaint must be made in compliance with relevant Sustainable Concordia policies and/or procedures which would absolve the conflict in an amicable, timely manner.

Article 2: Structure

Sustainable Concordia is an incorporated nonprofit organization with a multi-stakeholder approach, and a fee-levy group of Concordia University that is accountable to its general members.

1. Definitions:

For the purposes of this document, the following definitions are implied:

- 1.1. Coordinator:** any person paid to do work on a contracted basis for Sustainable Concordia. Formerly known as employee and/or paid staff.

- 1.2. **Fellow:** any person paid a fellowship (formerly known as honorarium) by Sustainable Concordia. Formerly known as Honorarium or honorarium recipients.
- 1.3. **Director:** see Article 6
- 1.4. **Member:** see Article 3
- 1.5. Coordinators and Fellows are accountable to the BoD; the BoD is accountable to the coordinator group, and all of these entities are responsible to all general members. Responsibilities and tasks are outlined below.

2. Non-Hierarchical

As outlined throughout this document, the operations of Sustainable Concordia are vested in the participation of many individuals at varying levels of influence, experience, and ability. The organization recognizes all opinions as equal in validity and no person or entity is recognized as having power or supremacy over any other in terms of decision-making. This approach is facilitated through consensus decision-making models and peer-to-peer accountability mechanisms.

3. Multi-stakeholder approach

Sustainable Concordia strives to include all members of the community in its dialogue, decision making, and implementation of solutions to common problems or goals. This implies that any member of the organization as defined in Article 3, are encouraged to participate in the organization in a transparent way that facilitates maximum participation.

4. Consensus-based decision-making model

A process for decision-making which seeks the consent of all participants. When full consensus cannot be reached, it is possible to reach a decision with one dissenting voice/vote: a process known as modified consensus.

Article 3: Membership

1. Members:

SC strives to engage the participation of all sectors of the campus community in efforts to make change.

There are two types of membership at Sustainable Concordia, defined below, with voting and decision-making powers: General Members and Honorary Members.

1.1. General Member:

Every fee-levy paying Concordia University student and all current Sustainable Concordia Coordinators and Fellows. This member has voting rights at our General Meetings and Annual General Meetings. A member who receives a fee refund (or, opt-out) ceases to be a member of Sustainable Concordia.

1.2. Honorary Member:

Concordia University Staff, Faculty, and Alumni; Sustainable Concordia's past Coordinators and Directors, and/or members of the community at large with a significant time investment in the organization. Approval by the coordinators and the board members is required to make this membership

official. This membership allows honorary members voting privileges at General meetings and Annual General Meetings.

2. Rights & Responsibilities

- 2.1.** All members (general members and honorary members) shall have voting privileges in elections and general meetings of Sustainable Concordia.
- 2.2.** All members shall be eligible to sit as Board members except for members who are paid by Sustainable Concordia through a coordinator role or fellowship.
- 2.3.** All members shall be entitled to participate fully in meetings and other activities, and benefit from the services of Sustainable Concordia
- 2.4.** Every document of Sustainable Concordia shall be open to inspection by any member within a reasonable time period except for unapproved Board minutes, minutes of Board meetings held in closed session and documents with personal or confidential information as defined by HR Committee.

Article 4: Coordinator Group

1. Members

The coordinator group is comprised of those members classified as Coordinators or Fellows (see Article 2, s1). While all members (as defined in Article 3) are welcomed and encouraged to participate in the coordinator group meetings, only Coordinators and Fellows (as defined in Article 2, s.1) will have voting privileges.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

- Attend coordinator meetings and participate in voting as necessary to make decisions concerning the operations and programming of the organization
- Communicate activities to the group through regular updates
- Follow their job description, as outlined by the hiring committee
- Establish plans and goals for the year, in collaboration with other SC members, which relate to the organization's priorities and strategic planning
- Participate in self-directed and peer evaluations as planned by the organization
- Participate in HR decisions as are necessarily deemed appropriate by the HR committee (i.e. participating in hiring committees, interviews, job description building, etc.)

3. Meetings

Meetings of the coordinator group are to be held according to a schedule as mutually agreed upon by the membership of the group. Coordinator group meeting schedule(s) shall be made available to any member of Sustainable Concordia who wishes to participate. At coordinator meetings, decisions are made by modified consensus.

Article 5: Board of Directors (BoD)

1. Members:

- 1.1.** The BoD is composed of a minimum of 6 and a maximum of 10 Board Members who are elected at the AGM

- 1.2.** Each Member of the Board of Directors commits to fulfill a one-year term, minimum, and is encouraged to commit to a two year term. If a Member of the Board of Directors wishes to fulfill a second year, they do not need to seek re-election. If Members of the Board of Directors wish to serve additional terms after a two year term, they must seek re-election from the General Membership through a General or Annual General Meeting.
- 1.3. Chair of the Board:** The Chair of the Board will be responsible for scheduling meetings; preparing agendas and minutes; updating the BoD and Coordinators Group about each other's activities and progress; and assisting with planning organizational retreats and the AGM

2. Composition:

The BoD must include representatives from the following four (4) categories:

- At least one member representing Concordia University undergraduate students*
- At least one member representing Concordia University graduate students*
- At least one member who has volunteered, held coordinator positions, or is an honorary member of Sustainable Concordia
- At least one member of the Concordia University Faculty, Staff, Alumni, or a member of the community at large of Concordia University

**Preferably the Board will consist of at least 50% student membership*

- 2.1.** If a board member does not fulfill responsibilities as described in section (Article 5, s3), said board member(s) may be dismissed from the board by a 2/3s vote of remaining board members at a meeting of which the offending board member has received ten (10) calendar days' notice.
- 2.2.** If a board member is absent for 3 regularly scheduled BoD meetings, during a one year term, without adequate explanation or sending their regrets at least four (4) days before the scheduled meeting, said board member(s) has automatically resigned.
- 2.3.** If, due to dismissal or resignation, the number of Board Members falls below the minimum, a special GM must be called to fill the vacancy(ies).
- 2.4.** Board Members do not receive any remuneration as such for the services they render as part of their duties. However, the BoD may be reimbursed for expenses incurred in the performance of their duties. These expenses must be approved beforehand by the BoD. Board Members can, however, receive other incentives like training, funding for retreats, and conference expenses.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

The oversight and administration of the affairs of Sustainable Concordia are vested in the Board, including:

- Ensure the mandate of the organization is being followed as stipulated by the Constitution
- Ensure financial viability and the legal and fiscal integrity of the organization
- Approve any discretionary or unbudgeted spending above \$500
- Facilitate the resolution of conflicts within the organization
- Ensure proper human resources functioning as needed
- Propose changes to SC's policies and procedures as it considers advisable for the conduct of the affairs of the organization provided that such rules and regulations are consistent with the constitution
- Maintain and modify the constitution as required
- Participate in standing committees outlined by the BoD Policy. These include, but are not limited

to: Finance committee, Human Resources committee, Governance committee, and Outreach committee.

4. Meetings

- 4.1. The BoD will meet on a monthly basis with a maximum time interval of every six (6) weeks, upon exceptional circumstances. A joint BoD and coordinator meeting will be held three (3) times per year; one in the summer which proceeds the AGM, one during the fall semester, and another during the winter semester. A **Special BoD meeting** can be called by written request to the Chair of the BoD from a coordinator or a Board Member. A suitable meeting date, time, agenda, and location must be sent to all Board Members in the most immediate manner possible.
- 4.2. As in the coordinator meetings, decisions are made by modified consensus.
- 4.3. The minutes of the BoD meetings must be made available to the coordinators within a maximum of three working days following the BoD meeting.
- 4.4. Quorum shall be 60% of Board Members.
- 4.5. All members of SC are empowered to attend all meetings of the Board of Directors with the understanding that only Directors have voting rights. Likewise, all members of SC may submit agenda items to the Chair of the Board of Directors before the beginning of the meeting.

Article 6: General Meetings

1. Annual General Meeting (AGM):

An Annual General Meeting (AGM) must be held each year. The time, place and purpose, as well as descriptions of coordinator and BoD positions and member responsibilities, must be advertised at least ten days prior to the meeting date.

Activities at AGM must include, but are not limited to:

- Elections of BoD members
- Constitutional amendments
- Annual budget approval

2. General Meetings (GM):

A General Meeting (GM) may be called at any time as necessary by the coordinator group, or by a petition signed by at least 30 general members. In the event of a petition, Sustainable Concordia must hold a GM within fourteen (14) days of receiving the petition. If the petition stipulates a time and location that meet GM requirements, the organization is bound to the time, location and agenda stated. The agenda must include the category of 'other' for members to propose motions not already outlined on the agenda.

The purpose for a GM may include, but is not limited to:

- BoD member dismissal
- Constitutional amendments
- Addressing emergency issues

3. Election Procedure:

A call out for new board must be held two weeks prior to the date of the AGM. Members who have been nominated for BoD positions will be required to submit a short bio by the set deadline and make a brief presentation summarizing their qualifications and motives at the Annual General Meeting, and answer questions posed to them by other SC members. In the event that more than 10 candidates run for BoD, BoD members will be elected by majority, where the elected candidates must secure a higher number of total votes than other candidates. Votes will be cast by secret ballot, and winners determined by a neutral party, chosen by the AGM committee

4. Quorum:

Quorum of 30 members must be reached to pass binding decisions at all general meetings (AGM or GM). The budget and constitutional amendments are passed if at least 75% of votes are favourable.

Article 7: Financial Considerations

The SC financial data on fee-levy expenditures will be available to SC members and the public by request. One BoD member from the Finance committee must act as a signing officer for the SC account.

1. Expenses Exceeding \$500

The signing officer needs modified consensus from the BoD before authorizing an expense of 500\$ or greater.

2. Amendments to Annual Budget

Should expenses arise outside of the approved annual budget, the coordinators must meet with the BoD to discuss the state of the budget and come to modified consensus if an amendment to the budget needs to be made.

3. Responsible Financial Practices

All financial accounts associated with Sustainable Concordia must submit receipts and financial statements to the Finance Coordinator on an ongoing basis and by the end of each fiscal year. The Finance Coordinator must report the receipt of these documents to the Finance Committee by email and/or at their monthly meetings, where they will be presented.

4. BoD Financial Reconciliation

The Finance Coordinator is required to report to the BoD at the end of the Winter semester, 30 days before the AGM, in order to summarize the budget for the prior year and to present financial statements for expenditures over 500\$ which the BoD co-signed on.

Article 8: External Arbitrations

In the event of a dispute requiring arbitration between SC members and an external person or group, the

following procedure shall be undertaken:

1. Arbitration Committee:

The arbitration will be conducted by an arbitration committee agreed upon by both the SC coordinator group and the external person or group. The arbitration committee will evaluate the dispute and present their findings to an arbiter. The arbiter may be selected from a group on campus that can be neutral in the situation and must be agreed upon by all parties involved in the dispute.

2. Arbitration outcome:

Both disputed parties will have two weeks after bringing the complaint to the neutral arbiter to reach an agreement. If an agreement is not reached, another neutral arbiter will be engaged by the arbitration committee.

Article 9: Conflict of Interest

Any SC member who has a personal or financial interest in a matter being discussed is obligated to declare such conflict and is obligated to abstain from all discussion, decision-making and/or voting related to said matter.

Article 10: Amendments to the Constitution

Amendments to the constitution can be made at regular BoD meetings and presented to the SC Coordinators for their approval, and vice-versa, with final approval of the constitutional amendments to be made at the AGM. SC operates on the most recent version of the constitution that has been approved by its general members until the amendments are approved at the AGM. In the event that the amendments are considered urgent by the coordinators and the BoD, a GM must be called.

Article 11: Separability of Articles

In case any of the provisions contained in this Constitution or any application thereof shall be invalid, illegal or unenforceable in any respect, the validity, legality, and enforceability of the remaining provisions contained in this agreement shall not, in any way, be affected.