



President's Mid-Mandate Report

Engineering and Computer Science Association

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I TL;DR

Sorry, there is no TL;DR version of this report. As President, there's no such thing as "less important" or matters I could gloss over, and the ECA Council should strive to adopt the same mindset. So if you have this report in your hands, read the entire goddamn thing – it also took a while to write, don't make it time wasted. That being said, if you're too apathetic to read it, I'd rather you read Section 19 than nothing at all.

2 INTRODUCTION

I will preface this report by mentioning that I have a profound hate for writing and, most especially, writing reports. This might come as a shock after seeing the table of contents and page count, but I did, in fact, attempt my best to keep it as concise as possible and only cover the most essential parts of my mandate.

Therefore, the length only demonstrates the breadth and depth of the work in which the ECA is engaged. Too often, we have a tunnel vision; that is why I strongly encourage Council to consider our decisions from the many perspectives we've had to consider ourselves. Indeed, this is needed to appreciate the full context of the decisions that were made, and see the big picture when advising the ECA.

The context in which we are evolving is ever-changing – I've had to amend and add sections to this report too many times over the last month – and yet, we're still the same old ECA, with a long history and short term memory.

These past two semesters, we've had our fair share of failures; there was a lot of trial and error as well as compromises, and that is to be celebrated, because that is how we steadily move forward. Creating real, lasting change is hard, long, and done by taking a lot of baby steps. Taking the time to reflect and learn from our mistakes comes hand in hand with building a stronger sense of where we are heading and following a long-term strategy. That is why I believe that with the work we've all accomplished, the ECA is in the right direction.

Finally, this report would not make any sense without the very kind and extensive proofreading done by Broseph Charles Wilson. His contribution is considerable and includes the paragraphs that follow below – and a superb metaphor which is too impressive for me to take credit for.

As a student association, the ECA will always have its share of clusterfucks. After all, we are students both inside and outside the classroom. However, the excrement created by the Executives provides wonderful fertilization for growing the ECA into a mature, blossoming organization.

Also, I can't possibly enumerate all of the work I do as President on a day-to-day basis. Most of these are small, one-off tasks that individually are not very burdensome but collectively take up a large amount of my time. Here is a non-exhaustive list of some of these duties: answering random emails from students and replying to them; answering emails from companies that want to whore us out for their profit; maintaining good relations with everyone; staying up-to-date on the political context as well as petty drama; explaining how things work to people; constantly checking whether people do their job; mediating conflicts; solving general ECA last-minute BS.

As such the report will be focused on the major aspects of my portfolio, and will outline where we've been, the work we've done, and where we're hoping to go with the rest of the year.

As always, I welcome your feedback on these topics and – more importantly – on what you think should be here but isn't. The ECA only grows with your help!

3 GLOSSARY

- **ABACUS:** Association of Biochemistry and Chemistry Undergraduate Students, member association of ASFA
- **AITs:** Academic IT Services
- **ASFA:** Arts and Science Federation of Associations
- **BNC:** Banque Nationale du Canada
- **Board, BOD:** the Board of Directors, composed the 8 executives.
- **BOG:** Concordia's Board of Governors
- **CCSL:** Concordia Council of Student Life
- **CFES:** Canadian Federation of Engineering Students, called FCEG in French
- **CREIQ:** Confédération pour le rayonnement des étudiants en ingénierie au Québec, called QCESO in English
- **CSU:** Concordia Student Union
- **DOS:** Dean of Students, often used to refer to the Dean of Student's office
- **ECSUSC:** Engineering and Computer Science Undergraduate Studies Committee, approves all ENCS-originating changes to the Academic Calendar
- **EF:** Equipment Fund
- **ENCS:** Engineering and Computer Science, often used to refer to the Faculty
- **EUS:** Engineering Undergraduate Society
- **GSA:** Graduate Student Association
- **Rep:** Representative, used to refer to the departmental representatives
- **SSAELC:** Student Space, Accessible Education & Legal Contingency Fund, collected by the CSU
- **UAV:** Unmanned Aerial Vehicles Concordia society
- **UG:** Undergraduate
- **VP:** Vice-President

4 FROSH/ORIENTATION

4.1 *Committee*

In recent years, Orientation was planned entirely by the Executives, sometimes with the help of a Frosh director. This year, we decided to have all Orientation activities entirely planned by a committee, with the Executives performing any needed tasks (e.g. VP Internal for the bookings, VP Finance for the budget).

The Frosh Committee was composed of the President, VP Social, VP External, and three students – Lafi Khouri (chair), Christopher Morin, and Anita Sarkissian. The intention was to empower students that were not necessarily involved by giving them an equal voice to the executives.

While the Committee's achievements were many – they were the driving force behind the entire planning process – the structure had unexpected consequences. In particular, there was poor communication between the Executives and the Committee¹, Orientation was not the trial by fire for the Executive team that it usually is, and there was confusion over the responsibilities of the Committee members and the Executives.

Although it is hard to predict whether having such a committee could be successful in the future, I would recommend switching the main planning responsibilities back to the Executives, and explore the possibility of having a smaller committee directly helping the Executives – and not the other way around.

4.2 *Inclusivity*

This year, we placed a big emphasis on creating a more inclusive Orientation. This came out of a process that was started by the previous Executive and which came to fruition through better volunteer training and a wider variety of events.

The Dean of Students office always helps student groups with the organization of Orientation activities, but they took a leading role this year on this particular issue. We started collaborating which them before we even took office, which culminated in their hosting of a harm reduction and consent training workshop that we made mandatory for all of our volunteers. We also gave internal presentations on our goals for Frosh and what made a good leader.

¹ There was an expectation from the Executives that the Chair would communicate the work done by the Committee, but this did not happen. Should future Executives choose the same framework, there are two strategies for avoiding this problem: (1) choose a Chair with a proven track record of effective communication, with deadlines established right at the beginning and clear delineation of tasks for each member of the Committee President making sure to set hard deadlines and precise requirements with the Chair, or (2) have the VP Social act as Chair. While this is not the preferable solution, this will ensure the Committee meets its goals.

In the spirit of promoting a culture of respect within the ECA, the Student Spirit committee led a process to create new, inclusive Engineering chants. The beginning of “Godiva’s Hymn”, also known as the “Engineer’s Hymn”, was included in the Frosh guides handed out to every new student. Taking these actions proved effective, as there has been no instance of inappropriate chants being sung during our Frosh events. Moreover, we should recognize that not mentioning the chants to let them “die out”, while focusing on promoting an inclusive environment, was an important factor in creating this culture shift.

Finally, we also planned “dry” events such as Sports Day, Yoga Day (which was, unfortunately, cancelled), Beach Day, and our usual breakfasts at the B-Annex. They were relatively successful, attracted students that normally would not attend Frosh, and we’ve always received positive feedback from the students attending.

However, I still believe that our Orientation events suffered from a lack of diversity. I recommend the ECA enlist the help of its societies to plan more alternative events that engage every kind of student. Moreover, I believe the VP Academic should work with the Faculty to create information sessions for students to help them navigate the academic calendar and its regulations. Students are often unaware of what resources and academic processes are available and how they can navigate them.

4.3 Overall Evaluation

Orientation was quite successful; we had a great turnout at our kickoff presentation and barbecue, where the majority of newly admitted students were present. They were engaged and our societies reported an increase in involvement compared to previous years.

We also received positive feedback from the students with regards to the volunteers. They were crucial in preventing harmful situations and responded excellently when situations arose². I am incredibly grateful for the hard work they put in.

Should the Frosh report ever be drafted, more information can be found there.

² I can’t emphasize this enough; volunteers are your foot soldiers. You need them to be responsible, because you cannot see every situation. They must act as leaders and make adequate decisions to keep everything under control.

5 COUNCIL RETREAT

The Council Retreat was held on August 8th and 9th at a chalet³. Invited were the previous ECA Executive team, a representative of each Society, and a few guests. The goal was for Council members to get to know each other and provide time for team building⁴.

On the Saturday, four different presentations were given, which covered the following topics:

- the governance structure of the ECA and how to be a good Councilor;
- Robert's rules of order;
- how to be society of the year; and
- an orientation planning update.

Then, the first Council meeting of the fiscal year was held.

Retreat had two minor setbacks – the attendance was too low and the training was insufficient. That being said, the retreat was worth doing. Indeed, the retreat should be considered as a success, given it was the first ever arranged by the ECA, and I hope to see it become a yearly tradition.

Finally, I would recommend the following logistics for future years:

- Make the retreat four days – the first two being exclusive to the Board of Directors, and the second half being with council.
- The retreat should be held at the end of May / beginning of June. The planning should be done during the Executive transition period, and it should be seen as a way to kick start the year.
- Expectations for the retreat should be set in advance, such as having the Orientation schedule by the end of the weekend.
- For the board, the retreat should be focused on finalizing their priorities for the year. For council, the focus should be getting to know the ECA and reviewing the year's action plan.
- Proposed schedule: Thursday, mid-day arrival, Board mapping out the year; Friday, working on the year's goals and projects, setting up their respective requirements and deadlines, afternoon arrival of council members; Saturday, presentations, working sessions, council meeting; Sunday, departure.

³ Chalet Le Sommet Royal. Contact: Robert Sabounjian.

⁴ Before the retreat, I would make sure to remind the participants that, even in an informal environment, the ECA should strive to create working environments – this wasn't just a week-end away with friends. Moreover, if you are inviting external guests, they should have to conduct a session.

- Finally, the retreat's content should be: 1/3 presentations, 1/3 working sessions, and 1/3 fun times!

6 ECA COUNCIL

This year, in addition to having a paid and external chair, we also have a secretary that is not a member of Council. This has proven extremely beneficial; besides being neutral and objective, they have, on a few occasions, held the Executive accountable by following up on what was said during meetings. Moreover, it allowed us to have better record keeping and smoother, quicker Council meetings.

We also made investments into having Council work effectively. Besides the Council retreat and the Council 101 document prepared by the current Chair, we passed a resolution on creating attendance requirements. This will create a consistency in Society representatives, which will ensure they are aware of the affairs of the association and can follow Council discussions with the full context.

Finally, Council made numerous appointments to our four Committees (more on that in the Committee section); recognized a new society under probationary status, UAV; and appointed two Executives, Kyle Arseneau as VP External and Vladimir Nekrashevych as VP Marketing.

Because of the above, I believe Council has been successful in its duty to create new policy, advise the BOD, and hold the Executives accountable.

7 POLICY

Creating new ruling documents was the strongest focus for the ECA this year. The Policy Committee worked on three aspects:

- 1) revising our outdated governance structure, by analyzing our strengths and weaknesses as an association and then designing a new framework that would fit our needs;
- 2) creating documents that present a comprehensive understanding of the ECA's inner functioning to ensure good transitions from year to year; and
- 3) increasing the overall accountability and transparency of the association.

For information regarding the Committee's work, please refer to the Policy Committee report of December 17th, 2014, included as Annex A of this document.

In parallel, the ECA brought up a series of policy changes at Council:

- a policy on Conference and Competition funding and reporting;
- a policy on Council members' attendance;

- a policy on Lizard Lounge operations; and
- the Complaint Resolution Policy.

8 COMMITTEES

One of the other focal points of this year was to decentralise the ECA and expand leadership opportunities through committees – notably, the Finance, Policy, Orientation, and EngWeek Committees.

8.1 Finance Committee

A standing Finance Committee was created, composed of the 4 departmental reps, the VP Finance, and the President. The intention was to have an impartial committee allocate funding to Societies, before being approved by Council, and finally approved by the BOD. This was a mistake; the committee failed to meet. The underlying problem is that departmental reps so far removed from the financial preoccupations that it does not have any significance to them. Therefore it only creates a useless level of bureaucracy and is a waste of time.

In the future, I would envision creating a committee similar to the Equipment Fund committee, where Societies would present their budget. By having all Societies present at the meeting, the whole process would be more transparent and there would, I hope, be a shared understanding of the use of student funds.

8.2 Policy Committee

The Policy Committee has worked successfully and I am looking forward to completing the year with them. We will be continuing our work on the reforms to the governing documents. As it stands, we appear to be on track to have the new Bylaws presented in time for the elections in March.

In the future, the President should ensure it stays active to review policies and keep them up to date. In order to involve any student interested in policy-making, the composition should remain as flexible as possible. It is also crucial to include “veterans” to provide context on the ECA’s long-term evolution. We have found these aspects to be incredibly beneficial in our work this year.

8.3 Frosh Committee

It is difficult to form a categorical judgement on the Orientation committee other than the observations mentioned in 4.1.

8.4 EngWeek Committee

It is too soon to draw any conclusions on the EngWeek committee. However, the committee includes two students who were not previously involved, which is positive.

9 SPACE MANAGEMENT

Years of improper maintenance of the B-Annex has caused it to become a grimey, run-down space. It is therefore rarely visited by students. Additionally, the ECA's facilities are rather inadequate for the needs of our growing societies, while at the same time a lot of our current space is being used suboptimally. The purpose of this much needed renovation is to create an attractive space for ENCS students and to use our space to its full potential.

The project has significantly involved in scope since the beginning of our mandate. Various aspects of the project and its evolution are outlined below.

9.1 Lounge / Bar

Over the summer we designed and wrote a first proposal. It centered on the construction of a better kitchen and bar area that could accommodate the various events we host there.

Funding-wise, we secured \$5000 through the CSU's SSAELC fund contingent on the ECA spending approximately \$10 000. We also submitted an application to CCSL's Special Projects Fund which, unfortunately, was rejected due to a lack of specifics, such as pricing, plans, or drawings from the University.

In late September, we submitted a similar proposal – see Annex B– to Guy Gosselin, the Building Operations Manager for the ENCS Faculty, which was then forwarded to Facilities Planning. While ENCS owns the space, Facilities Planning is responsible for overseeing any renovations to the space. There has since been no update from Facilities Planning.

9.2 Security

There is a recurring issue in the ECA where Executives, both Societies and the ECA, do not return their keys at the end of their mandate. In order to maintain sufficient security of the B-Annex, the ECA has to change the locks every year – a process costing \$2000. This practice is obviously short-term and not sustainable.

The proposed solution is the installation of an electronic card access system. It was decided a November meeting between myself, Guy Gosselin, and Sebastien Bruyere, Concordia Security Systems Coordinator, we evaluated the security needs and the possible cost and agreed on the following strategy:

- An electronic card system will be installed on the entrance to the building.

- A switch will be installed to disable the system during opening hours or special events, so that students without a key card can enter.
- Key cards will be available for Societies, after a small deposit. Key cards will allow access to the building while Concordia is open but ECA staff are not present.
- Regular keys to the Societies' offices will be available at the Security desk in the Hall building, as is the current practice.
- A phased or complete rollout of the electronic key system on every door in the building will be considered in future years.

We are currently waiting on a quote from Security before placing the work order.

9.3 Safety

A meeting was arranged by Guy Gosselin in November with Normand Lanthier, Concordia Fire/Public Safety Officer, with regards to the fire safety in the Annex. The fire doors of the Annex have historically been jammed open for convenience, and the two first-floor doors were damaged and could not fully close on their own due to this practice. The ECA and Facilities agreed to the following:

- The ECA would ensure all fire doors remain closed at all times outside of opening hours.
- Facilities would repair the fire doors broken by the ECA, at their expense.
- Facilities would remove the locks on the 2nd and 3rd floor fire doors.

The doors were changed by Facilities on January 28th, 2015.

9.4 Space proposal

In a meeting I had with Guy Gosselin and David Kruse, Propriety Manager at Facilities Management, we discussed creating a larger, multi-year space proposal.

An informal Space working group was struck, composed of: James Vaccaro (ex-CSU VP Clubs and Internal, who was also in charge of CSU space), Chuck Wilson (bearded dude), and myself. Our new B-Annex Manager, Chris Morin, is also involved in the process. Our mandate was to map out the process of creating a unified space proposal.

The first step was to conduct a space assessment; evaluating the space needs of the ECA, Societies, Competitive teams, and the ENCS student body in general. Based on that, we iterated through different possible layouts and proposals, and finally drafted an outline of the proposal.

The next step is to meet with Guy Gosselin and David Kruse in the winter semester to evaluate the feasibility of each solution and determine the final space proposal. We expect renovations to start in the summer, with a target date for renovation completion to be before Orientation 2015. Obviously, these dates are merely targets; we are subject to the whims of the university.

10 ACADEMIC REPRESENTATION

The ECA's implication in the academics of its members has historically been minimal. We tried to buck the trend this year by with two measures:

- 1) supporting academic events through increased funding and hosting Finals Crash Course tutorials; and
- 2) increasing academic advocacy through coordination between the student representatives of different academic decision-making bodies of Concordia.

I will focus on the 2nd point in this section, as it is more in line with the President's portfolio.

10.1 Changing Academic Regulations: Minors for Engineers

As you may know, the ECA is currently engaged in the process of amending the Academic Calendar to officially allow for engineering students to take minors – the proposed change can be found in Annex C. This process was initiated thanks to the intrepid work of our BCEE Representative, Melissa Nielsen.

Proposing academic changes and seeing them through can be a long, unfamiliar process, and involves regular follow up, which is why it is really important to be coordinate efforts. For example, this has been the process for making the changes to engineering minors:

- On November 11th, at the **ECA Council** meeting, a motion was brought forward to recommend that the ENCS Faculty allow its students to take minors in other Faculties.
- On November 20th, at the **CSU Student Congress**, we brought up the same resolution, to gather greater support.
- On November 25th, a **memorandum was sent** to the Secretary of the Faculty Council, to have the issue placed on the next agenda of the following Faculty Council.
- On December 8th, we **organized a meeting** with Dr. Ali Akgunduz, Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, to discuss the proposed change.
- On January 21st, at the **ECSUSC**, we presented an amendment to the Academic Calendar.
- At the next **Faculty Council** meeting, the proposal will be presented for adoption.
- Then, the proposal will go to Senate's **Academic Planning Committee (APC)**.
- Finally, it will be presented at **Senate** for adoption.

Note that the two final bodies are University-wide, and thus are jurisdiction of the CSU and not the ECA. This obviously makes it important for the ECA to communicate with the CSU to ensure our perspective will be voiced.

10.2 CSU Student Congress

The CSU Student Congress is a bi-annual meeting that aims to articulate common concerns among all Concordia students. Because of the high threshold needed for adopting motions (90%), it is a very effective way to gather greater support for any change, and should be used by the ECA.

This fall, we chose a delegation of motivated students to represent ENCS students. We worked on the resolutions we were going to propose prior to the Congress, and all of our motions passed. The ECA should not downplay the impact of Congress and we need to continue preparing for it to stay relevant.

The resolutions can be seen in Annex D

10.3 Faculty Council Composition

In practice, six UG students are considered voting members at ENCS Faculty Council, while according to Concordia's by-laws, there are only four. This would mean both the President and VP Academic are not members of the Faculty Council. As they are ex-officio members of two Faculty council committees – the Executive Committee for the President and ECSUSC for the VP Academic – it is crucial for them to be able to attend and vote at Faculty Council. Therefore, the ECA should ask for the University to increase the number of UG student seats on Faculty council to six.

10.4 Other Considerations

I would recommend the outgoing President and VP Academic prepare a training for the incoming student representatives for Faculty Council, explaining the structure of academic governance at Concordia.

The ECA should also consider formally creating an academic caucus, in the form of a monthly meeting prior to Faculty Council. They would review the proposed agenda, recap their respective academic meetings, and draft a short report for the ECA Council of the main resolutions adopted at Department and Faculty councils.

Finally, it is important for the President to entertain Faculty administration relations by setting up meetings with the Dean of ENCS each semester, inviting professors to events such as Iron Ring, and establishing a proactive working environment with Associate Deans when proposing Academic changes. These duties should not be considered the exclusive duty of the VP Academic simply because it has to do with Faculty.

II EXTERNAL RELATIONS

As spokesperson of the ECA, the President should cultivate and maintain its relationships with other student groups, services on campus, and companies. Although this could be seen as a non-essential duty for the President, the connections can produce, if used properly, extremely useful resources for the Association.

II.1 Administration and Services

The President has to familiarize themselves with the Concordia Administration and Services, and explore the opportunities they provide to promote the ECA. For example, this year we:

- Delivered a talk, during Discover Concordia, to newly admitted ENCS Students with respect to Frosh and Student Life;
- Delivered a talk to exchange students with respect to Frosh and Student Life;
- Attended the Open House and the winter Discover Concordia tabling fair.

During every academic year, AITS renews a portion of its computers. The ECA makes a request to have some of their old stock donated to the ECA, which are then redistributed amongst ECA and Societies. Unfortunately, no computers were available this year.

However, we did manage to negotiate an agreement authorizing the ECA to use AITS plotters at no charge.

The President should also keep Laurence Miall, Communications advisor for ENCS, regularly updated on the Association and recommend some stories for media coverage. For example, this game coverage to our team's podium finish at the Quebec Engineering Games, which was featured on Concordia's home page for a while⁵.

II.2 CSU and Faculty Associations

There is already a structure in place for some ECA VPs to meet with their equivalent counterparts in other student groups – for example, Academic Caucus of the CSU and some DOS meetings. With the exception of a single lunch with the Dean of Students, this does not exist for Presidents. Therefore, the President should be proactive in setting up meetings with the Presidents of the CSU and Faculty Associations.

Throughout the summer, I met with the CSU President to discuss our yearly goals as well as collaboration between the two associations. They provided us with tents, barbecues, and the Reggie's fridge for Orientation at no cost. They also agreed to financially support our B-Annex

⁵ <http://tinyurl.com/enggames-cunews>

renovation project – mentioned above in section 9. We also discussed the possibility of having one Lizard Lounge run by the CSU.

Partnering with different associations is important for the ECA, as it provides insight into how similar groups work, and can lead to finding mutual issues which are easier to tackle together. The frosh planning period is a great time to start these relationships. For example, we hosted an event in collaboration with ABACUS, who provided help in planning, promotion for the event, as well as a diverse crowd.

11.3 Other Engineering Student Associations

Similarly, being in contact with other Student Associations, either through CREIQ, CFES, or by direct communication, is important.

Historically, Concordia has a close relationship with McGill, so I organized a meeting in the summer with the President of McGill's EUS to share ideas. The President should not hesitate to reach out and examine how each association approaches some topics. This was beneficial for me, as I gained insights when meeting with McGill to discuss taxes and meeting with ETS to discuss the role of the umbrella association with respect to subgroups.

12 EXTERNAL COMPANIES

12.1 Contracts

It is the President's responsibility to be signatory on every single contract of the company, and may sometimes be involved in drafting the contract itself. During Orientation, many similar agreements have to be signed, so a contract template was created. It is intended for small, recurring contracts, such as drink deals at a bar, and will save time for the Executives. However, they shouldn't make any legal assumptions when dealing with contracts involving larger or unusual commitments – asking professional advice is, almost always, a good investment.

12.2 Labatt

The ECA negotiated a sponsorship agreement and beer deal with Labatt that will be valid until July 31st 2015 and can be renewed. The terms of the agreement are confidential and cannot be discussed here, but it is extremely important for the ECA to have a contract before Frosh as it greatly reduces costs.

12.3 Banque Nationale

The ECA is on a three-year sponsorship contract with BNC⁶, ending this fiscal year. I would recommend for the ECA to find a sponsor in the banking industry before the beginning of next year.

12.4 Handbooks

The ECA has an advertising agreement with CU Advertising⁷, which was renewed for next year. The monies collected through the ads usually matches the cost of producing an agenda or handbook. I would also recommend for the ECA to renew its printing contract for the agenda, as the 2-year agreement with Kalendar⁸ expired with the production of our agendas.

13 FINANCE

13.1 Taxes

For the first time ever, the ECA registered for tax numbers with the government, which allows us to collect tax, and is in the process of submitting its first remittance. This will allow us to gain approximately \$10 000 per year in tax reimbursements and will also compel the ECA to keep its books up-to-date. Unfortunately, Concordia is not set up to handle such situations, and we have had some difficulty making our filing because of internal account charges. Thankfully, we are currently working with the DOS to obtain complete invoices for all of the charges. Once this is resolved we will be able to submit the final tax numbers, with the added benefit of knowing if we're being fucked by Concordia.

13.2 Equipment Fund

13.2.1 Ownership

The allocation of EF is done by a joint committee of the ECA and the ENCS Faculty. The fund's mandate is officially defined in a BOG resolution, but guidelines, more adapted to the uses of EF, have also been written through the years. Because of the poor turnover from year to year, these documents are not always respected, by both the ECA and the Faculty. For example, equipment purchased for the Faculty should bear a plaque indicating it was bought through donations from students of that particular year.

I believe it is extremely important to realize that the Fund is composed of donations from students. Therefore the ECA, as a representative of the student body, should affirm its control

⁶ Contact: Souad Ouared.

⁷ Contact: Sophie Zivontsis.

⁸ Contact: Andrew Pritchard.

over EF. This does not necessarily mean increasing the portion allocated towards the ECA, but affirming its authority with regards to the use of the fund. Moreover, all equipment purchased through the Fund for the ECA should be officially donated to the association by the university. I am currently working with the VP Finance and our part-time financial employee, Chuck Wilson, to ensure this gets done.

13.2.2 Logistics

The committee met twice during the fall semester – once to consider Faculty requests and once to consider ECA requests. Most Society requests that were submitted were not considered serious or realistic enough by the Faculty. Consequently, we had to go over them and consolidate them. Besides creating a surcharge of work for the ECA, it made us look moronic and unprepared in front of Faculty. To avoid this issue in the future, the ECA should host a preparatory meeting, with all of the societies, where they shall approve a preliminary proposal within a decided funding bracket. This will make the societies more conscious of the monetary restrictions and should also accelerate the funding process⁹.

Additional funding requirements were adopted by the committee. All of the requestors had to submit a complete inventory and supporting documents for selected budget lines. Furthermore, conditions were added for students to be reimbursed their registration¹⁰. Finally, a list of ineligible expenses was created.

13.2.3 Policy

In light of this informal and hasty policy creation, the ECA should work in collaboration with the Faculty to create an Equipment Fund policy or guideline document, which would guide societies when preparing requests and help the ECA make consistent funding decisions. This document should be added to the Standing Regulations.

⁹ In reality, this will most likely result in a lot of arguing and time wasted. But societies will learn from that first meeting and come back with better proposals.

¹⁰ 50\$ per student were allocated towards registration. The reimbursement conditions are as follows:

- the student must be in good standing;
- the student must be a member of the ECA – registered in a minimum of 1 class in ENCS for the Fall 2014 semester;
- the list of students must be submitted a minimum of 3 weeks before the event;
- the student/group must submit a competition/conference report and presentation, as specified in the Oct. 20th ECA Council Motion;
- the student/group reimbursement will be contingent to the fulfillment of the above.

14 INTERNAL AFFAIRS

14.1 Employees

I will discuss employee relations in my Mandate Report. The ECA tried different strategies in term of hiring and hour allocation, and I feel more comfortable drawing conclusions on their effectiveness at the end of the year.

14.2 Document and Information Management

At the beginning of the year, there was barely any internal organization in the ECA's information, save for a few systems that fell into disuse after a few months or a year – if lucky. We began implementing or revivifying a few simple tracking systems:

- A spreadsheet with all the new keys ordered;
- A complete inventory of the ECA's assets, including the ones present in societies' offices;
- An archive for all meetings and financial documents.

There is still a lot of work to be done on this front and years of files left to organize. But this is incredibly important if we want to pass on institutional information, year after year.

14.3 Office and Storage

The ECA Office (H-838) was rearranged twice with the goal of creating a better working environment and reducing clutter. We also added shelving units and started to make a more efficient use of the storage room (H-983). Still, there is a lack of office space for the ECA. The number of workstations is only four – which means that, when the Office Manager and Accountant are present, only two executives can work out of eight. I would recommend for the ECA to invest in improving its office and to get more floor space.

15 LIZARD LOUNGE

We hosted Lizard Lounge in the B-Annex Lounge (B-104) for every week of the fall semester, except for the last two events, where we failed to obtain a liquor permit due to poor organization. We encountered a few problems with the way the event was running, the main ones being:

- Damages to the premises, due to the inadequacy of the space for holding such events;
- Decreasing attendance, causing a drop in revenue – there are fixed costs related to having the event, and we sometimes lose money, which is an issue for a fundraising event; and
- A lack of participation from some societies, creating a burden on the Executives.

In light of these facts, we decided to reconsider our investment in Lizard Lounge. Unfortunately, the circumstances have changed – notably, it is no longer hosted at Reggie's. The compromise we found was to host a Lizard Lounge every other week during the winter semester.

Practically, four will be themed after a department, where societies active in said department will be featured, plus one for general student groups (e.g. WIE).

This format was chosen because it will attract more students to the event, give us time to prepare, and have increased Society manpower to ensure everything runs smoothly. Moreover, this frees up Fridays for the societies to host alternative events such as Wine and Cheeses, or movie nights.

This should be re-evaluated at the end of the semester by the outgoing and incoming Executives.

16 ECAID

16.1 Charity

This year, the Board decided that all ECAid proceeds would go towards the ECA's Ride to Conquer Cancer team fundraiser. This decision was not only taken because half of our executive team is doing the ride, but also because we wanted for the ECA to be proactive and engaged in its fundraising activities and not passively donating at the end of the year.

I strongly recommend future Executive teams adopt similar commitments.

16.2 Promotion

Unfortunately, the ECAid is not a well-known initiative. Our students are aware of our philanthropic endeavours but not the existence of the ECAid itself. I recommend the ECA creates a marketing strategy that would promote it, this would include the following:

- Dedicated webpage, explaining the previous campaigns, the details of the current one, and a donation thermometer;
- Addition of the ECAid name and logo to the marketing of all related events.

The ECA should also create an ECAid committee.

This is unlikely to be something that will happen by the end of our year without some external help. Moreover, I doubt a better promotion will occur in future year without the creation of an ECAid committee overseeing this.

17 MARKETING

17.1 Apparel

The sales of the apparel stock (t-shirts, hoodies, kilts) we have from previous years remains low. Selling these items is extremely hard due to: the stock we have, the location of sales (the B-Annex is not popular enough to be a good point of sales), the “oldness factor”, and just generally the minimum level of promotion. The best course of action would be for the ECA to (1) create a strong marketing campaign and (2) sell these items at a low price. Doing these two things at the same time is crucial, as one goes with the other. This would also ensure the ECA gets rid of its stock, as having it carry over, year after year, with very little sales, is a burden for the Association – and is generally a bad practice. I do not believe we will be able to execute this during the year as it requires a significant amount of work and someone dedicated to spearheading this project.

Apparel is a tricky issue in ENCS at Concordia as there is no strong “Engineering spirit” like there is in other faculties. Therefore, the ECA should be careful when ordering items and ensure it fits in a long-term marketing plan. In the future, the ECA should consider the following strategy:

- Order a small stock. Buying small quantity – although it may be more expensive per item – is preferable to keeping unsold stock forever. Novelty is also an important factor in sales.
- Short-term thinking. Even though this may seem counter-intuitive, the ECA has repeatedly failed in the past at long-term strategy with regards to apparel – or anything in general. Items being carried over from year-to-year are burdens on the Association rather than the asset they should be; changing this is a risk not worth taking, so baby steps are in order.
- Have a dedicated director. Overseeing this requires a very specific focus but, at the same time, presents financial risks for the Association. Having a director answering to both the VP Internal and the VP Marketing – under whose portfolio such duties fall – would be the perfect compromise.
- Always order samples. Because the orders are usually rushed, the ECA keeps making the mistake of not getting samples. Not only do they allow for us to avoid bad surprises, but they could also be used to create promotional material in advance.
- Invest in quality over quantity. The ECA should extensively research the available products to find the best compromise between quality and price. We should also consider the desires of students; for example, the current trend is going away from cheap t-shirts, towards high-quality neutral products.
- Create a marketing campaign, however small. The ECA is bound to fail without one.

This fall semester, we more or less followed these guidelines and ordered both hoodies and patches. The sales are around half of the amount received, which should be considered a success; if sales keep up, our entire stock will soon be sold.

One issue we encountered receiving hoodies that were different from our initial expectations. Although this did not affect the quality of the product, we might have ordered different hoodies had we seen a sample.

17.2 Branding

Creating a strong identity is crucial, especially if the ECA wants to grow and increase its reach. Our current logo – the bee – neither matches our needs nor any relation with the ENCS Faculty, and therefore our student body does not identify with it. Anecdotally, at a tabling fair, we were recognized every single time as the “Sports team” or SWARM.

I believe the ECA should work on creating a new branding identity, and actually start a conversation on what would better fit our needs, instead of settling for an arbitrary one. This will also echo the slow strategic direction change the ECA has been doing for the past few years and help us be closer to the students we represent. This will most likely not get accomplished this year because of the lack of resources, but could be done over the summer. Finally, I strongly stand behind the recommendations I wrote in the 2013-2014 VP Marketing Mandate Report.

18 ACCOUNTABILITY

Accountability is a really nice buzzword – often preached, and probably thrown around too often. It nevertheless is crucial if we want to see the ECA grow as an association, and is obviously the reason this report was written for the ECA Council. It is a concept I am a strong advocate for, and tried to implement through reports, policy, and better oversight of the Executive by the ECA Council.

According to the OED, the word means “responsible” and “explicable”. It is not about pointing fingers, but recognizing both our successes and our failures, and most importantly, doing it together. I believe it should be considered as one of the core aspects of the Association, and the ECA should nurture this culture of accountability. Moreover, it will force the ECA to look back on what we’ve done; this is a starting point in establishing a healthy institutional memory and counter the yearly turnaround of Executives.

Finally, to not be a hypocrite, below is my personal mid-mandate reality check with regards to what I’ve wanted to accomplish this year. It is taken directly from the campaign platform I ran on, so it is understandably moronic in some ways. A lot stems from my marketing background

and should not be the focus of the President. A lot are dreams that, after considerations, are not good decisions – as it should be, it's like golf – you always aim past the hole.

19 REALITY CHECK

Developing the ECA's academic impact:

Most students are interested in academic matters before anything else, so the ECA should aim to host crash tutorials every semester before finals, with reliable TAs, and which cover most engineering courses.

Moderate success. We should have covered more courses but lacked enough tutors and had poor attendance in some courses.

Student-run workshops by our department reps during frosh can also provide new students a comprehensive understanding of their degrees and how to choose their courses.

Failure. This was overlooked due to a lack of time during Orientation, I strongly believe the ECA should collaborate with the Faculty to host such events.

We should also encourage low-cost tutorials and info sessions hosted by societies.

Moderate success. We increased funding towards tutorials, but the ECA should still establish greater, non-monetary, support for those events.

Improving student space:

The B-Annex is currently not used to its full potential while it could be a great student space for Engineers and Computer Scientists; we should begin a renovation that would provide our students with study space, workshops, new offices and party space, of course.

In process.

The faculty of Fine Arts has great facilities in the EV Building: the Core Technical Centres (Metal shop, wood shop, maquette and prototyping lab) could be shared with engineering students and would enable them to prepare adequately for their competitions and projects.

Moronic idea. It is not the best solution when trying to solve the competition space issue; we would remain completely dependent on the Administration, which is not sustainable in the long-term.

Encourage student involvement and recognition

I want to work with faculty to introduce a new course that will give academic credit to projects that are a direct application of engineering degrees, because students should never be faced with the choice of applying what they learned or passing a class, and this will finally recognize our societies' academic contributions.

Unrealistic. Creating this kind of change is extremely tricky given the CEAB accreditation and the lack of accountability within the ECA and its subsidiaries. This would require a multi-year process of extensive work and collaboration with the Faculty, Administration, and a better-working Association.

Instead of having leadership positions that currently are all or nothing within the ECA, we should promote different levels of involvement through committees (Frosh, EngWeek, ECAid) and directors (Executive director, volunteer coordinator, ...).

Moderate success. See sections 4.1 and 8. More to come in my Mandate Report.

We recognize outstanding work by our societies during the Molson Banquet but every student should be recognized for their student involvement, that's why the ECA should introduce kilt patches that will reward and honor student participation. I also want to better display and promote student initiatives through a special page on our website.

Kilt patches: Moronic idea. It is a mistake to jump on the kilt bandwagon because it was a huge failed investment. There are already many barriers to getting involved; promoting paying for a kilt does not help, and the patches further the small, closed communities the ECA tends to create.

Website page: Failed. I will not push for it, as it is not a priority – e.g. considering the general website issues – and is not within my portfolio as President.

Because the ECA should be held more accountable to their membership and sponsors, I want to introduce a yearly report that will showcase both the ECA's and the societies' work and achievements.

Too soon to evaluate. However, given the difficulties with producing a mid-mandate report, and the difficulty of producing last year's mandate reports, this will likely be a huge undertaking.

Expand our internal collaboration

Having monthly 1-to-1 meetings between myself and the societies' presidents, as well as having the ECA execs hold office hours, would improve society-ECA communication and facilitate the holding of joint events and projects.

Monthly 1-to-1: Failed. It completely slipped my mind, although I will try to implement this for the winter semester.

Office hours: Successfully failed. They are not attended and are a waste of everyone's time.

Because every involved student has to learn a lot of new skills in a very short time, the ECA should make this process easier by providing training sessions on organizational skills, finances or how to make the most of council meetings, so student leaders can be more productive and focus on the important stuff.

Moderate success. We focused mainly on Council training. Future years should host a training day for Society executives.

Another priority if we want to become a more trustworthy institution is to adapt the standing regulations and by-laws to our current needs, and have a diverse group of students representative create a financial policy that will drive the ECA's priorities and ensure fairness.

In process. More to come in my Mandate Report.

20 LOOKING FORWARD

For the upcoming semester, I will focus on the following projects:

- By-Law changes, mentioned in section 7;
- Developing a stronger legal backbone in consultation with the administration, focused around insurance and finance;
- Eng-Week, mentioned in section 8;
- B-Annex renovation and Space proposal, mentioned in section 9;
- The adoption of the minors change and a modification to the number of seats at Faculty Council, mentioned in section 10;
- Equipment Fund reforms, mentioned in section 13;
- Organizing archives and creating extensive documentation for the upcoming years, mentioned in section 14;

- Create an Annual Report with a Failure section, mentioned in section 18;
- Annual General Elections and transition; and
- Do president things.

ANNEX A: POLICY COMMITTEE REPORT

Policy Committee report

Date: December 17th, 2014

The Policy Committee met throughout the fall 2014 semester to review the current governing documents of the association and then begin the rewriting work.

Although the composition of the committee changed multiple times – necessary in order to find the perfect balance between policy experience, interest in the project, and awareness of the current context of the ECA –, its actual members never changed. The members are the following:

- Melissa Nielsen, BCE Representative;
- Iman Hassanein, Chairperson of Council;
- Chuck Wilson, Secretary of Council; and
- Emma Saboureau, President.

1 SCOPE OF THE CHANGES

There is a lot of confusion surrounding the current governing documents: some documents have been lost, the number of policies adopted is unclear, the amendments were not recorded, parts of the regulations are obsolete, and policies are contradictory. Therefore, only the By-Laws adopted in February 2006 and the Standing Regulations adopted in June 2010 are currently in use.

This makes it extremely difficult to interpret those documents and leads to very little accountability and a framework that doesn't reflect our current needs as an Association.

The committee has decided to rewrite all the documents in their entirety, starting with the By-Laws. The ruling documents will be divided in 2 categories:

- (1) **By-Laws**, adopted and amended by vote of the members (ie Referendum or Annual General Meeting); and the
- (2) **Book of Policies**, adopted and amended by resolution of the Advisory Council. The following will be included: mandates of the standing committees, mandate of the employees, member association governance policy, financial policy, administrative policy, special projects grants, elections and referenda, respectful conduct and complaint resolution policy.

The Policy committee did not take into account the Letters Patent.

2 TIMELINE

❖ Milestone 1: December - January

- Completion of Alpha (first draft)
- Alpha sent to Board of Directors for discussion
- Alpha sent to Patrice Blais (ECA's legal counsel) for review

- Alpha sent to selected members for discussion
- ❖ **Milestone 2: February - March**
 - Presentation of the new framework to Council
 - Completion of Beta (second draft) incorporating reviews
 - Start drafting Book of Policies
 - Beta sent to Council for discussion
- ❖ **Milestone 3: March - April**
 - Completion of RC1 (final version) incorporating reviews
 - RC1 sent to Council for approval
 - Referendum

3 CURRENT PROGRESS

An early version of the By-Laws, labeled Alpha, has been drafted. The document does not include some minor sections, but is being released in order to start the review process. The content of those sections should not have any effect on the essence of the documents as they either require the completion of other sections to be written (eg: definitions) or are to be determined by our legal counsel (eg: duties of a Director of a corporation, general meetings).

ANNEX B: B-ANNEX RENOVATION PROPOSAL

This proposal was submitted on October 9th, 2014 to Facilities Planning.

Engineering and Computer Science Association (ECA)

B-Annex Renovation

Proposal

1. Purpose:

The B Building, or B-Annex, is a student space open to all ENCS students Monday through Friday from 10am to 5pm, with an employee on-site during that time. The building serves multiple purposes: office and workshops for the ECA's subsidiaries, meeting space (conference room), study space, and lounge where snacks and apparel can be bought.

The space has however become run-down (broken furniture, bad spacial planning, does not accommodate the needs of our students) and is therefore never used by students.

The purpose of this much needed renovation is to create an attractive space for students and use this space to its full potential. It also centers on the construction of a better kitchen and bar area that would accommodate our needs for our Lizard Lounges (charity events hosted by our subsidiaries every week), B-Annex parties (around 5 a year), as well as Breakfasts during Orientation and EngWeek.

3. Description of the changes:

- (1) Removing of a 12' long wall, floor to ceiling, between B-204 and B-203;
- (2) Adding a bar height counter with cabinets (approximately 9' long) on the space;
- (3) Reworking the electrical setup for new small appliances (on the opposite wall);
- (4) Addition of a smaller counter with a sink and running water;
- (5) New desk for the B-Annex manager;
- (6) New ceiling projector.

2. Project implementation:

Before any official work can be done, the University should send a qualified inspector to ensure that asbestos or other dangerous materials do not figure in this scope of work. To my knowledge – Kyle Arseneau, Building Engineering student working in the Construction Industry –, after looking in the ceilings and walls, I do not believe there to be any, however, we would need a second inspection before proceeding with any work.

There was an initial inspection done by Kyle Arseneau, in the company of Guy Gosselin¹, and it was determined that the wall was not supporting, thus the last questions to answer would be the asbestos before being able to proceed with any work.

– Work to be done (through University consent/contract):

- 1 week of electrical work (includes electrical inspection of existing, and figuring out how to provide the proper power to new design without overloading the breakers, which is a common happening with our current setup);

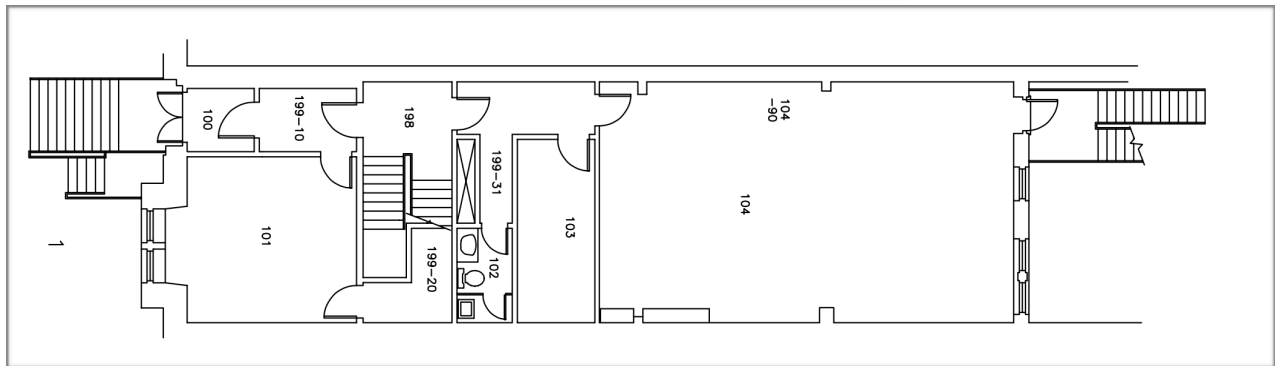
¹ Manager of Building Operations, Planning & Operations Facilities

- 1 week of demolition and patching (2 carpenters, 1 week);
- 2 to 3 days of plumbing work to be done (the access to water and drains should be easy as it is a suspended ceiling beneath;
- 2 to 3 days of painting/plastering (possibly more depending on what needs to be opened up for the electrical/plumbing work);

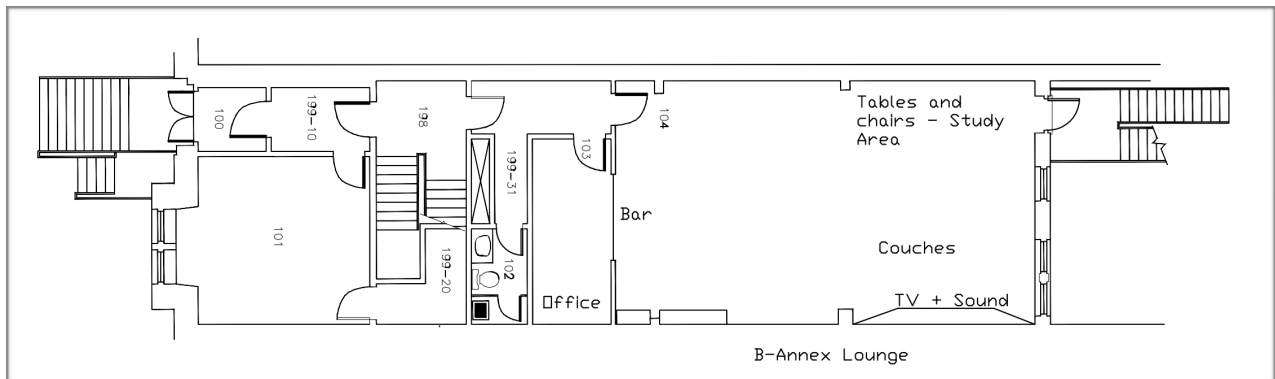
– We are roughly looking at about 8,000\$ in workmanship. This, however, does not include the inspection for asbestos, but does cover the time an electrician would need to determine a new layout of the electrical work.

4. Floor plan (B-Annex 1st floor):

Current setup:



New setup:



5. Project members:

- **Emma Saboureau, President**

president@ecaconcordia.ca

- **Kyle Arseneau, Vice-President of External Affairs** (Building Engineering student)

external@ecaconcordia.ca

- **Jimi Adoumie, B-Annex Manager** (Civil Engineering student)

bannex@ecaconcordia.ca

6. Detailed budget:

Description	Cost	Notes
EXPENSES		
Bar / kitchen		
Counter top + Cabinets (9' long)	\$1,000.00	Cuisine Action quote
Smaller Counter + Sink	\$1,000.00	Cuisine Action quote
Furniture		
Desk, tables, chairs, and shelving units	\$2,500.00	
Couches	\$3,000.00	
Projector and set-up	\$1,100.00	
Industrial fridge	\$0.00	Sponsored
2 Computers	\$0.00	Old ones from AITS
Appliances		
Ice maker, microwave, coffee maker	\$1,000.00	
Work		
Construction	\$8,000.00	Taking down a wall and adding a sink
Materials for construction work	\$5,000.00	
Other		
Locks	\$2,000.00	New locks as we had thefts in the past
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$24,600.00	
REVENUE		
ECA	\$10,000.00	Confirmed
CSU - Space Fund	\$5,000.00	Confirmed
CCSL - Special Projects	\$5,000.00	Not confirmed
ENCS Faculty	\$4,600.00	Not confirmed
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$24,600.00	



ANNEX C: MINORS FOR ENGINEERS PROPOSAL

This proposal was approved by the ECSUSC with one modification not present on the document below. This change adds a requirement of a minimum 3.0 cumulative GPA in order to be able to be enrolled in a minor program. The amended proposal will be brought up for adoption at the ENCS Faculty Council of March 6th.

71.20 BENG

71.20.1 Curriculum for the Degree of BEng

The University offers programs leading to the degree of BEng in the fields of Aerospace, Building, Civil, Computer, Electrical, Industrial, Mechanical, and Software Engineering.

The BEng degrees in Aerospace, Computer, Electrical, Industrial, Mechanical and Software Engineering require completion of a minimum of 120 credits. The BEng degrees in Building and Civil Engineering consist of 119 credits. Program requirements comprise a group of required courses with a group of elective courses which allow students to select part of their program to provide some depth in an area of specialization (their "option") according to their particular interests, or breadth in the general field of their chosen discipline.

A minor is a program consisting of a minimum of 24 specified credits in a single discipline and professing to give a basic introduction to the methodology and key concepts of that discipline. Students in Engineering programs may not combine register for minors in other Faculties, with the approval of that Faculty. Credits taken towards a minor may only count towards the General Education electives of the required credits for a BEng stated above. ~~their program with a minor or cluster from another field of study. Any exception to this policy must be approved by the Faculty's Student Request Committee. Minors are indicated in the Calendar entry for the respective department or college.~~

In their final undergraduate year, students with high standing may apply for permission through the Dean's Office to register for a limited number of graduate courses offered by the Faculty in lieu of some courses in the undergraduate program.

Successful completion of a BEng program requires hard work and considerable dedication on the part of each student. Courses are presented with the expectation of an average of about two hours of "outside" work for each lecture hour and about one-half hour of "outside" work for each hour spent in the laboratory for all programs of study.

ANNEX D: CSU STUDENT CONGRESS PROPOSALS

Some motions proposed below were extensively amended on the floor, unfortunately, because the official minutes have yet to be published, this does not reflect the actual wording of the resolutions adopted.

(1) Sustainable curriculum (Michael Banks)

Whereas research conducted by the Sustainable Curriculum Project has found there to be little coverage of sustainability in the curricula of programs across Concordia University;

Whereas objective 4.2.2 of Concordia's academic plan states that "As part of regular curriculum appraisal processes, encourage and facilitate focused departmental discussions on how ethics, citizenship, critical engagement, and global awareness are and should be integrated into program coursework and related co-curricular activities;"

Be it resolved that the Concordia Student Congress call upon the departments of all Faculties to design and implement a mandatory 200 level, 3 credit course in each program, on the topic of sustainability and sustainable practices.

Be it further resolved that the Provost's office guide departments in such efforts;

Be it further resolved that the introduction of such mandatory courses begin with those students admitted for the Fall 2016 semester.

(2) Minors for Engineers (Melissa Nielsen)

Whereas pursuing a minor is against the official academic regulations for all Engineering programs;

Be it resolved that the Concordia Student Congress call upon the ENCS Faculty to implement optional minor programs for students registered in Engineering programs.

(3) Student database (Emma Saboureau)

Whereas information regarding student groups is not unified in any central place;

Whereas this makes it difficult for units within Concordia to ascertain information about these groups;

Whereas this creates an unnecessary burden on those units as well as on the student groups;

Be it resolved that the Concordia Student Congress call upon the Dean of Students' office to create a unified database for student groups, to be shared across all Concordia University services, which would contain the following information for each group:

- The executives of the group;
- The booking officers for the group;
- The locations occupied by the group;
- The employees or other members of the group, as relevant;
- The security access given to each relevant person, as decided by the relevant Designated Space Administrators for the locations in question;