

GUSS

Geography Undergraduate Student Association

Department of Geography, Planning and Environment
Concordia University

GENERAL BY-LAWS

GUSS

C/O: Department of Geography, Planning and Environment

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Preamble:

In recognition that undergraduate students in the Department of Geography and Environment at Concordia University have needs and interests that differ from other departments within the university, the Geography Undergraduate Student Association (GUSS) seeks to maintain and enrich the academic and social interests of its constituency. As the central governing body for the undergraduate students in the Department of Geography and Environment at Concordia University, GUSS is mandated to maintain and enrich the academic and social interests of its constituency, in recognition of the diversity of students who enter these disciplines. GUSS shall strive to foster a sense of community among its members by fulfilling the specific objectives outlined below. GUSS is headquartered in Montreal, Quebec, and recognizes that we are also headquartered on Kanien'kehá:ka (Mohawk) land.

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Article I: Name

1. The name of the Association hereby established shall be the GEOGRAPHY UNDERGRAD STUDENT SOCIETY, abbreviated GUSS (hereinafter, “the Association”).

Article II: Purpose and Structure:

1. The purposes of the Association are to:

- a) represent the undergraduate students in University activities and to the faculty, and to co-ordinate activities amongst undergraduate students within the department, subject to the by-laws of the University.
- b) to promote research and collaboration with other institutions, collectives and individuals with an emphasis on human and environmental interactions
- c) to promote student community, and to inform geography students about opportunities and events concerning the fields of geography and environment
- d) to promote equal access to education at Concordia University, regardless of culture, religion or ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation or gender expression, mobility, income, or language.

2. The Association shall exist as a member association of the Arts and Science Federation of Associations, Inc., (hereinafter, “ASFA”) and shall be subject to the applicable rules and regulations duly passed by its Board of Governors (hereinafter, “ASFA Council”).

Article III: Membership.

1. Every student enrolled in an honours, specialization, major or minor program in the DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY AND ENVIRONMENT (hereinafter, “the Department”) shall be a full Member of the Association and shall enjoy the rights and benefits thereof equally.

2. Every member shall pay a membership fee. The fee is currently fixed at zero (0) dollars.

Article IV: Executive Council

1. Purpose of the Executive.

The GUSS shall be governed by a Board of Governors, hereinafter called the Executive Council. Each officer shall serve a term of one year as Director and is eligible for re-election.

2. Composition of the Executive.

The Executive **council** shall be composed of a President, Vice President – Finance, Vice President – Communications, Vice President – Social, Vice President – Academic and Vice President – Internal/External.

3. President

The President shall act as President of the Board of Directors.

The President, who shall be a signing authority, shall also be the main representative of the Association to its Membership, to the ASFA Executive, the Department, the Faculty, and other external bodies, and may from time to time appoint people to represent the Association.

4. Vice President – Finance

The Vice President – Finance shall act as treasurer of the Board of Directors.

The Vice President – Finance shall be a signing authority and hold responsibility over the financial matters of the Association.

5. Vice President – Communications

The Vice President – Communications shall act as Secretary of the Board of Directors.

The Vice President – Communications shall be responsible for the distribution of information to the Membership and maintain the website along with social media platforms.

6. Vice President – Social

The Vice President – Social shall be responsible for the holding of *social* gatherings and shall be the officer responsible for booking space and resources for these events.

7. Vice President – Academic

The Vice President – Academic shall be responsible for holding of *academic* gatherings and shall be the officer responsible for booking space and resources for these events.

8. Vice President – Internal/External

The Vice President – Internal/External shall be responsible for dialogue and cooperation between the association, the membership and the department.

9. Meetings of the Executive Council

The Executive Council shall meet at least once a month at a time and place determined by the President and notified to all members of the Executive Council at least one week in advance.

The Executive Council shall also meet at a time and place determined by a written notice of five (5) days signed by at least four members of the council.

Quorum for an Executive Council meeting as described above shall be a majority of the Executive Council's elected officers.

The Executive Council may meet through unanimous consent of all Officers and with a quorum of the full Executive Council as needed.

Article V: General Assemblies

1. Powers of General Assembly.

The General Assembly shall be the decision-making body of the Association within the limits of the law.

2. Calling a General Assembly

A General Assembly of the membership may be called by

a) The Executive Council

b) The President, upon receipt of a written petition signed by at least 2% or 25 members (whichever is higher) of the GUSS membership, that clearly states the reason for the assembly on each page of the petition. The call must be made two weeks in advance of the General Assembly, and must be effectively announced to the Membership.

3. Annual General Assembly

The Executive shall assure that an Annual General Assembly is held every year before April.

4. Functioning of General Assemblies

All members of the GUSS shall have the right to participate in and vote at General Assemblies.

General Assemblies shall function on a Rules of Order ratified by the Executive Council.

5. Publicity of General Assemblies

The Executive council shall assure that notice is served to all members of all upcoming general assemblies at least 10 days in advance by whichever means the

Executive council chooses most adequate. The agenda for the General Assembly must be announced at least 2 calendar days prior to the General Assembly.

Article VI: Elections

1. Annual General Elections

Members of the GUSS shall vote directly for its Executive officers who shall act as its Board of Directors. General Elections for the Executive shall be held every March, at a date to be announced by the Executive.

2. Election Procedure

Each officer shall be elected independently from one another by secret ballot vote. An Electoral Officer shall be appointed by the General Assembly to monitor the elections Quorum.

At least 5% of the Membership must participate in the Annual General Elections for the results to be binding.

The elections shall occur annually for a period of 5 days of campaigning, 3 days of voting, and all voting must be completed by the 31st day of March each year.

3. Auditing and Contesting

The Electoral Officer shall report results to the ASFA Chief Electoral Officer, who shall reserve the right to audit and entertain contestations to the legitimacy of the results pursuant to ASFA's electoral policies.

Article VII: Removal from Office

1. A petition of 50% percent of the Membership demanding the removal of an individual from Office shall be required.

Article VIII: ASFA Councillor

2. The Executive shall appoint, before the first regular meeting of ASFA Council of the academic year, one of its Members to be ASFA Councillor for a mandate no longer than the end of the current academic year. This appointment, which shall be attested to by the two signing authorities of the Association, shall be presented in writing to the Secretary of ASFA Council.

Article IX: Finances

1. The Association shall follow any and all applicable policies approved by the ASFA Council.

Article X: Conflict of interest

1. Any member of the Executive Council (Board of Directors) shall disclose any organizations that he (or a member of his immediate family) has a business interest in that intends to contract with the Association. When any business with such organization arises, the Director shall abstain, except to answer questions from Board members, from participating in any discussion and vote on the issue.
2. A Director must report any situation of conflict of interest he is facing to the Board of Directors and such conflict must be noted in the minutes of the meeting following the disclosure.

Article XI: Limitation of Liability

1. No director, officer or employee shall be liable for the acts, receipts, neglects or defaults of any other director, officer or employee, or for joining in any receipt or other act for conformity, or for any loss, damage or expense happening to the Association through the insufficiency or deficiency of title to any property acquired for or on behalf of the Association, or for the insufficiency or deficiency of any security in or upon which any of the moneys of the Association shall be invested, or for any loss or damage arising from the bankruptcy, insolvency or tortious acts of any person with whom any of the moneys, securities or effects of the Association shall be invested, or for any loss or damage arising from the bankruptcy, insolvency or tortious acts of any person with whom any of the moneys, securities or effects of the Association shall be deposited, or for any loss occasioned by any error in judgment or oversight on such person's part, or for any other loss, damage or misfortune whatever which shall happen in the execution of the duties of his or her office or employment or in relation thereto, unless the same are occasioned by such person's own negligence or willful default; provided that nothing herein shall relieve any director, officer or employee from the duty to act in accordance with the Act or from liability for any breach thereof.

Article XII: Indemnification

The Association shall indemnify a director or officer of the Association, a former director or officer of the Association or a person who acts or acted at the Association's request as a director or officer of a body corporate of which the Association is or was a shareholder (or other type of equity holder) or creditor, and such person's heirs and legal representatives, against all costs, charges and expenses, including an amount paid to settle an action or satisfy a judgment, reasonably incurred by such person in respect of any civil, criminal or administrative action or proceeding to which such person is made a party by reason of being or having been a director or officer of such Corporation, Company or body corporate, to the full extent permitted by the Act and by law. The Association is authorized to enter into agreements evidencing its indemnity in favour of the foregoing persons to the full extent permitted by law and may purchase and maintain insurance against the risk of its liability to indemnify pursuant to this provision.

Article XIII: Contractual Matters

Contracts, documents or other instruments in writing requiring the execution by the Association are signed by the President and the Secretary. All contracts, documents or other instruments in writing so signed shall be binding upon the Association without any further authorization or formality. Notwithstanding this provision, the directors are authorized from time to time, by resolution, to appoint any officer or officers, director or directors, or any other person or persons on behalf of the Association either to sign contracts, documents or instruments in writing generally or to sign specific contracts, documents or instruments in writing.

Article XIV: Banking and borrowing arrangements

The banking business of the Association including, without limitation, the borrowing of money and the giving of security therefore, shall be transacted with such banks, trust companies or other bodies corporate or organizations and under such agreements, instructions and delegations of powers as the directors determine from time to time. Without limiting the borrowing powers of the Association, the board may from time to time: (a) borrow money upon the credit of the Association; (b) issue, re-issue, sell or pledge bonds, debentures, notes, or other evidence of indebtedness or guarantee of the the Association, whether secured or unsecured; and (c) mortgage, hypothecate, pledge, or otherwise create an interest in or charge upon all or any property (including the undertaking and rights) of the the Association, owned or subsequently acquired, by way of mortgage, hypothecate, pledge or otherwise, to secure payment of any such evidence of indebtedness or guarantee of the Association. Nothing in this section limits or restricts the borrowing of money by the Union on bills of exchange or promissory notes made, drawn, accepted, or endorsed by or on behalf of the Association.

Article XV: Books

The Association shall maintain at its head office during normal business hours a book or books containing the following:

- A) These by-laws, amendments to it and all regulations enacted or repealed.
- B) The names and addresses of the members.
- C) The names and addresses of the Directors, and the dates upon which they became and cease to be such.
- D) Minutes of all the meetings of the Board, as approved by the Board and signed by the Chair of the Board and the Secretary.

Article XVI: Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the Association shall terminate on the 31st of May. The financial statements of the affairs of the Association for the presentation to the members at the annual general meeting thereof shall be made up to that date.

Article XVII: Head Office

The Head Office of the Association will be in the city of Montreal, Province of Quebec. The Association may, in addition to the foregoing, establish other offices elsewhere as the Directors may, from time to time, determine.

Article XVIII: Delegation of Duties

The Board may, from time to time, entrust to and confer upon any one or more of the Directors or any standing or special committee or any officer or officers of the Association for the time being or any corporation or person or attorney or agent or trustee, either within or without Canada such of the powers exercisable by the Directors as they think fit, including the powers to sub-delegate, for such time and to be exercised for such objects and purposes, and upon such terms and conditions and with such restrictions as determined by law or the Board of Directors as the Board of Directors may deem expedient and may from time to time revoke, withdraw, alter or vary all or any of such powers.

Article XIX: Conflict

In the event of any conflict between these by-laws and any regulations of the Association, these by-laws shall take precedence.

Article XX: Conformity to By-Laws

All amendments, regulations, and resolutions, motions or decisions of the Association, including, but not limited to those made by the executive, the Board, Special General Meetings or Referendums must be made in conformity with these by-laws.

Article XXI: Modifications and approval of new By-Laws

Amendments to these By-Laws and the adoption of any new by-law must be approved by two-thirds of the Board, and ratified by a majority of the members at a General meeting. If the By-Laws are rejected or not ratified by the annual general meeting following their adoption they cease, as of that date, to have effect.

Article XXII: Gender and Number

In these by-laws the masculine shall include the feminine, singular shall include the plural, and vice-versa, where appropriate.