February 2026—Volume 18, Issue 1

CUSSU Concordia University Support Staff Newsletter

Note from the President:

Dear members,

As you know the university is in deficit and we have experienced and will be experiencing more cuts in positions at the university. Some of our CUSSU members are very concerned that the university will abolish their positions. Rest assured, if you have 2 years of seniority in CUSSU you have job security. The university is not abolishing positions that have employees associated with the position (for example vacant positions due to medical leave) but the ones that have been vacant for more than 6 months. The university is also not renewing contracts that are coming to an end.

If co-workers in your unit leave because of VRP, retirement, or resignation, the university may not replace the position but will re-organize and restructure their unit. Be prepared to be asked to do extra duties and if this is the case we ask that you are compensated for the extra tasks as a stipend. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us at cussu@concordia.ca.

If you are feeling overwhelmed or stressed, the EAP program is available for you and your family.

Our Negotiation team has been hard at work revising your responses to the survey that was sent last year. We are aiming to send another survey and look at the Collective Agreement to see what Articles should be tweaked to better understand the articles.

We will be calling a special General Assembly, date to be confirmed, and hope many of our members will attend this meeting.

In solidarity,
Donna Fasciano,
CUSSU President

35 YEARS OF SOLIDARITY SINCE 1989

CUSSU SESUC

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Contributors to this issue

- Donna Fasciano
- Faith Howard
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- Larissa Dutil
- Anastasia Rebelos

Psychological Incident Reporting by Faith Howard

Dear Comrades,

We all know the University is in a difficult position due to the CAQ government's policy decisions. It is no surprise that support staff might be experiencing significant psychological and physical symptoms due to the increased pressures we are facing individually and collectively.

To address situations of crisis—and ideally to prevent situations from reaching that point—Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) needs employees to proactively report the psychological stresses and incidents that are occurring in the workplace.

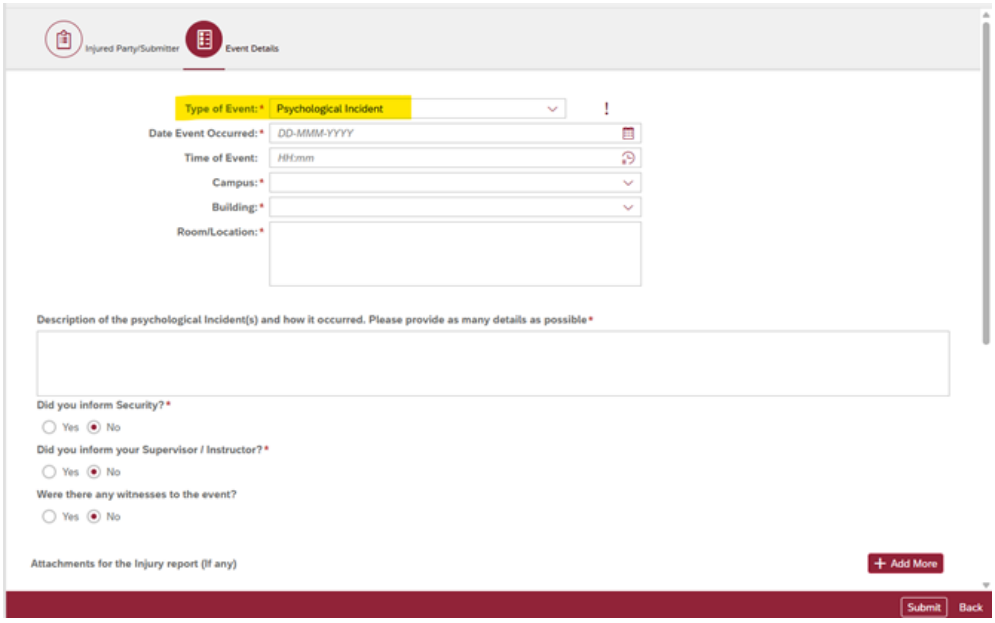
N.B.: When an employee submits a report for a Psychological Incident, their supervisor is **NOT automatically notified**. An EHS staff member will review the incident report and contact the employee prior to any communication with their supervisor. If it is necessary for EHS to **communicate with the supervisor to address the situation**, they will **ask for the employee's consent** before doing so. Your reports will remain confidential to the extent that you wish.

Incidentally, the staff position in EHS tasked with receiving and responding to psychological incidents is a CUSSU position.

The interests of EHS are aligned with the interest of employees. The employer is legally obligated to protect the health and safety of employees, both physical and psychological, and to eliminate risks (or minimize risks as much as possible) at the source.

The instructions for incident reporting can be found on Concordia's website here.

The Psychological Incident report submitted in Unity looks like this:



Psychological Incident Reporting Cont'd by Faith Howard

If you are not sure if the situation you are facing qualifies as a psychological incident or near miss, the CNESST has guidelines and definitions of psychosocial risk factors in the workplace as well as examples of workplace conflicts, any of which can result in psychological work injuries if left unaddressed. (Some information on the CNESST website is only available in French at this time.)



If you do not wish to include personal details or lengthy descriptions in your incident report, you may list the risk factors from the CNESST's definitions that are currently present in your workplace. EHS will commence their investigation by contacting the employee to discuss the issues reported.

A few of our members have already reported health and safety issues in their units using the Unity Psychological Incident report form and can confirm that EHS followed the process as described above.

Physical injuries and near misses should be reported too! This includes any situation that already is or could become unhealthy or unsafe, especially if no corrective action is taken. When a report is submitted, EHS must investigate, take corrective action, and record the corrective action taken before closing the incident file.

If you have any questions about this, please email CUSSU@concordia.ca and write Health & Safety Incident Reporting in your subject line.

Vacation—Article 27 by Donna Fasciano

27.13 - The annual **vacation** entitlement **must be taken** during the **fiscal year** in which it is **due**. However, with the **permission of the immediate supervisor**, an employee **may carry two (2) weeks' vacation from one year to the next**, and this for **two (2) consecutive years**.

This **accumulated vacation must be taken** at the **latest in the third year**. In such a case, the **total duration** of the annual vacation (taken consecutively or not) **must not exceed nine (9) weeks within any one fiscal year.**

In the case of an **employee participating** in the **Deferred Salary Leave Plan**, they will be **allowed to carry over three (3) weeks'** vacation to **the year in which they return from their leave.**

Reminder, if you have **more than 2 weeks' vacation** entitlement **left** to **take before May 31, 2026**; we **suggest you plan to take them** or if **you fail your supervisor can schedule** your **vacation days for you**. Plan to meet vacation bank limits - Carrefour - Vacation days and carryover | Carrefour - Concordia University.

Example if you have 3 weeks left (225hrs) you can only with the permission of immediate supervisor carry over 2 weeks (150hrs). You can extend the 5 days over the months or take 1 week. If you fail to do so, your supervisor can choose vacation days for you.

Voluntary Retirement Program (VRP) / Early Retirement by Donna Fasciano



Last year the university offered retirement packages via the Voluntary Retirement Program (VRP). A few of our members applied for the VRP and were accepted. The university was disappointed with the outcome of the number of employees that applied for the VRP so they decided to re-offer this to their employees with a deadline of February 6, 2026.

Our members that applied were not given the option to choose what date they would like to leave - April 1, 2026, or December 1, 2026, even though they had given their preference of the date they would like to leave. This was decided by Administration, and the date was not negotiable as written on the application form.

If you had applied for the Early Retirement with Allowance – Article 37.05 (2026/2027), received your letter of acceptance in December 2025 and you gave your response to pension before February 1, 2026.

What are my Next Steps?

If you have not already contacted a Pension Assistant/Advisor, we suggest you do. You can book an appointment to discuss your pension plan if you have any questions regarding your pension. If your last name starts with A to J – Nelson Sauveur would be your Pension Assistant and if your last name starts with K to Z - Olivier LeBlanc. You may also want to contact Madalena Vidal, the Senior Pension Advisor.

Things to Keep in Mind once you retire:

Benefits:

- You will lose access to Health Services
- No more dental Plan
- No more access to the Concordia email address
- No more access to Carrefour
- No more access to Optional Life Insurance

For more information visit the website on Carrefour Retirement benefits - Concordia University

At 65 years you will be required to apply to RAMQ for medical coverage and the portion not paid by RAMQ can be claimed by your medical insurance. You also have the option to opt out of the medical insurance plan.

Voluntary Retirement Program (VRP) / Early Retirement (cont'd) by Donna Fasciano

Vacation entitlement:

You may choose to take your vacation entitlement that you have left in your UNITY bank before your retirement date. Remember if you would like to retire, for example on September 1st; you would have accumulated from June 1 to Aug 31st vacation entitlement percentage of your gross salary (% depends on the years of service at Concordia, more than 21 years will receive 10%).

Your vacation entitlement, if not all taken will be paid out to you.

Don't forget when you plan your vacation before retirement or payout; did you pay back the Transition pay (2 weeks)?

Transition pay (2 weeks) If you did not give back the 2 weeks, the university will remove those 2 weeks before paying out any vacation entitlement. If you do not remember if you gave back the transition pay, check on your paystub. See example below; if you see this on your paystub that means you did not pay it back. If you do not see this it means you have paid back the 2 weeks of the transition pay.

EARNINGS AND OTHER PAYMENTS						
	CURRENT			PRIOR PAY ADJUSTMENTS		
	Hours	Rate	Amount	Hours	Rate	Amount
Trans.Pay FTPens balance						
Total						

Paycheque Guide by Donna Fasciano

Payroll has created a web page that has the new guidelines of deductions for your January 8, 2026, pay stub. For more information on the overview of the guidelines go to Carrefour - Paycheque guide | Carrefour - Concordia University.

Tax Season by Donna Fasciano



Payroll is preparing your T4 and RL1. They should be available before February 28th. The exact date TBC and you should be receiving a notice from the university to inform you when they are posted to UNITY. To access these forms, go to MY CU Account, go to Personal; then click on Tax slips. Or you can go to UNITY under the My Tax Slips portlet. Note only employees doing more than 3 days remotely will receive a T2200 form for working hybrid.

You can also get your health, dental and vision claim summary for Jan 1, 2025 – Dec 31, 2025, in your Sun Life account. Go to Sun Life website and login to your account.

Do you know who your Union Delegates are? by Donna Fasciano

Our Constitution states under Article 31, the Responsibilities and authority of the Union Delegate.

The responsibilities of the Union Delegate are as follows:

a) To ensure that the Collective Agreement is respected, within the group of employees that he or she represents.

b) To encourage newly hired personnel to join the Union.

c) To inform the group that he or she represents of the decisions made by the Union Council, and to defend in the Union Council the viewpoint(s) proposed by the unioni zed people in the group that he or she represents.

d) To encourage the people in the group that he or she represents to attend all General Meetings, regardless of the prescriptions set out in Article 21.

If you would like to know who your union delegate is for your building go to our CUSSU website page, under Contact; [UNION DELEGATES/DÉLÉGUÉS | cussu]

Delegate Contacts

EV Building contacts
Gabriella Pedicelli ext. 4566
Anastasia Rebelos ext. 3610

FG Building contact
Sheri Bernier ext. 2029

GM Building contact
Michel Erkic ext. 4906
Donna Fasciano ext. 2350
Rowan Somerville ext. 3766

FB Building contact
Faith Howard ext. 8565
Jose Medeiros ext. 2643

Hall Building contacts
Bo Kim ext. 7327
Jennifer Srey ext. 2051
Kelly Routly ext. 3901

LB Building contacts
Stuart O'Driscoll ext. 3483
Helene Medeiros ext. 2435
Aneil Mehta ext. 2653

MB Building contact
Christabell Moyo ext. 2708
Larissa Dutil ext. 4750

Annexes contacts
David Babcock ext. 4141

Loyola Campus contacts
Vidya Khan ext. 3702
Karen Holder ext. 2223
Daniel Amico ext. 4239
Amanda Rosen ext. 2222

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Who is Raphael Estevao—CUSSU member & Athletic Trainer, Savate Kickboxing Instructor/Coach & Publisher by Donna Fasciano



A native Portuguese living in Montreal. Since the age of 10, he has practiced various martial arts, they included: Judo, Karate (Black Belt) (Style: Kyokushinkai, & Shotokan), Capoeira (Batizado as "Braza" and of course Savate. His qualifications; Boxe Française Savate: Nivau Gant Jaune; Savate Defense Gant Rouge and Savate Baton Defense Gant Rouge.

Being competitive by nature participated in competitions with a good amount of success winning a number of tournaments and championships. His accomplishments in Savate included:



- 2000 – Canadian National Team
- 2000 – Competitor for the First "Coupe Du Monde Assaut" in Paris, France
- July 14 2001 – Obtained the diploma of "Moniteur de Boxe Française Savate" in Toulouse, France. (FFSBF&DA) Federation Française de Boxe Française Savate & DA

With formal training and certification in France along with other licenses and certifications, he is a certified athletic and personal trainer and Savate Kickboxing instructor at Concordia University—LeGym. He is also a former international competitor that has competition experience representing Canada.

As a coach, he has sent multiple athletes to the Savate World Championships — in 2024, three returned with medals — and even the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC News) featured a TV report on the training session, where their reporter left with a few bruises and a newfound respect for the sport. He had the opportunity to showcase this combat sport and its vibrant community. March 6, 2025—Ever heard of savate? We took a swing at the French combat sport | CBC.ca .

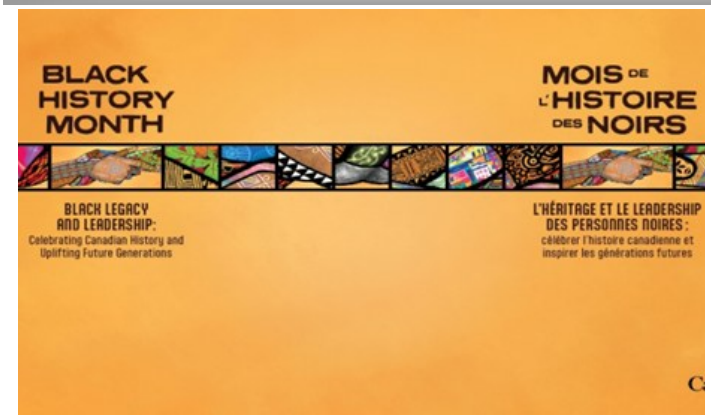


Savate: A Comprehensive Guide to a European Martial Art and Modern Combat Sport

Discover The Art of French Kickboxing. His new book on Savate — the elegant yet fierce French martial art — has hit the shelves! For years, he had the privilege of coaching incredible athletes at Concordia University's LeGym, guiding them to World Championship podiums and sharing the beauty and discipline of Savate with everyone from curious beginners to seasoned fighters.

This English-written book is his way of sharing the history, techniques, practical insights from real coaching experience, and philosophies that make Savate more than just a sport. Raphael goes on to say that whether you're a martial artist, coach, curious reader, or someone seeking a fresh perspective on European martial arts, he wrote this book for you.
If you would like to purchase his book it is available on Amazon, and Indigo-Chapters -Coles.

Black History Month—by Christabell Moyo



Black History Month is commemorated in Canada every year from February 1st to March 1st.

Every February, people across Canada participate in Black History Month events and festivals that honor the legacy of Black Canadians and their communities.

The 2026 theme for Black History Month is:

"Black Legacy and Leadership: Celebrating Canadian History and Uplifting Future Generations."

Black History Month is about honoring the enormous contributions that Black people have made, and continue to make, in all sectors of society. It is about celebrating resilience, innovation, and determination to work towards a more inclusive and diverse Canada: "A Canada in which everyone has every opportunity to flourish."

During Black History Month, people in Canada celebrate many achievements and contributions of Black Canadians and their communities who, throughout history, have done so much to make Canada the culturally diverse, compassionate, and prosperous nation it is today. However, it is also a time to reflect on Canada's painful history and the distinct challenges that Black people in Canada continue to face in their daily lives, such as systemic barriers, racism and discrimination.

"Black History Month offers us all a valuable opportunity to learn more about the diversity of Black communities across the country, and to listen to and be open with one another on what we can continuously do to build a better, more inclusive Canada."

"In Canada, diversity is a fact, but inclusion is a choice; for far too long Black communities in Canada have been faced with anti-Black and systemic racism".

Click on the links below for more information:

More information https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/campaigns/black-history-month.html

https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/news/2026/01/the-government-of-canada-announces-the-theme-for-black-history-month-2026.html

Black History Month Event https://allevents.in/montreal/black-history-month?ref=cityhome https://www.mtl.org/en/experience/black-history-month https://fonduaunoir.ca

Black History Month | Black Presence - Concordia University

Black history organizations &educational resource Organizations and educational resources on the history of Black communities in Canada - Canada.ca

CUSSU in the Kitchen

...'cause everyone wants a revolution, but no one wants to do the dishes!

Greek Salad (the way Anastasia makes it!)
Submitted by Anastasia Rebelos



INGREDIENTS:

- 1 red, medium tomato (juicy and room temperature)
- 1 Lebanese cucumber (or part of an English cucumber)
- 1 small onion (or half a medium onion)
- 1/4 of a green pepper (seeded and cut into rings or crescents)
- A few black Kalamata olives (more or less, depending on if you like olives)
- Feta cheese (Greek feta, not Canadian marked as "Greek" and not double cream)
- 2 1/2 tablespoons of the best olive oil you have
- Salt to taste
- Pepper (cracked pepper if you have)
- Dry oregano
- Fresh mint (optional)

YOU WILL NEED: A shallow, wide-bottomed bowl (the salad should be spread out, not piled up); a peeler; and a serrated knife.

* Slice the tomatoes first, place in bottom of the dish and sprinkle with salt so that the juices start to run. Let them sit for a few minutes. If you keep your tomatoes in the refridgerator (which you shouldn't!), then let them get to room temperature.

* Cut the small onion in half and use a peeler to shave slices over the salted tomatoes. Shaving instead of pieces allow for more flavour in the dressing (onion juices), and also when you eat the salad you don't bite into chunks of onion... you just notice the flavour which compliments the tomato very well.

* Slice up the cucumber & pepper and add on top of tomatoes and onion.

* Add pepper, oregano, mint, olives (I like to squash the olives with the side of a knife, pit them, and chop them up into small pieces but you don't have to).

* Add the feta on top and sprinkle it with some oregano.

* Drizzle olive oil generously over everything. Let the salad sit so that the tomato and onion juices mix with the olive oil to meld into a nice dressing at the bottom of the bowl. (It should not look too watery. If it does, add more olive oil!).

HOW TO REACH US

Address: **2130 Bishop St., Rm MI-303**
Tel: **514-848-2424 ext. 8644**
E-mail: **CUSSU@concordia.ca**
cussu.grievances@concordia.ca
President cell: **438-865-0756**

Executive Committee Members
Donna Fasciano - President
Rowan Somerville - Interim VP General
David Babcock - VP Grievance
Bo-Kyung Kim - Secretary
Vidya Khan - Treasurer
Faith Howard - VP Health & Safety
Larissa Dutil - VP Information
Christabell Moyo - VP Women's Issues

Calendar

March 5, 2026: International Women's Day -
CUSSU Lunch
- Loyola: HU 115-01
- SGW: H 655.02

March 6, 2026: President's Day - University closed.

April 3, 2026: University closed
April 6, 2026: University closed

TBC: CUSSU Annual General Assembly

Have suggestions or Ideas for the newsletter?



Email us at cussu@concordia.ca

CUSSU Website: Please check out our CUSSU website at www.CUSSU.net

Did you know CUSSU has a Facebook Page?

AVEC VOUS DEPUIS 75 ANS feesp.

News From Members

The CUSSU newsletter is packed with practical advice on various issues of interest to the support staff. We want to give you the opportunity to stay in touch with us, and to tell us what useful information you would like to see on the CUSSU website and CUSSU newsletter. Newsletters are usually published four times per year, and is sent to all members as a benefit of our membership.

If you have a problem and would like your fellow members to help, send your questions, suggestions or comments to **cussu@concordia.ca**. This email address is protected from spambots.

The Executive seeks to support and assist you, our members, by keeping you informed of any new developments in the University. **Your union delegates**:

EV Building contacts Gabriella Pedicelli ext. 4566 Anastasia Rebelos ext 3610 **FG Building contact** Sheri Bernier ext. 2029 **FB Building contact** Jose Medeiros ext. 2643 Faith Howard ext. 8565 **Annexes contacts** David Babcock ext. 4141	**LB Building contacts** Stuart O'Driscoll ext. 3483 Helene Medeiros ext. 2435 Aneil Mehta ext. 2653 **GM Building contact** Michel Erkic ext. 4906 Donna Fasciano ext. 2530 Rowan Somerville ext. 4462 **Hall Building contacts** Bo-Kyung Kim ext. 7327 Jenn Srey ext. 2051 Kelly Routly ext. 3901	**MB Building contact** Christabell Moyo ext. 2708 Larissa Dutil ext. 4750 **Loyola Campus contacts** Vidya Khan ext. 3702 Karen Holder ext. 2223 Daniel Amico ext. 4239 Amanda Rosen ext. 2222