

## **PLENARY AGENDA**

39<sup>th</sup> Semi-annual National General Meeting of the Canadian Federation of Students  
Wednesday, May 9 to Saturday, May 12, 2001

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### **OPENING PLENARY – 15:00, WEDNESDAY, MAY 9**

#### **1. ATTENDANCE ROLL CALL**

A roll call of the membership will be taken to determine that quorum – the minimum number of member locals required to conduct business – is present.

#### **2. WELCOMING REMARKS AND GUEST SPEAKER**

National Chairperson Michael Conlon will provide welcoming remarks for the meeting.

#### **3. RATIFICATION OF PLENARY SPEAKER**

#### **4. ANNOUNCEMENT OF PROXIES**

The Plenary Speaker will announce the appointment of all proxies that conform to Bylaw II, Section 7 b., Proxy Votes.

#### **5. ADOPTION OF PLENARY AGENDA**

The plenary will consider the plenary agenda prepared by the National Executive. Changes or additions to the agenda may be proposed at this time.

#### **6. ADOPTION OF NATIONAL GENERAL MEETING AGENDA**

The plenary will consider the general meeting agenda prepared by the National Executive. Changes or additions to the agenda may be proposed at this time.

#### **7. ADOPTION OF NATIONAL GENERAL MEETING MINUTES**

#### **8. CONSIDERATION OF MEMBERSHIP APPLICATIONS**

#### **9. INTRODUCTION OF ANTI-HARASSMENT ADVISOR FOR THE GENERAL MEETING**

The Federation strives to create an environment at its national general meetings that is free of harassment. At each national general meeting the Federation employs an anti-harassment advisor who is available on a 24-hour basis to assist delegates.

At this time, the Anti-Harassment Advisor will provide a brief orientation to the Federation's harassment policy as described in the policy manual.

#### **10. PRESENTATION BY THE FEDERATION'S STAFF RELATIONS OFFICER**

The Staff Relations Officer for the Federation will make a brief presentation on the collective agreement between the Federation and its employees as it pertains to the rights and responsibilities of the employees at national general meetings.

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**11. ADOPTION OF STANDING PLENARY SUB-COMMITTEE AGENDAS**

As per Standing Resolution 1.1, the following sub-committees of the plenary are automatically struck:

- Budget Committee;
- Campaigns and Government Relations Committee
- National Education and Student Rights Committee; and
- Organisational and Membership Development Committee.

The plenary will consider the plenary sub-committee agendas prepared by the National Executive. Changes or additions to the agenda may be proposed at this time.

**12. PREPARATION FOR ELECTIONS**

**a. Introduction of Chief Returning Officer(s)**

In accordance with Bylaw 6.7, the National Executive has appointed Christine Bourque, Ontario Fieldworker, and Ashkon Hashemi, Ontario Internal Coordinator, as the Chief Returning Officers for the elections to be conducted at this meeting.

**b. Overview of Election Schedule and Procedures**

The Chief Returning Officers will provide an overview of the election schedule and procedures at this time.

**13. CONSIDERATION OF MOTIONS SERVED WITH DUE NOTICE**

**14. PRESENTATION OF THE REPORT OF THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE**

As per Bylaw V, Section 2 f., the National Executive will present a report to the plenary detailing the work of the Federation undertaken since the previous national general meeting.

The plenary will have the opportunity to ask the National Executive questions on the contents of its report and other activities undertaken since the previous general meeting.

**15. OTHER BUSINESS**

**16. RECESS**

## **Motions for Consideration**

39th Semi-annual National General Meeting  
Canadian Federation of Students



## **MOTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION**

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This document contains motions which are submitted with due notice for consideration at the May 2001 national general meeting. The National Executive's recommendations for action will be presented during the opening plenary session.

### **1. MOTIONS POSTPONED FROM THE PREVIOUS NATIONAL GENERAL MEETING**

This section contains motions that were postponed from the previous national general meeting to be considered at the May 2001 national general meeting.

#### **a. Proposal to Explore a Joint Internet Site with Canadian University Press**

**2000/11:N05**

##### **MOTION**

Local 08/

Whereas the Canadian Federation of Students and the Canadian University Press support student democracy, freedom of expression and freedom of the press;

Whereas both Canadian Federation of Students and Canadian University Press provide services through the internet that frequently serve similar goals and help similar student bodies; and

Whereas Canadian Federation of Students and Canadian University Press could realise benefits through the pooling and sharing of resources and services; therefore

Be it resolved that the option of combining the Federation's internet site and internet service provider with Canadian University Press be explored.

#### **b. Proposal to Support the Canadian University Press Innovation Fund**

**2000/11:N06**

##### **MOTION**

Local 08/

Whereas the student press is frequently unable to undertake innovative and radical activities because of financial constraints; and

Whereas Canadian Federation of Students and Canadian University Press support student democracy, freedom of expression, freedom of the press and would like to see more radical and innovative activities within the student press; therefore

Be it resolved that member locals be encouraged to create a 25¢ per student per year levy to be dedicated to the Canadian University Press Innovation Fund.

#### **c. Proposal to Support the National Campus Radio Association Innovation Fund**

**2000/11:N07**

##### **MOTION**

Local 08/

Whereas campus radio stations are frequently unable to undertake innovative and radical activities because of financial constraints; and

Whereas Canadian Federation of Students and National Campus Radio Association support student democracy, freedom of expression, freedom of the media and would like to see more radical and innovative activities within campus radio; therefore

Be it resolved that member locals be encouraged to create a 25¢ per student per year levy to be dedicated to the National Campus Radio Association Innovation Fund.

#### **d. Proposal Concerning Access to Canadian University Press Newswire**

**2000/11:N16**

##### **MOTION**

Local 79/Local 94

Whereas the Federation supports the Statement of Principles of Canadian University Press (CUP); and

Whereas communication is a powerful tool for member locals; and

Whereas CUP provides a central arena for communicating news and information regarding students issues amongst Canadian universities; and

Whereas the Federation and its campaigns are often the topic of new items or articles which are communicated to CUP members, and that would consequentially

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serve as an invaluable tool for Federation member locals across the country as well; and

Whereas access to the CUP wire is difficult for many locals because they do not have a newspaper on campus and therefore, do not have access to the CUP wire; therefore

Be it resolved that the establishment of easier access for member locals to information available on the Canadian University Press wire that pertains the Federation campaigns or issues of local interest be pursued; and

Be it further resolved that "current event style" news be disseminated to all member locals, where appropriate, within a reasonable and timely fashion for usage in Federation campaigns.

## **2. MOTIONS SERVED NOTICE AT THE PREVIOUS NATIONAL GENERAL MEETING**

This section contains motions that were submitted at the previous national general meeting for consideration at the May 2001 national general meeting.

### **a. Proposal to Adopt Policy on Income Contingent Loan Repayment Plans**

#### **2000/11:NE-01 MOTION TO ADOPT POLICY**

Local 23 / Local 35

Be it resolved that the policy on Income Contingent Loan Repayment Plans be repealed.

Be it further resolved that the following policy on Income contingent Loan Repayment schemes be adopted:

##### **Preamble**

First introduced in 1955 by U.S. economist Milton Friedman, a leading proponent of supply side economics, Income Contingent Loan Repayment Plans (ICLRPs, also referred to as "Income Sensitive") were devised as a way to shift the cost of an education from the state to the individual. This shift would result in increasing the cost of education and student debt loads. Friedman proposed that, in order to bear the increased financial load, students should have access to loans so large that they would only be manageable if the repayment was scaled to the level of students' income after graduation.

Supporters of ICLRP's characterise the plan as a fair and flexible model of student aid. But, ICLR models are mechanisms to raise institutional revenue through emphasis on debt management, rather than acknowledging the crisis of debt accumulation. Shifting the cost to students would only place upward pressure on user fees, further increasing debt loads. In other countries where ICLRP's have been implemented, such as Australia, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom, the corresponding tuition fee increases have been dramatic, some as high as 500% in one year.

Borrowers with lower incomes after graduation repay their loans over a longer period of time, thus accruing more interest than graduates with high post-graduate incomes who are able to repay their loans more quickly. The result is borrowers who earn more money would pay less for their education. Ultimately the Plans would discriminate against disadvantaged groups in Canada, who continue to suffer from wage inequity. Consequently, it is likely that many people will select their field of study based on a rough estimate of future earnings, rather than personal interest.

Historically, when ICLRP's have been considered in Canada, the reaction has been overwhelming. When the federal Liberal government attempted to introduce the Plans in 1995, the Federation mounted a massive campaign and successfully defeated their implementation. In 1996, the provincial government in Ontario also proposed ICLRP's but met resistance from students, and unwillingness from the banks.

##### **Policy**

The Federation opposes Income Contingent Loan Repayment Plans and related repayment schemes that extend debt repayment, rather than reduce student debt.

The Federation supports a system of national grants.

**b. Proposal to Amend Policy on Student Financial Assistance**

**2000/11:NE-02 MOTION TO AMEND POLICY**

Local 75 / Local 23

Be it resolved that the following policy on Registered Education Savings Plans and Canada Education Savings Grants be adopted:

**Registered Education Savings Plans**

**Preamble**

Similar to Registered Retirement Savings Plans, though not tax deductible, Registered Education Savings Plans (RESPs) allow a contributor to save for a child's post-secondary education. Under current rules, contributors can devote a maximum of \$4,000 per year for a lifetime limit of \$42,000. Savings grow tax-free until the beneficiary is ready to attend an eligible post-secondary institution as a full-time student. Contributors may invest in RESPs for 21 years but the RESP must be collapsed after 25 years.

RESPs are a national system of indirect grants: income generated by the RESP accumulates tax-free. The foregone tax revenue is tantamount to a grant payable to RESP investors. This indirect grant would only be available to individuals or families wealthy enough to continually set aside significant amounts of disposable income.

**Policy**

The Federation is opposed to privately funded savings plans for post-secondary education.

The Federation is opposed to the need for individuals to open privately funded savings plans for post-secondary education, as it ignores the need for a system of national grants.

**Canada Education Savings Grants (CESGs)**

**Preamble**

Introduced in the 1998 federal budget, CESGs are a direct grant paid out to those wealthy enough to afford RESPs. The federal government contributes 20% of the first \$2,000 invested into a RESP. Under this model, as much as \$400 is contributed each year for a maximum of 17 years, totalling \$7,200 per child. As with the RESP, this money is accumulated tax-free. If no child claims the money by attending college or university, the grants must be repaid, but not the income generated by the grant money.

Both the RESP and the CESG are statutory programmes, meaning that the government must budget as if all eligible Canadians will pay into the plans at the maximum amount. In 2000-2001 alone, the government budgeted \$2,885,617,200 for the CESG. If the government were to establish a Canada Student Grants Programme with that money, the Federation calculates that almost 50% of Canadian post-secondary students would receive a grant of \$4,000.

Registered Education Savings Plans and the CESGs are wholly inadequate methods to ensure access to post-secondary education because they are a grant for upper-middle class families. Contributors who can invest the most, benefit the most. Moreover, since the only requirement for a benefactor's access to the funds is that she must be enrolled on a full-time basis, public funds accrued through the tax-free status of RESPs/CESGs may potentially subsidise universities outside Canada, or private institutions within Canada.

**Policy**

The Federation is opposed to federal contributions of public funds towards privately funded savings plans for post-secondary education.

**c. Proposal to Adopt Policy on Instructor Evaluations**

**2000/11:NE-03 MOTION TO ADOPT POLICY**

Local 75 / Local 23

Be it resolved that the following policy on Instructor Evaluations be adopted:

**Preamble**

Since the 1960's, students have been seeking to achieve a stronger voice in the governance of universities. Teaching surveys were promoted as a way of ensuring that the student perspective would be taken into account in evaluating their instructors. Currently, student concerns about accountability have increased demand for anonymous teaching evaluations.

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Anonymous student ratings of teaching are widely used in post-secondary institutions to evaluate teaching. Many different questionnaires are employed, and procedures governing their use are highly variable. Generally two important but distinct functions are served: formative and summative. Formative feedback provides direction to instructors to help them to improve their instruction. Summative feedback is information for the evaluative purpose of personnel decisions and students' course selection.

Given the structure and design of the majority of evaluations, the results of these measures can most accurately be described as a summary of students' attitudes or opinion towards the course and the instructor, rather than the amount of learning which has occurred. As such, results of instructor evaluations should be considered a very blunt instrument for measuring teaching effectiveness.

The complexities in the teaching-learning environment should demand additional caution to be exercised in the interpretation of teaching evaluation results. For example, an evaluation based on a market-based relationship that emphasises student satisfaction clearly characterises students only as "consumers" of a teaching "product". Such limitations only dampen experimental teaching styles that challenge or provoke students. Ultimately this framework will create subtle pressure on faculty to grade leniently, thereby subverting the educational experience in favour of the lowest common denominator.

There is also evidence that women and minority faculty members may be evaluated by students in ways that their colleagues are not. This can be especially problematic in situations where these faculty, by virtue of their minority status, do not conform to conservative student expectations for their instructors.

### **Policy**

The Federation supports the use of anonymous instructor evaluations for formative purposes.

The Federation recognises the limited utility of anonymous instructor evaluations to measure teaching effectiveness, where evaluations are employed for summative purposes. Any procedure for the evaluation of teaching should take into account all relevant sources of information about teaching.

The Federation recognises the right of faculty and teaching assistant unions to negotiate guidelines for the use of instructor evaluations in collective agreements.



April 26, 2001

**National Executive  
Canadian Federation of Students  
Suite 500-170 Metcalfe Street  
Ottawa Ontario  
K2P 1P3**

To Whom it May Concern,

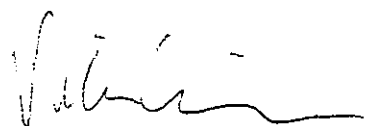
In a referendum held on March 19-30, 2001, the individual members of the University of Calgary Graduate Students' Association voted 73.5% in favour of membership in the Canadian Federation of Students. The specific results were as follows:

|                          | <u>Number</u> | <u>Percentage</u> |
|--------------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| In favour of Membership: | 285           | 73.5              |
| Opposed to Membership:   | 87            | 22.4              |
| Spoiled Ballots          | 12            | 3.0               |
| Void Ballots             | 4             | 1.1               |
| <b>Total Votes</b>       | <b>388</b>    | <b>100</b>        |

The University of Calgary Graduate Students' Association agrees to serve as the representative of its members within the Federation and to act as the agent for the Federation with respect to the collection of Federation membership fees.

On behalf of the members of the University of Calgary Graduate Students' Association, I request that this application for membership in the Canadian Federation of Students be accepted.

In solidarity,



Viola Cassis  
President, GSA

