

**CANADIAN SOCIETY FOR THE STUDY OF RELIGION /  
SOCIÉTÉ CANADIENNE POUR L'ÉTUDE DE LA RELIGION**

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING / RÉUNION DU CONSEIL  
VIRTUAL MEETING AGENDA  
APRIL 11TH, 2024, 4 TO 6PM ET**

**Present:** Diana Dimitrova, Zabeen Khamisa, Kalpesh Bhatt, Jacqueline Giesbrecht, Rachel Brown, Christopher Austin, Rubina Ramji, Alison Marshall, and Chris Miller,

**Regrets:** Paul Gareau, Michael Gillingham, Michelle Folk

**1. Welcome/Bienvenue**

Start time: 4:00 PM Eastern

**2. Accept Agenda/ Accepter l'ordre du jour**

*MOTION : Accept the agenda*

Moved: Christopher Austin

Seconded: Alison Marshall

*Motion carried unanimously*

**3. CSSR Annual Meeting June 15-17 2024/Congrès annuel de la SCÉR 15-17 juin 2024 – Executive members' presence on site and support to the Program Chairs (Alison Marshall)**

- Rachel will be sending around an updated Program for the Conference in the next newsletter. Please sign up to Chair a session if one is needed.
- At the conference, we don't want all the work/support to fall solely on the Program Chairs and LAC. Chris will send around an online sign up sheet ([https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1KuWicEihy8mbzbqlA9PxlZLIkZFGCXvb3mXv3K-D3QY/edit?usp=drive link](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1KuWicEihy8mbzbqlA9PxlZLIkZFGCXvb3mXv3K-D3QY/edit?usp=drive_link))
  - Everyone please sign up for 3-4 sessions to be on-site at Congress and help CSSR members navigate the building
- Ruby asks Alison to send around the contact numbers for Congress so that the exec in these posts can get in touch if needed
- Alison shares that for both the complementary registrations that the CSSR receives, as well as for the drink tickets that we receive for the Congress President's Reception/Happy Hour, we should prioritize a needs-based approach
  - Give these to students, contingent employees first
  - Alison reiterates that this needs-based approach should also be an outlook that the CSSR adopts for all things moving forward

**4. CSSR and communication/SCÉR et communication (Zabeen Khamisa)**

- Zabeen wants to bring our attention to an issue with general dysfunction in how the CSSR operates and communicates

- Lots of recent emails among exec point to feeling of disrespect that needs to be addressed
  - There is also unclear prioritization among the tasks that we are working towards
- Zabeen is committed in her role to helping the CSSR communicate and work in a more clear, coherent, and respectful manner
- One major task is establishing a centralized location for storing files. This will contribute to ongoing organizational stability year over year
- We also need to develop a clearly-defined operations manual that outlines the organizational responsibilities of each person/role
- Ruby echoes these feelings/experiences of poor communication among executive
  - Her priorities for the CSSR are twofold
    - Keep us solvent, not in a deficit
    - Keep the executive active and full
  - This requires a commitment to ensuring that we operate more effectively, respectfully
- Ruby has a Google Drive from Darlene Juschka that has CSSR files dating back to 2000
- Zabeen willing to collaborate and help organize this institutional memory
- Rachel echoes these feelings and thanks Zabeen for her work
- Rachel also clarifies that we have moved all documents from the old website to the new one (some of these are on the backend)
  - However, there are still some challenges in terms of who is able to access what
- Rachel echoes that exec members need to do a better job of clearly outlining their roles and responsibilities, as well as clear time frames
  - This will ensure a better transition/onboarding of new members
- Zabeen proposes that we have a less active year over the next year in order to figure out where we're heading as an organization and as an executive
  - Clearly outline rules
  - Reduce some unnecessary responsibilities
- On an unrelated note, Zabeen notes that while the CSSR Zoom account has been cancelled, we still maintain access for one year
  - Suggests that we change the email from Paul's email to the CSSR email
- Ruby raises that without a professional account, we need to plan a contingency for when the person running a webinar doesn't have institutional access to an account that allows for 20+ attendees, recording, and other features

## **5. Items related to the CSSR status/Affaires découlant du statut de la SCÉR. Should we become a Registered Charity? (Christopher Austin)**

- Chris will circulate a budget to the executive prior to our next meeting
  - Everyone can review this and ensure that there is enough allocated for what they need to do at their position
  - This shapes the budget that is presented at the AGM
- Ruby suggests that we shouldn't switch to the Treasurer Hotmail account. We should stick with the Gmail account because this is what everyone knows.
  - Chris doesn't want this Gmail account out there. We have just spent lots of time telling people to not use it (because we didn't have access to it)
  - Ruby confirms that there is no BMO info in that address. Just hard copy documents that were sent to Ted
  - But, the Gmail account is how FHSS and IAHR bill us

- Chris is just going to update those remaining vendors, and then eliminate the Gmail account
- Zabeen suggests streamlining all of our various accounts, and storing things into a single Gmail/Google system
  - Discussion about whether we should keep it, for consistency. Or eliminate it, since so much time/work has gone into switching everything to the Hotmail account
- Concerning registering as a Charity, Chris summarize the multiple unsuccessful attempts to establish a Business Paypal account
  - We need a business number in order to have that type of account
  - We can get this account by registering with the Canadian government as a charity
- Ruby feels uneasy about registering as a Charity
  - We don't do charity work
  - And we, as executive members, would be directors of this charity, and thereby liable for fraud
- Chris raises that the Canadian government lists 'advancing education' as a qualification for charity status. This is something that we do
- Rachel adds that the same liability for fraud would actually offer us some protection like in events that we recently experienced with Ted (Treasurer ceased communication and did not share access details to accounts)
- Several people raise that they want to learn more about this process
  - Suggest that we should talk with an accountant
  - Learn the risks
  - Would there be costs of hiring an accountant to file tax returns
- Chris clarifies that we wouldn't need to *pay* taxes
  - We just need to *file* our taxes so that there is an account of what money we took in and how we spent it
- Chris Miller asks about the importance of having our (physical) original constitution
  - This is outlined as something that is necessary in application for Charity status
  - Chris Austin says that it is considered pretty important
  - C Miller will look into this, to see if anyone knows where it may be
- Lengthy discussion over the status of our constitution. We know it was adopted at a meeting in 1977, and there have been 2 major amendments (1995, 2019)
  - Ruby's position was the subject of the amendment in 2019
  - Zabeen's position was added as an amendment in 2022/23, though this is not reflected in the constitution on the website
  - Does anyone likely still have the paper copy?
  - Some people can see the full constitution on our website. Some can only see a partial version.
  - Chris will look into past minutes and see if we can find where the original constitution may be. Ruby has some people she may also contact
  - Chris will also look through past AGM minutes for Amendments and compile a list
- Should we happen to find paper documents, Jacqueline asks about where we could possibly store these
  - Ruby can reach out to the archive at her school (Cape Breton)

**MOTION** : *Establish archive of physical CSSR documents at Cape Breton University*

Moved: Jacqueline Giesbrecht

Seconded: Kalpesh Bhatt

***Motion carried unanimously***