

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

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING / REUNION DU CONSEIL
VIRTUAL MEETING AGENDA
MAY 16, 2023 (16:30–18:30 EDT)

Minutes Submitted by Chris Miller, Recording Secretary, September 28, 2023

Present: Diana Dimitrova, Chris Miller, Paul Gareau, Zabeen Khamisa, Jacqueline Giesbrecht, Michelle Folk, Rubina Ramji, Michael Gillingham, Samiksa Love, Rachel Brown, and Qamer Hameed,

Regrets: Kalpesh Bhatt

1. Welcome/ Bienvenue

Start time : 16.32 EST

2. Accept Agenda/ Accepter l'ordre du jour

MOTION : *Accept the agenda*

Moved: Rubina

Seconded: Jacqueline

Motion carried unanimously

3. Minutes/ Procès verbal – April 12, 2023

MOTION: *Accept the minutes.*

Moved: Michelle

Seconded: Paul

Motion carried unanimously

4. Reports/Rapports

Programme Chair/ Présidence pour le programme (Michelle Folk/Qamer Hameed)

Program Co-Chairs Report

Canadian Society for the Study of Religion Monday, May 16, 2023

Submitted by Michelle Folk and Qamer Hameed

Congress 2023 is hosted by York University. Congress dates are May 27- June 2, 2023 making the start of our annual meeting Saturday, May 27, 2023. The CSSR President's Reception is scheduled for May 27 while the Executive meeting and AGM will be held later in the summer. This year the conference will be held in person for the first time since 2019.

The theme of Congress 2023 is *Reckonings and Re-imaginings* and is summarized (see attached program chairs' report from October 2022 for more information).

The early bird registration deadline for Congress 2023 was March 21, regular registration was April 1, and on-site registration is open as of May 26. There is a new underemployed attendee registration category defined as someone who is "employed part-time, seasonal or temporary and attending or presenting at an association conference."

This year, Chris Miller is supporting the program co-chairs in LAC responsibilities and has helped confirm the location of the conference rooms is sufficient for meeting needs. Additionally, Paul Gareau has kindly been providing meeting notes from the Congress 2023 conference planning meetings where he is able to attend.

The CFP closed January 31, 2021 this year. The draft program includes the following:

39 individual papers were submitted and grouped into 6 panels (adjustments will be made for any withdrawals).

We have had three withdrawals of individual papers and have needed to adjust the program slightly because of this.

1 workshop on Publishing Your Book on the Study of Religion. 3 roundtables including:

- From Their Mouths to Our Ears: Listening to a Generation on Living out an Ecological Spirituality,
- Author Meets Critics: Religion, Spirituality and Secularity among Millennials,
- The Handbook of Religion and Migration: Author Reflections.

2023 Plenaries part 1 and 2: Possible Roles, if Any, of a Scholar of Religion Regarding Promotion of Public Knowledge and Understanding of Religion.

The graduate student luncheon will be held on Monday May 29, 2023.

CSSR President's Reception is on Saturday May 27, 2023 from 5pm-7pm at McLaughlin College 014.

Congress 2023 President's Reception Hosted by York University is on Sunday May 28 from 5pm-7pm at Scott Library.

We are not scheduled to host the Craigie/International Speaker in 2023.

To date, the association signing authority, fees for Congress, membership list, conference details, rooms requests, association greeting table form, A/V and catering forms, open program information, and the final uploaded program have been submitted to the Federation through the Congress portal. Catering and room bookings were confirmed as well. We will likely update the program one more time and post to our website.

The program requires moderators, please let us know which sessions you are available to moderate and encourage other members to step forward as well.

We look forward to having a successful conference this year and would like to thank everybody for your help and ongoing support.

Discussion: Michelle notes that we have had 3 withdrawals so far. Rachel asks for a list of all these withdrawals so that she does not follow up with them about registration/membership

Michelle also shares that our bill for catering is currently projected at around \$3000. For reference, this is less than when Congress was at UBC, and more than when it was at Regina

Jacqueline asks about dietary concerns. Chris notes that Congress has not shared this information with us when we ordered, but we can follow up and inquire further. Rachel suggests that we submit a statement to Congress regarding the importance of inclusive food programs (for both dietary and religious reasons) for the purposes of accessibility and equity.

Communications Officer/ Agente des communications (Samiksa Love)

WEBSITE AND SERVER

- Website running smoothly at this time. I continue to be vigilant about bots/hackers trying to create accounts on our website.
- Hostpapa: is where our domain name is hosted since it offers .ca domains. Bluehost site nameservers are pointing to the Hostpapa domain name. We still have some credit on our account through Hostpapa so we will use the remaining amount to continue renewing our domain there every year. The most recent renewal was December 2022, and next one will be in December 2023. The total amount for renewal was \$23.72 (paid in December 2023), and we still have \$76.94 left in our account.
- Bluehost: Bluehost continues to be our web hosting provider, and the website is regularly maintained and backed up. Through Bluehost, basic web hosting was renewed until February 2025, and the SiteLock Security Essential feature renewed until February 2023. SiteLock Security Essential was paid for in February 2023 (\$131.52 CAD) and I was reimbursed by our CSSR Treasurer shortly afterward.
- A reminder that if the website ever goes down, it is very likely due to the index.php file needing to be re-uploaded properly, so please let me know if you ever notice the website is down (in case I don't notice it).

SOME WEBSITE CHANGES WE MADE SINCE LAST MEETING

- Posted 2023 Membership poster throughout website and in weekly newsletter.
- Updated Student Ambassadors for 2022-2023.

WEBSITE TO DO AFTER OUR MEETING TODAY

- Change due dates for Book Prize for 2023. Change due dates for Essay Contest for 2023. Poster needs to be updated every year with new deadlines so it would be helpful if Members-At-Large kept a template to reuse each year for use in posting to website and on Twitter.
- Link to new instagram account posted on our website under "Connect" menu?
- Does website FAQ section need revision?

SUNFLOWER

- SUNFLOWER (our automated paper submission system) ran smoothly during autumn 2022.

MEMBERSHIP DATABASE

- There are roughly 843 members within our website's database as of May 13, 2023 (minus a few duplicates), up from 804 in October 2022.
- Thank you to our Membership Secretary Rachel Brown for diligently updating members' membership status on the database as she receives notice of their payments from our Treasurer, and creating new profiles for them if they are new members. The website database is usually consistent with the list we send to CSSR (formerly we sent this to SAGE).

CSSR WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

- Our Mailchimp newsletter service is still running smoothly. As of May 13, 2023, we have 557 subscribers to our Mailchimp mailing list (it fluctuates as people subscribe and unsubscribe. In October 2022 it was 555).
- "SUBSCRIBE TO OUR NEWSLETTER" option is still on our website's home page as well as under the "Connect" menu.
- Thank you to other CSSR Executive members who also send news to post onto the website and include in our newsletter each week.

CSSR YOUTUBE CHANNEL

- CSSR Zoom Webinar Series sessions recorded and uploaded to the CSSR youtube channel for members. The CSSR Youtube channel is listed on our website under the "Connect" menu (<http://cssrscer.ca/?q=node/1515>). New videos are announced in the CSSR newsletter.

CSSR FACEBOOK PAGE

- Facebook page is unofficial and not regularly maintained by anyone on our Executive. It has been abandoned and references to it have been removed from our website and newsletter.

CSSR TWITTER ACCOUNT

- Access given to Graduate Student Member-At-Large, Communications Liaison, and new Digital Coordinator for posting.

CSSR INSTAGRAM ACCOUNT

- New account created and maintained by Digital Coordinator. Information to be sent to Samiksa to post to website.

THANK YOU

- Thank you to all the executive members for all your individual and team work throughout the year. It continues to be a pleasure to work alongside you to help the CSSR thrive.

Discussion: Samiksa adds that she is ready to begin discussions for next stage/updates to our website. Will set up a meeting with Zabeen, Rachel, and Diana to coordinate this

Membership Secretary/ Secrétaire des membres (Rachel Brown)

Membership Numbers for 2023:

We have 94 folks, with some more to process, signed up and paid for 2023. The breakdown of membership categories is as follows:

Regular Members – 45

Associate receiving SR through CSSR – 11

Associate receiving SR through other society – 8

Student receiving SR through other society – 18

Student receiving SR through CSSR – 12

I am waiting on a few more folks to register ahead of presenting at Congress. I emailed those who had not yet registered for 2023 membership and who are slotted to present. There were about 16 people who still needed to do so. If all of them register, that will put us at 110 members.

Discussion: Diana suggests that we need to be strict about unregistered presenters and follow up with an email to ensure that they register before the conference. Zabeen suggests that in an effort towards inclusion, we should offer a grace period to register. Executive agrees that we will follow up with an email as a reminder.

Treasurer/ Trésorier (Paul Gareau [Interim])

Interim Status:

I had to step in and take over as treasurer from Ted this winter. We are hoping to secure a new treasurer at the AGM in June 2023.

Clear Up BMO Account:

Once we have elected a new treasurer for the CSSR, we need to clear up the BMO account for who has signing power. I will bring in the minutes from our next AGM to make sure our account is up-to-date.

Travel Funds:

There are only 4 legitimate claims for the travel fund, totaling **\$1,599.76** out of \$6,500.

Account Status:

Current

- Community Account: \$20,092.18
- BMO Mutual Funds Investment January 1st, 2023: \$67,389.66
- Total Income: \$87,481.84

E-transfer:

E-transfer is working out well. We had international members who couldn't access the BMO e-transfer. We sent them a way to wire the money. Unsure if they were able to complete their membership at the time of this meeting.

Outgoing Expenses:

- SR subscriptions were paid out to the CCSR for 2022 and 2023: $\$920 + \$1,540 = \$2,460$.
- IAHR dues will be sent out this week. Fees are 2.40 Euro per member, after the exchange and wire transfer fee it worked out to 489.09.
- Zoom account: Is now paid directly from the BMO account.
 - Annual Fee (March 8th): $\$200.00 + \$10.00 \text{ tax} = \$210.00$
 - Monthly Cloud Storage (8th of every month): $\$53.00 + \$2.65 \text{ tax} = \$55.65$

Discussion: Paul adds that the Zoom account has been transferred to Zabeen

Paul also notes that only 4 travel funding applications were received. Rubina suggests that if we have so few travel funding applications, we should start promoting it to Faculty, sessionals, and others

Past President/ Anciennes présidente (Paul Gareau)

Current Executive:

- President and Representative to the Corporation: Diana Dimitrova [2022–2024]
- Past-President and Academic Freedom & Tenure Committee: Paul Gareau [2022–2024]
- Appointed Executive Member: Rubina Ramji [2020–indefinite]
- Recording Secretary: Chris Miller [2022–2025]
- Treasurer: Paul Gareau [interim 2023]
- Membership Secretary: Rachel Brown, University of Victoria [2022–2025]
- Communications Liaison & Website Administrator: Samiksa Love [2010–indefinite]
- Members-At-Large: Kalpesh Bhatt, University of Toronto [2022–2025] & Jacqueline Giesbrecht, Queen's University [2022–2025]
- Programme Co-Chair: Qamer Hameed [2020–2023] & Michelle Folk, PhD [2018–2024]
- Graduate Student Member-at-Large: Michael Gillingham [2022–2024]
- SQÉR Representative: Stéphanie Tremblay
- Canadian Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences (CFHSS) Representatives: Paul L. Gareau [2022–2024]

Nominations for 2023

This year the following positions are reaching the end of their term:

- Programme Co-Chair: 2023–2026 — Alison Marshall
- Treasurer: 2023–2026 — Christopher Austin
- Digital Coordinator Position: 2023–2026 — Zabeen Khamisa As always, we will also accept nominations from the floor at the AGM.

Nominations for 2024

Keep in mind that there are three positions up for renewal or nomination in 2024:

1. President

2. Programme Co-Chair
3. Graduate Student Member-at-Large

President/ Président (Diana Dimitrova)

Congress 2023

I am happy to say that we shall have our next conference with Congress (at York University, Toronto) and in person from May 27th to May 29th. Our Programme Chairs Michelle Folk and Qamer Hameed, our LAC Chris Miller and our Past President and Federation Representative Paul Gareau have been working very hard on this. Our preliminary program has been posted – it looks amazing! Thank you so much, Michelle, Qamer, Chris and Paul!

We’ll have some great events for our graduate students – thank you, Michael for organizing all this! And thank you, Chris for your help!

Website and newsletter

Thank you, Samiksa for all your help with the website and the newsletter, which function beautifully!

Membership

Our membership numbers are steady and as we know, most members pay their dues before the conference, so I expect the numbers to go up in the coming few weeks. Thank you so much, Rachel for your wonderful work!

CSSR webinars 2022-2023

Additionally, Zabeen Khamisa has been preparing our new CSSR webinar series – this was another amazing and exciting year. Marc Dumas and I co-chaired a CSSR webinar on a book published in the collection “Matière à pensée”, PUM, which I am co-editing with Marc Dumas, the other 3 webinars were chaired and moderated by Sarah Wilkins-Lafamme and Zabeen Khamisa. Thank you, Zabeen!

New Executive Position – Digital Coordinator and New Interim Treasurer

We have decided to have a new executive position “Digital Coordinator”, but this will be finalized at our AGM on June 20th, 2023.

Treasurer-situation

We have also replaced our Treasurer Ted Malcolmson. Paul Gareau has kindly agreed to take on the duties of Interim Treasurer until the next AGM. Thank you so much, Paul!

Student Essay Winners : PhD and MA 2022

NAME:	TITLE:	PSEUDONYM:	DEGREE:
Catherine van Reenen	On the Limits of Auto-Critique in the Study of Religion	Essay 3	PhD vanreenc@myumanitoba.ca

Ian Greer	Angrezi Shariat: Islamic Law in 20th Century Britain and its Colonial Antecedents	Essay 6	MA ian.greer@aucegypt.edu
-----------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---------	------------------------------

I would like to thank Alyshea Cummins and Jeanine LeBlanc for their excellent work. Paul sent a check in the amount of \$300 to Ian Greer and a check in the amount of \$650 to Catherine van Reenen – this is the monetary value for the awards. The deadline for the next competition will be August 1st, 2023. Thank you, Jacqueline and Kalpesh!

CSSR book prize 2022 and President’s Reception

We will honour the winner of the CSSR book prize at the CSSR President reception at Congress 2023. The reception will take place on May 27th. Thank you, Ruby and all committee members for your hard work on selecting the winner!

CCSR Meeting

I attended the CSSR meeting on January 21s, 2023. Lori Beaman’s term is coming to an end and the current vice-president of the CCSR – David Keussens of the Université de Sherbrooke will take over the presidency in May 2023. The AGM will take place on May 24th at 1pm.

Following the unanimous motion on the subject of the CCSR logo on the CSSR webinars at our April executive meeting, I contacted the CCSR by email, inviting the CCSR to be our financial partner of the CSSR webinars, in exchange for having their logo on our webinars. I asked for an annual contribution of \$1000. I’ll find out about their decision at the AGM of the CCSR on May 24th.

I would like to thank you all for your amazing work!! Thank you!

Recording Secretary/ Secrétaire archiviste (Chris Miller)

Meeting Poll

Thank you to everyone for submitting your responses to both of our meeting polls! Thank you for helping us to find times that work for this meeting and for our AGM.

Congress – Local Area Coordinator

I have also had the pleasure of working as the Local Area Coordinator for our upcoming meeting at Congress. Looking forward to connecting with everyone at York University in the Spring!

Thank You!

Graduate Student Member-at-Large/ Étudiants des études supérieures (Michael Gillingham)

Student Ambassador Program

Now in its seventh year, the Student Ambassador program is continuing to run. We have added two Student Ambassadors to the list since my last report for a total of 13 Student Ambassadors for this year. Our two newest ambassadors are Faezeh Izadi (University of Calgary) and Ankita Choudhary (University of Toronto). We have continued to advertise for new Student Ambassadors on our website and through the newsletter. I sent out two updates to the ambassadors in January 2023 reminding them about opportunities for funding and also reminding them about the call for papers for the CSSR meeting at York University during Congress. I had a request to write a letter confirming the membership and involvement of a Religious Studies graduate student named M. Morad Bkhait (UQAM) and I was able to do that. I am hoping to see some of the ambassadors at the CSSR meeting this year. At Diana's request, I also recently forwarded an invitation to the CSSR student ambassadors from those planning meetings of the Federation Advocacy Forum will be held in person at Congress. I asked the student ambassadors to circulate this invitation with their contact lists.

Graduate Student Programming at the Annual Meeting

I am glad to report that a presenter has been booked for the Graduate Student Luncheon at our 2023 Annual Meeting. Rachel Brown has agreed to present and her presentation is entitled "Brace yourself: Navigating a declining academic job market." I am looking forward to hearing Rachel present on this topic and I am interested in the responses of the attendees.

Student Reps Joint Project

I've been involved in a conversation about planning some joint events with student representatives from other organizations similar to CSSR in Canada. This conversation has been headed up by Lauren Strumos, student representative of the CCSR. We are currently working on plans for a webinar for MA and early PhD students on writing and presenting conference papers, and the difference between a conference paper and journal article. This is tentatively being planned for May 2023. I will share more details about this soon.

Thank You

I am very thankful to Chris, Samiksa, Rachel, Michelle, and Diana for the help they've provided me at various points this winter and spring. I am looking forward to our time at York University as we gather to meet and share our work with each other.

Discussion: Michael suggests that CSSR Executive may wish to show up at the Graduate Student Luncheon to say hello and welcome students to the CSSR. Rubina notes that the Grad Student Luncheon should remain a space that is safe and free for graduate students to discuss any issues they are experiencing, and that senior scholars attending may complicate this. As a compromise, the Exec may show up at either the beginning or end of the luncheon, and Michael will communicate his preference over email.

Members-at-Large (Jacqueline Giesbrecht and Kalpesh Bhatt)

Advertising for this year's essay contest has begun, and we've received our first submission! More details about the contest can be found on the [website](#), along with this year's poster.

We've continued to be in conversation with Samiksa, confirming and updating contest details on the website. The submission deadline will once again be on August 1st. The undergrad word limit was increased to 2500-5000 words, with the hope of drawing students taking upper-year courses or doing independent studies. As discussed at the previous meeting, the student winners will be invited to share their papers during the 2023-2024 CSSR Webinar series. The contact for essay submission was updated (from Paul to Jacqueline and Kalpesh), and we've created a shared Google folder for collecting the essays.

Discussion: To reflect the changing nature of scholarship, and the work that students are being trained to produce, discussion of whether we should open the student essay contest to better reflect this diversity of thought and writing. Expand the criteria to allow for policy papers, podcasts, other forms of media and writing. Chris suggest that by changing the name from Student Essay Prize to Student Paper Award, this could broaden the scope on its own, as the description of what is eligible is already quite open.

If we would like to make this change, it must be raised at the upcoming AGM, and could then be implemented after this current open contest finishes (August 1, 2023).

MOTION: The CSSR will create a third student prize that evaluates non-traditional scholarly work, open to all undergraduate and graduate students. Prize amount is \$300.

Moved: Rubina

Seconded: Michelle

Motion carried unanimously

Discussion: Tweaking the title and description for this award will continue among the executive through email

5. Additional items/ Des articles supplémentaires

i. Honorarium

Honorarium for Executive members increased from \$400 to \$600

ii. CSSR Webinar Series

Diana asking the CCSR for \$1000 if they wish to co-sponsor

iii. Digital Coordinator Position

Role currently held by Zabeen is being elevated to an Executive position

6. Next Meeting/ Prochaine reunion

AGM taking place June 19

7. Adjournment/ Adjournement

MOTION: *Adjourn the meeting.*

Moved: Rubina

Seconded: Rachel

The meeting adjourned at 18:10 EDT.