

## Mikaela Clark-Gardner's biography for Academic & Advocacy Coordinator

### Short bio (75 words):

I'm Mikaela Clark-Gardner and I'm running for Academic & Advocacy coordinator with team SPEAK UP! As a fourth-year student with two years experience as a Senator and Fine Arts Councillor, I have the vision, enthusiasm and know-how to make sure that your concerns, needs and interests are central to CSU. Fostering student voice, equity and democracy are my key commitments. I'm passionate about improving mental health services, advocating for survivors of sexual assault and anti-racist curriculum.

### Long bio (483 words):

I'm Mikaela Clark-Gardner and I'm running for Academic & Advocacy Coordinator with team SPEAK UP! I have the experience, vision, enthusiasm and know-how to make sure that your concerns, needs and interests are central to Concordia Student Union. I am a fourth-year student with lots of experience in advocacy, policy and campus organizing. Fostering **Student voice, equity** and **democracy** are my key commitments, and I have a number of proposals to share with you!

I am committed to bringing your voice forward in my role as Academic & Advocacy Coordinator. I am approachable and open to hearing about issues that you are most worried and excited about. One way that I intend to do this is by creating an annual survey to hear students concerns, needs and interests that will inform the directions that the union will take. It is essential that the union continues to be informed about current issues that matter to students.

With my experience as a Fine Arts Councillor for two years, I bring a wide range of experience while working on Policy, External & Mobilization, Sustainability and Library Services Fund Committees. Recently, I fostered more **democratic elections** and **better student representation**; I started an Election Reform committee to improve the policy and training. We improved the database for the nomination period to reduce the margin of error that often lead to wrongful disqualification.

I am passionate about **democracy in the classroom**. My background in pedagogy and curriculum as an Art Education student gives me the knowledge and experience to engage this work. For instance, I am dedicated to creating **a new evaluation policy**, where students can negotiate and be part of decision-making with professors on how they are evaluated in their courses. I bring knowledge and research of where this has been successful at other universities.

Diversity of thought and perspective is essential for a well-rounded education. I will advocate for policy on **inclusive, anti-racist and decolonized curriculum**. For instance, I will be supporting the indigenous directions recommendations and partnering with the committee of Equity and Visibility in Academia (CEVA).

As a fourth-year student, I also know how important it is to work on and maintain your **mental health**. I will be focusing on addressing the real need for student accommodations, expanded counselling services, and improved accessibility services as part of my mandate.

Sexual violence on campus issue must be addressed. In my two years of work as a Senator, I have been vocal about implementing **survivor-centred policy and consent training**. I am working on the committee to review Concordia's sexual assault policy and successfully developed a policy with the administration regarding instructor-student relationships that recognizes issues of power differentials and the importance of consent. I helped coordinate the Student Congress on Campus Sexual Violence, where we passed four motions that requests faculty, staff and students to participate in workshops on consent and power dynamics to address issues of sexual violence.