



**Hello.**

**A guide on how to hold a  
membership meeting.**

**From TRAC Union.**

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# Best practices

## Overview

- Every meeting should be inviting, playful, and joyous! This is an opportunity to meet people, make connections, and strengthen our bonds of solidarity; it is not a bureaucratic obligation!
- Consider splitting the meeting into two halves: one half for discussing workplace issues and your ambitions for TRAC, and the other half for socializing (playing games, gossip, watching a film, etc).
- Collectively discuss and approve an agenda, especially for the first part of the meeting.
- Meetings ideally include clear action points. Maintain momentum by ensuring everyone knows what they've signed up to do, even if this is just a small piece of research about departmental policy.

## Before meeting

- Get contact information for membership from the Mobilization officer/ Administrative Assistant. This information includes names, phone numbers, and email addresses.
  - Don't be afraid to text members! The email list given by Concordia to TRAC often only includes concordia.ca email addresses, which many members do not set up or regularly check. The phone numbers provided by Concordia are usually more accurate and effective. If you prefer to hide your personal phone number, Text Plus is free and easy to use.
  - Direct messaging via social media is also very effective.
  - Direct, one on one conversations are best. Listening is key.
- Use a scheduling tool like Doodle or When2Meet to find member availability. Give at least one week to collect responses on availability and then schedule accordingly. During the fall and winter semesters, Friday afternoons are often the best day since few classes are scheduled during this time.
- If meeting in person, TRAC can provide food and drinks. Flyers posted in public spaces in the department are also useful.
- For in-person meetings, Contact local stakeholders ahead of the meeting. These include department admin, the local GSA, and experienced students who may know a variety of people. Let them know about the meeting but be clear that only TRAC members can vote. Non-students like professors or staff, should never attend any union meeting.

- If possible, have a TRAC executive officer or proxy present, especially if it is your first meeting.

### During the meeting

- Introductions: name, year, RA/TA experience, something personal or fun (specialization of research, favourite food, etc)
- Ensure that someone keeps notes on what is discussed and decided.
- Brainstorm general concerns about working in your department. Use break out rooms for this so that everyone has the opportunity to speak.
- Brainstorm general concerns about being a worker (housing, health expenses, racial/sexual/gender etc discrimination). Use break out rooms for this so that everyone has the opportunity to speak.
- Discuss what priorities you would like to see TRAC adopting over the coming year
- Elect 1 or more delegates
  - Every department is entitled to 1 or 2 delegates. Larger departments can receive more, subject to approval of the Executive Committee.
  - The Mobilization officer can explain the role of delegates
- If you have enough capacity and interest from members, form a departmental committee. This group could meet ad hoc when problems arise, or on a semi-regular basis to mobilize for union events and plan future department events.

### After the meeting

- Create a department channel for chatting and information sharing (WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger, Signal or whatever members use most). Doing so will help with organizing and mobilizing for future events as well as provide a clear channel of communication for discussing problems as they arise. Many members really enjoy having this outlet.
- Contact the Mobilization officer to send any notes taken or decisions made (i.e. who was chosen as delegate(s), priorities, ambitions, or any other helpful information.
- New delegates (and anyone else interested in learning more) will attend an organizer training.

# Organizing a meeting

1. Obtain a list of current members by emailing our administrative assistant at [office@trac-union.ca](mailto:office@trac-union.ca). You should also cc [mobilization@trac-union.ca](mailto:mobilization@trac-union.ca)
2. Look at the upcoming calendar and pick a range of dates for a potential department meeting. These should ideally be 10–14 days from the present date. For example, if today is March 1, then look for dates and times which are between March 11 and March 15. Create a [doodle.com](https://doodle.com) poll with the dates and times you have selected.
3. Send an email to members inviting them in a friendly tone to fill with the range of dates you've selected in step 2. This is also a good time to begin the process of having one on one conversations with members in which you ask them about their concerns and invite them to the meeting to help address them collectively. You can start with people you know and go from there.
4. About 3 days after sending the initial email, send a followup email thanking those who have filled out the doodle and asking anyone else interested to do so ASAP. Let them know when they need to fill it out.
5. Select the date with the maximum number of availability members and send a third email to members alerting them to the selected meeting time. Alert your department GSA to this meeting and ask them to forward it to their list as well.
6. TRAC can provide a Zoom link for meetings. The Mobilization Officer can be invited to attend or not, it is up to you.

# Samples

## Sample email

*Hey everyone,*

*Thanks for your responses so far! If you haven't already done so, please respond to the doodle by 5pm on Friday with your availability. Here is the link again. This meeting is really important for us and I would appreciate it if you can attend. Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns!*

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*Hello everyone,*

*I'm (your name), a (TA/RA) in the (XYZ) department here at Concordia. I'm writing to give notice of a TRAC union meeting exclusively for current and recent (XYZ) department TA's and RA's, scheduled for (date and time) over Zoom. The link will be sent later.*

*We're striking up a (XYZ) department union committee and electing delegates because through our labour we have the most power to change the university and protect our rights at work. This meeting is our chance to come together and see what we can do to stand up for each other and improve the academy. I encourage you to come regardless of whether you are having issues at work yourself – your workmates who are struggling will appreciate your presence, and we have so much more power to change the university and beyond if we all come together.*

*Reply to RSVP to the meeting, and let me know if you have another preferred email.*

*We've written a proposed agenda below, but if anyone else has something they'd like to raise please email me prior or raise it at the meeting.*

## Sample agenda

1. *Territorial Acknowledgement*
2. *Appoint facilitator, minute-taker*
3. *Check-in about current workloads, TA and RA contracts, and other work issues.*
4. *Overview of upcoming TRAC events*
  1. *Organizer Training, General Assembly etc.*
5. *Delegates election*
  1. *Elect delegates*
  2. *Give instructions to delegates for the next delegate council meeting.*
6. *Sending people to TRAC Committees*
  1. *Equity*
7. *Campaign issues*
  1. *Mental health campaign*
  2. *Other campaigns and issues*
8. *Any other business*
9. *Set time for next meeting*

**Good luck.**