

**MINUTES OF THE JOINT OPEN SESSION
OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS
AND OF THE CORPORATION**

Thursday, December 14, 2023, at 4 p.m.
Room GM 410 (Board of Governors meeting room)
SGW Campus

PRESENT

Governors:

Helen Antoniou (C)	Pat Di Lillo (zoom)	Philippe Pourreaux
Francis Baillet	Kim Fuller	Duraichelvan Raju
Ken Brooks	Caroline Jamet	Rahul Ravi
Graham Carr (P and Vice-C)	Claude Joli-Coeur (V.C)	Robert Soroka
Jarett Carty	Shoshana Kalfon	Ted Stathopoulos
Daniel Cross	Catherine Loubier (zoom)	Cathy Wong (zoom)
Selvadurai Dayanandan (V.C)	Harley Martin	Roula Zaarour (zoom)

Also attending:

Philippe Beauregard (zoom)	Denis Cossette	Pascal Lebel
Dominique Bérubé	Michael Di Grappa	Aisha Topsakal
William Cheaib	Amy Fish	Lisa White
Paul Chesser	Frederica Jacobs	Anne Whitelaw

Alternate Governor: Nassim Boutalbi (zoom)

Non-voting observers: Jonathan Wener (zoom), Gina Cody (zoom)

ABSENT

Governors:

Gary N. Chateram	Rana Ghorayeb
Adriana Embiricos	Paul John Murdoch

LEGEND:

C: Chair

P and Vice-C: President and Vice Chancellor

V.C: Vice Chair

1. Call to order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m.

1.1 Approval of the Agenda

Upon motion duly moved and seconded, it was unanimously RESOLVED:

R-2023-10-1 *That the Agenda be approved, including the items on the Consent Agenda.*

CONSENT

2. Approval of October 26, 2023 Minutes

R-2023-10-2 *That the Minutes of the meeting of October 26, 2023, be approved.*

3. Request for the use of Concordia's Name (Document BG-2023-10-D1)

R-2023-10-3 *That, subject to the conditions set out in the Policy on the Use of Concordia University's Name, Logo and Related Insignia, and the Governance of its Visual Character and Digital Presence (SG-4) and its related Procedures, the Board of Governors approve the following request to use the Concordia name:*

- *Oxfam-Québec Concordia Student Group*

4. Collection of fee levies (Document BG-2023-10-D2)

R-2023-10-4 *SAE Fee Levy - That the Board of Governors authorize Concordia University to collect an SAE Fee Levy of \$0.50 per credit, annually adjusted to the Consumer Price Index of Canada, to be collected from all undergraduate students in the Gina Cody School of Engineering and Computer Science and to be implemented with registration for the Winter 2024 (2234) term in accordance with the University's tuition refund and withdrawal policy.*

Space Concordia Levy - That the Board of Governors authorize Concordia University to collect a Space Concordia Fee Levy of \$ 0.50 per credit, annually adjusted to the Consumer Price Index of Canada, to be collected from all undergraduate students in the Gina Cody School of Engineering and Computer Science and to be implemented with registration for the Winter 2024 (2234) term in accordance with the University's tuition refund and withdrawal policy.

5. Honorary Degree Committee recommendation: Revisions to the Policy on the Awarding of Honorary Degrees (BD-15) (Document BG-2023-10-D3)

R-2023-10-5 *That, following input from the Governance and Ethics Committee and recommendation from the Honorary Degree Committee, the Board of Governors approve the proposed changes to the Policy on Awarding Honorary Degrees (BD-15).*

6. Human Resources Committee recommendation: Revisions to the Policy On Employment And Remuneration Of Senior Administrators, Deputy Provosts, Vice-Provosts And Associate Vice-Presidents (BD-8) (Document BG-2023-10-D4)

R-2023-10-6 That, on recommendation of the Human Resources Committee, the Board of Governors approve the revisions to the Policy on Employment and Remuneration of Senior Administrators, Deputy Provosts, Vice-Provosts and Associate Vice-Presidents (BD-8).

7. Ratification of nominations to Board Standing Committees
(Document BG-2023-10-D5/CORP-2023-6-D1)

R-2023-10-7 That, Faith Howard be nominated to the Employee Benefits Committee for a two-year term starting December 14, 2023.

That, Bonnie Harnden be nominated to the Honorary Degree Committee, for a term starting December 14, 2023, till the time they remain a member of Senate.

8. Environmental Legislation & Health & Safety (EH&S) Compliance Report
(Document BG-2023-10-D6)

This report was provided for information purposes only.

REGULAR

9. Business arising from the Minutes not included on the Agenda

There was no other business to bring before the meeting that was not included on the Agenda.

10. President's report (Document BG-2023-10-D7)

As complementary information to his written report, G. Carr's remarks are summarized as follows:

- G. Carr began by speaking to the government's recent update on changes to the funding formula for out-of-province and international students. Earlier today, for the first time since the new tuition policy was announced on October 13, the University received an official written document from the government of Quebec outlining the impact that these changes will have on the University. This document was released to the media at the same time. This update was delivered in the same way that this dossier has been handled by the government since the initial announcement, without respect or consultation.
- Given the many contributions of the three anglophone universities and the place these institutions hold in Quebec and Montreal, Dr. Carr noted that the government's lack of a consultative process to come to this decision is even more troubling. He reminded the Governors that the Presidents of the three anglophone universities had directly met with the Premier and proposed other solutions in good faith, which included an

unprecedented and groundbreaking commitment to francization. In light of the latest announcement, today is a sad day for the city, the province, and the university community.

- He noted that, since the original October announcement, the University had already witnessed a 20% drop in applications from the Rest of Canada and a 30% drop in international applications for the 2024-25 academic year.
- At a minimum, the anglophone institutions had asked for a delayed implementation to the new tuition fees, given that recruitment is already well-underway. However, the government did not accept this request. While the \$12,000 tuition fees for out-of-province students are less than the \$17,000 originally proposed, this amount is still close to twice the tuition fee rates for similar programs in the rest of Canada.
- Further, the Presidents of the anglophone institutions had proposed to the Premier that they would aim to achieve 40% francisation for non-francophone students over the first four years. The goal was to design programs to be custom fit to the linguistic needs of students in each program. This was the first time that any anglophone institutions led with the approach that the French language needs to be protected and that they would be allies in the francisation of Quebec society. The government has since returned with the requirement of 80% francisation – a target that is simply unrealistic, setting the anglophone institutions up for failure. When one considers the teaching and financial resources needed to achieve these targets, particularly given the detrimental impact of the revised funding formula on revenue streams, the target of 80% francisation is not understandable.
- While all this is quite discouraging, G. Carr noted the outstanding support that the University had received from all sections of the community, expressed both publicly and privately. He expressed gratitude for those in the University community who mobilized, and also to Montreal Mayor Valerie Plante, the Chamber of Commerce, the Conseil des patronats, countless francophone media chroniclers, and other members of the wider community who have advocated against this proposal.
- The higher education sector in Quebec remains underfunded. The revised funding formula doesn't aim to add any new investment in the sector and is only looking to reshuffle monies from the anglophone universities to the francophone universities.
- G. Carr affirmed that the University will continue to convey to all prospective students that Concordia's programs are still world class, and the city of Montreal is still an international education city. The University will be communicating that they will support these prospective students in achieving their dream of attending Concordia.
- For international students, \$17,000 will be clawed back by the government. The government will provide a compensatory grant for each international student, however, there will be a shortfall of about \$5,500 per international student. G. Carr also confirmed that the University will not increase tuition fees for 2024-25, honouring

the fees that have been advertised to prospective students this year and that were approved by the Board in May of this year.

- The next topic that Dr. Carr spoke about was the impact of the situation in the Middle East on campus life. Since the last meeting of the Board in October, there had been a physical altercation in the Hall building where the SPVM were called to make an arrest and two individuals were subsequently banned from campus. Since then, the University team has been working day and night to ensure safety for all without infringing on freedom of expression and academic freedom. It is a delicate balance, as there are diverse views on what constitutes freedom of expression, hateful expression, and so on. Also, Concordia's central, accessible physical location makes protecting campus spaces complicated and there have been instances of individuals from outside of the University community entering campus and behaving in ways that violate Concordia's code of conduct where Campus Security has had to intervene. In the era of social media, it is easy for other individuals to capture these moments in photographs or videos and circulate with a view to creating the impression that the University is not taking appropriate action.
- Nevertheless, G. Carr is deeply concerned about the current environment on campus. Some members of the University community have expressed fear for physical safety, others have expressed fear of fully expressing their identity on campus. It is essential for all community members to be ambassadors of compassion. Over the last few weeks, G. Carr has conveyed the message that all must commit to conducting themselves with empathy and respect when he has addressed Senate, met with academic leadership and the leaders of Unions and Student groups, and, most recently, at a town hall with about 200 managers and directors in attendance.
- Dr. Carr also underlined that there are external factors and forces at play which are outside of the University's control and some of which are invested in making things difficult for the University. He emphasized that Concordia is a big place and that everyday, great things happen at Concordia. It is especially important to remind ourselves of this and to spread the word about the great things happening here.
- He then turned his attention to some amazingly positive things that have been happening at the University. On November 28th, Concordia celebrated 1,200 of the newest graduates as they crossed the stage at convocation. Joining them at Place des Arts were three honorary doctorate recipients: Edward Rosenthal, BA 74, for his contributions to innovation in the agricultural industry; Farah Alibay, an aerospace engineer who promotes inclusion in STEM fields; and Anita Marangoly George, a business executive and leader of a sustainability fund for climate solutions in India.
- On the topic of sustainability, Concordia placed within the global top 100 universities in the 2024 QS Sustainability Rankings, in recognition of the University's actions to tackle environmental, social and governance issues. Together with McGill and Université de Montréal, Concordia is one of only three Quebec universities to be in the top 100 ranking.

- Creative writing graduate Sarah Bernstein, BA 09, won the Scotiabank Giller Prize for her novel *Study for Obedience*. The prize is the biggest in Canadian literature, valued at \$100,000.
- Karim Zhagib, Professor of Chemical and Materials Engineering and the CEO of Voltage, was named a personality of the year by *l'Actualité* magazine for his position as a global leader in battery development, electrification and the green transition.
- Quebec's 2024 Rhodes Scholar-elect is recent Department of Journalism graduate Bogdan Lytvynenko. This is the second Rhodes Scholar for Concordia in three years – a testament to the calibre of our student body. At a recent breakfast with Dr. Carr, Lytvynenko explained that the reason he chose Concordia was because of his experience at Open House, so great credit to faculty and staff who contribute to these key events.
- Concordia aerospace engineering student Marion Thénault won aerials gold at the women's World Cup in Ruka, Finland, on December 3rd. Thénault, from Sherbrooke, Quebec, previously won Bronze at the Olympic games in Beijing in the inaugural Olympic mixed team aerials event.
- A Concordia student run literary journal, *Headlight Anthology*, won the *FORCES Avenir* award in the Arts, Literature and Culture category. The journal's three editors are Master's students in the Creative Writing program.
- Last week, Concordia celebrated 28 varsity athletes as Academic All-Canadians and Academic All-Stars. Emmy Fecteau, captain of the women's ice hockey team, was awarded the Joe and Ben Weider Athletic Leadership Award for academic success, exemplary achievements in sport and community contributions. Fecteau is a remarkable person; a francophone from La Beauce who is specializing in Teaching English as a Second Language. Together with their teammates and the other students noted in this report, they are wonderful ambassadors for what Concordia contributes to Quebec society.

The Chair thanked Dr. Carr for his leadership. Other members also echoed their support of the work that was being done by the University and its leadership team.

Some members had specific questions about the feeling within certain groups that the University was not responding to their concerns. Dr. Carr responded that the University remains committed to ensuring everyone's safety and that academic freedom remains. He also underlined Concordia's commitment to remain focussed on its core mission of teaching and research.

To a question about providing scholarships to out-of-province students to offset the increase in tuition fees, Dr. Carr confirmed that scholarships are available and that all options are currently being explored to ensure that the impact on enrollment is limited.

11. Annual report from the Office of Rights and Responsibilities (Document BG-2023-10-D8)

A. Topsakal presented the report and began by providing an overview of the work of the Office of Rights and Responsibilities during the reporting period from May 1, 2022 to April 30, 2023. The Office received 372 new cases, which was slightly more than the previous year. 32 files were carried over from the previous year. Of the total files, 69% required consultation, 11% were referred to Student Tribunals, and 10% were Student of Concern files. Fewer members have filed formal complaints; however, the complexities of files continue. More and more requests have been coming into the Office for support for students who are still reeling from the isolation that was caused by the pandemic. The Office consistently worked with other offices like the Ombuds Office, the Equity Office and other services to ensure the best coordination of services that were offered to the community.

Harassment was the most cited matter that came to the Office. Throughout the reporting year, the Office's priority was to equip the community with the tools to deal with issues. A. Topsakal acknowledged the support and work at department levels, where de-escalation was always undertaken before a matter was brought to the office.

A. Topsakal then provided a few examples of the files that had come to the Office. One dossier related to a student who was looking to act in a manner that could have been detrimental to them. Security services were alerted and they were able to locate the student and bring them to medical services and the Office helped pair them with a social worker. In another matter, a staff member complained of psychological harassment by a manager. The manager received a disciplinary letter and was mandated to complete training. On a final matter, a student was being followed by an ex-boyfriend. The Office was able to inform security, ban the ex-boyfriend from campus, and provide accompaniment to the student in following up with the SPVM.

A. Topsakal noted that while the previous months had overall been difficult for the community, the number of complaints received was not at the high level that would be anticipated. The Office continues to work with all services and is constantly trying to make their presence known so that community members know where to turn to when they need services.

12. Update from the Ombuds Office

As an update to the annual report presented to the Board earlier in the year, A. Fish began by speaking about the role of the Ombudsperson. A. Fish then provided an update following the incidents in early November prompted by the conflict in the Middle East. The Ombuds Office had received about 41 requests, 2 of which came from students, some from parents and 28 from individuals unknown to Concordia, many of whom were from outside of Montreal. The Ombuds Office responded to all and offered meetings to the students and parents, but no meeting offers were accepted.

The Ombuds Office remains in consistent contact with the Dean of Students, the Equity Office and the Office of Rights and Responsibilities and is constantly trying to find ways to offer additional tools to the community, so that they can access the office's services.

13. Other business

There was no other business to bring before the meeting.

14. Adjournment

The Chair declared the meeting adjourned at 5:25 p.m.

K. Singh
Karan Singh
Secretary of the Board of Governors