



BG-2024-1

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

Thursday, February 8, 2024, at 3 p.m.  
Room GM 410 (Board of Governors meeting room)  
SGW Campus

**PRESENT**

**Governors:**

Helen Antoniou (C)	Selvadurai Dayanandan	Catherine Loubier
Francis Baillet	(V.C) (zoom)	Harley Martin
Ken Brooks	Adriana Embiricos	Philippe Pourreaux
Graham Carr (P and Vice-C)	Kim Fuller (zoom)	Rahul Ravi (zoom)
Jarett Carty	Caroline Jamet	Robert Soroka
Gary N. Chateram (zoom)	Claude Joli-Coeur (V.C)	Ted Stathopoulos
Daniel Cross	Shoshana Kalfon	Roula Zaarour

**Also attending:**

Philippe Beauregard	Denis Cossette	Frederica Jacobs
Dominique Bérubé	Michael Di Grappa	Pascal Lebel
William Cheaib	Nadia Hardy	Anne Whitelaw
Paul Chesser		

**Non-voting observers:** Gina Cody (zoom)

**ABSENT**

**Governors:**

Nassim Boutalbi (Alternate)	Rana Ghorayeb	Cathy Wong
Pat Di Lillo	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 3:04 p.m.

1.1 Approval of the Agenda

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

R-2024-1-1 *That the Agenda be approved, including the items on the Consent Agenda.*

**CONSENT**

**2. Approval of December 14, 2023 Minutes**

R-2024-1-2 *That the Minutes of the meeting of December 14, 2023, be approved.*

**3. Ratification of nominations to Board Standing Committees**

(Document BG-2024-1-D1/CORP-2024-1-D1)

R-2024-1-3 *That, June Riley, be reappointed as the part-time employee group representative to the Employee Benefits Committee and the Pension Committee for a two-year term from January 1, 2024 to December 31, 2025.*

*That, Patrice Blais, be reappointed as a CUPFA representative to the Part-Time Employee Benefits Committee for a two-year term from January 1, 2024 to December 31, 2025.*

**4. Membership of the advisory search committee for Vice-President, Research Innovation, and Impact and the evaluation committee for the Dean, Faculty of Fine Arts**

(Document BG-2024-1-D2)

R-2024-1-4 *That, following nomination by the Executive Committee of the external members of the Board of Governors to the following committees, such nomination be ratified by the Board of Governors:*

- *Claude Joli-Coeur - Advisory Search Committee for the Vice-President, Research Innovation, and Impact*
- *Caroline Jamet - Evaluation Committee for the renewal of the Dean, Faculty of Fine Arts*

**REGULAR**

**5. 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.

## 6. President's report (Document BG-2024-1-D3)

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

- Dr. Carr began his remarks by noting that the Québec government issued the *Règles budgétaires* ("RBs") in the week of January 22<sup>nd</sup>, essentially confirming December's announcements on tuition increases for Rest of Canada students and tuition claw back for international students. There was another detail that emerged in the RBs, that students from the Rest of Canada studying at francophone universities would continue to pay the former tuition rate of \$9,000 rather than the increased rate of \$12,000 that those attending anglophone universities will pay.
- Prior to the holiday break, the University had announced the creation of the Canada Scholars Award, an attempt to bridge the gap between previous tuition rates and the newly increased rates. This award is a merit-based scholarship of \$1,000-\$4,000 automatic for all new students from the Rest of Canada with B- average or higher, and it will be renewable throughout recipients' program of study. Unfortunately, the recruitment process has been additionally complicated by the government's announcement that, beginning in 2025, the anglophone universities will need to work to bring 80% of non-Québec students to an intermediate level of French proficiency. This number is twice what had been proposed by the anglophone universities, as this is an unrealistic number for various reasons. The announcement that came in late 2023 created another layer of confusion for prospective students, and questions came up about whether they can graduate without French proficiency, and whether additional credits or semesters of coursework would be required to complete their degrees. Due to the lack of clarity from the government around these issues, the University has been unable to respond definitively to these questions beyond affirming that students registering in 2024 will not be covered by the francisation requirement. The government created a working group to define the mandate and the consequences of this new requirement, but the details are still to be clarified.
- In consequence, there has been a precipitous decline in applications, with a current decline of 27% in Rest of Canada applications and 10% decline in international undergraduate student applications. This is very worrying in terms of revenue, but also for the message it sends about Québec and Montréal's image as a place to learn and live. The mairesse of Montréal had publicly spoken against the policy, calling it an attack on Montréal, which resulted in some backlash from CAQ officials in response to her comments.
- Last week, a report was made public by the *Comité consultative sur l'accessibilité financières aux études*, a body that advised the *Ministère de l'Enseignement supérieur* on matters related to higher education. The report was highly critical of the government for the increases to tuition for Rest of Canada students, pointing out that there was no financial analysis or data to accompany the decision and that it was in stark contradiction to Québec's stated commitment to accessible higher education. Dr. Carr also noted that the Minister of Higher Education had not released the report, it had

been leaked, and the Minister's response was to dismiss its findings because it had been submitted 4 days after the original deadline for submitting the report, which coincided with publication of the RB's. This story was covered by *The Globe and Mail*, *La Presse*, and *Radio Canada*. Yesterday, Dr. Carr did several interviews with *Radio Canada* over the course of the day, and he did an additional interview with *CBC Radio* earlier this morning. The University is continuing to work overtime to convert as many applications as possible to confirmations by the March 1<sup>st</sup> deadline for applications.

- Dr. Carr then spoke of the situation on campus owing to the conflict in the Middle East. The University team is continuing to monitor the situation closely with the intent of de-escalating tensions. He spoke about a piece on *RDI* a few weeks ago where it was reported that various faculty members were feeling silenced on university campuses in Montréal. This is troubling for the University, as it is important that all members of the community feel safe and free to express themselves respectfully, but also because the University wants faculty to share their expertise and improve our understanding of complex topics.
- Two weeks ago, there was a lot of social media attention focused on the University when it was mistakenly claimed that a table booking in the Hall Mezzanine by Jewish students had been cancelled by the University because of fears for the safety of participants. The facts were quite different - the reality was that the Concordia Students' Union had mistakenly booked table space for a for a pro-Palestinian student group and the Jewish student group at the same time. Given the altercation that had occurred on November 8<sup>th</sup>, the University wanted to avoid any repeat of what had happened. The University thus approached the Jewish group about postponing their event, since the pro-Palestinian group had booked the space first. There was initial agreement by the group to postpone, but, a few hours later, they decided to continue with the event as planned. The events took place with both groups on the Hall Mezzanine at the same time. Both groups were peaceful and respectful, and Campus Safety provided support. However, it was wrongly reported on social media that the event had been cancelled despite the reality that, since the November 8<sup>th</sup> altercation, both Palestinian and Jewish student groups have been using the Hall Mezzanine space peacefully.
- Dr. Carr then spoke about a rather disturbing incident that occurred during last week's student protests against the tuition increases and the Middle East conflict. During the protests, students from four universities gathered in downtown Montréal and, at one point, a banner was displayed outside of the McGill campus with images of McGill's Principal Dr. Deep Saini and Concordia's Chancellor J. Wener associating both with genocide. This is reprehensible, and on behalf of Concordia, Dr. Carr stated that this crossed a line, particularly since J. Wener is not part of the administration and serves as Chancellor in a volunteer capacity. J. Wener has been a tireless champion of Concordia and has contributed greatly as a volunteer - it is unacceptable to attack him in this way. It is impossible not to conclude that J. Wener was targeted because he is Jewish, which only underscores the need to continue to promote and support civility in our community. Dr. Carr concluded by reflecting that we should all be grateful for

J. Wener's many contributions to Concordia, which date back to his own days as a student leader, and that this kind of smear reflects far more about those who were behind the banner than it does about our Chancellor.

- Dr. Carr then shared some positive news, beginning by reporting that five members of the Concordia community were named to the Order of Canada: Dr. Osama Moselhi, Department of Building, Civil and Environmental Engineering, has made significant contributions to the engineering of tall buildings, bridges, nuclear power plants, harbor and offshore facilities; supervised and co-supervised over 100 masters and Ph.D. graduates; and authored and co-authored over 400 scientific publications in the world of academia; Lino Saputo, who is a Concordia graduate, corporate leader and campaign co-chair, Louis Francescutti, who is a Concordia alumni, physician and currently a professor at the University of Calgary; Kim Thúy, who is an honorary doctorate recipient and a former member of the Board of Governors; Grand Chief Wilton Littlechild, who is an honorary doctorate recipient and also co-chaired the Truth and Reconciliation Commission on Canada's residential schools with Loyola Medal winner, Justice Murray Sinclair.
- Dr. Carr reported that, as part of his professional service, he chairs the board of U Sports, which is the national body that oversees university varsity athletics in Canada. Each year U Sports and the Governor General honor the top 8 academic all-Canadians in the country, which include 4 women and 4 men, who are both leaders in their sport and excel academically. One of the honorees is Emmy Fecteau, who is the captain of Concordia's women's ice hockey team. Emmy has an incredible story as she was born in Québec, and, while her parents wanted her to play ringette, she always wanted to play hockey like her friends. Emmy is studying Teaching English as a Second Language at Concordia.
- Lastly, Dr. Carr also reported on a major gift from Power Corporation of \$4M in support of Volt-Age. This is to help the development of innovative green technology and living labs associated with projects developed across Canada under the umbrella of the Canadian First Research Excellence Fund grant. Earlier this week, more than \$7.2M was allocated by Volt-Age to support first-phase research on 36 projects led by Concordia and its partner institutions, Dalhousie University, Toronto Metropolitan University, University of Calgary, ranging from highly technical engineering and system development to governance, climate monitoring. Dr. Carr thanked D. Bérubé and Karim Zaghbi for their leadership on this initiative.

## 7. Other business

The Chair congratulated Dr. Carr for completing 40 years at Concordia. She spoke to Dr. Carr's stellar experience as an academic and as an administrator. She noted his accomplishments and continued leadership of the University.

The Board gave him a round of applause.

There was no other business to bring before the meeting. Before Open Session concluded, a Board member noted that there was a detail in the written President's report that begs mention: Concordia was ranked 5th best employer in Canada on *Forbes Magazine's* list of Canada's Best Employers 2024.

## **8. Adjournment**

The Chair declared the meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

*K. Singh*  
Karan Singh  
Secretary of the Board of Governors