

**MINUTES OF THE OPEN SESSION
OF THE MEETING OF SENATE**

Friday, November 12, 2021,
immediately following the Closed Session,
via Zoom video conferencing

PRESENT

Voting Members: Graham Carr (Chair), Shimon Amir, Leslie Barker, Guylaine Beaudry, Elizabeth Bloodgood, Catherine Bolton, Lovina Angela Brown, Boutaina Chafi, Queenie Hui Jing Chen, Anne-Marie Croteau, Alexandra Dawson, Selvadurai Dayanandan, Alex De Visscher, Mourad Debbabi, Effrosyni Diamantoudi, Riya Dutta, Linda Dyer, Mary Esteve, Mehdi Farashahi, Ariela Freedman, Annie Gérin, Marina Ghali, Nicolka Gorel, Abdelwahab Hamou-Lhadj, Hannah Jamet-Lange, Moshe Lander, Eduardo Malorni, Peter Morden, Catherine Mulligan, Satinder Pal Singh, Gilles Peslherbe, Duraichelvan Raju, Jasmine Ramcharitar-Brown, Lourdu Reddy Allam, Rosemary Reilly, Pascale Sicotte, Reza Soleymani, Robert Soroka, Kelly Thompson, Craig Townsend, Guylaine Vaillancourt, Deeva Wazir, Anne Whitelaw, Shaina Willison, Paula Wood-Adams, Radu Grigore Zmeureanu

Non-voting members: Philippe Beauregard, Paul Chesser, Ilze Kraulis (in replacement of Stéphanie de Celles, Nadia Hardy, Tom Hughes, Candace Jacobs, Frederica Jacobs, Émilie Martel

Also attending: Amy Fish (for items 7 and 8 only), Sandra Gabriele, Karan Singh, Melodie Sullivan, Aisha Topsakal (for items 7 and 8 only)

ABSENT

Voting members: Mathew Barker, Joanna Berzowska, Demetre Christopoulos, Sally Cooke, Larry Deck, Prady Cassandra Ngouma Wa, Jean-Philippe Warren

Non-voting members: Denis Cossette, Michael Di Grappa, Isabel Dunnigan

1. Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 2.45 p.m.

1.1 Approval of the Agenda

Some Senators opposed the approval of the agenda, and E. Malorni, H. Jamet-Lange, S. Willison and Q. Chen requested that their opposition be recorded in the Minutes.

R-2021-7-7 Upon motion duly moved and seconded, it was resolved by a majority that the Agenda of the Open Session be approved.

1.2 Adoption of October 8, 2021 Minutes

Senate did not vote on the adoption of the October 8, 2021 Minutes.

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

There was no business arising from the Minutes not included on the Agenda.

3. President's remarks

The President's remarks are summarized as follows:

- President Carr began by giving an update on the COVID situation: there had been 51 cases in 10 weeks since the beginning of the semester, none of which were cases of transmission on campus. He mentioned that many people appreciate the dashboard that had been set up by the university, which has weekly campus updates, but also compares with trends elsewhere in Montréal.
- President Carr informed Senators that *Santé publique* had shared vaccination rates of university communities. Because *Santé publique* is satisfied that vaccination rates had attained an excellent threshold they stopped tracking the vaccination rates in the university sector in late October. Dr. Carr thanked everyone for their efforts in ensuring a safe return to campus. He noted that this will enable the university to open campuses to more extra-curricular activities and assist with the planning of more in-person academic activities in the Winter semester.
- With the world's focus on the COP-26 Summit in Glasgow over the past days, Dr. Carr drew the Senate's attention to the release of the Year-One Progress Report on Concordia's Sustainable Development Action Plan, under M. Di Grappa's leadership, and acknowledged the outstanding efforts by people across the Concordia community. He informed Senate of the measurable actions that the university had taken in the past year and the progress made in five key areas: Sustainable Food Systems; Zero Waste; Climate Action Plan; Sustainability in Research; Sustainability in Curriculum. Dr. Carr expressed pride and felt encouraged by the announcement made earlier about the university accelerating its efforts to reduce on-site greenhouse-gas emissions, with a target of 55% reduction by 2030 against baseline of 2014-15 in contrast to original target of 50% by 2050. He also noted that in line with revised recommendations of climate experts, including Concordia's Damon Matthews (Department of Geography, Planning and Environment and Concordia University

Research Chair in Climate Science and Sustainability), Concordia plans to reach carbon neutrality across all operations by 2040.

- Dr. Carr recognized the contribution of Concordia researchers at COP-26: Concordia's delegation at the 12-day event included: Damon Matthews who attended COP-26 virtually, Matthias Fritsch (Department of Philosophy), Ursula Eicker (Canada Excellence Research Chair in Smart, Sustainable and Resilient Communities and Cities) and Carmela Cucuzzella (Concordia University Research Chair in Integrated Design and Sustainability for the Built Environment).
- Dr. Carr shared with Senate that Concordia was one of the institutions in Montréal that is taking a leadership position in the Montréal Climate Partnership which launched its Great Expectations campaign earlier this week.
- Dr. Carr reported that, on November 11, he had the privilege to be one of two university presidents, along with several political figures in Québec, to participate in a town hall with young environmentalists organized by Oxfam to hear their priorities and share Concordia's efforts.
- Dr. Carr shared that Hawa Keita, the Executive Director of CEED Concordia, had been named one of Canada's Top 30 under 30 Sustainability leaders by Corporate Knights. Hawa, who was born in Senegal and raised in France, had just begun her term as Executive Director when those dual health crises hit but managed not only to adapt and pivot to save the Ugandan projects but also to expand CEED to Ghana, Senegal and Colombia.
- Dr. Carr offered heartiest congratulations to the Women's rugby team who won the RESQ consolation final, to the Men's Rugby team who won the Québec title last Saturday, and kudos to the football team and men's soccer, both of whom made it to semi-finals.
- With the conclusion of the municipal elections last weekend, Dr. Carr congratulated the 50 or so Concordia graduates for taking up municipal offices as mayors (7) and councillors. He also expressed confidence and looked forward to working with the new elected officials, given Concordia's role as an anchor institution in the city.
- Dr. Carr informed Senate that Concordia hosted a virtual Open House for graduate studies and one for undergraduate studies; and that both featured presentations and the opportunity to discuss academics and life at Concordia and to speak with current and future students. For the Graduate Open House, the unique logins were 682 from 67 countries, and for the undergraduate, 1,551 from 107 countries.
- Dr. Carr advised Senate that the preliminary recommendations of the Task Force on Anti-Black Racism were expected next week, which is also when the Scarborough Charter on Anti-Black Racism and Black Inclusion in Higher Education, to which Concordia is a signatory, was going to be launched. He added that on November 17, Concordia will be launching the Indigenous Futures Research Centre in a virtual event.

Dr. Carr shared some notable accomplishments with Senate:

- John Molson executive-in-residence Louise Champoux-Paillé was awarded the Medal of the National Assembly of Québec, in recognition of her 50-year career and more than 40 years dedicated to promoting women in leadership.
 - Prosper Dovonon was elected a Fellow of the Econometric Society in recognition of their research achievements. The international organization is dedicated to the advancement of economic theory in its relation to statistics and mathematics. P. Dovonon is the first in Concordia's Department of Economics to receive this honour.
 - The Royal Society of Canada will formally be inducting Kathleen Vaughan (Art Education) and Thanh Dang-Vu (Health, Kinesiology and Applied Physiology) into its College of New Scholars, Artists and Scientists; and Jason Lewis (Design and Computational Arts) as Fellow of Royal Society.
 - A group from Concordia's SynBioApps program, participating in iGEM, earned \$30,000 and were named semi-finalists in the Deep Space Food Challenge, held by NASA and the Canadian Space Agency. Concordia's project was the AstroYeast Microfarm, which was centered around a yeast strain that is specially adapted to the space environment.
 - Tristan Gosselin-Hane and Alexandre Lavoie, undergraduate students in Concordia's Department of Computer Science and Software Engineering and cybersecurity enthusiasts, topped the leaderboard at the CyberSCI national Capture-The-Flag cybersecurity competition.
 - Shaan Baig, a student in Kinesiology and Clinical Exercise Physiology, won the Forces AVENIR – Personality Avenir 2021 honour at the undergraduate level.
- In some philanthropic news, Dr. Carr appraised Senate of the \$1M gift from RBC Foundation to support Beat the Odds program, which provides paid internships to talented students who are juggling many life responsibilities and challenges, and to support internships at not-for-profit organizations
 - Dr. Carr informed Senate that the Centraide campaign closing event is scheduled for November 16, where the fundraising total from this year's campaign would be announced. The campaign ran from October 12 with the goal for this year to raise \$200,000.
 - Dr. Carr also noted that November 30 is Giving Tuesday, an opportunity to support Student Emergency and Food Funds or other areas of everyone's choice.

4. Academic Update (Document US-2021-7-D3)

Dr. Anne Whitelaw had no additional information to the written report.

CONSENT

5. Committee appointments (Document US-2021-7-D4)

R-2021-7-8 That the committee appointments be approved.

REGULAR

6. Academic Programs Committee - Report and recommendations (Document US-2021-7-D5)

Some Senators requested that item 6 be removed from the Consent Agenda.

R-2021-7-9 Upon motion duly moved and seconded, it was resolved by a majority that item 6 be removed from the Consent Agenda for separate discussion.

Some Senators asked questions about Course Elective 435, which is offered in French. Dr. Whitelaw confirmed that all students in Québec universities were allowed to submit their work in English and French. Dr. Whitelaw further explained that French language institutions offer courses in other languages like English and Spanish. Dr. Carr also clarified that Bill 96 recognized McGill, Concordia and Bishop as English language institutions in Québec, and explained that Concordia already offers inter-institutional programs in collaboration with other francophone universities where the language of instruction is often French.

Dr. Gabriele informed Senate that the Course Elective 435 was not a new course, is not taught at Concordia and has always been offered in French. The curriculum change being made adds a notation to the calendar description to inform students that the course is offered in French. Dr. Gabriele clarified that it remains an elective course.

Dr. Debbabi, further noted that this course was part of a multi-university program on power systems, and the idea was that Concordia students may also have the opportunity to take this course. Dr. Soleymani elaborated that this course was offered in collaboration with Polytechnique and McGill University as well.

R-2021-7-10 Upon motion duly moved and seconded, it was unanimously resolved that the Academic Programs Committee - Report and recommendations (Document US-2021-7-D5) be approved, with the correction to the undergraduate curriculum revision proposal for the Minor in History program of the HIST-28 dossier, where the second reference to the 200-level courses be modified to 300-level courses ("12 Credits of History courses at the 300 level").

7. Annual Report from the Ombuds Office (US-2021-7-D6)

Ombudsperson, A. Fish, presented the highlights of the annual report from the Ombuds Office, which included some statistics. A. Fish conveyed to the Senators that with the innumerable complexities facing the students, faculty members and staff in 2020-21, two cases yielded recommendations, which were summarized to the Senators. A. Fish also noted that it was the first time that the Ombuds Office provided recommendations under her leadership.

8. Annual Report from the Office of Rights and Responsibilities (US-2021-7-D7)

Director and Senior Advisor of the Office of Rights and Responsibilities (ORR), A. Topsakal summarized the ORR's mandate and presented the highlights of the annual report, including some key statistics. To illustrate the types of situations that the ORR deals with on a regular basis, A. Topsakal shared some narratives.

A Senator requested clarification on the backlog of incidents dealt with by the Office of the Student Tribunals (OST), and A. Topsakal explained that a very small percentage of the Code of Rights and Responsibilities incidents are referred to the OST. Me Sullivan explained that the cases referred to student tribunals were cases under the Academic Code, and that the backlog was being worked on, but that is it too early to speak of the impact the increased number of Tribunal Chairs and members in the Student Tribunal Pools would have on the backlog.

Further to a question on whether an incident reported to the ORR would be kept on file, even if the complainant withdrew from the process mid-way, Me Sullivan explained that when a complainant chose to withdraw from the process or did not take the complaint all the way through the process, then the complaint was deemed to have been withdrawn.

9. Revisions to the Policy on the Establishment of Tribunal Hearing Pools (BD-6) (US-2021-7-D8)

Me Jacobs introduced this item and explained that since the pandemic, there is backlog of cases that have been accumulated. Me Jacobs informed Senate that following a suggestion from the Concordia Student Union, revisions were made to increase the number of undergraduate and graduate students nominated to the Student Tribunal Pool.

Me Sullivan added that the breakdown of faculty members in the Faculty Tribunal Pool was revised and noted that that in anticipation of the approval of the revisions to the Policy, potential new members of the pools had been trained in advance.

R-2021-7-11 Upon motion duly moved and seconded, it was unanimously resolved that Senate recommend to the Board of Governors the approval of the revisions to the Policy on the Establishment of Tribunal Hearing Pools (BD-6).

10. Question period

J. Ramcharitar-Brown reported on some of the discussions from the Arts and Science Faculty Academic Committee and offered several suggestions. Dr. Whitelaw spoke of the work being done by the Indigenous Directions Leadership Group to develop a series of professional development courses, webinars and training around decolonization. Dr. Whitelaw also noted that, as part of the Taskforce on Anti-Black Racism, one of the recommendations of the Taskforce will be to develop anti-black racism training, and the Taskforce is reflecting on the best way to deliver such training. Dr. Whitelaw conveyed to the Senators that with the Equity Office, the Office for Indigenous Directions and the Black Perspectives Office, the university is well supported in these efforts.

H. Jamet-Lange queried about the membership of the Steering Committee of Future Concordia, especially with regards to the fact that there was no student representation. Dr. Whitelaw explained that the approach of Future Concordia was to engage with various stakeholders, and that the Steering Committee was not meant to be a representative group but to include people who were in leadership positions who could mobilize the work. Dr. Whitelaw also informed that there is undergraduate and graduate representation on the Student Experience working group, and consultations strategies to obtain students input will be put in place. Dr. Whitelaw also clarified that the Future Concordia working groups mandate is to make recommendations, not to take decisions.

Dr. Whitelaw responded to Dr. Esteve' question regarding the university's operative definition of the word decolonization, and spoke to the Indigenous Directions Action Plan as the university's guiding document for the roadmap of what the university needs. Dr. Esteve asked for examples.

E. Malorni asked a question about the inclusion of multinational corporations as food providers on campus. Dr. Carr advised Senate that the Vice-President, Services and Sustainability, M. Di Grappa will report back to Senate on this item.

Referring to an incident that had taken place involving a presentation by a guest lecturer in a First Peoples Studies course on October 28, E. Malorni asked for the university's position on the matter. Dr. Carr responded that the university had acted swiftly and appropriately to address the matter.

J. Ramcharitar-Brown raised an item in relation to university admission and how grades and similar determinants should not be the only benchmark to determine a prospective student's ability to gain admission to Concordia. Dr. Carr spoke to how historically Concordia has been an accessible university, specifically in relation to recruitment. Dr. Diamantoudi explained the paths for alternative access for graduate studies are available and that there are non-standard admissions options. However, Dr. Diamantoudi also underlined the responsibility of the admission committees to reflect on student success in their studies when analysing student admission dossiers. Dr. Whitelaw added that there were many pathways into undergraduate programs and various support options for students like the Beat the Odds program, which is an internship for students who need support during which they can demonstrate their skills

and potential. Dr. Whitelaw provided other examples for student support, such as the Student Success Center and student advising.

Dr. Dayanandan echoed Dr. Diamantoudi's remarks, and mentioned that as a past Graduate Program Director, was able to attest to the non-standard admission process for graduate studies.

11. Other business

There was no other business to bring before the Open Session.

12. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:19 p.m.

Shelina Houssenaly

Shelina Houssenaly
Secretary of Senate