MINUTES OF THE OPEN SESSION
OF THE MEETING OF SENATE

Held on Friday, November 6, 2009, at 2 p.m.
in the Norman D. Hébert, LLD Meeting Room
(Room EV 2.260) on the SGW Campus

PRESENT

Voting members: Mr. G. Beasley; Mr. N. Burke; Prof. M. Charland; Prof. R. Cross; Mr. A. Dabchy; Dr. L. Dandurand; Prof. M. Debbabi; Prof. D. Douglas; Prof. A. Dutkewych; Prof. L. Dyer; Prof. A. English; Prof. M. Fritsch; Prof. J. Garfin; Mr. G. Giannis; Dr. D. Graham; Prof. M. Jamal; Mr. G. Johannson; Prof. G. Leonard; Dean B. Lewis; Mr. Z. Ling; Prof. W. Lynch; Prof. S. Mudur; Prof. B. Nelson; Mr. P.R. Osei; Mr. A. Oster; Prof. M. Paraschivoiu; Prof. M. Peluso; Mr. D. Perera; Ms. E. Perkins; Prof. H. Proppe; Ms. D. Roldan; Dean S. Sharma; Ms. S. Siriwardhana; Associate Dean T. Stathopoulos; Prof. P. Stoett; Prof. P. Thornton; Dean C. Wild

Non-voting members: Ms. K. Assayag; Dr. D. Boisvert *(Speaker)*; Mr. R. Côté *(Acting Vice-President in the absence of Mr. M. Di Grappa)*; Mr. L. English; Me B. Freedman; Ms. L. Healey

ABSENT

Voting members: Mr. E. Chevrier; Ms. S. Dolatshahi; Dean R. Drew; Prof. J. Grant; Ms. K. Gregor; Mr. R. Hafiz; Mr. Z. Khan; Prof. S. McSheffrey; Prof. L. Ostiguy; Prof. M. Pugh; Prof. C. Ross; Prof. F. Shaver; Prof. W. Sims; Ms. S. Turnin; Prof. B. Woodside; Dr. J. Woodsworth;

1.   Call to order

The Speaker called the meeting to order at 2:02 p.m.

2.   Approval of the Agenda

Prof. Lynch, supported by Prof. Debbabi, asked that items 4.1.6 and 4.3 be removed from the Consent Agenda.

R-2009-8-1   *Upon motion duly moved and seconded (Stathopoulos, Graham), it was unanimously resolved that the Agenda of the Open Session meeting be approved, with the removal of items 4.1.6 and 4.3 from the Consent section to the Regular section, and that items 3 to 7 (not including items 4.1.6 and 4.3) be approved, confirmed, or received for information by consent.*

3. Approval of the Minutes of the Open Session meeting of October 16, 2009

R-2009-8-2   *The Minutes of the Open session meeting of October 16, 2009 were approved by consent.*

4. Report and recommendation of the Academic Programs Committee (Document US-2009-8-D1)

4.1 Major undergraduate curriculum changes – Faculty of Arts and Science

4.1.1 Department of Applied Human Science (Document US-2009-8-D2)

R-2009-8-3   *The major undergraduate curriculum changes in the Department of Applied Human Science, set out in Document US-2009-8-D2, were approved by consent, as recommended by the Academic Programs Committee in Document US-2009-8-D1.*

4.1.2 Department of Classics, Modern Languages and Linguistics (Classics) (Document US-2009-8-D3)

R-2009-8-4   *The major undergraduate curriculum changes in the Department of Classics, Modern Languages and Linguistics (Classics), set out in Document US-2009-8-D3, were approved by consent, as recommended by the Academic Programs Committee in Document US-2009-8-D1.*

4.1.3 Department of Classics, Modern Languages and Linguistics (Modern Standard Arabic) (Document US-2009-8-D4)

R-2009-8-5   *The major undergraduate curriculum changes in the Department of Classics, Modern Languages and Linguistics (Modern Standard Arabic), set out in Document US-2009-8-D4, were approved by consent, as recommended by the Academic Programs Committee in Document US-2009-8-D1.*

4.1.4 Department of Education (Document US-2009-8-D5)

R-2009-8-6   *The major undergraduate curriculum changes in the Department of Education, set out in Document US-2009-8-D5, were approved by consent, as recommended by the Academic Programs Committee in Document US-2009-8-D1.*

4.1.5 Département d'Études françaises (Document US-2009-8-D6)

R-2009-8-7   *The major undergraduate curriculum changes in the Département d'Études françaises, set out in Document US-2009-8-D6, were approved by consent, as recommended by the Academic Programs Committee in Document US-2009-8-D1.*

4.1.7 Department of History (Document US-2009-8-D8)

R-2009-8-8   *The major undergraduate curriculum changes in the Department of History, set out in Document US-2009-8-D8, were approved by consent, as recommended by the Academic Programs Committee in Document US-2009-8-D1.*

4.1.8   Department of Philosophy (Document US-2009-8-D9)

R-2009-8-9   *The major undergraduate curriculum changes in the Department of Philosophy, set out in Document US-2009-8-D9, were approved by consent, as recommended by the Academic Programs Committee in Document US-2009-8-D1.*

4.1.9   Department of Political Science (Document US-2009-8-D10)

R-2009-8-10   *The major undergraduate curriculum changes in the Department of Political Science, set out in Document US-2009-8-D10, were approved by consent, as recommended by the Academic Programs Committee in Document US-2009-8-D1.*

4.1.10 Department of Theological Studies (Document US-2009-8-D11)

R-2009-8-10   *The major undergraduate curriculum changes in the Department of Theological Studies, set out in Document US-2009-8-D11, were approved by consent, as recommended by the Academic Programs Committee in Document US-2009-8-D1.*

4.1.11 School of Community and Public Affairs (Document US-2009-8-D12)

R-2009-8-12   *The major undergraduate curriculum changes in the School of Community and Public Affairs, set out in Document US-2009-8-D12, were approved by consent, as recommended by the Academic Programs Committee in Document US-2009-8-D1.*

4.2   Major undergraduate curriculum changes – Faculty of Engineering and Computer Science

4.2.1   Department of Computer Science and Software Engineering (Document US-2009-8-D13)

R-2009-8-13   *The major undergraduate curriculum changes in the Department of Computer Science and Software Engineering, set out in Document US-2009-8-D13, were approved by consent, as recommended by the Academic Programs Committee in Document US-2009-8-D1.*

4.4   Minor undergraduate curriculum changes - Section 200.6 of the Faculty of Engineering and Computer Science (Document US-2009-8-D15)

4.5   Minor undergraduate curriculum changes - School of Extended Learning (Document US-2009-8-D16)

Minor undergraduate curriculum changes were received for information.

4.6   Major graduate curriculum changes – Faculty of Arts and Science

4.6.1   Department of Economics (Document US-2009-8-D17)

R-2009-8-14   *The major graduate curriculum changes in the Department of Economics, set out in Document US-2009-8-D17, were approved by consent, as recommended by the Academic Programs Committee in Document US-2009-8-D1.*

4.6.2   Department of Geography, Planning and Environment (Document US-2009-8-D18)

R-2009-8-15   *The major graduate curriculum changes in the Department of Geography, Planning and Environment, set out in Document US-2009-8-D18, were approved by consent, as recommended by the Academic Programs Committee in Document US-2009-8-D1.*

4.7   Major graduate curriculum changes – Faculty of Engineering and Computer Science

4.7.1   Department of Computer Science and Software Engineering (Document US-2009-8-D19)

R-2009-8-16   *The major graduate curriculum changes in the Department of Computer Science and Software Engineering, set out in Document US-2009-8-D19, were approved by consent, as recommended by the Academic Programs Committee in Document US-2009-8-D1.*

5.   Committee appointment (Document US-2009-8-D20)

R-2009-8-17   *The committee appointment, outlined in Document US-2009-8-D20, was approved by consent.*

6.   Report of other Senate Standing Committees

6.1   Academic Planning and Priorities (Document US-2009-8-D21)

The report was received for information.

6.2   Finance

The committee met on October 19. A written report will be submitted at the next meeting.

6.3   Research

The committee has not met since the last Senate meeting.

6.4   University Library (Document US-2009-8-D22)

The report was received for information.

7.   Update from the Advisory Search Committee for a Dean of Graduate Studies

The committee has not met since the last Senate meeting.

REGULAR

8. <u>Business arising from the Minutes not included on the Agenda</u>

There was no business arising from the Minutes.

4.1.6 <u>Department of English</u> (Document US-2009-8-D7)

Referring to the proposed changes to the summer literary seminars calling for the deletion of ENGL 485 (St. Petersburg Workshops) and ENGL 487 (Nairobi Workshops) and their being replaced by ENGL 486, SLS – International Literary Seminars which could be held in multiple locations, Prof. Lynch wondered who would ensure that the academic quality and requirements would be met.

Speaking privileges were granted to Associate Dean Joanne Locke. She explained that the summer literary seminars have existed for over 15 years and that a decision was made in 2007 that they be offered for credit. However, those courses describe specific locations, whereas the actual locations of the seminars have been multiplied. Thus, it was decided to introduce a topics course which allows flexibility in the location. She noted that the content of the course is organized and vetted by an international committee which includes a representative of Concordia University and specified that the content of the course is not germane to its location.

R-2009-8-18   *Upon motion duly made and seconded (Nelson, Graham), it was unanimously approved that the major undergraduate curriculum changes in the Department of English, set out in Document US-2009-8-D7, be approved, as recommended by the Academic Programs Committee in Document US-2009-8-D1.*

4.3 <u>Major undergraduate curriculum changes - Calendar changes to Section 16</u> (Document US-2009-8-D14)

Prof. Lynch asked for clarification regarding the change in section 16.3.10 c) on page D3 in connection with the treatment of supplemental exams. He recalled that the rules had been modified so that only the second attempt in a course would count towards the GPA, the rationale being that the second attempt was a more accurate demonstration of the student's recent knowledge of a subject matter. Therefore, he felt that counting both attempts in an exam was contravening that principle and that the same rule should apply. Mr. Dabchy concurred that only the second attempt in the exam should be factored into the GPA.

Registrar Healey and Vice-Provost Dyens replied that both attempts in the exam have always been factored in the GPA, specifying that the proposed deletion of the first phrase of 16.3.10 c) would result in allowing students to have a chance to repeat the course even though they had done a supplemental exam in the course. Thus, this is to the benefit of students. The Provost added that the rewrite of a final exam is different in spirit from the repetition of a course.

R-2009-8-19   *Upon motion duly made and seconded (Burke, Dandurand), it was resolved by a majority that the major undergraduate curriculum changes in relation to Section 16 of the undergraduate calendar, set out in Document US-2009-8-D14, be approved, as recommended by the Academic Programs Committee in Document US-2009-8-D1.*

9.   <u>Presentation on eConcordia</u>

Dr. Graham began his presentation by providing a brief history of the creation, vision and intended market of eConcordia. As originally conceived, eConcordia teaching was to be done in accordance with a course provider model under which eConcordia contracted directly with individual faculty members to develop courses and negotiate a contract to compensate them for the use of their intellectual property on a royalty basis at the rate of $20 per registered student, with control over academic matters to remain vested in the academic unit under the oversight of the Deans.

However, in practice some issues surfaced, making it difficult to ensure consistent oversight of academic quality control and working conditions. Concerns arose among some faculty members about the quality of online teaching. eConcordia attracted fewer students not already enrolled at Concordia than had been anticipated, and it became clear that questions of enrolment management and accurate costing were problematic for the Deans. Thus, in 2006 the University began formal discussions with eConcordia with the goal to ensure control over academic matters, and in 2008 the negotiations resulted in the conclusion of a two-year framework agreement between both parties that addressed the concerns and altered the structure of their relationship and in eConcordia's reincorporation as a not-for-profit corporation.

In addition to eConcordia, a commercial brand, KnowledgeOne, will be incorporated separately to develop and deliver courses from and for bodies other than Concordia, including credit and non-credit courses for other universities or non-credit offerings for other corporate bodies, such as professional education or corporate training. This provides a clearer separation between Concordia courses and those of other bodies, institutions or agencies. The funding sources of both eConcordia and KnowledgeOne were explained.

Dr. Graham indicated that the key features of the agreement between the University and eConcordia include an agreement of two years with the possibility of renewal, full academic control over eConcordia course development, choice and assignment of instructors and teaching assistants, closer integration of the governance structures of eConcordia with those of Concordia University, and royalty payments now flowing to the academic sector rather than individual faculty members. The eConcordia Board of Directors includes strong representation from Concordia University, enabling effective University oversight at the top level and ensuring that the University's interests are represented, while the academic governance is ensured by an Academic Liaison Group which is chaired by the Provost and which meets regularly to review course development and academic oversight issues. The Provost conveyed the key features of the letters of agreement signed with CUFA and CUPFA with respect to course development, teaching assignments and compensation.

Dr. Graham shared his thoughts on the importance of e-learning and on quality assurance. Based on the charts showing significant and constant enrolment growth in online course registrations in the United States and at Concordia since 2002, he opined that this method of course delivery is here to stay. In his view, online learning growth is driven by student choices, and flexibility is the primary reason students, especially those who are working, choose online learning options. Dr. Graham acknowledged that the academic quality of online learning has been hotly contested for many years, more specifically in relation to

course design, faculty engagement, student experience and engagement, academic integrity, learning outcomes and academic standards, and retention. He noted that eConcordia has been responsive to those concerns and explained what measures have been taken to address them. As a result, many concerns have now been alleviated.

In conclusion, eConcordia has implemented several good practices to ensure quality control in all domain of its activity. In those cases where more is needed to be done, the Provost is satisfied that the work is being done effectively and conscientiously. eConcordia presents an opportunity to meet our students' needs effectively without significant loss of quality. Going forward, course development and planning are proceeding in all Faculties and discussions are continuing with the School of Extended Learning, appropriate mechanisms are in place to ensure effective academic oversight and support development, and enrolment management planning will enable us to ensure that eConcordia's growth is in line with the University's priorities and planning.

Pursuant to the presentation, Senators thanked the Provost for his presentation. A discussion ensued during which the following issues were clarified by Dr. Graham and Me Freedman:

- KnowledgeOne has not yet been incorporated and is currently just a brand name, but once incorporated, it will more likely than not be a for profit corporation. Its mandate has a more global reach and differs from that of eConcordia since it will develop and deliver courses unrelated to Concordia for other universities or the corporate sector, such as professional corporate training in real estate in Vancouver, etc.
- eConcordia is only a delivery mechanism. An online course can also be delivered in a classroom setting, and vice-versa. The development of course material by faculty members is treated as a commissioned work, and the University retains the full FTE funding.
- Teaching assistants will be hired by eConcordia on recommendation of the University's academic units. They are compensated at a lower rate but the Faculties can top up their compensation.
- Students taking courses through eConcordia are subject to the same fees and have the same privileges, such the use of the Library, etc., as those registered in traditional classroom courses.
- Transcripts do not indicate that a course has been taken online.
- eConcordia has its own evaluation forms. Dr. Dyens is currently chairing a group which is looking at the assessment of teaching, and eConcordia evaluations will be integrated into our system.
- As for classroom teaching, there is no linear relation between class size and quality for courses taken via eConcordia. Grade distribution in itself is not an indicator of the quality of the course content or its method of instruction, and the assumption that online classes are necessarily less demanding has not been proven.
- While it is easier to convert the content of some lower level skills for online delivery since some subjects lend themselves better to that mode, it is not necessarily appropriate for some 300 or 400-level courses.
- The data regarding learning outcomes in online courses are anecdotal and should be looked at more closely to ascertain if there any variances compared to traditional classroom teaching.
- While not providing the same interaction as face to face teaching, the delivery of online courses is improving with the advancement of multi-media tools.

It was agreed that a copy of the presentation would be forwarded to Senators by Ms. Tessier.

10. Remarks from the President (Document US-2009-8-D23)

The Speaker noted that a copy of Dr. Woodsworth's written report had been included in the documentation.

11. Items for information

There were no items of information to bring before Senate.

12. Question period

Mr. Osei's expression of shock and surprise at Concordia's position in the Macleans annual university rankings triggered questions and comments from other Senators with regard to the impact of these rankings on the University's reputation, the value of its degree, admission to graduate studies, as well as the job opportunities and starting salaries for graduates. While relating to the frustrations voiced, the Provost encouraged Senators not to place undue importance on those rankings, given that they are flawed and have serious methodological problems. They place a high value on reputational surveys which are invalid instruments since the samples are neither random nor controlled. Dr. Graham noted that that emphasis should be placed on identifying core indicators in the strategic planning process which will allow the University to achieve its objective of becoming a top five comprehensive university. While recognizing that history and funding are key factors, he outlined the measures that are being taken to achieve this objective.

In response to a question from Mr. Johannson, Dr. Graham indicated that all academic programs, rules and regulations are approved by Senate before being included in the calendar while administrative matters, such as dates, are set by the Office of the Registrar.

Prof. Leonard wondered if another test will replace the University Writing Test. Dr. Dyens replied that a working group, comprised of representatives from the Faculties and Schools, students, etc., is currently looking at core skills, from the time of admission to graduation. In due course, a report will be presented to the Faculty Councils, the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee, the Academic Programs Committee and Senate.

13. Other business

On behalf of Dr. Woodsworth, the Speaker reminded Senators that Convocation will be held on November 13 and urged all Senators to attend.

14. Next meeting

The Speaker noted that the next meeting will be held on Friday, December 11, 2009, at 2 p.m., in Room EV 2.260.

15.	Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:10 p.m.

Danielle Tessier
Secretary of Senate