

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

Held on Friday, May 17, 2019, at 2:00 p.m.
in the Norman D. Hébert, LLD Meeting Room
(Room EV 2.260) on the SGW Campus

PRESENT

Voting members: Alan Shepard (*Chair*); Sarah Abou-Bakr; Sami Al-Hanbali; Ali Akgunduz; Paul Allen; Reena Atanasiadis; Leslie Barker; Sandra Betton (*Acting for Anne-Marie Croteau*); Rory Blaisdell; Mathilde Braems; Graham Carr; Mikaela Clark-Gardner; Sally Cooke; Frank Crooks; Ricardo Dal Farra; Mourad Debbabi (*Acting for Amir Asif*); Christine DeWolf; Jill Didur; Mehdi Farashahi; Marcie Frank; Ariela Freedman; Christophe Guy; Rim Hamila; Sophie Hough-Martin; David Morris; Brad Nelson (*Acting for Paula Wood-Adams*); Eunbyul Park; Elaine Paterson (*Acting for Rebecca Duclos*); Virginia Penhune; Martin Pugh; André Roy; Daniel Salée; Safa Sheikh; Ali Sherra; Robert Soroka; Marc Steinberg; Ron Stern; Christopher Trueman; Radu Zmeureanu

Non-voting members: Philippe Beauregard; Denis Cossette; Roger Côté; Stéphanie de Celles; Isabel Dunnigan; Tom Hughes; Frederica Jacobs; Anne Whitelaw

ABSENT

Voting members: Shaina Ali; Guylaine Beaudry; Pascale Biron; Christopher Brett; Vince Graziano; Brigitte Jaumard; Jean-Gabriel Lacombe; Sarah Mazhero; Zenobia Pais; John Potvin; Francesca Scala; Rashmikaa Sethu Madhavan; Nafisa Tabassum Jamal; Jean-Philippe Warren

Non-voting members: Joanne Beaudoin; Paul Chesser

1. Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 2:36 p.m.

1.1 Approval of Agenda

R-2019-3-9 *Upon motion duly moved and seconded, it was unanimously resolved that the Agenda of the Open Session be approved.*

1.2 Approval of the Minutes of the Open Session meeting of March 15, 2019

R-2019-3-10 Upon motion duly moved and seconded, it was unanimously resolved that the Minutes of the Open Session meeting of March 15, 2019 be approved.

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

During the course of his remarks, the President updated Senate on recent appointments, ongoing University events, initiatives, awards and research and funding grants.

He noted that a list of accomplished individuals will be receiving honorary degrees at the Convocation ceremonies held from June 10 to 12 and urged Senators to attend.

4. Academic update (Document US-2019-3-D5)

As complimentary information to his written report, Dr. Carr noted the inadvertent omission on page 1 of Pippin Barr as one of the mentors for the team who won the Jury Prize at the Ubisoft Game Lab Competition. Referring to page 2 of his report, he added that between the date of the report and now, Newsha Azeri had advanced from the 3MT eastern regional final competition to the national competition.

5. Standing Committee reports

5.1 Academic Planning and Priorities (Document US-2019-3-D6)

There were no questions in relation to this report.

5.2 Finance (Document US-2019-3-D7)

Responding to queries, Dr. Carr indicated that the new government funding policy regarding international students does not affect graduate fee remissions, since those are targeted to research Master's and PhD students who are not affected by the new policy. He also clarified that fee remissions are purely based on merit and not the origin of the students.

With respect to the comment in the report about the Finance Committee's role and mandate, Dr. Carr explained that the timing issues in relation to the process have been addressed, since the process has been changed and the issue of financial probity is now being dealt with in a more consistent fashion earlier on in the process. In other words, the costing of new programs will be submitted for review by the Finance Committee before final approval of Councils.

- 5.3 **Library** (Document US-2019-3-D8)
- 5.4 **Research** (Document US-2019-3-D9)

There were no questions in relation to these reports.

CONSENT

- 6. **Committee appointments** (Document US-2019-3-D10)

R-2019-3-11 *That the committee appointments, outlined in Document US-2019-3-D10, be approved.*

- 7. **Academic Programs Committee: Report and recommendation** (Document US-2019-3-D11)

- 7.1 **Undergraduate curriculum proposals – Faculty of Arts and Science**

- 7.1.1 **Faculty requirements** (Document US-2019-3-D12)

- 7.1.2 **Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry** (Document US-2019-3-D14)

- 7.1.3 **Department of English** (Document US-2019-3-D16)

- 7.1.4 **Department of Geography, Planning and Environment** (Document US-2019-3-D17)

R-2019-3-12 *That the undergraduate curriculum proposals in the Faculty of Arts and Science, outlined in Documents US-2019-3-D12, D14, D16 and D17, be approved, as recommended by the Academic Programs Committee in Document US-2019-3-D11.*

- 7.2 **Undergraduate curriculum proposals – Faculty of Fine Arts – Department of Studio Arts** (Documents US-2019-3-D18 and D19)

R-2019-3-13 *That the undergraduate curriculum proposals in the Faculty of Fine Arts, outlined in Documents US-2019-3-D18 and D19, be approved, as recommended by the Academic Programs Committee in Document US-2019-3-D11.*

- 7.3 **Undergraduate curriculum proposals – Gina Cody School of Engineering and Computer Science**

- 7.3.1 **Certificate in Science and Technology** (Document US-2019-3-D20)

- 7.3.2 **Requirements and regulations** (Documents US-2019-3-D21 and D22)

- 7.3.3 **Centre for Engineering in Society** (Document US-2019-3-D23)

- 7.3.4 **Department of Computer Science and Software Engineering** (Documents US-2019-3-D24 and D26)

- 7.3.5 **Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering** (Document US-2019-3-D27)

- 7.3.6 **Department of Mechanical, Industrial and Aerospace Engineering** (Document US-2019-3-D28)

R-2019-3-14 *That the undergraduate curriculum proposals in the Gina Cody School of Engineering and Computer Science, outlined in Documents US-2019-3-D20 to D24 and D26 to D28, be approved, as recommended by the Academic Programs Committee in Document US-2019-3-D11.*

7.4 Graduate curriculum proposals – Faculty of Arts and Science – Department of Education (Document US-2019-3-D29)

R-2019-3-15 *That the graduate curriculum proposals in the Faculty of Arts and Science, outlined in Document US-2019-3-D29, be approved, as recommended by the Academic Programs Committee in Document US-2019-3-D11.*

7.5 Graduate curriculum proposals – Gina Cody School of Engineering and Computer Science

7.5.1 Department of Computer Science and Software Engineering (Document US-2019-3-D30)

7.5.2 Department of Mechanical, Industrial and Aerospace Engineering (Document US-2019-3-D31)

R-2019-3-16 *That the graduate curriculum proposals in the Gina Cody School of Engineering and Computer Science, outlined in Documents US-2019-3-D30 and D31, be approved, as recommended by the Academic Programs Committee in Document US-2019-3-D11.*

7.6 Graduate curriculum proposals - John Molson School of Business – Department of Investment Management (Document US-2019-3-D32)

R-2019-3-17 *That the graduate curriculum proposals in the John Molson School of Business, outlined in Document US-2019-3-D32, be approved, as recommended by the Academic Programs Committee in Document US-2019-3-D11.*

REGULAR

8. New undergraduate curriculum proposals:

8.1 Faculty of Arts and Science – Department of Biology – BSc Honours in Systems and Information Biology and BSc Specialization in Systems and Information Biology (Document US-2019-3-D13)

Dean Roy and the Chair of the Department of Biology, Patrick Gulick, presented the highlights of these new proposals.

R-2019-3-18 *Upon motion duly moved and seconded, it was unanimously resolved that the new undergraduate curriculum proposals in the Faculty of Arts and Science, outlined in Document US-2019-3-D13, be approved, as recommended by the Academic Programs Committee in Document US-2019-3-D11.*

8.2 Gina Cody School of Engineering and Computer Science – BcompSc in Health and Life Sciences and BCompSc Honours in Health and Life Sciences (Document US-2019-3-D25)

Mourad Debabbi, representing Dean Asif, and the Chair of the Department of Computer Science and Software Engineering, Lata Narayanan, presented the highlights of these new proposals.

R-2019-3-19 *Upon motion duly moved and seconded, it was unanimously resolved that the new undergraduate curriculum proposals in the Gina Cody School of Engineering and Computer Science, outlined in Document US-2019-3-D25, be approved, as recommended by the Academic Programs Committee in Document US-2019-3-D11.*

8.3 Faculty of Arts and Science – Department of Education – Minor in Teaching English as a Second Language (Document US-2019-3-D15)

Dean Roy and Teresa Hernandez-Gonzalez, representing the Department of Education, conveyed the highlights of this new Minor.

R-2019-3-20 *Upon motion duly moved and seconded, it was unanimously resolved that the new undergraduate curriculum proposal in the Faculty of Arts and Science, outlined in Document US-2019-3-D15, be approved, as recommended by the Academic Programs Committee in Document US-2019-3-D11.*

9. Motion regarding proposed Bill 21 (Document US-2019-3-D33)

Ms. Abou-Bakr presented the motion, which was similar to the text of the motion adopted by Senate regarding Bill 62 a few years ago.

R-2019-3-21 *Upon motion duly moved and seconded, it was unanimously resolved:*

Whereas Concordia University represents a broad range of nationalities, cultures and faiths which cohabit peacefully;

Whereas this diversity is a great strength and contributes to the vitality of the University and Quebec society; and

Whereas members of the Concordia community have expressed concerns that the proposed Bill 21 (An Act respecting the laicity of the State) and its regulations may limit access for graduates to jobs in some fields and prevent students from completing their education in some programs at the University;

Be it resolved that Senate reaffirm the unifying values of Concordia University and its founding institutions as a secular university which is profoundly dedicated to freedom of expression, freedom of conscience, and access to higher education;

Be it further resolved that Senate object to any actions that infringe upon those values.

The President indicated that he will forward a copy of the resolution to the government and that a copy will also be posted on the website.

10. Fossil fuel divestment (Document US-2019-3-D34)

Mr. Côté updated Senators on the broad spectrum of activities and initiatives undertaken by the University towards achieving sustainability. As of 2014/2015, a total of 476 initiatives and projects had been mapped. He spoke of the sustainability

accomplishments, including being ranked as the most energy efficient Quebec university for 21 consecutive years.

He also outlined the sustainability in the curriculum, in research as well as in funding and investments, which includes the issue of a \$25 million sustainable bond, noting that Concordia is the first university in Canada to do so. He also apprised Senators of the Concordia Foundation's membership in a United Nations Principles of Responsible Investment (UN PRI), its full integration with an Environmental, Social, Governance (ESG) Investment Policy as well as social impact investments included in the Investment Policy which are aligned with sustainable development goals.

Mr. Côté reviewed the University's sustainable planning timeline, which includes the development of a five-year sustainability action plan in 2019 as well as the mandate and composition of the Sustainability Steering Committee and its three permanent sub-committees which form part of the governance framework and are set-up to engage the University in a structural way by incorporating the sustainability strategies.

He explained that the definition of sustainability had been arrived at through community consultation and noted the University's policy commitment integrate sustainability as a core value. He outlined the five streams (food, waste, climate, research and curriculum) and that each stream includes goals, targets and strategies and measurement plans. Those will be integrated into the 2019/2024 Sustainability Plan which is expected to be adopted in the Fall. Mr. Côté noted that while some strategies will require funding through the operating and capital budgets, many of the initiatives will be self-funding via optimization of the use of resources.

Following Mr. Côté's presentation, Damon Matthews, Professor in the Department of Geography, Planning and Environment, and Mr. Sherra made a presentation entitled *The Case for Fossil Fuel Divestment*.

Prof. Matthews apprised Senators of Concordia's sustainability strategy in the areas of curriculum, operations and research and acknowledged its current sustainable investment initiatives. While the University is to be commended for those initiatives, he made the point that it is difficult for institutions to move quickly to achieve pressing societal changes, and that the need to respond should no longer be a process, since the situation is now urgent.

He explained that more needs to be done to achieve the target in the Paris agreement, since climate change is a real and imminent danger, that CO₂ emissions, which are still increasing, need to be cut by half by 2030 and to zero by 2050, which means that the vast majority of the world's fossil fuel reserves will never be burnt.

Prof. Matthews showed a graph illustrating how close we are to the 1.5°C limit and a slide showing that wildfires, draughts, and smog will contribute to killing most the world's coral reefs. He explained the effects of the trajectory of the CO₂ emissions and spoke about how much carbon is in the fossil fuel reserves, which is enough to cause a warming of + 4°C.

He noted that while the elimination of direct greenhouse gas emissions (such as heating of buildings) and the decrease of indirect emissions (food, transportation, etc.) are part of the University's Climate Action Plan, the decarbonizing investments, such as fossil fuel divestment, would have a powerful societal effect but is not currently being considered.

Mr. Sherra opined that the Concordia University Foundation, the University's not-for-profit corporation in charge of making its investments, should cease investing in the world's top coal, oil and gas companies and transfers its investments to companies that look into green energy. He conveyed the positive external benefits of doing so, including an enhanced public image, leading by example rather than following the market, receiving higher rankings and attracting students who are increasingly concerned about climate change.

Mr. Sherra also spoke of the internal benefits, including a better alignment with other sustainability goals, noting that Socially Responsible Investing (SRI) funds generally perform as well or better than traditional investment funds. He concluded by informing Senate of other funds, countries, cities, organizations and universities which have divested, making the point that while some Canadian universities have committed to divest, none have at this point.

A discussion ensued, during which questions of clarifications were answered. Mr. Cossette confirmed that less than 10% of Concordia's portfolio is invested in oil and gas, and that this is expected to decrease going forward.

Ms. Park asked to make a motion that Concordia divest in fossil fuels, which some other Senators supported. The President ruled it out of order, explaining that Steering Committee, mandated to approve Senate agendas, had discussed the suitability of entertaining such a motion, determined that it did not fall under in the purview of Senate and that the subject be presented to Senate solely for information. He added that it would not be appropriate for Senate to entertain a motion based on one presentation and in the absence of the full context. He suggested that the Chair of the Concordia University Foundation be invited to present to Senate in the Fall.

11. Question period

In response to a query from Ms. Clark-Gardner regarding the selection of the next Chair of Senate, Prof. Shepard replied that the By-Laws provide that the President chairs Senate.

12. Other business

Noting that this was his final meeting of Senate, Prof. Shepard conveyed his pride in Concordia's progress and the pleasure he had serving an institution with so much talent and momentum.

Senators thanked him for his leadership and gave him a standing ovation.

13. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.



Danielle Tessier
Secretary of Senate