

**MINUTES OF THE OPEN SESSION  
OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

Held on June 16, 2021,  
immediately following the joint meeting of the Closed  
Session of the Board of Governors and the Corporation  
via Zoom Video Conferencing

**PRESENT**

**Governors:** Helen Antoniou, *Chair*, Françoise Bertrand, Jeff Bicher, Antoinette Bozac, William Bukowski, Graham Carr, *President and Vice-Chancellor*, Gina P. Cody, Roy Cross, Selvadurai Dayanandan, Adriana Embiricos, Rana Ghorayeb, Caroline Jamet, Claude Joli-Coeur, *Vice-Chair*, Isaiah Joyner, Frédérica Martin, *Vice-Chair*, Georges Paulez, Philippe Pourreaux, Suzanne Sauvage, Robert Soroka, Ted Stathopoulos

**Alternate Governor:** Chelsea Okankwu

**Also attending:** Philippe Beauregard, Sylvie Bourassa, William Cheaib, Paul Chesser, Denis Cossette, Michael Di Grappa, Nadia Hardy, Frederica Jacobs, Shelina Housseny, Lisa Ostiguy, Karan Singh, Anne Whitelaw, Paula Wood-Adams

**ABSENT**

**Governors:** Ken Brooks, Pat Di Lillo, Odile Joannette, Claudine Mangen, Prasanth Shunmugan

**Non-voting observer:** Jonathan Wener, *Chancellor*

1. **Call to Order**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and congratulated fellows Governors:

- Suzanne Sauvage, appointed an Officer of the Order of Quebec;
- Georges Paulez, awarded the Benoît Pelland Distinguished Service Award by the Concordia University Alumni Association (CUAA); and
- Isaiah Joyner, awarded the Concordia Medal by the CUAA as well as being one of three Concordia undergraduate students awarded Quebec's Lieutenant Governor's Youth Medal.

1.1 **Adoption of the Agenda**

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

R-2021-5-12 *That the Agenda be approved, including the items on the Consent Agenda.*

CONSENT

2. Adoption of the May 19, 2021 Minutes

R-2021-5-13 *That the Minutes of the meeting of May 19, 2021 be approved.*

3. Audit Committee report (BG-2021-5-D9)

4. Sundry fees report (BG-2021-5-D10)

These reports were submitted for information.

REGULAR

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

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

6. President's report (BG-2021-5-D11)

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

- He thanked all Board members for their support, encouragement and good advice during an extraordinary year, stating publicly, once more, his pride in the University community and its accomplishments under the conditions of the past year. We have continued to deliver the academic and research mission of the University, carried out our operations under challenging circumstances and continued to make progress on key strategic directions.
- The University is in the throws of planning the return to campus in the fall, following the announcement of Minister McCann on May 31. Dr. Carr reiterated that the goal is to prioritize on-campus student experiences both through in-person teaching but also high-impact individual and group activities. The course schedule will be announced in July and will take into account the lessons learned from the past 16 months, including student preferences for the flexibility of mixed in-person and online course components, faculty development with regard to deploying technology in the classroom, and much serious reflection on how to make in-person classes or components of classes - plus other student services - as meaningful and effective as possible.
- We are also very focused on anticipated, unique challenges that fall may bring as we welcome two cohorts of students who have had a difficult, social isolating experience because of the pandemic and also very conscious that this will be the first time on campus, or back on campus, for various groups of students whose communities have been the object of social injustice including different forms of

hatred. A number of initiatives are being developed to raise our community's awareness that the principles of respectful behavior are non-negotiable and to reinforce our expectations about comportment in person and online.

- The Quebec government has indicated that the green light for full return is pending a target of 75% full vaccination of Quebec's adult population with a particular focus on the 16- to 29-year-old cohort. Accordingly, the University has been strongly communicating with students and other members of its community about the vaccine priority.
- Dr. Carr noted that the challenging dossier with regard to fall return continues to be travel guidelines for international students. It is a complex dossier with multiple agencies and ministries involved at the federal and provincial levels. The University is maintaining regular contact with international students, the majority of whom have submitted their visa application dossiers well in time to be processed for arrival in late August. That said, it is unclear whether they will be permitted to travel to Canada and, if so, under what conditions. As a contingency plan, the University has identified courses and programs that typically have a higher-than-average international registration with a view to developing some online options to allow those individuals to begin their programs remotely.
- Since the Minister's announcement about fall and with the vaccine rollout, we have noticed that the number of people coming onto campus daily has dramatically increased, going from an average of 1,500 on campus a week a month ago to 3,500. This increase is driven by student demands for research facility access but also more faculty members coming to labs and offices. We have also begun to pilot a return to campus for non-academic personnel in key sectors, particularly student services.
- We are developing a back-to-campus plan for the University as a whole, which includes transition measures for remote work and partial return to campus. Understandably, there is some anxiety about return to campus which we continue to address through adherence to public health and safety protocols, as well as our willingness to make exceptions for individuals who have very particular medical conditions or who are caregivers for other vulnerable individuals.
- Despite the significant increase in traffic in recent weeks, we continue to record zero COVID-related cases. We are also developing a longer-term plan for the future of work focusing on unit-level assessments of tasks that require full-time, part-time, limited time presence on campus, as well as principles and protocols that would guide decisions with respect to future remote work.
- The President concluded his report by noting that while June is normally convocation month, convocation ceremonies have once again been postponed. In lieu thereof, he urged everyone to participate in the virtual celebration of Spring 2021 graduates which will be held tomorrow evening through CU Celebrates.

7. Senate recommendation regarding the establishment of the School of Health (BG-2021-5-D12)

Drs. Whitelaw and Wood-Adams conveyed the highlights of the proposal via a PowerPoint presentation.

Dr. Whitelaw began by underlining the transformative potential of this School for interdisciplinary research and teaching on health. She explained that COVID has underlined the importance of research and training in the area of health while making the point that the wide-ranging issues that have accompanied the pandemic underline that the importance of research on health is not just at the clinical or the treatment levels but also at the level of wider social impact.

As an interdisciplinary faculty, with researchers from across the university, the School of Health will be able to facilitate the kind of collaborations and new approaches to health research at large that does not happen in traditional medical or health faculties. The need for and importance of this kind of approach has been highlighted by a number of external researchers and organizations, all of them having told us that they see this School as filling a much-needed gap in the Montreal and Quebec health landscapes.

As we conceive a faculty that approaches health in this way, it is clear that the School of Health aligns with many of Concordia's values including a commitment to the UN's SDG goals. The School of Health will also facilitate training of the next generation of researchers and other highly trained personnel. While the University remains committed to existing doctoral programs in health, we are seeing a high number of students in our interdisciplinary doctoral programs working on health-related topics, demonstrating sustained interest from our students in pursuing interdisciplinary research in health.

Consultations over the past number of years suggest that Biomedical Science and Engineering and Community Health are two areas that are ripe for the development of inaugural doctoral programs to be housed in the School of Health. The final nature of those programs – and others that will come to light as we continue the process of working with researchers in health over the coming years – will be determined by the Dean of the School in collaboration with researchers from the School.

Dr. Wood-Adams spoke of Concordia's existing high-impact research in health as spanning over nine research units and 27 research chairs, with major contributions from researchers in several departments as well as from the PERFORM Centre, a leader in preventative health. She explained how establishing a School of Health would provide an opportunity for Concordia to massively increase its research funding, citing the example of Simon Fraser University.

Examples of growing interest in health research across the University include emerging areas of strength such as health economics, Indigenous approaches to health, and arts in wellness. Several researchers are well networked in the Quebec context with affiliations and partnerships. Students and post-doctoral fellows are also active in health research and innovation.

Health was identified in 2015 as key to the University's *Double our Research* strategic direction. Since then, consultations with researchers resulted in the identification of six transdisciplinary research clusters in 2017, which have been grouped into three hubs which will give structure to the School. The commitment to interdisciplinary research and training will give Concordia a competitive edge by providing a unique position in Montreal and Canada's health ecosystem.

Dr. Whitelaw continued by speaking of the structure of the School, which will be led by a Dean to ensure the presence of "health" at the weekly meetings of the Academic Cabinet. Its status as a faculty will also facilitate the development and stewardship of graduate programs, while the absence of a standard departmental structure will reduce silos and facilitate the kind of interdisciplinary approach to research and training that will be unique to Concordia in the Montreal landscape.

Three transversal hubs came out of the consultations with researchers and the identification of the six transdisciplinary research clusters referred to above. These three areas are where Concordia has existing or emerging strengths. Interdisciplinarity of the hubs is central to their functioning and will be a gathering place for researchers from across the University in key areas. The PERFORM Centre remains an important contributor to the School of Health, but it will be restructured and its resources deployed differently so it can better support the diversity of health research and health researchers across the University.

Dr. Whitelaw spoke of the extensive consultations, making the point that this has been an iterative process with opportunities for input at every turn, and of the governance approvals, which led to a formal proposal being overwhelmingly approved by Senate, which is recommending Board approval. She noted that at its last meeting, the Board approved a budget that included an investment in the School of Health.

Dr. Wood-Adams reviewed the financial implications of the School, explaining how the expenses of the PERFORM Centre resources will be deployed to the School and that creating the School will require an incremental investment of \$4.7 million over seven years to reach financial sustainability. She outlined the assumptions, including a conservative enrolment projection. She concluded the presentation by apprising Governors of the next steps, pending Board approval.

Following the presentation, a discussion ensued during which several Governors expressed their enthusiasm for this initiative, and Drs. Whitelaw and Wood-Adams responded to questions regarding the School's structure and financial projections.

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

*R-2021-5-14 That, on recommendation of Senate, the Board of Governors approve the establishment of the School of Health.*

8. Request for the use of the Concordia name by the Concordia University Sport Shooting Association (BG-2021-5-D13)

While this item is normally placed on the Consent Agenda, the Chair apprised Governors of the context leading to the Executive Committee's decision to place it on the Regular Agenda. She referred to the list prepared by Me Jacobs stating the pros and cons related to granting the use of the name.

Making the point that the existence of the Association is not in question, she asked each Governor to briefly share their view as to whether or not the Board should grant the use of the Concordia name to the Sport Shooting Association, a student group under the CSU.

Pursuant to the tour de table, the quasi-totality of Governors opined that the use of the name should not be granted for the following reasons:

- While it was acknowledged that sport shooting is a legitimate activity and Olympic discipline, the Association's mandate also covers other areas regarding the use of firearms.
- The Association can operate without bearing the Concordia name.
- Use of the Concordia name is a privilege not a right.
- Questions were raised about what benefit, if any, would come to the University by being associated with such an association.
- The University has the responsibility to manage its reputation and granting the name would undoubtedly be polarizing and constitute an unnecessary risk.
- Granting the name would be insensitive to Concordia's tragic history and politically questionable, particularly in the context of Quebec higher education.
- It would be difficult to explain, both externally and internally, how the activities of the Association, including its advocacy mission, would align with the University's values.

The following motion was then made and seconded: *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), the Board of Governors approve the following request to use the Concordia name: Concordia University Sport Shooting Association.*

However, given that only one Governor voted in favor, the motion was defeated by an overwhelming majority.

9. Other business

Noting that today is Mr. Bicher, Ms. Bozac, Mr. Joyner, Ms. Okankwu and Mr. Shunmugam's last meeting, Ms. Antoniou thanked them for their service and contributions during their tenure on the Board.

She also underlined that today was Ms. Tessier's last meeting and thanked her for her service.

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

R-2021-5-15 *That the Board of Governors express its deep and sincere appreciation to Danielle Tessier for her rigour, tenacity, creativity, fearlessness and dedication to Concordia University during her tenure as our Board and Senate Secretary, our governance encyclopedia and our Associate Secretary-General.*

A video tribute to Ms. Tessier followed.

10. Adjournment

The Chair declared the meeting adjourned at 7:54 p.m.



Danielle Tessier  
Secretary of the Board of Governors