

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

Wednesday, April 16, 2025 at 4 p.m.
Room GM 410 (Board of Governors meeting room)
SGW Campus and via Microsoft Teams video conferencing

PRESENT

Helen Antoniou (C)	Pat Di Lillo (remote)	Miranda Melfi (remote)
Theresa Bianco	Adriana Embiricos	Paul John Murdoch
Ken Brooks	Kim Fuller	Rahul Ravi
Graham Carr (P and Vice-C)	Shahir Guindi	Robert Soroka
Jarrett Carty (V.C) (remote)	Claude Joli-Coeur (V.C)	Ted Stathopoulos
Gary N. Chateram (remote)	(remote)	Roula Zaarour (remote)
Daniel Cross	Shoshana Kalfon (remote)	

Alternate: Ali Salman

Non-voting observer: Gina Cody (remote)

Also attending:

Philippe Beauregard	Denis Cossette (remote)	Frederica Jacobs
William Cheaib	Michael Di Grappa	Pascal Lebel
Paul Chesser	Tim Evans (remote)	Anne Whitelaw
Julie Fortier (remote)	Nadia Hardy (remote)	

ABSENT

Governors:

Darshan Vishnu Dorugade	Catherine Loubier
Rana Ghorayeb	Kareem Rahaman

LEGEND:

C: Chair

P and Vice-C: President and Vice Chancellor

V.C: Vice Chair

Remote: joined via Zoom/Teams

1. Call to order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m.

1.1 Approval of the Agenda

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

R-2025-2-1 *That the Agenda be approved, including the items on the Consent Agenda.*

CONSENT

2. Approval of February 6, 2025 Minutes

R-2025-2-2 *That the Minutes of the meeting of Open Session of February 6, 2025 be approved.*

3. Use of Concordia's Name (Document BG-2025-2-D1)

R-2025-2-3 *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) and its related Procedures Handbook, the Board of Governors approve the following request to use the Concordia name:*

Coda Concordia Student Club

4. Approval of fee levies for graduate students (Document BG-2025-2-D2)

R-2025-2-4 *Student Services fee:* *That the Board of Governors authorize Concordia University to increase the Student Services fee that supports the Student Services Sector comprised of the Student Success Centre, Campus Wellness and Support Services, the Dean of Students Office, and the Financial Aid and Awards Office -- to match the fee levy that undergraduate students are already paying, from \$10.26 per credit to \$11.11 per credit (an increase of \$0.85 per credit), annually adjusted to the Consumer Price Index of Canada, to be collected from all Graduate students, and to be implemented for the Summer 2025 (2251) semester in accordance with the University's tuition, refund, and withdrawal policy.*

R-2025-2-5 *Link Publication Society:* *That the Board of Governors authorize Concordia University to implement a fee levy of \$1.00 per student per semester to support the Link Publication Society, a student newspaper at the university. The fee would be collected from all GSA members who would become members of the Link Publication Society by paying the fee levy. The fee levy will be effective with the Summer 2025 (2251) semester and billed in accordance with the University's tuition billing and refund policy.*

5. Finance Committee recommendations :

5.1 Administrative Fee (Document BG-2025-2-D3)

R-2025-2-6 *Whereas the current Administrative Fee being charged to all students is \$12.74 per credit; and*

Whereas the government has allowed the University to increase this fee up to \$12.99 for 2025-26;

Be it resolved:

That, on recommendation of the Finance Committee, the Board of Governors approve the collection of an increased Administrative Fee of \$12.99 per credit from all students, to be implemented with registration for the fall 2025 (2252) term, in accordance with the University billing, refund and withdrawal policy.

5.2 Technology Infrastructure Fee (Document BG-2025-2-D4)

R-2025-2-7 *Whereas the current Technology Infrastructure Fee being charged to all students is \$6.01 per credit; and*

Whereas the government has allowed the University to increase this fee up to \$6.13 for 2025-26;

Be it resolved:

That, on recommendation of the Finance Committee, the Board of Governors approve the collection of an increased Technology Infrastructure Fee of \$6.13 per credit from all students, to be implemented with registration for the fall 2025 (2252) term, in accordance with the University billing, refund and withdrawal policy.

6. Governance and Ethics Committee recommendation: Revisions to the Policy on the use of Concordia University's name, and the governance of its visual character and digital presence (SG-4) (Document BG-2025-2-D5)

R-2025-2-8 *That, following recommendation of the Governance and Ethics Committee, the Board of Governors approve the revisions to the Policy on the Use of Concordia University's Name, and the Governance of its Visual Character and Digital Presence (SG-4) and its related Procedures Handbook, as detailed in the attached documentation.*

7. Report on compliance with environmental legislation and health and safety regulations (Q4-2024 and full 2024 Report) (Document BG-2025-2-D6)

This report was provided for information only.

REGULAR

8. 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.

9. President's report (Document BG-2025-2-D7)

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

- Dr. Carr noted that the semester is nearing its end, classes are over and final exams are underway. The climate on campus had been calm since the last Board meeting. However, last week on Thursday evening, there was an incident of antisemitic violence in the ER building (Monit building) on Guy Street. Certain masked individuals vandalized the office of Concordia's Azrieli Institute of Israel Studies. Graffiti was spray-painted on the office door with the words 'Genocide Institute' and a window was broken. Following the incident, social media posts celebrated the incident while specifically targeting the director of the Institute who is a Concordia faculty member, which was extremely disturbing.
- Dr. Carr noted his anger at the incident and shared that an overwhelming majority in the University community share this anger to have to repeat that such violent actions, which are clearly rooted in hate and designed to intimidate, have absolutely no place either in the University or in society. Dr. Carr sent out a message to the University community the following day vigorously condemning the vandalism, the violence, the antisemitism. The Dean of Arts and Science and the Special Advisor to the Provost on Campus Life each met with the faculty member who was a victim of the attacks to offer support. Dr. Carr reaffirmed the University's commitment to stand up for members of our community, regardless of their political inclinations, to defend the principles of academic freedom and uphold our codes of conduct.
- The SPVM has escalated their investigation of the incident to the hate crimes unit. The University will collaborate closely with Montréal police to identify anyone who has broken the law, violated the *Code of Rights and Responsibilities* or failed to adhere to the University's behaviour guidelines and will take appropriate action accordingly.
- Dr. Carr informed the Board that the security in the Monit building is the responsibility of the building owners, not the University, so the University has also reached out to the Monit building landlord to review security measures on the evening in question and going forward.
- Notwithstanding the regrettable incident, there has also been positive news regarding campus climate. The working groups of the STRIVE Task Force continue to meet with members of the University community with a view to providing preliminary reports to the Provost in May.

- The inaugural event of the Courageous Conversations Speaker Series, organized by Marc Lafrance, Special Advisor to the Provost on Campus Life, and by the Equity Office, was held on April 4th. The initial conversation - which featured panelists from University of Montréal, McGill University and Concordia - was focused on how to foster intercultural dialogue, specifically how to have a dialogue about dialogue. Dr. Carr was also in attendance and the event attracted 150 attendees, which included faculty, staff, students, both in person and online. Importantly, the feedback received by the organizers was overwhelmingly positive. Dr. Carr underscored that an event of this nature demonstrates the shared desire of the vast majority in the University community to be able to move beyond polarising and antagonistic rhetoric and actions to exchanges grounded in the University's commitment to enjoy a positive climate for teaching and learning for all.
- Dr. Carr then turned to an update on the court proceedings related to the tuition fee matter. The University is still waiting for the decision of the Québec Superior Court in the joint proceedings with McGill University regarding the changes to the tuition structure and funding formula announced by the government of Québec in fall 2023 and implemented in winter 2024. The judge has until June 2025 to render a decision, but it could also come much sooner. The Board will be kept informed as more information comes in, and particularly when the outcome is known. Regardless of the verdict, the University team will likely take 24-48 hours to review the decision in depth before making any substantive public comments.
- On registration numbers, the application period for all undergraduate programs is now virtually complete and, unfortunately, as anticipated, the enrolment numbers are bleak because of the collapse in international student demand, a trend that is also unmistakable in graduate professional programs, specifically in the Master of Engineering programs. Dr. Carr noted that this is directly the result of the negative publicity for Québec and Canada that stems from policy announcements reducing the number of available visas for international students, and in the case of Québec, setting visa quotas per university, which is not an approach followed by other provinces. Additionally, the confusion over francization obligations which disproportionately affects potential applicants to anglophone universities doesn't help the situation.
- The University is experiencing a 39% decline in international applications for fall 2025 compared with the same dates last year. The previous year was also a bad year for international recruitment because of the negative impact of new Québec tuition and language policies specifically targeting anglophone institutions, including also the revoking of fast-track permanent residency for international graduates of anglophone institutions. A 39% decline in applications doesn't even compare to the average decline for all universities in Québec, which is 48.8%.
- There has been some return of Rest of Canada (ROC) undergraduate applications, and the University is ahead of where we were last year in terms of Québec student applicants, and Ph.D. numbers are also promising for now. This however does not

come close to overcoming overall declines in the University's numbers. Final registration numbers will be available in the fall.

- Based on the data currently available, the BCI conservatively estimates that the decline in international students alone will cost the réseau \$200M next year, which loss will be recurring for the program life of those students. At the University, the net revenue from international students in fiscal year 2023-24 was ~\$54M, while for the current fiscal year it is at ~\$18M in revenue. All of this put together represents the largest defunding of universities in Québec history.
- There is a paradox here, as the Board would recall that the Québec government defended last year's increase in tuition charges for ROC students, and its decision to claw back international student tuition revenues from anglophone universities, by saying that this would generate more funds to be injected into francophone universities. The opposite has occurred, not only resulting in the weakening of the financial positions of the University and institutions like McGill University, but also generating less money, not more, for redistribution across the réseau, effectively reducing the government's investment in the university sector. Concerning international students, Dr. Carr noted that it was important to understand that the quota of students assigned to Québec universities is really a fictional goal because there are simply not enough applicants to fill the quotas. There are also many applicants from some countries who, because of systemic visa processing delays, even if accepted into programs, could not be approved for registration this academic year.
- Adding to all of the above, the Government of Québec passed Bill 74 imposing international student quotas, and, out of the blue, it also removed fast-track access to permanent residency for researchers and faculty members being recruited to Québec. The rationale given for this is that there is no shortage in these domains; however, this is contrary to the rationale behind building up *zones d'innovation* and *créneaux d'excellence* in areas of research strength like aerospace, green energy transition, quantum physics and AI, which were all to attract high quality expertise. Unfortunately, with everything that is happening in the United States, this could have been an opportunity for Québec and Canada to capitalize on recruiting top talent among students, faculty and postdocs.
- Dr. Carr then went on to speak about the announcements that were part of the government's budget on March 25, 2025. There was a reference to a reinvestment of 2,1% in higher education; however, none of that money goes towards support the operating costs of universities. Instead, it is funding for the operations of the *Ministère de l'Enseignement supérieur* itself, for CÉGEPs and for students in the form of increased bursaries paid directly to them. The University has also subsequently learned that some targeted programs to support student recruitment in engineering, for example, will be ended in the next budget year – which will represent an additional decline in financing of \$13-14M for the University.
- This is an unprecedented situation, that a provincial budget has been tabled that makes zero provision to university operating funds.

- Notwithstanding all of the above and the University remains on track to meet the deficit target for 2024-25.
- Dr. Carr invited Governors to read the President's report to learn about the amazing things that happen at the University, which include successes of students, faculty and alumni on an ongoing basis. Embedded in that report are the reasons why the University remains transformative for the lives of the students, and important for the health and future of our society.
- Dr. Carr closed his comments by sharing the good news of the announcement by Groupe Desjardins of a gift of \$2.5M in support of startup entrepreneurship and career development opportunities at District 3, V1 Studio and the John Molson School of Business (JMSB). Guy Cormier, President and CEO of Desjardins, was at the event where the announcement was made, joined by Dr. Carr and Dean Anne-Marie Croteau from JMSB.
- The University's partnership with Desjardins dates back almost 20 years and reflects a strong value alignment between two organizations with authentic ties to the real world, a passion for entrepreneurship, and commitment to youth and next generation enterprise. G. Cormier received an honorary doctorate from the University in 2022 and has been mentoring this year's cohort of the John Molson Executive MBA program.

10. Other business

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

11. Adjournment

The Chair declared the Open Session adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

K. Singh
Karan Singh
Secretary of the Board of Governors