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CHAIR’S MESSAGE

This annual report for Concordia University’s Senate provides the highlights of activities for the 2020-21 academic year—a year marked by many successes at our university against the backdrop of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Concordia’s momentum this year is clear not only from our continued strong rankings, but our enrolment: while many Quebec universities saw their student numbers decline in the COVID context, ours increased. Our necessarily virtual Open Houses turned out to be our largest ever, reaching students from 109 countries.

It was an exceptional year for new initiatives. To take our leading research to the next level by facilitating cross-disciplinary exchange both within and outside Concordia, we launched our Next-Generation Cities Institute, opened our state-of-the-art Applied Science Hub and got Board approval to establish our new School of Health. On the social and environmental justice fronts, we launched our Equity Office, the President’s Task Force on Anti-Black Racism, and our Sustainability Action Plan. While lockdowns and successive COVID-19 waves meant the majority of our course elements were conducted virtually, we successfully introduced a new series of work-integrated learning University Skills courses to meet the growing demand for experiential learning.

These achievements demonstrate the continued cohesion and strength of the Concordia community—faculty, staff and students alike. Clearly, this was an exceptional and difficult academic year. It was extremely disruptive and taxing on everyone—students, faculty, staff and administrators. Nevertheless, our community accomplished remarkable things, as it has done since the outbreak of the pandemic. By way of illustration, we should all be extremely proud that in spring 2021 we had the largest graduating class in Concordia’s history.

While some trends and indications of what a post-pandemic future for higher education might look like emerged this year, much uncertainty remains. The Senate’s role in helping Concordia navigate these uncharted waters through collegial reflection and discussion is invaluable. I offer my sincere thanks to all the members of Senate who have served this past year and for the year ahead.

Graham Carr
President and Vice-Chancellor
MANDATE

Senate is responsible for the academic governance of the University, including matters related to research, faculties, departments, libraries, programs and courses, academic standards, regulations, policies and procedures, and the granting of degrees, diplomas and certificates (excluding honorary degrees). The functions and powers of Senate are listed in Section 13 of the By-Laws.

STANDING COMMITTEES

The work of Senate is supported by its standing committees which regularly report to Senate and bring forward recommendations as required. A full description of each committee’s composition and mandate is included in the Membership and Functions of Senate Standing Committees.

ACADEMIC PLANNING AND PRIORITIES COMMITTEE (APPC)
Studies and evaluates the implications of all proposals regarding academic development and priorities, supports the academic planning function of the university and makes reports and recommendations to Senate on academic planning and academic priorities.

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS COMMITTEE (APC)
Coordinates and makes recommendations to Senate regarding credit programs and undergraduate academic regulations.

DISTINGUISHED PROFESSOR EMERITUS COMMITTEE
Assesses and reviews nominations and recommends to Senate the awarding of the title of Distinguished Professor Emeritus.

ETHICS COMMITTEE
Oversees and enforces the application of the Code of Ethics and Conduct Applicable to Members of Senate and Members of Committees Established by Senate (US-1).

LIBRARY COMMITTEE
 Acts as an advisory body to the University Librarian and Senate in connection with library objectives, policies, and budget and the development of its services and collections.

RESEARCH COMMITTEE
Studies and makes recommendations to Senate concerning the development, administration, guidelines and policies regarding research and the support thereof.

SPECIAL GRADUATION AWARDS COMMITTEE
Solicits and reviews nominations and recommends recipients to Senate for the eight special graduation awards.

STEERING COMMITTEE
Reviews Senate Agendas and ensures that the documentation forwarded to Senate is appropriate and in a form permitting effective debate.

MEETINGS

Eight regular meetings of Senate were held during the 2020-21 academic year:

- September 18, 2020
- October 16, 2020
- November 13, 2020
- December 4, 2020
- February 19, 2021
- March 19, 2021
- April 23, 2021
- May 21, 2021

All Senate and Senate standing committee meetings were held virtually due to the public health situation.
The highlights of the main topics discussed during those meetings are summarized below.

**COVID-19 PANDEMIC**
As has been the case since the spring of 2020, a good part of the Senate meetings was devoted to updates by the President and the senior leadership team regarding the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the work, initiatives and actions undertaken to address the challenges in relation thereto.

**FALL READING WEEK**
Following presentations and discussions in previous years with respect to adding a fall reading week, Senate approved in March 2021 the implementation of a fall reading week and the resulting adjustments to the length of the fall and winter terms. Starting in fall 2023, the fall term will comprise 12 weeks of classes or instructional activities and a one-week reading break during the week of the Thanksgiving Holiday.

**CURRICULUM CHANGES**
While Senate approved numerous undergraduate curriculum changes and regulations as well as numerous graduate curriculum changes throughout the year; of special note is the approval of the undergraduate curriculum proposal regarding the new University Skills courses. The new series of work-integrated learning courses was developed in collaboration with Concordia’s FutureBound program of the Student Success Centre and the Future Skills Innovation Network (FUSION), a pan-Canadian initiative to develop innovative approaches to skills development led by Concordia in collaboration with five other universities.

**ESTABLISHMENT OF THE SCHOOL OF HEALTH**
After years of research and stakeholder consultation, at its May 2021 meeting, Senate recommended to the Board of Governors that it approve the establishment of the School of Health. Emerging from discussions that began in 2015 as part of the Double our Research Strategic Direction, the School of Health will serve as a showcase for the diversity of health research at Concordia and will consist of three transversal hubs, reflecting existing research strengths across the University: Community Health Hub, Clinical Research and Prevention Hub, and Biomedical Science and Engineering Research Hub. These hubs are designed to facilitate interdisciplinary research within and across them.

**RESEARCH**
Concordia Materials Characterization Platform was granted University-recognized status in accordance with the Policy on Research Units and Infrastructure Platforms (VPRGS-8).
GENERAL
The following individuals gave presentations throughout the year, in order to keep Senators apprised of ongoing projects and initiatives:

- Amy Fish and Lisa White presented the highlights of the Ombuds Office annual report and the Office of Rights and Responsibilities annual report, respectively.
- Nadia Bhuiyan presented the report on Intership Study at Concordia University.
- Gaya Arasaratnam delivered a presentation on Campus Wellness and Support Services.
- Anne Whitelaw proposed academic accommodations for the fall 2020 for discussion at Senate.
- Lisa Ostiguy and Lisa White updated Senate on the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) working group recommendations and the EDI office.
- William Cheaib, Monica Mulrennan, Jason Ens and Sabrina Lavoie provided an overview of Concordia’s commitment to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Voluntary University Review (VUR) process.
- Anne Whitelaw provided an update on the alternate grading policy which will be submitted for approval in 2021-22.

MEMBERSHIP
The membership of Senate for the 2020-21 (as of May 1, 2021) included:

VOTING MEMBERS
EX-OFFICIO
Graham Carr, President and Vice-Chancellor
Anne Whitelaw, Interim Provost and Vice-President, Academic
Paula Wood-Adams, Interim Vice-President, Research and Graduate Studies
Pascale Sicotte, Dean, Faculty of Arts and Science
Mourad Debbabi, Interim Dean, Gina Cody School of Engineering and Computer Science
Annie Géron, Dean, Faculty of Fine Arts
Anne-Marie Croteau, Dean, John Molson School of Business
Effrosyni (Faye) Diamantoudi, Interim Dean, School of Graduate Studies
Guylaine Beaudry, University Librarian

FACULTY OF ARTS AND SCIENCE
Shimon Amir
Leslie Barker (PT)
Matthew Barker
Elizabeth Bloodgood
Cathy Bolton
Christopher Brett
Selvadurai Dayanandan
Mary Esteve
Elizabeth Fast
Ariela Freedman
Helena Osana
Virginia Penhune
Gilles Peslherbe
Ronald Stern
GINA CODY SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING AND COMPUTER SCIENCE  
Ali Akgunduz  
Alex De Visscher  
Catherine Mulligan  
Reza Soleymani  
Radu Zmeureanu  

FACULTY OF FINE ARTS  
Sally Cooke (PT)  
Christopher Moore  
Kelly Thompson  
Guylaine Vaillancourt  

JOHN MOLSON SCHOOL OF BUSINESS  
Frank Crooks  
Linda Dyer  
Mehdi Farashahi  
Robert Soroka (PT)  

PROFESSIONAL LIBRARIAN  
Vince Graziano  

GRADUATE STUDENTS  
Md Foysal Ahmed  
Sri Divya Doppalapudi  
Duraichelvan Raju  
Praneetha Reddy  

NON-VOTING MEMBERS  
EX-OFFICIO  
Philippe Beauregard, Chief Communications Officer  
Paul Chesser, Vice-President, Advancement  
Denis Cossette, Chief Financial Officer  
Stéphanie De Celles, University Registrar  
Michael Di Grappa, Vice-President, Services and Sustainability  
Isabel Dunnigan, Executive Director, Centre for Continuing Education  
Nadia Hardy, Interim Deputy Provost  
Frederica Jacobs, Secretary-General  

ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPPORT STAFF REPRESENTATIVE  
Candace Jacobs  
Émilie Martel  

GCS PART-TIME FACULTY MEMBER  
Tom Hughes  

SECRETARY OF SENATE  
Danielle Tessier  

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS  
Adewunmi Ajika  
Nicholas Bailey  
James Hanna  
Fiona Harrison-Roberts  
Safwan Hye  
Debra Irabor  
Hannah Jamet-Lange  
Isaiah Joyner  
Samantha Leger  
Colin Long  
Sarah Mazhero  
Alexander Stojda