

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

Friday, March 21, 2025
Immediately following the Closed Session
in the Loyola Chapel
(Room FC-110) on the Loyola Campus
and via Zoom Videoconferencing

PRESENT**Voting members:**

Graham Carr (Chair) (zoom)	Alexandra Dawson	Catherine Mulligan
Angelica Antonakopoulos	Niraj Dayanandan	Xavier Ottenwaelder
Gabriela Aragon	Mourad Debbabi	Véronique Pepin
Ryan Assaker	Ariela Freedman	Ian Rakita (zoom)
Beverley Best (zoom)	Annie Gérin	Rosemary Reilly (zoom)
Theresa Bianco	Andrea Harland	Ramin Sedaghati (zoom)
Amy Buckland	Bonnie Harnden	Anna Sheftel (zoom)
Robin Chemtov	Steve Henle	Pascale Sicotte
Maria Chitoroaga	Mehdi Kharazmi (zoom)	Kamila Sobol (zoom)
Roy Cross	Michael Lecchino	Ayyappan Subramanian
Anne-Marie Croteau	Maggie McDonnell	(zoom)
Fabienne Cyrius (zoom)	David Morris (zoom)	Sofiène Tahar (zoom)
		Anne Whitelaw

Non-voting members: Philippe Beauregard (zoom), Stéphanie de Celles, Isabel Dunnigan, Nadia Hardy, Carlos Santana, Melodie Sullivan (attended as delegate for F. Jacobs) (zoom), Olivia Ward (zoom)

Also attending: Erika Adams, Alison Beck (zoom), Caroline Baril, William Cheaib (zoom), Adelina Feo, Julie Fortier (zoom), Sandra Gabriele, Shelina Houssenaly Kassim (zoom), Kristina Huneault, Mike Popoff (zoom)

ABSENTVoting members:

Mohamad Abdallah	Effrosyni Diamantoudi	Moshe Lander
Duraipaandiyaan	Tim Evans	Vanessa Massot
Anbumani Poongothai	Mar Ibrahim	Christopher Moore
Matthew Barker	Asli Isaaq	Mireille Paquet
Sabine Bergler	Arnav Ishaan	Kareem Rahaman
Patrice Blais	Mia Kennedy	Ahmed Soliman

Non-voting members: Paul Chesser, Denis Cossette, Michael Di Grappa, Stefana Nita

1. Call to order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 2:10 p.m.

1.1 Approval of the Agenda

R-2025-2-4 Upon motion duly moved and seconded, it was unanimously resolved that the Agenda of the Open Session be approved.

1.2 Adoption of February 7, 2025 Minutes

R-2025-2-5 Upon motion duly moved and seconded, it was unanimously resolved that the Minutes of the Open Session meeting of February 7, 2025 be adopted.

CONSENT

2. Committee reports (Document US-2025-2-D2)

The reports were provided for information only.

3. Committee appointment (Document US-2025-2-D3)

R-2025-2-6 Upon motion duly moved and seconded, it was unanimously resolved that the Committee appointment be approved.

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

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

5. President's remarks

- Dr. Carr began with offering congratulations for several student and alumni accomplishments:
 - Students in the University's MA of Public Policy and Public Administration program won the annual National Public Administration Case Competition hosted by Carleton.
 - Business and engineering students from the John Molson School of Business and the Gina Cody School of Engineering and Computer Science placed second in the Engineering and Commerce Case Competition hosted by the University. Placing first was Maastricht University and rounding out the top three was the University of Texas at Austin, a great competition.
 - Two Concordia alumni, Jin-me Yoon (MFA 93) and Clive Robertson (PhD 04), won the Governor General's Awards in Visual and Media Arts.
 - Michael Lecchino, current Senator and member of the Garnet Key Society, received Canada's Volunteer Award in the Emerging Leader category. This award is made by the Ministry of Employment and Social Development Canada, and M. Lecchino is one of only five Canadians to win the emerging leader award.
 - The University also became the first Canadian university to be awarded Gold level STARS status from the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education in recognition of the University's achievements on sustainability and social responsibility.
 - Congratulations to the University's men's basketball team who finished fifth in Canada at national championships at UBC last week and to the men's hockey team who won, for the first time in the University's history, the Queen's Cup, as champions of the combined Ontario and Québec varsity league and who begin their pursuit of a national championship in Ottawa.
 - Finally, congratulations to the University's women's hockey team, who began their defence of the national USports hockey championship the previous day with a victory over St. Francis Xavier University in Waterloo, Ontario.
 - Particular congratulations to Julie Chu and Marc-André Élément, named by their peers as varsity coaches of the year for the University's women's and men's hockey teams.
- Dr. Carr also congratulated Dean Gérin and Dean Sicotte for both securing reappointment for a second term as Dean of the Faculty of Fine Arts and Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Science, respectively.

- He thanked everyone who contributed to making February's Open House a success. Having attended the Open House on both campuses, he appreciated the efforts of students, staff and faculty to ensure that the University put their best forward.
- In some good news, there has been a positive trend in terms of undergraduate recruitment from CEGEPs, and globally in terms of PhD and research master's applications. The University needs to continue to sustain this pattern, issue admission offers and do whatever is in the University's power to confirm and register new students. While encouraging overall, these gains are offset by declining international undergraduate registrations and important losses in professional master's programs.
- Dr. Carr noted that, based on current trends, it is likely that the student population will be smaller next year than in the current year, which means that there will be an important loss of revenue for the University in the next fiscal year
- The situation with student recruitment continues to be dire across the country, but particularly in Québec, where the government decided not to exempt universities from quotas on international students with Bill 74. This is despite strenuous objections of all Québec universities, including Concordia.
- As of February 26, 2025, and until February 26, 2026, the Québec government has set a maximum number of applications for temporary selection for studies for each educational institution. The timing and operationalization of this policy have created confusion for university admissions and programs, and for prospective students.
- Additionally, the reputational damage for the university sector, especially on the heels of the policy changes that were experienced a year ago, makes it more challenging.
- Dr. Carr shared with Senate that the Paris based newspaper, *Le Monde* ran an article last week on the refusal of student applicants from France. Québec and Canada had been the third most important destination for French students seeking an international experience prior to this year.
- Given the reality with visa delays, the University is anticipating that many international students who applied for admission for Fall 2025 will not be able to attend in 2025-26. As a result, in countries where we know visa approvals take longer, we are accepting students for admission in 2026.
- As institutions have been reeling from the negative effects of the international student quota policy, the provincial government - without consultation or advance warning - also announced two weeks ago that it was removing newly recruited international faculty members and researchers from the list of professions eligible for fast-track permanent residency. The reasoning was that there is no labor shortage in university teaching or research, the logic of which goes entirely contrary to the thrust of prior government strategies to develop research clusters and innovation zones or

poles of excellence in targeted fields where increased recruitment is prioritized to grow capacity. The university sector is at an impasse with the current government over the role of higher education in meeting the needs of society and the economy.

- The Minister of Finance will be presenting the budget next week, but not much relief is expected nor new investment in the higher education sector. The combined collapse of the rest of Canada and international student recruitment markets, plus the changes to the funding formula by the government has resulted in the largest defunding of the university sector in Québec's history.
- Additionally, universities in the United States are struggling as they are experiencing or fearing massive defunding of research and training activities, literally hundreds of millions of dollars of cuts for many universities, both public and private. Many of these cuts target particular areas of research and there are potential impacts for Canadian researchers collaborating on U.S.-funded projects. Canadian researchers working on projects funded in whole or in part by U.S. federal agencies were sent a questionnaire to determine how their work aligns with the current U.S. administration's policy agenda. At the University, we have one research project only that receives funding from a U.S. federal agency (the National Institutes of Health - NIH). The grant is approximately \$23,000 and there has been no impact based on the available information. The University is continuing to monitor the situation to be ready and advise researchers on future collaboration with the United States that could fall under this funding criteria.
- Dr. Carr concluded that in an article in *Le Devoir* earlier in the week, Rémi Quirion and Mona Nemer, Chief Scientists of Québec and Canada respectively, wrote about the opportunity for Canada to capitalize on the current political situation with the United States and invest in the importance of research and development north of the border. With a federal election campaign imminent, it is certainly an opportune moment to make the case for higher education.

6. Academic update (Document US-2025-2-D3)

A. Whitelaw informed Senate of the start of the *Festival International du Film sur l'Art* where some experimental films produced by Concordia graduates will be screened and invited Senators to take the opportunity to discover some very interesting films.

There were no additional updates on the report that was provided.

7. Revisions to the *Policy on Recording of Lectures* (PRVPA-2)

A. Whitelaw made a presentation on the *Policy on Recording of Lectures*. A summary of points discussed are as follows:

- Under PRVPA-2, recordings can only be made with written prior permission of the Instructor (section 1). A Request Form is required to be submitted to the course Instructor (section 2). The purpose of a recording is to meet a student's particular

need and is only for the purpose of private study. The permission to do so shall not be unreasonably withheld by the Instructor (section 3).

- A. Whitelaw noted that one key revision to the current policy is that, where the permission to record a lecture has been obtained as an Accommodation under the *Policy on Accessibility* (PRVPA-14), sections 1, 2 and 3 of the current Policy as outlined above do not apply – in this instance, a student who is registered with the Access Centre for Students with Disabilities (“ACSD”) and has received approval for this specific accommodation does not need to receive approval from the instructor to record lectures.
- Students who have permission to record have a responsibility to ensure the privacy of the Instructor and other students and they must respect intellectual property rights, including *Policy on Copyright Compliance* (SG-2).
- Recordings cannot be shared, reproduced or uploaded, to any web or digital network environment, including, but not limited to, social media, online platforms, cloud repositories of any kind, with the exception being University-approved tools. Recordings must be stored in a secure, password-protected environment and they must be deleted when the course is over. Recordings cannot be made, used, and distributed for any commercial purposes or compensation by any person.
- Students who have access to authorized recorded Lectures can only use those recordings for personal study and cannot reproduce, share or upload the recordings to any web or digital environment.
- Violations of the Policy are treated under applicable University policies, including the *Code of Rights and Responsibilities* (BD-3) and the *Academic Code of Conduct*.
- A. Whitelaw emphasized that the revisions to the Policy strengthen prohibitions against recording lectures without permission and very clearly indicates the sanctions that will follow if the policy is violated.
- A. Whitelaw went on to provide an overview of disability-related accommodations and the work of the ACSD. Accommodations are not about giving students an unfair advantage; rather, they are about removing barriers that impede some students from succeeding. The ACSD serves approximately 10% of the student population at Concordia, and those numbers are growing. It is important to understand that there is no “one-size fits all” approach for accommodations, and the ACSD team takes a closely researched and analyzed approach to assessing the barriers to learning experienced by the students they serve.
- Once a disability-related barrier has been identified, Concordia is legally responsible for providing accommodations. The current Policy on recording must be changed to meet the University’s legal obligations under the *Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms* and the University’s *Policy on Accessibility* (PRVPA-14).

- A. Whitelaw then discussed software solutions and information security. A key advantage of software solutions is that they give students a greater sense of autonomy and agency for engaging with course material. Any software that is used at Concordia must be in compliance with Quebec privacy laws, which are the strongest in North America. Data is encrypted at rest and in transit and is stored on appropriate servers. Moreover, Concordia is very proactive in ensuring that its cybersecurity is as strong as possible.
- Finally, regarding intellectual property, A. Whitelaw acknowledged that concerns about unauthorized recordings are justified as there have been instances in recent years of misuse of unauthorized recordings. However, the revisions to the Policy address the risk of unauthorized recordings by outlining the sanctions that will be imposed if the Policy is violated. The Policy focuses on the protection of intellectual property, and it is also focused on removing barriers to accommodations for the students registered with the ACSD who have received permission to record lectures.

Senators raised various questions; some items raised are summarized herein:

- The proposed policy change doesn't consider the pedagogy used in certain courses, e.g. in courses that are more conversational and discussion-based, recording may inhibit students and instructors from sharing their views openly;
- A Senator asked whether the ACSD can have discussions with faculty members on cases where requests for accommodations are received. In response, Senate was informed that the protocol for assessing the need for an accommodation is detailed and very personal to the student in question, and as such each accommodation and related plan is personal to the student. It is not possible to communicate with all concerned faculty while these assessments are being done, both in terms of capacity and timing, to ensure that students can complete the assessment and receive appropriate accommodation without missing out on their classes;
- Overall, concern was shared that there aren't enough opportunities for faculty and the ACSD to collaborate and work together, and that the University should facilitate this collaboration so that both sides can support each other's work;
- A Senator shared a concern around Indigenous studies and related courses and that the dissemination of recordings of these courses and contents is not considering the sensitive nature of Indigenous knowledge and its sharing;
- A concern was raised that there is no manner of enforcing the policy breach if someone chooses to circulate a recording. In response to this concern, it was explained by the University's legal office, that breaches of policy are managed under the *Code of Rights and Responsibilities* and that the accommodation requirement is a legal one that the University is obligated to provide to students;

- Senators spoke about balancing authority of faculty members to determine what transpires in their classes with meeting the special accommodation needs of some students to make recordings;
- Senators reaffirmed their support of students and to find mechanisms to provide accommodations;
- It was reemphasized that requests for accommodation come from a small group of students and the permission to record is specific and confined to ensure that the University meets its legal obligation to provide accommodations. No other use of the recordings would be permitted, and the IT protocols at the University are robust to ensure that the use is limited to the purpose of the requested and approved accommodations.

All of the points discussed above would be taken into consideration as the policy dossier is revised further.

8. APC recommendation: Changes to the program curriculum FA-STUDART-5730
(Document US-2025-2-D5)

A. Gérin presented the item and noted that the University's Studio Arts program is very well regarded across Canada. The program hasn't been revised in a long time and the proposed revision was to change the current MFA three-year program to a two-year 45-credit thesis program. Additional details on the revision of the program were detailed in the documentation circulated. There were no additional costs associated with these changes.

E. Adams explained that the goal was to align the program with what the students are doing in practice. Also, the changes would make the students eligible for FRQ funding.

In response to a question on whether the thesis supervision would require additional faculty support, it was clarified that most students already had supervisors for their work and as such no additional resources would be required at this time.

R-2025-2-7 Upon motion duly moved and seconded, it was unanimously resolved that, on recommendation of the Academic Programs Committee, Senate approve the proposed changes to the Studio Arts MFA curriculum (FA-STUDART-5730).

10. Question period

During question period, a question came up about the University having used up all of its numeral identifiers for courses. S. Gabriele confirmed that the University's current practice is to simply add an additional number, so that the course numeral is four digits instead of three. When the University runs out of three-digit course numbers, a fourth digit is added.

11. Other business

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

12. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:54 p.m.

K. Singh
Karan Singh
Secretary of Senate