

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

Friday, March 27, 2026 at 2:00 p.m.  
in the Norman D. Hébert, LLD Meeting Room (EV 2.260)  
on the SGW Campus and via Zoom video conferencing

PRESENT

Voting members:

Graham Carr (Chair)	Lina El-Bakaye	Véronique Pepin
Seif Bedair	Zoe Erika-Okoye	Isabella Providenti
Theresa Bianco	Tim Evans	Sina Queyras
Patrice Blais	Ariela Freedman	Isabelle Ranger
Onur Bodur (zoom)	Annie Gérin	Rosemary Reilly (zoom)
Narmine Boubasla	Michael Gillis (zoom)	Aphrodite Salas (zoom)
Cynthia Bruce	Steven Henle	Ramin Sedaghati
Robin Chemtov	Vanessa Massot (zoom)	Adam Semergian (zoom)
Roy Cross	Maggie McDonnell (zoom)	Anna Sheftel (zoom)
Anne-Marie Croteau	Christopher Moore	Pascale Sicotte
Fabienne Cyrius	Peter Morden	Kamila Sobol
Alexandra Dawson	Catherine Mulligan	Reza Soleymani
Mourad Debbabi	Sanaz Naghdi	Huu Thien Tran
Effrosyni Diamantoudi	Xavier Ottenwaelder	Radu Zmeureanu
Geoffrey Dover	Mireille Paquet	

Non-voting members: Philippe Beauregard, Paul Chesser, Stéphanie de Celles, Michael Di Grappa, Isabel Dunnigan, Tom Hughes, Frederica Jacobs (zoom), Brad Nelson, Olivia Ward

Also attending: Caroline Baril, Rachel Berger, Julie Fortier (zoom), Aaron Johnson, Kristina Huneault (zoom)

ABSENT

Voting members:

Saraluz Barton-Gomez	Andrea Harland	Kamila Sobol
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Amy Buckland  
Eléanore Handsone

Moshe Lander  
Muhammad Ilyas Nadeem

Ahmed Soliman  
Preethi Srikanth  
Roberto Viereck-Salinas

Non-voting members: Kathleen Lizé, Frederica Martin

**1. Call to order**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 2:04 p.m.

**1.1 Approval of the Agenda**

*R-2026-2-1 Upon motion duly moved and seconded, it was unanimously resolved that the Agenda of the Open Session be approved with item 4 being moved to the Regular Agenda.*

**1.2 Adoption of February 6, 2026 Minutes**

*R-2026-2-2 Upon motion duly moved and seconded, it was unanimously resolved that the Minutes of the Open Session meeting of February 6, 2026 be adopted.*

**CONSENT**

**2. Committee report (Document US-2026-2-D1)**

The report was provided for information only.

**3. Committee appointments (Document US-2026-2-D2)**

*R-2026-2-3 Upon motion duly moved and seconded, it was unanimously resolved that the Committee and Faculty Tribunal Pool appointments be approved.*

**REGULAR**

**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 by noting some recent student accomplishments:
  - Two teams from the John Molson School of Business competed and won silver medals at prestigious international case competitions at the University of Navarra, Spain and in Belgrade, Serbia.

- Five students from the Public Policy and Public Administration Master's Degree program in Political Science won the National Public Administration Case Competition in Ottawa. This win resulted in Concordia becoming the first university to win the top prize two years running since the competition was created 15 years ago.
- The University's engineering and business students hosted the EngComm case competition in February, attracting teams from across Canada and the US, including UC Berkeley and UT Austin, Maastricht University in Europe and King Faud University in Saudi Arabia.
- Dr. Carr congratulated Gina Cody School of Engineering and Computer Science faculty member Dr. Chun Yan An, one of eight individuals who received the Dorothy Killiam Fellowship (valued at \$80K), which is designed to support scholars with exceptional ability to pursue research. Dr. An's work focuses on coastal resilience and how to anticipate and prepare for environmental emergencies.
- On April 17<sup>th</sup>, the University will award an honorary doctorate to Gina McCarthy, former White House National Climate Advisor, at a special conferral ceremony. G. McCarthy has an extraordinary career in academia and government, in public health and the environment. The University will be celebrating her achievements because they align so well with all that we are doing in the climate action sphere, and at a moment when sustainability champions are facing unprecedented obstacles in other countries.
- An example of the positive impact that the University has on the *rayonnement* of Quebec is all the publicity that focused on Montreal following the awarding of an Oscar to the National Film Board for the animation film, *The Girl Who Cried Pearls*. The co-creator of the film, Maciek Szczerbowski, is a BFA 94 grad in scenography. Seven other Concordia graduates from different domains in fine arts worked on the film as well.
- Over the past few months, Interim Provost E. Diamantoudi has been visiting departments and faculties on an individual basis to discuss among other things the need to develop new academic programs going forward. Following these visits, the Office of the Provost has already received suggestions and ideas for 30 academic programs, which are being assessed.
- In mid-February, the University received ministerial approval and launched two new undergraduate programs in cybersecurity: a Bachelor of Science (BSc) in

Cybersecurity and a Bachelor of Engineering (BEng) in Cybersecurity. While the approval for the programs was only received two weeks before the March 1<sup>st</sup> application deadline, the programs have already received 400 applications.

- Fall 2026 will be the first intake of students to B Eng in Chemical and Materials Engineering. New admissions are at 136 in Chemical and Materials Engineering and significantly, 80 of those admitted are women. Dr. Carr congratulated the Gina Cody School of Engineering and Computer Science on this remarkable development, noting that the University has been committed to increased gender equity in disciplines where historically women have been underrepresented.
- Dr. Carr reported that the STRIVE Task Force on Identity-based Violence has now completed its work. The Task Force was created to examine issues related to antisemitism, anti-Asian racism, transphobia, anti-Arab racism and Islamophobia, as well as the cross-cutting themes of campus climate and campus engagement. The co-chairs compiled the findings of the working groups into a draft report with recommendations, which was presented to a steering committee made up of the heads of the sub-committees and other members of the University community. Following the steering committee's review, a second version of the report has been finalized and presented to Dr. Carr, as well as to Senior Administration, including the deans. The report will be made public mid-April, which is the two-year anniversary of the establishment of the Task Force.
- Once the STRIVE Task Force's report is made public, an implementation committee will be constituted to map next steps forward. The gist of the report is that as a community, while we seek to learn from the past, it is essential to focus on the future to find ways to improve the experience on campus, which will benefit all members of the community.
- On the tuition litigation dossier, Dr. Carr noted that, as already discussed at a previous Senate meeting, the University decided not to launch a new lawsuit contesting the Québec government's increase of Rest of Canada student tuition fees. The government's right to set tuition can't be contested, the issue being if the set amount is justifiable. The government complied with the letter of the judgment, but in the University's view, not the spirit.
- The University's assessment of the 'legality' of the new justification for the tuition increase was complicated because even before the government provided its latest justification, Concordia's co-plaintiff, McGill, had already increased Rest of Canada tuition beyond the government's \$12K threshold and is now charging out-of-province students \$14K in business and engineering. Thus, on the balance of factors, the University decided not to take on the expense of a new court case. Instead, the

University wishes to start afresh with the government, reaffirming Concordia's role and contribution to society and the province's economy.

- Discussions are continuing with the government to provide increased French-language learning opportunities for students to better enable them to choose to stay in Québec after graduation and the University has begun new initiatives to support that goal. As an example, in the EV Building today, there is a job fair that aims to link international engineering students with employers and organizations in the regions through the program *Réussir en français* in an effort to help students increase their employability and make the choice to stay in the province while helping regions address professional labor shortages. There are plans to expand this program to include students in other disciplines next year.
- Next week, Dr. Carr and his chief of staff, William Cheaib will join Minister Biron on a higher education mission to France, to announce some new bilateral partnerships and to raise Concordia's visibility as a destination university for French students. As of date, Concordia will be the only anglophone university participating in the mission.
- Dr. Carr reported on recruitment, providing a high-level overview of current application patterns. He noted that this year, CEGEP applications have decreased, largely because of a decrease in applicants from anglophone CEGEPs, which are traditionally the major source of undergraduate students. However, there have been small increases in applications from francophone CEGEPs, Rest of Canada students, and inter-institutional transfers. There have also been efforts underway to encourage students who were previously enrolled and withdrew to return to their studies. At the graduate level, there has been an encouraging 30% increase in PhD applications. The federal government's commitment to fast-track visas for international PhD students to a two-week period that was announced in December 2025 seems to be bearing fruit.
- Dr. Carr concluded his remarks by sharing updates from the provincial budget that had been announced the week before. Most details are still pending, and because the university network had very low expectations, it was a surprise to see any increase in the overall higher education grant. However, it should also be noted that higher education funding is not only distributed to the universities but also funds CEGEPs and the activities of the Ministry, therefore it is unclear what any distribution across sectors will amount to. Details of individual allocations are forthcoming, but there is at least some possibility that the University could receive marginal benefits. That said, it is important to note that the government of Québec is currently facing a significant structural deficit. Therefore, the University needs to be prepared for the

possibility that, after the fall 2026 elections, regardless of which party takes power, more budget cuts could be made early in the new government's mandate.

**6. Academic update** (Document US-2026-2-D3)

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

**7. Policy on Research Entities** (Document US-2026-2-D4)

T. Evans introduced the item and explained that following the presentation of the policy to Senate in February, the policy document was revised to include feedback from Senate and also input that was received from Senators. The modified document was presented to the Senate Research Committee, and following recommendation of the Senate Research Committee is being recommended to Senate for approval.

*R-2026-2-4 Upon motion duly moved and seconded, it was unanimously resolved that, upon recommendation of the Senate Research Committee, Senate approve revisions to the Policy on Research Units and Infrastructure Platforms (VPRGS-8), now being renamed as Policy on Research Entities (VPRII-8) as detailed in the attached documentation.*

**8. Department Name Change: Concordia Institute for Information Systems Engineering (CIISE) to the Department of Cybersecurity and Intelligent Systems Engineering** (Document US-2026-2-D5)

Dean Debbabi presented this item that as per the protocol, the name of the departments at the University usually includes the name of programs, in its title/description. As such, the current CIISE is being recommended to be renamed: Department of Cybersecurity and Intelligent Systems Engineering.

*R-2026-2-5 Upon motion duly moved and seconded, it was unanimously resolved that, following recommendation of the Faculty Council of the Gina Cody School of Engineering and Computer Science Senate recommend to the Board of Governors that the Concordia Institute for Information Systems Engineering (CIISE) be renamed as the Department of Cybersecurity and Intelligent Systems Engineering.*

**9. Question period**

A Senator expressed concern about incidents on campus targeting a Holocaust Studies professor and the Azrieli institute. The Senator noted that they hoped that the recommendations in the forthcoming STRIVE Task Force report would take note of what is happening on campus, as it is critical for all community members to feel safe on campus.

There were questions from Senators about the process for bringing motions to Senate in light of a refusal to entertain a motion from the floor at a previous Senate meeting, and another motion that was brought to Senate Steering but ultimately not included in the agenda of Senate. In addition, a Senator asserted that the mandate of Senate (pursuant to the

By-laws) allows it to consider any items that impact the academic programs at the University.

The Chair reiterated the process regarding motions at Senate, which is clearly explained at Senate Orientation and outlined in the Senate meeting procedures document. As per our governance process, it is the responsibility of Senate Steering to vet proposed motions before they are brought to Senate to ensure that the content of the draft motions is factually accurate, that the subject of the draft motions fall within the purview of Senate, and that the proposed outcome of the motion is reasonable.

There was a question about whether the quality of programs would be negatively affected because of potentially increased class sizes and the non-renewal of LTA contracts. It was noted that, in scheduling courses for the academic year, the faculty deans work closely with department chairs to determine how best to meet program requirements. Furthermore, the deferral of sabbaticals was part of the plan to ensure that adequate teaching resources are available for program delivery.

A Senator noted the recent tuition increases at McGill and asked whether there was any intention to increase tuition at Concordia. It was confirmed that the tuition for the next year had already been set and as such there were no expected tuition fee increases for 2026-27 other than those mandated by the government of Québec.

There was a question about funding for PhD students. The Senator emphasized that the University needs to find and implement adequate measures to ensure that PhD students have proper funding and to support research activities that are not always limited to the four-year programs to which PhD students are admitted.

The Chair spoke about the increase in graduate enrolment in the past few years, attributing this increase to the robust research and supervision that is offered at Concordia. The Chair also noted that the university has invested heavily in increasing financial support for graduate students over several years, and that graduate funding comes in the form of mixed offerings, including fee remissions that are offered to most entering PhD students, as well as research stipends and teaching assistantships.

#### **10. Other business**

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

#### **11. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:05 p.m.

*K. Singh*  
Karan Singh  
Secretary of Senate