

MINUTES OF THE OPEN SESSION

COUNCIL OF THE GINA CODY SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING AND COMPUTER SCIENCE

Friday, September 11, 2020

ZOOM

PRESENT:

Chair: Debbabi, M.

Voting members: Agarwal, A.; Akgunduz, A.; Anbuhi, S.; Athienitis, A.; Bagchi, A.; Ben Hamza, A.; Campbell, S.; Contreras, I.; El Ayoubi, C.; Fayyaz, F.; Goodarzi, B.; Gopakumar, G.; Hammad, A.; Hashtrudi Zad, S.; Khalid, Z.; Kuzgunkaya, O.; Lucia, W.; Narayanan, L.; Nazemi, A.; Ng, H. D.; Ormandjieva, O.; Pugh, M.; Qiu, D.; Rathore, A.; Ronci, D.; Safa, T.; Shayan, Y.; Shihab, E.; Singh, T.; Soliman, A.; Stathopoulos, T.; Thiel, S.; Vermeire, B.; Walia, J.; Youssef, A.; Zeng, Y.

Non-Voting members: Pawelek, P.; Udvud, E.; Ward, M (for Bencheikh, Z.).

Observers: Allaire, V.; Clarke, A.; Fiorentino, N.; Gosselin, G.; Himmo, M.; Martel, C.; Miatello, M.

REGRETS:

Voting members: Carr, G.; De Visscher, A.; Morgan, A.; Popa, T.; Whitelaw, A.; Witte, R.

Non-voting members: Bencheikh, Z.; Edwards, J.-M.; Kraulis, I.

Observers: De Melo, D.

1. Call to Order of the Open Session

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

2. Adoption of the Agenda

Motion 2020-06-01 Upon motion duly moved and seconded (T. Stathopoulos / M. Pugh), it was passed that the Agenda be adopted as submitted.

Vote: Carried unanimously

3. Closed Session

4. Approval of the Minutes of Open Session ECFC 2020-05 – May 15, 2020

Motion 2020-06-06 Upon motion duly moved and seconded (Y. Shayan / T. Stathopoulos), it was passed that the Minutes be approved with the following revisions:

- *“We’ve got five Canada Excellence Research Chairs (CERCs)...” to be corrected to “We’ve got five CURC...”*

- *Chairs Remarks: "We have received results from NSERC discovery grants competition. Three DAS awards were received by Dr. Ali Dolatabadi (MIAE), Dr. Wen Fang Xie (MIAE) and Dr. Emad Shihab (CSSE)."*

Vote: Carried unanimously

5. Chair's Remarks - Summary

- Interim Dean Debbabi congratulated GCS faculty members on a productive summer and thanked them for their dedication.
- Dr. Catherine Mulligan from BCEE, has been named the newest president of the Canadian Society for Civil Engineering (CSCE) and is the first Concordian to hold that position.
- Dr. Kash Khorasani from ECE is leading the SPNET initiative (Security/Policy, Nexus of Emerging Technology), which aims to develop new defense policy frameworks to enhance transparency, predictability, assurance, and accountability of autonomous, AI, and cyberspace systems.
- Dr. Jeremy Clark, from CIISE was one of the organizers of the first international virtual conference, held at Concordia in July 2020. It was on Privacy Enhancing Technologies, and highlighted how truly innovative and adaptable we can be.
- A cross-faculty research initiative led by Dr. Ursula Eicker is in the final approval stage: the Cities Institute is a research cluster that explores the concept of next-generation cities.
- The Institute in Applied Artificial Intelligence is also in the preparation stage. It involves a large number of faculty members across various departments and faculties. The research will explore the topic of applied AI in different areas from energy efficiency to power systems, next-generation cities and cyber security.
- The School is at 98% of weighted FTE's compared to the same period last year. There is a 15% increase in undergraduate students' admission and another 15% in the thesis-based enrolment. The MEng program saw a drop in numbers, as a result of our international student's inability to enter the country due to the pandemic.
- GCS is well prepared for the fall semester. We have worked in conjunction with the university to inform new and returning students with regards to the in-person activities available.
- This year's Shuffle will take a different form and will be held virtually from September 18th to 25th. Everyone is encouraged to register and join the GCS team.

6. Associate Dean Remarks

Anjali Agarwal, Associate Dean of Student Academic Services and Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

- Undergraduate admissions have increased approximately 15-17 %. Winter admissions will continue to be monitored. With some of the programs slightly below the targeted enrolments, we will try to attract more students to them.
- The processing of student requests is ongoing. The SAS team is working hard to streamline student requests and transition them online.
- A reminder to submit Summer II grades as early as possible.
- The deadline for dropping courses is September 21st.
- The undergraduate studies virtual Open House is being held on October 24, 2020

Emad Shihab, Associate Dean, Research and Graduate Studies

- We have finalized the 23 FRQNT team grants received. An additional 16 proposals are expected to be submitted by next week.

- We are in the process of preparing for the NSERC discovery grants and working closely with the Office of Research.
- Thanks were given Dr. Ursula Eicker for her leadership of the Cities Institute, and to Dr. Kash Khorasani, Dr. Nizar Bouguila, and Dr. Tristan Glatard for their efforts and support in moving the initiative on Applied AI forward.
- Reminder to encourage faculty members to apply for upcoming internal grants: ARRE, Team Start-up, Seed program.
- Mentioned enrolment, expressed the hope that the situation with the pandemic will improve.

Ali Akgunduz, Associate Dean, Academic Programs

- From the perspective of academic programs, summer has been a busy time that involved participation in different committees mostly related to teaching and learning. A number of guidelines on teaching and assessments were elaborated.
- CTL and AITS are ready and equipped to resolve unexpected issues that may develop during the semester. Our Moodle system now has better capacity to handle file exchanges compared to the winter term.
- With regards to teaching methods, faculty are strongly advised to use a hybrid system. The idea is to either record or pre-recorded lectures and make them available to students.
- In terms of the software to use during lectures, the course outline templates provide additional information.
- No heavy workload in terms of curriculum items. There is only one faculty council meeting left to approve curriculum changes to the undergraduate calendar. Any urgent curriculum items must be submitted as soon as possible.
- In response to a question regarding access to a computer lab and software for a student registered at McGill but taking a course at Concordia, it was explained that in order to access the lab, students have to use the VPN and have a Concordia email-address. In order to accommodate this request, you must contact AITS.

Hoi Dick (Eddie) Ng, Associate Dean Academic Affairs

- We welcomed virtually a number of new faculty members to our School this summer.
- This year, GCS has been allocated five new tenure track positions.
- Further to the recent circulation of the critical path document, which highlights important academic deadlines for faculty members, kindly advise your colleagues who are interested in contract renewal, promotion, etc. to respect the indicated dates.
- This year, due to COVID, the performance evaluation exercise is cancelled for most of the professors who received the CDI previously. The few colleagues who received an evaluation letter in any of the following categories: research, teaching and/or service, will be contacted directly by the Provost Office and advised regarding a date to submit a dossier for evaluation.
- The deadline for the second round of applications for faculty support on course design for online delivery was yesterday. In the first call, GCS received 95 funded applications. By October 5, the selected members should provide some evidence of implementation.
- In response to a question regarding access to a space that students can use before and after their labs, it was explained that the Vanier and Webster Libraries are open with a maximum capacity of 250 people. A potential increase of this number is possible within few weeks of operation. The reservation system is available to everyone. The School is also exploring the possibilities on providing some space for students.

5. Ratification of Elections (ECFC 2020-06-01)

On an exceptional basis and due to the time sensitivity of this ratification, a section of document ECFC 2020-06-01: Membership on the Council of the Gina Cody School of Engineering and Computer Science - CSSE Representatives, was ratified at the beginning of Council, which coincided with the closed session. It was carried unanimously on the closed session motion 2020-06-03.

Motion 2020-06-07

Upon motion duly moved and seconded (H. D. Ng / T. Stathopoulos), it was passed that the documents ECFC 2020-06-01:

- Steering Committee for the Council of the School of Graduate Studies,*
 - Advisory Search Committee for the Dean of the Gina Cody School of Engineering and Computer Science,*
 - Academic Planning and Priorities Committee,*
 - Senate Library Committee,*
 - Graduate Thesis and Mentoring Awards (GTMA) Committee*
- be adopted as submitted.*

Vote: Carried unanimously

Motion 2020-06-08

Upon motion duly moved and seconded (E. Shihab / H. D. Ng), it was passed that the FRC Composition document ECFC 2020-06-01 be adopted as submitted.

Vote: Carried unanimously

6. Other business

Dr. Debbabi mentioned the passing away of Dr. Fancott, a colleague whose life was a true example of dedication and commitment to both academic and student communities.

7. Adjournment at 3:00 p.m.

Zineb Bencheikh,
Secretary of Faculty Council
Gina Cody School of Engineering & Computer Science