

MINUTES OF THE OPEN SESSION
COUNCIL OF THE GINA CODY SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING AND COMPUTER SCIENCE

Friday, March 12, 2021

PRESENT:

Chair: Debbabi, M.

Voting members: Agarwal, A.; Akgunduz, A.; Athienitis, A.; Bagchi, A.; Ben Hamza, A.; Campbell, S.; Contreras, I.; De Visscher, A.; El Ayoubi, C.; Fayyaz, F.; Goodarzi, B.; Hammad, A.; Hashtrudi Zad, S.; Jahanshahi-Anbuhi, S.; Kuzgunkaya, O.; Lucia, W.; Narayanan, L.; Nazemi, A.; Ng, H.; Ormandjieva, O.; Paquet, J.; Pugh, M.; Qiu, D.; Ronci, D.; Safa, T.; Shayan, Y.; Shihab, E.; Singh, T.; Soliman, A.; Stathopoulos, T.; Tajmel, T. (for Gopakumar, G.); Vermeire, B.; Walia, J.; Witte, R.; Youssef, A.; Zeng, Y.

Non-Voting members: Binsley, R.; Kraulis, I.; Medraj, M.; Ward, M.

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

Guests: Adams-Robinette, H.; Barrafato, A.; Bloom, E.; Wood-Adams, P.

REGRETS:

Voting members: Arabian, M.; Carr, G.; Gopakumar, G.; Khalid, Z.; Maistre, M.; Morgan, A.; Rathore, A.; Whitelaw, A.; Thiel, S.

Non-Voting members: Bencheikh, Z.; Edwards, J.-M.

Observers: De Melo, D.; Fiorentino, N.

1. Closed Session

2. Call to Order of the Open Session

The Chair called the open session of the meeting to order at 2:13 p.m.

3. Adoption of the Agenda

Motion 2021-02-01

Upon motion duly moved and seconded (A. Soliman/L. Narayanan), it was passed that the Agenda be adopted as submitted.

Vote: Carried unanimously

4. Approval of the Minutes of Open Session ECFC 2021-01 – February 12, 2021

Motion 2021-02-02 Upon motion duly moved and seconded (T. Stathopoulos/A. Soliman), it was passed that the Minutes be approved as submitted with the following edits:

- Change the attendance of A. Athienitis from absent to present.*

Vote: Carried unanimously

5. The New Proposal for the School of Health – Presented by Paula Wood-Adams and Heather Adams-Robinette

Dr. Paula Wood-Adams, Interim Vice-President of Research and Graduate Studies was welcomed to council to provide an overview on the processes used to create the new School of Health and to answer questions and receive feedback from faculty. Dr. Wood-Adams explained that the School will consist of three hubs: clinical and preventive health, biomedical science and engineering, and community health. Each hub is comprised of two of the six clusters identified. An appointed Dean will lead the School of Health and will report to both the VPRGS and the Provost, which is a unique reporting structure. This is done as the School will have two main activities: research and PhD programs. Two areas have been identified for interdisciplinary programs: a PhD in community health, and a PhD in biomedical science and engineering. Faculty members will remain in their departments, but they will then become affiliates with the school, if they wish. Once affiliate, they can be involved with the supervision of students, contribute with curriculum, and teach in the program. Approval is still required from Senate and Board for the creation of the School and consultations are currently being done with the faculties. The written feedback will be reviewed in April and then in the month of May the proposal will go to Senate and then to the Board of Governors. Once approved by the Board, a search for the Dean can begin and then a search for the Scientific Directors for each hub. The Scientific Directors will be selected from within the faculties.

Question and Feedback Period

Various feedback and questions were asked, including the following:

- That the School should be independent. It was felt that in order for the School to be successful it should be composed of both undergraduate and graduate students. Dr. Wood-Adams explained that the idea at the moment is to be flexible and research focused and the vision may change in the future.
- It was asked to be mindful not to create conflicts with the research currently offered within the Gina Cody School of Engineering and Computer Science. A structure needs to be defined to avoid competition between colleagues and to ensure we are a collective team. Dr. Wood-Adams explained that the idea is to have the Gina Cody School of Engineering and Computer Science, the Faculty of Arts and Science and the School of Health work together to run the programs. A Dean will allow for strategic development for the future.

Action: The School of Health proposal will be circulated to the members of the GCS Council for written feedback. The deadline to submit comments is April 13, 2021.

6. Chair's Remarks

- The Dean spoke of Dr. Peter Grogono's passing. Dr. Grogono was an outstanding colleague and faculty member at the Gina Cody School of Engineering and Computer Science. He chaired the department and showed a lot of integrity, judgement, and honesty. As a professor he was extremely knowledgeable in programming languages, artificial intelligence and he authored many contributions from books and to journal and conference articles. He will be missed.
- Dr. Chadi Assi in the Concordia Institute for Information Systems Engineering was congratulated for receiving funding from the Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI). He is the lead principal investigator of a research project entitled, "Toward Intelligent and Resilient Smart Cities with Energy-Vehicle-Human Interactions". He has attracted \$1.8 million in total funding and is gearing up to launch an interdisciplinary research infrastructure in summer 2021.
- More attention will be made for the Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI) competitions to increase the participation and funding of GCS.
- Due to the announcement from the university, it was reiterated that because the health and well-being of our community remain our priority, Concordia will continue to remotely deliver teaching this Summer with in-person activities. As has been the case since last summer, there will be some exceptions for teaching labs, where in-person presence is required. Research labs and our libraries on both campuses will remain open. Concordia is targeting the beginning of May to make an announcement about the academic delivery of the Fall 2021 term.
- The first ever Gina Cody School Appreciation Day will be held on March 18, 2021. Faculty, staff, students, and alumni were encouraged to participate in the two events organized: A discussion with Charlie Kawwas, Chief Operating Officer at Broadcom Inc., during lunch time, and a student research showcase in the evening.
- There is \$90 million over 5 years allocated to faculties of engineering in Quebec, at a rate of \$18 million per year. Concordia's share is \$3.18 million per year, \$1.08 million of that for scholarships for undergraduate students. The allocation of scholarships was submitted to the Ministry of Education on March 1st. The *Niches of Expertise* or "*Créneaux d'expertise*" is \$2.1 million per annum. The senior administration approved 10 faculty positions under the "*Créneaux d'expertise*" and four staff positions aimed at business development.
- GCS received one ETA position.

Action: Dean Debbabi will follow up to find out if foreign students can be vaccinated in Canada.

7. Associate Dean Remarks

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

- Cegep applications were due on March 1st, however they are still being accepted. Overall, there is an increase of 17 percent for all programs from first-time applicants. There is an increase of 20 percent of cegep applications and a 24 percent increase for international applications. Student Academic Services is currently monitoring the number of admits.
- International programs have been processed slower university wide, however admitted numbers are fine compared to last year this time.
- A new bachelor's in computer science titled Health and Life Sciences has been added and students have begun to apply.

- International Woman's Day was last week and there are still ongoing activities. Women in Engineering (WIE) had a conference on March 6, 2021.
- The conference titled, SHE Engineers: Why can't you? is happening on March 13, 2021 from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. You can register and it is free for everyone. Information can be accessed on the Concordia website.

Emad Shihab, Associate Dean, Research and Graduate Studies

- There was a very successful MedTeq event held on March 3, 2021. GCS and VPRGS are working hard together to align external grants and match them with NSERC and all of the other consortia that exists. GCS is planning with VPRGS to hold events for other consortia like PROMPT innovEE and many others.
- The Canadian government is willing to count 100 percent of time studied abroad towards post graduate work permits. This is very good news, especially for our course-based students. However, we are still waiting for the news of our Quebec government position. We also still do not know the Quebec governments position for our international students. As soon as information will be received it will be communicated.
- There is interest to slowly return to campus. Discussion is being done with the School of Graduate Studies to give some graduate students access to their offices. A protocol is being created.
- GPD and GPA's received an announcement that comprehensive exams can now be done on campus. A link was provided to book a room. It can be done online, however it is an option to come on campus if students prefer to be in person.
- CRC LOI discussions will be had in the coming week. CURC dossiers have been discussed and will be forwarded to VPGRS shortly.
- Applied AI institute presentation and discussion has been had with VPRGS. This dossier is moving forward. Feedback from VPRGS is being implemented and will be sent to Academic Cabinet.
- CFI grants have been given major support and GCS would like to be leading the grants. The key to this is to begin early. VPGRS is aligned with this vision. Try to strategize early, get networks done early and verify what has been done in the past.
- Fall admission for thesis - 116 compared to 119 last year. We are not doing as well as we did last year to attract local students. Please encourage faculty to attract local students for masters and PhD programs.
- Fall admission for non-thesis - 190% compared to this time last year. This is due to many deferrals that we received last year because of COVID-19. We are still only looking at admission numbers not registrations. 1481 compared to 510 last year.
- GCS has a 5-year strategic enrolment plan that has been discussed with the university. We don't want another 50 percent increase. We need smart growth in key areas and key programs.

Action: Dr. Shihab will find out the numbers of graduate students who reside outside the Montreal area.

Ali Akgunduz, Associate Dean, Academic Programs

- Faculty were asked to inform Dr. Akgunduz no later than today who will be conducting exams on campus. This information needs to be provided to the Provost's office.
- A conference called "How to Change the World" took place after reading break. Dr. Melody was the faculty advisor. This was a great experience. We need to duplicate these activities at Concordia. These students receive a solid understanding at these events about social justice and social issues students.
- Faculty members need to collectively think about how to schedule classes on campus for the fall term, should that happen. Dr. Akgunduz has asked the council members to send any ideas they may have. Fall

teaching looks like it will be a big change and how we will handle this is important.

- Accreditation will be on October 26th, 2021. This will be an online virtual visit for the aerospace program.
- In person exams discussions are on-going but nothing is finalized. The policy is at a draft stage.

Hoi Dick (Eddie) Ng, Associate Dean Academic Affairs

- Council was thanked for the nominations that have been received for the university awards, including the Provost's Circle of Distinction and the President's Teaching Excellence Awards. The nominations will be submitted by March 31st.
- Please bring forth any Honorary Degree nominations to the Associate Deans or Chairs.
- The tenure track interviews are on-going. The LTA draft advertisements will be submitted to the Provosts office and hopefully the drafts will be approved, and the advertisements can then be posted in CAUT.
- The pen tablets for TA's have been distributed to the departments. Please contact Dr. H. Ng if you still require pen tablets for your TA's because there are still some on reserve.

8. Curriculum changes

- a) Undergraduate Curriculum Proposal for the 2022-2023 Academic Year
Department of Computer Science and Software Engineering:
SOEN 471, COMP 333, COMP 438, COMP 6381 (ECFC 2021-02-01)

Motion 2021-02-03 Upon motion duly moved and seconded (A. Akgunduz/L. Narayanan), it was passed that document ECFC 2021-02-01, be ratified as submitted.

Vote: Carried unanimously

- b) Undergraduate Curriculum Proposal for the 2021-2022 Academic Year
Department of Computer Science and Software Engineering:
SOEN 498 (ECFC 2021-02-02)

Motion 2021-02-04 Upon motion duly moved and seconded (A. Akgunduz/L. Narayanan) it was passed that document ECFC 2021-02-02, be ratified as submitted.

Vote: Carried unanimously

- c) Undergraduate Curriculum Proposal for the 2022-2023 Academic Year
Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering:
COEN 422, ELEC 435, COMP 465 (ECFC 2021-02-03)

Motion 2021-02-05 Upon motion duly moved and seconded (A. Akgunduz/Y. Shayan), it was passed that document ECFC 2021-02-03, be ratified as submitted.

Vote: Carried unanimously

- d) Graduate Curriculum Proposal for the 2021-2022 Academic Year
Department of Building, Civil & Environmental Engineering:
Degree Requirement Changes to MASc Building Engineering and MASc Civil Engineering (ECFC 2021-02-04)

Motion 2021-02-06 *Upon motion duly moved and seconded (E. Shihab/A. Bagchi), it was passed that document ECFC 2021-02-04, be ratified as submitted:*

Vote: Carried unanimously

- e) Graduate Curriculum Proposal for the 2021-2022, Academic Year
Concordia Institute for Information Systems Engineering:
INSE 6615 Blockchain Technology (ECFC 2021-02-05)

Motion 2021-02-07 *Upon motion duly moved and seconded (E. Shihab/A. Ben Hamza) it was passed that document ECFC 2021-02-05, be ratified as submitted.*

Vote: Carried unanimously

- f) Graduate Curriculum Proposal for the 2021-2022 Academic Year
Department of Chemical and Materials Engineering:
Graduate Diploma in Chemical Engineering (ECFC 2021-02-06)

Motion 2021-02-08 *Upon motion duly moved and seconded (E. Shihab/A. De Visscher), it was passed that document ECFC 2021-02-06, be ratified as submitted.*

Vote: Carried unanimously

9. Ratifications of Elections (ECFC 2021-02-07)

Motion 2021-02-09 *Upon motion duly moved and seconded (H. Ng/A. Ben Hamza), it was passed that document ECFC 2021-02-07, GCS Council CIISE representatives be ratified as submitted.*

Vote: Carried unanimously

Motion 2021-02-10 *Upon motion duly moved and seconded (H. Ng/M. Pugh), it was passed that document ECFC 2021-02-07, GCS Council MIAE representatives be ratified as submitted.*

Vote: Carried unanimously

Motion 2021-02-11 *Upon motion duly moved and seconded (H. Ng/A. Bagchi), it was passed that document ECFC 2021-02-07, Faculty Elections Committee representatives be ratified as submitted.*

Vote: Carried unanimously

10. Access Centre for Students with Disabilities: Accommodating Students on Campus
Presented by Anna Barrafato and Elana Bloom

The purpose of the Access Centre for Students with Disabilities (ACSD) is to support students with disabilities on campus to provide academic accommodations for what they need to be active on campus and to provide an inclusive approach to learn on campus. The intent is to reduce barriers and the centre's services will not change a person but change the environment so they can have access to the campus, education, and materials. Once the students are admitted and registered for courses, they can then register for ACSD services on a voluntary basis. There are 3000 students registered voluntarily to the ACSD. The numbers of admits go up 10 percent each year. Students registered with ACSD provides documentation to provide a diagnostic to demonstrate that they require these services. Once the students are admitted, they are matched with an advisor to discuss an accommodation plan. The exam accommodations include extra time for exams, sign language interpretation, transcription, coaching and professional notetaking. When we are on campus additional services are offered like hygiene, accessibility access and alternate format options. Faculty support is also offered, and the details are on the website under FAQ. The intent of the access centre is to make the Concordia community aware of the services and to make it more of an inclusive environment, promoting open minded attitudes to change the way people think about disability.

11. Other Business

None

12. Adjournment at 3:59 p.m.

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